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Prison Libraries and Prison Education: Books towards Post Incarceration Reformation and Rehabilitating

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Abstract

The prison system as a social institution is concerned with reformation and rehabilitation of societal offenders. The experience of incarceration has significant psychological effects for all ex-inmates. Thus, the prison has been said to have a 'revolving door', signifying the number of ex-inmate returnees to the prison environment having been found guilty of crimes, sometimes even more grievous than previous offences. This paper assesses prison education, prison library and their roles in the reintegration and resettlement of incarcerated persons upon release. Literature reviewed revealed that, although there are cases of successful integration of ex-offenders into the society, the condition for most of them remains pitiable as most are usually ushered into the society without resettlement, and consequently, they come face-to-face with the full wrath of isolation. Reformation, rehabilitation, reintegration, and resettlement were identified as the four cardinal points of reformation for incarcerated persons. Therefore, it was concluded that bibliotherapy is an essential tool in reformation process and equipping them with information and skills necessary for life after prison is key to successful reintegration. The paper recommended that bibliotherapy should be fully utilized in the reformation efforts for offenders. Also, the Nigerian government should be fully engaged with the aftermath issues of ex-offenders to reduce crime and further promote inclusive human capital development and curb recidivism.

Keywords: Prison Education, Prison Library, Recidivism, Reformation, Rehabilitation, Re-Settlement, Ex-Inmates, Nigeria.

Introduction

Human capacity development is the primary element to political, social, and economic development of every society. Thus, the government owes constant human development endeavours to her citizenry. This explains the various institutions for human resource development. The prison system, since the paradigm shift from custodial and punishment philosophy to rehabilitation, no matter how punitive it may seem to the comprehension of many, is an institution for reformation and human capacity development of societal offenders in any nation. For this reason, the prison is synonymously referred to as correctional facility. It is based on this submission that prisons have evolved in modern times as the institution where offenders are kept under surveillance, particularly as the prospects of their being able to turn a new leaf and, therefore, contribute meaningfully to societal building.

In recognition of this, the 1955 United Nations (UN) standard minimum rights for the treatment of prisoners accorded prisons the custodial right to assist the inmates to reconstruct their life and psyche (the domain of human reasoning) which in the case of a criminal convict is usually crime prone. This right in full requires that prisoners be afforded a chance at self-improvement through the provision of rich, timely and reliable information resources. The implication outlines that the prison system always should provide services and programmes that are aimed at self-improvement and empowerment for inmates, so that upon release, they will be usefully integrated as functional members of the society. Such programme of rehabilitation includes the prison education programme, where inmates are accorded the opportunity to continue with their

educational processes, and the provision of books to inmates through the prison library to cater for their information needs and ultimately encourage reflective reasoning.

Most inmates prior their incarceration are without skills or abilities which makes adjustment a tedious task, however, with simple ability to read, the uncertain years of incarceration could be productive. Erwin (2005) expressed that unlike his cell mate who hanged himself during his first Christmas in incarceration, books helped him stay alive. The prison library provides inmates with information resources and therefore, has proven to provide to be a haven for inmates in the harsh realities of incarceration. However, the essence of incarceration can only be measured upon how well the released individual adjusts to realities of the society. This is because the facilitative effect of books while in incarceration would lose its essence if it cannot contribute to adjustment upon release, such that inmates could view it as a time-wasting venture until they are released to go back to their previous life. Prison education does not only equip inmates with the ability to read and write, it also broadens and deepens their perceptual acuity to adjust well in their environment. This process is known as bibliotherapy. According to Shechtman (2009), the idea of healing through books is not new; it can be traced far back, to the first libraries in ancient Greece. Many use books in character-education programmes (Kilpatrick, Wolfe, & Wolfe, 1994). In extolling the importance of bibliotherapy in assistive roles, Palmer (2000) described the concept of bibliotherapy as the use of books to help people like prison inmates to solve problems and make a change in their personal lives. They express catharsis verbally through discussion or writing, or nonverbal means such as art (Sridhar & Vaughn, 2000), role-

playing, creative problem solving, or self-selected options for students to pursue individually (Hebert & Kent, 2000). Once catharsis has occurred, the clients can be guided to gain insight into the problem. It is upon the exalted function of books in prison that this paper seeks to examine books and post incarceration experience of ex-incarcerated persons.

Prison Education

It could be said that some inmates possess university degrees or other forms of higher degrees, while there are those with little or no form of education. Perhaps, education does not bear any significant impact for inmates. However, prison education is recognized as any educational activity that occurs inside prison. Therefore, education in the prison system comes in various forms, such as academic, vocational, drug & alcohol treatment, self-help/support groups, mental/sexual/physical health classes, college courses, and employment training. These are designed to impact on the perception of self-esteem, confidence, self-worth, character, respect, gratitude, morals, values, responsibility, accountability and a sense of purpose in life. Thus, education in prison is a fundamental opportunity to open-minded inmates willing to incur positive life changes.

Bazos and Hausman (2004) explained prison education as a means of rehabilitating and re-directing inmates. Davis, *et al.*, (2014) reported that across fifty-eight empirical studies between 1980 and 2011, individuals who participated in correctional education programs had 43 percent lower odds of re-offending (recidivism) than those who did not. In the same vein, Chappell (2004) conducted a meta-analysis of fifteen studies from 1990 to 1999 and reported that individuals who participated in post-

secondary education while incarcerated had a recidivism rate of 22 percent as compared to 41 percent of individuals who did not participate. The Prison Studies Project (n.d.) reported that “in 2011, nearly 7 in 10 people who are formerly incarcerated will commit a new crime, and half will end up back in prison within three years. Given that about 95 out of every 100 incarcerated people eventually re-join the prison.” There are arguments against the education of inmates (Henson, 2009), however, the education of inmates remains the most effective tool of reformation. Little wonder then that the act of imprisonment does not take away the right for self-development and growth from incarcerated individuals.

A report from the Department of Corrections (DOC) reported in a study carried out in 1992 that an average of 50% of all inmates who enter the prison system do not have a high school diploma, and about 75% have no vocational or collegiate education. The document also reported that “the recidivism rate of inmates who don’t get their General Education Diploma (G.E.D) and/or participate in educational programs while in prison, are at an alarmingly high rate of 65-75%”. It, therefore, supposes that education provides the opportunity of self-betterment and success for inmates upon their release.

There have been arguments as to whether it is necessary to educate inmates. The 1955 United Nations (UN) standard minimum rights for the treatment of prisoners accorded prisons the custodial right to assist the inmates to reconstruct their life and psyche (the domain of human reasoning) which in the case of a criminal convict is usually crime prone. In this regard, Williams (2002) asserted that prison education does not perform well when it emphasizes literacy and numeracy. The

author opined that prison education should be such that promises radical reform to make sure education inside the prison walls translate into jobs and less re-offending, vocational, and employability skills relevant to the society. Although, an encompassing education would further stretch the already strained literacy and numeracy education. The United Nations provided an auxiliary to further strengthen the educational process of inmates as Emasealu and Popoola (2016) explained:

Rule Forty (40) of the *United Nations Standard Minimal Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (1955)*, stipulates that “every institution shall have a library for the use of all categories of prisoners, adequately stocked with both recreational and instructional books, and prisoners shall be encouraged to make full use of it”. In a parallel vein, the *Education in Prison Report*, endorsed by the Council of Europe includes a chapter on the prison library where it recommends that the prison library should function with the same professional standards as libraries in the community; should be managed by a professional librarian, should meet the interest and needs of a culturally diverse population; should provide open access for prisoners; and should provide a range of literacy and reading related activities.

It is on this ground that most prisons offer inmates the opportunity to pursue educational courses, including basic adult education, secondary education, college courses, special education, vocational training, and study release programs. Such programs teach inmates new skills and equip them for life when they complete their

sentence. The above justifies the use of prison library for the provision of information resources aimed at personal development of inmates on the cognitive, affective, and psycho-motive domains of human development. This is a process popularly known as bibliotherapy.

The process of bibliotherapy involves a guided process of using selected thought-provoking literary materials to treat a problem that has been identified in an individual. Bibliotherapy utilizes reading books to reshape perception and behaviour acquired overtime. In recognizing this, Palmer (2012) averred that bibliotherapy helps people to enhance self-confidence, overall quality, self-esteem, and well-being. Reading as an activity can influence character building and self-concept. It can be reassuring for offenders to identify that they are not alone in dealing with a problem as ideas in a book can incite them to compare their life situations in a positive way to characters, they relate to in the book. This is an important factor in behaviour modification process, and which is capable of bringing the personality questions of who am I and who do I want to become. It can also be referred to the use of literature to help people cope with emotional problems, mental illness, or changes in their lives (Pardeck, 1994), or to produce affective change and promote personality growth and development (Lenkowsky, 1987; Adderholdt-Elliott & Eller, 1989). By providing literature relevant to their personal situations and developmental needs at appropriate times (Hebert & Kent, 2000), bibliotherapy practitioners attempt to help people of all ages to understand themselves and to cope with problems such as separation and divorce, child abuse, foster care, and adoption.

Prison Library

It has been observed that where prison libraries existed, the inmates were often active users. In their deprived circumstances, the library assumed a much larger role in their lives, resulting in higher usage of the prison libraries than the typical public library.

The contemporary society has adopted more humane and enlightened practice of criminal justice and incarceration in harmony with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The prison system, therefore, has shifted focus from punitive measures to education, rehabilitation, constructive and reformation. The prison library then becomes an important part of the entire prison environment in its support for educational, recreational, and rehabilitative programs. The prison library also provides a level of "normalcy" in a highly regulated environment as a place where individuals are free to make their own choices and engage in self-directed pursuits. The library presents a window to the outside world and can provide much useful information for those preparing for release to the outside world. Accordingly, Lehmann and Locke (2005) explained that:

An incarcerated person has not relinquished the right to learn and to access information, and the prison library should offer materials and services comparable to community libraries in the "free" world. Restrictions on the access to library materials and information should be imposed only when such access is known to present a danger to prison security.

Williams (1999) observed that prison libraries, like public libraries, often begin with the provision of recreational reading

materials-for pleasure, escape diversion and imaginative flight. A second major role is educational support; supplying materials both for structured programmes and self-directed learning. In this, the library within the prison often doubles as a school or college library. The prison library, like the public library, can serve as a cultural centre for the community, broadening the inmates' intellectual horizons, stimulating their creativity and imagination, encouraging self-expression and enjoyment through the arts, music, writing and discussion. It is believed that this can nurture personal and spiritual growth and be a humanizing influence in a dehumanizing environment.

The inference that should be drawn from this literature is that appropriate material selection in prison libraries will help furnish the inmates with their desired information about the outside world, help them maintain contact, keep them abreast of current events, provide legal information and prepare them for re-integration into the large society. When an individual is found guilty of a crime, such person is ushered into the prison environment for rehabilitation, the prison system is expected to assist such persons to gain an introspective understanding of the society and how to conform to societal norms and laws. Perhaps, inmates acquired wrong perception of life and the society itself and are, therefore, not capable of processing situations that befall them rationally, as such, they require behaviour modification and attitude restructuring. Based upon this, the prison system is expected to assist inmate become conscious of broader reality, transcend the boundaries of self and attends to the needs of collectivity and society. This is the level where one becomes aware of the entire humanity – which in Maslow's hierarchy of human need is termed self-transcendence.

Consequently, inmates stand to benefit a lot from bibliotherapy programme even after incarceration because it rationally restructures their self-perception, self-concept, and general attitude to life ultimately leading to improved self-actualization.

Issues of Recidivism

The prison system strives to help inmates find interests beyond themselves, increase their understanding of human motivations, do honest self-appraisals, to show that there is more than one solution to a problem, and to help plan constructive solutions to problems other than crime. The prison environment has been explained to be psychologically and developmentally tasking, consequently, inmates who could not get over such challenges are usually ushered back into the society worse than they were before initial incarceration leading to recidivism.

Recidivism is the act of a person repeating an undesirable behaviour after they either experienced negative consequences of that behaviour or have been trained to extinguish that behaviour. It is also used to refer to the percentage of former prisoners who are re-arrested for a similar offence (Henslin, 2008). Recidivism is one of the most fundamental concepts used in criminal justice. It simply means the relapse of a person to criminal behaviour. Although there are few records on incidents of recidivism in Nigeria, the Prison Reform Movement (2014), stated that 76.6 percent of ex-offenders were re-arrested at least once. Additionally, they found that 55.4 percent of ex-offenders were

convicted of a new crime within the space of five years.

One key goal of Nigerian prison system is to rehabilitate the prisoners in the hope that they will not continue to live a life of crime. This explains the many rehabilitation processes and exercises instituted in the prison environment, however, many inmates upon release relapse back into crime and often times, more serious than the one prior to first incarceration. The reason for such relapse has been found to be linked to life before prison, in prison and after prison experiences (Murphy, 2004). Accordingly, some factors inherent in these three periods of an inmate's life are lack of socialization, lack of job training, inability to adjust to societal pressure, inability to reintegrate into the society after release, antisocial attitude, lack of education, lack of social support, substance abuse, neglect or abuse of the ex-inmate.

Convicted persons could be reasoned to have a wrong perception of the society by virtue of their being found guilty of a crime. Therefore, they could to some extent, be regarded as non-rational individuals who were irrational before incarceration. Consequently, incarceration as rehabilitation time becomes a time for increased information need for inmates. In confinement, they are incapacitated to reform themselves. Therefore, the availability of reformation programmes such as bibliotherapy becomes pivotal to their reformation goal.

Post-Experience of Ex-Convicts

Persons sentenced to prison are human beings with individual characteristics and pre-learned dispositions acquired prior to incarceration. The prison environment as an entire world different from the larger society influences inmates to a broader range. It is, therefore, reasonable to assert that the pre-acquired experiences of inmates before incarceration affect life in the prison environment, which in turn, has a far-reaching effect on the adjustment process after release. Thus, an inmate's ability to deal with incarceration is contingent on the history of experiences that a particular inmate brings to prison and holds significance for how successful the inmate will be in facing impending extramural challenges upon release (Adams, 1992).

There is no doubt that the experience of incarceration has psychosocial effects for all inmates. De Veaux (2013) stated that the experiences of the prison environment are hard to describe, he concluded that no one leaves unscarred. Clemer (1941) explained that the prison experience is neither normal nor natural and constitutes one of the most degrading experiences a person might endure. Considering this, we might gain an insight of what life lies in wait for everyone who has stepped into the prison environment. In painting the picture of life as an inmate, some researchers suggested that people in prison experience mental deterioration and apathy, endure personality changes, and become uncertain about their identities (De Veaux, 2013).

The Nigerian Experience

To imagine exactly what the perception of inmates on life after prison sentence, would be a life devoid of crime and full of opportunities. It is therefore, surprising that a lot of them are being ushered back into the prison environment after the initial incarceration. No wonder, the prison has been said to have revolving doors because of the high rate of returnees. Murphy (2004) asserts that aspects of the incarceration experience constitute traumatic stressors that cause Post Traumatic stress symptoms in some individuals. The condition is highly more defined in prison systems in most developing countries like Nigeria.

In Nigeria, life as an ex-inmate is very tasking that many inmates prefer the comfort, they enjoy behind the iron bars. The issue of freedom upon release is exaggerated – in that ex-inmate suffer desolation, isolation and segregation. There is also so much stigmatization from the government, family, and the society at large. The rehabilitation of inmates is expected to equip them not just with rational reasoning capability but also societal support for successful reintegration back into the society. For instance, hundreds of prisoners are released every year from the clutches of her 227 prisons; majority of these ex-prisoners would find the new life harsh and brutal. For most of them, there will be no family to return to and no help from anyone. For this, Akioye (2013) opined that for a sizable number of them, life in prison would be worth more than their harsh freedom. He listed four cardinal points in crime reduction and

rehabilitation of offenders as reformation, rehabilitation, reintegration and resettlement.

Reformation

This is the first step towards rehabilitating a person especially the inmate, it could be likened to the cognitive dissonance phase of behaviour modification whereby previously acquired irrational thinking and knowledge are conflicted with to allow space for the acquisition of new rational ones. As noted earlier, inmates are ushered into the prison environment with their preconception of life in general which could lead to a serious impediment to the internalization of reformatory programmes. Often, as in the case of ex-inmates in Nigeria (The Nationsonlineng.net, 2013), a lot of them are released back into the society without reformation taking place. These are people who thrive in their life of crime and they became more enraged with the society and more amplified with life of crime. This is because the prison environment is characterized by psychological and developmental tasks that come in form of anxiety, depression, stress, loneliness, nervousness, withdrawal, self-estrangement, separation from loved ones, and boredom, making it impossible for many of the inmate to internalize the reformation programme. Some offenders get into the prison and lose their sanity as recorded of two ex-inmates (Akioye, 2013). Consequently, it is often the case that inmates are usually ushered back into the society worse than they were before initial incarceration. They, therefore, need information just as any other member of the society. In congruence to the above, inmates expressed that their information needs include legal aid information, economic information, recreational information, current awareness information, health information, skill acquisition information,

survival and coping information, information on self-directed reading and life-long learning, information on re-entry into society, institutional regulation and procedure, and information on how to make meaningful contact with families. Information in these areas are required by inmates in order to increase their awareness and enhance developmental activities in prison, fill their knowledge gap so as to keep them abreast of current happenings before reintegration into society.

However, through the discussions, it was discovered that analysis of information needed was hitherto not considered and, as such, most available information materials often do not meet the needs that could enhance their psychological well-being. Thus, information resources found in the library consist of archaic materials which are irrelevant to what inmates actually required. Most of the books found in the libraries are those donated mainly by religious groups and Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs). Consequently, respondents were asked to explain their understanding of the wellness of the mind and the state of happiness and satisfaction based on certain necessities of life that provide one a considerable sense of fulfillment. The respondents reported that library information resources are crucial to their reformation in prison because apart from the library, they have no other source of connecting with the outside world. They contended that financial security, access to good road, good medical facilities, agricultural productivity, economic empowerment and food among other factors contribute to a contented life. They submitted that all these cannot be achieved when the value of information is compromised. This is so because the knowledge gained from information will enable them to improve on the above listed indicators. They unanimously reported that

availability of information resources would help to empower them and be better individuals in the long run. Perhaps, it would be better understood from the assertion Pius, an eloquent inmate of Nsukka Prison, who puts it succinctly when he states thus:

What is food? Food is essential to man, but survival in prison should go beyond just providing prisoners with food, morning, afternoon and night... filling out for parade etc... information is key to progress.

Rehabilitation

This is the actual stage of rehabilitation but does not derive much importance more than any other stage. After the onset of cognitive dissonance during the reformation stage, the programme for behavioural change and acquisition of rational understanding and perception of life is administered, usually in therapy form. Inmates, who had not gone through the reformation stage, lack the pre-requisite disposition to receive rehabilitative therapy such as bibliotherapy. Also, Prison inmates desire standard libraries that are well equipped and stocked with relevant and useful materials. Participants listed some subject books they desire libraries to stock. The list includes books in economics, mathematics, government, physics, chemistry and biology. The government and stakeholders should come to their aid through the provision of information material that would rehabilitate the minds of inmates and give them a new focus on life after staying in prison. This is to enable them pick up skills and knowledge to lead an acceptable life upon release. However, it is pitiable to observe inmates express disappointment and frustration on the condition of equipment and furnishing in the library and the state of information materials

stocked. Some of the participants reported that they did not find relevant materials for their needs in the prison library. In some of the prison libraries, even such quick reference materials as dictionary, encyclopedia and handbooks were nonexistent. Some prison inmates were unable to write such external examinations as the General Certificate of Education (G.C.E.) because relevant subject books were lacking. Joseph, a young respondent in Nsukka prison who is popularly referred to as "Pastor", reported that:

After each lecture, we wish to go for research at the library but as usual, we are disappointed due to unavailability of learning materials and the archaic state of the few books found in the library did not help either.

Rehabilitation offers inmates a new look at life, enabling them to decide the resourceful means to integrate themselves with their families upon release and most importantly the society. They are exposed to the stigma or challenges of their new status when they get released. They also, are to gain introspective career to pursue after prison in order to gain new perspective in life. They are expected to be equipped with skills while receiving rehabilitation, where they are to pick a skill to reinvent themselves. It should be noted that a wrongly applied rehabilitation is worse than the absence of rehabilitation. While conducting the Focus Group Discussion in Owerri Prisons, it was observed that the prison environment was not conducive to effective learning as the library was rowdy and noisy. There is no gainsaying the fact that concentration would be difficult to achieve in such a "library environment" which also serves as a welfare office, a reception room for visitors and as store. Also, there is no proper sitting arrangement nor is there provision for

carrels and reading chairs. The few available ones cannot meet the needs of the population of inmates who may wish to use the library. "Pastor" Joseph, an inmate in Owerri Prison, volunteered the information that:

The library lacks quality and quantity... even what is referred to here as a library cannot be compared to my library at home. There are no books here to meet my needs. All these books are outdated and old.

From the above, it is clear that the quality of the few available information materials in Nigerian prisons seriously hamper rehabilitation.

Reintegration

Life after prison in most developing countries like Nigeria is more difficult than pre-incarceration. Being labeled a criminal attaches an unavoidable stigma to the person even after prison sentence. Ex-offenders are highly marginalized, that they are left with just menial jobs with little pay and are also limited as to the profession they can venture into. Inmates are treated with mistrust and in most cases, disdain, that some eventually would find their way back through the iron gates and bars of prison where they are assured a regular meal and space to sleep; but for those who got out and stayed out, life is often full of ironies as they have to continually battle with societal stigmatization that is associated with being an ex-inmate. Freedom from prison also offers harsh realities, therefore, it stands to reason that inmates can never be useful to the society again as they continually come face to face with the problem of acceptance. Akioye (2013) reported that some family members refuse to take their own back after such a violent past, while the society refuses

to give them a second chance at life. As for the lot of many ex-offenders, he went further to assert that many ex-inmates have had a raw deal of rejection by the society, they had to bear the humiliation silently, live with slammed opportunity and watch their life's hope fade away. An ex-inmate expressed thus:

"most people still view us as dangerous. I don't blame them; if it didn't happen to me, I would have done the same. It is difficult to identify genuinely changed people, so the people are skeptical. But I think everybody needs a chance and once you have not misbehaved, then the society should give you a chance (Akioye, 2013)."

The above assertion exposed the pitiable position these ex-offenders face on a regular basis. This has helped in no way towards the reduction of crime, considering the statement by another ex-convict, thus:

"I also think stigmatization is the cause of all these violent crimes because when you don't give people a chance, they have nowhere to turn to. When you help an ex-convict, you keep yourself safe. If you stigmatize and the person doesn't get help, he is coming back to you because resentment would set in (Akioye, 2013)."

It therefore, supposes that the more we stigmatize, the more occurrences of recidivism, and the more fuel we provide for the wheels of violent and premeditated crimes in our societies.

Resettlement

Placing a person behind bars limit contact with the larger society and, therefore, imposes a clog in the wheel of activities for

such a person. To a large extent, incarcerated persons need more than their own capacity to resettle once they complete their sentencing. Life outside prison walls for inmates without assistance for resettlement could be described as brutish and inhumane. De Veaux (2013) explained that “when I review my experiences, I often feel like a deer caught in an oncoming headlight; I seem to stand still and stare.” In most cases, the issues of resettling released inmates are carried out by non-governmental and charity organizations often championed by ex-inmates who understand the magnanimity of the challenges of being an ex-convict. Most times, inmates who served a long prison sentence have nowhere and no one to get back to when they leave the prison. Therefore, without support to reform and resettle them, they are sitting on a keg of gunpowder, thus, they are likely to commit another crime and go back inside where they already feel at home. In the prison environment, inmates live and do virtually everything together, this is done to teach them peaceful co-existence among each other and imbibe the habit of self-belongingness to a society where other citizens should be considered as well (except for the cases of poor prison management where inmates are clustered due to inadequate spaces to house them). Through such means, they develop dependency among one another. It, therefore, becomes an entire new world to upon release, and the society cannot wholesomely welcome them and make them feel accepted as they were in prison. Consequently, they feel segregated in the free society and would most likely rebel. According to Maslow (1954), love and belongingness is the central point of human needs where every other need takes root. It could be reasoned that the principle of social behaviour assumes that individuals cannot

function in a social setting where they do not feel accepted. This explains why most ex-inmates find themselves reoffending after initial incarceration. It is simply because they were stereotyped and herded towards just one line of thought – “you are not worthy to be associated with.”

Bibliotherapy and Life after Prison

Life after prison offers more challenges than the prison sentence itself. Consequently, most ex-inmates prefer the acceptance, free accommodation, and free meal they enjoy while incarcerated. The concept of rehabilitation and reformation is to equip inmates with the pre-requisite skills to reintegrate into the society, overcome the challenges of stigmatization, and contribute meaningfully to the society. Such change cannot be extrinsic, because it requires internal (intrinsic) processes of restructuring general perception and attitude towards life.

Bibliotherapy as a programme for rehabilitation is very crucial for inmates because the client is at the center of the process and not the therapist. Also, it equips receivers with internal reflection skill which is a powerful, persuasive and persistent tool in influencing perception and attitude. Bibliotherapy provides inmates with the necessary tools (thought-provoking information resources) and allow them to take the first step towards reformation – a conscious process towards valid reformation. Consequent upon this, they can wholeheartedly embrace and assimilate other skills necessary for reintegration and resettlement. Programmes such as skill acquisition, vocational training and the likes in the prison cannot be said to be adequate if inmates’ perception and attitude are not receptive.

Attitude and perception determine the total man; they reflect the individual's disposition towards situations in life which can be transformed for positive realization of goals. Attitude is everything about the extent to which people succeed in life; it is summarily the prescriber of human behavior. It should be understood that inmates form new attitude and perception in the prison environment, through their interactions and association with one another, and other elements of the penal system. Field (1931) opined that when a body of relatively uneducated men lives together in close association, almost invariably, a high degree of uniformity in behaviour is induced by community pressure. This is particularly true of a prison environment. An inmate most often perceives incarceration as punishment and, therefore, forms a defensive negative attitude while in prison. On this ground, the target towards attitude becomes apparent, because inmates must be rehabilitated before they are released into the society.

Change in attitude and perception is required for them to integrate and live among other members of the society as law abiding citizens. No doubt, they may have been exposed to other programmes to equip them physically and skillfully to gainfully and meaningfully live in the larger society; if their attitude and perception towards the society remain unchanged they are likely to re-offend upon any perceived challenge or threat. This is because; incarcerated persons unconsciously build hatred for the society that incarcerated them. Therefore, without adequate restructuring (constituting of attitude and perception change, education, and skill acquisition), they usually return as hardened enemy full of vengeance for the society that incarcerated them. Bibliotherapy in prison, therefore, becomes

a veritable tool in total reformation and rehabilitation for inmates.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Life after prison for most inmates is a tedious task. Perhaps, the term "the revolving doors of the prison" stands to explain the rate at which inmates go in, out, and in of the prison environment at a speedy rate. The prison is synonymously referred to as a correctional facility, upon which, it is understood to be where offenders are kept under for reformation and reintegration purposes. This implied that the prison system should provide services and programmes that are aimed at self-improvement for inmates.

Bibliotherapy as a programme of rehabilitation has been described as a guided process of using selected thought-provoking literary materials to treat a particular problem that has been identified in an individual. Consequently, it is a programme designed to reform inmates and equip them with information and skills for overcoming challenges of life after prison, leading to reduction in crime and reduced recidivism. Bibliotherapy is essential for inmates because they face a lot of social adjustment problems often resulting to deprivation, frustration, and consequently, relapse. At all times, rehabilitation process should focus on inmates' reformation, rehabilitation, reintegration, and resettlement, as the four cardinal points of emphasis during and after prison sentence. Without this, life becomes unbearable for most inmates that they often choose the path of crime which to them is a familiar terrain.

The condition of ex-offenders in Nigeria calls for serious attention. It is, therefore,

recommended that the government should be concerned not just in locking up offenders, but also, in keeping a tab on ex-inmates' adjustment and developmental process and progress. Such records should be judiciously kept assisting social and other aid workers in enabling a safe landing for ex-inmates into the fabrics of the society. The government should also collaborate with non-governmental organizations and set up an after-prison intervention scheme that would primarily be for integration and resettlement of ex-inmates. The issue of segregation and stigmatization of ex-inmates by the society should be addressed by the government, and they should be provided with opportunity to expand their horizon in the areas of personal career

development. Finally, prison systems should encourage the use of bibliotherapy in the rehabilitation of inmates, as it has the capacity to change their ill-conceived attitude and perception towards the penal system. Professionals such as librarians, social workers, teachers, psychiatrist/psychologists, counselors and others in the field of human behaviours should be actively involved. Indeed, effective bibliotherapy in prisons would reduce recidivism and ensure greater public safety, thereby making prison term more of reformation than deformation, thus, improved quality of life after incarceration towards human capacity development for ex-inmates.

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