

The library for the incarcerated male juveniles: an observation of five correctional schools

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study extends our earlier research on what we have learned so far about the information needs of Malaysian male juvenile offenders. This focus is important to consider when designing and delivering the best possible library services to this group. The study explores the extent the prison library is used as the environment for information seeking of male juvenile delinquents. Data were collected using participants observation with 27 juveniles (13 to 21 years old) living in five correctional schools in Malaysia. Our observation at all research sites has led us to conclude that the prison library does not play that much roles in addressing the participants' information needs. Current findings add to the limited literature on juvenile offenders' information needs and how the prison libraries meet the needs of this people.

Keyword: Male juvenile delinquents; Prison library; Youths at risk; Information needs; Information behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Little published research has been conducted on information needs of young inmates in correctional facilities, with the recent literature examining how emerging digital behaviours via computer-mediated communication over the Internet (Lim et al. 2013) are challenging and, perhaps, changing the way the young inmates seek for information. The information needs of marginalized youth communities such as juvenile delinquents and youths-at-risk in Malaysia is also still understudied. In light of rising Internet use amongst youths worldwide, coupled with the prevailing issue of delinquency and risk-taking among youths (Haynie 2002), this is an issue of growing import that bears closer investigation. It is most important that the informational needs of inmates be met and they "need books on personality development, personal growth, and the mind and how it works" (Jefferies 1975 cited in Burt 1977, p. 27) as "self-improvement follows self-respect in the process of [inmates'] rehabilitation" (Roth 1970 cited in Burt 1977, p. 27).

In the Malaysian context, the importance of education is emphasized to young prisoners (aged 21 years and below) in order to prevent them from relapsing into criminal activities. They are unconstrained to the same educational opportunities in life that any children would expect. They gain formal education and are permitted to sit for public

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examinations under a special program by the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Prisons Department of Malaysia. Teachers are sent to prison to teach the young prisoners for the following academic programs:

- a) 3M recovery classes (literacy classes for reading, writing and arithmetic).
- b) Pre-PMR classes (lower secondary)
- c) PMR classes (Lower Certificate of Education)
- d) Pre-SPM classes (upper secondary)
- e) SPM classes (equivalent to GCE O level)
- f) STPM classes (equivalent to GCE A Level)
- g) Diploma / degree classes (for long distance education programs).

The existence of the academic classes indirectly encourages young prisoners to use the prison library to obtain information related to their education. According to Conrad (2012), the prison library should address the inmate's requirements for information on institutional policies, enable inmates to maintain contact with the outside world, enhance vocational skills, provide educational materials, support rehabilitation, provide reading materials for personal recreation, and provide information on reentering the community after parole. According to Zeman (2014) in her debut memoir of a prison librarian on the state of juvenile incarceration in the United States, the juvenile delinquents have absolute need to read but there was a lack of reading materials in the prison for them. Eze (2014) in highlighting the nature of the prison environment, found out that prisoners who undergo stress, anxiety, fear, insecurity, boredom and lacked direction, would get relief from emotional and psychological instability by using the prison library.

The importance of having prison library in Malaysia is stated in the Malaysia Prison Regulations (2000): "a library shall be provided in every prison and, subject to these regulations and to such conditions as the Director General may determine, every prisoner shall be allowed to have library books and to exchange them as often as practicable". Recognizing the lack of attention given by library and information science scholars in Malaysia to libraries in prisons and correctional schools, we aim to fill the gap with this study. We would like to know to what extent is the prison library used as the environment for information seeking, and if the prison library affects the juvenile delinquents' information needs. This focus is important to consider when designing and delivering the best possible library and information services to this group. The current study extends our earlier findings on what we have learned so far about the information needs of Malaysian male juvenile offenders (Rafedzi and Abrizah 2014).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Past studies (Omagbemi and Odunewu 2008; Kennedy 2006; Curry, 2003; Barlotti 2003; Lehmann 2003; Dixen and Thorson 2001; Lemon 1997; Liggett 1996; Stevens and Usherwood 1995) have shown the importance of establishing prison libraries services to rehabilitate and giving education to inmates. The denial of information services to prisoners can be detrimental to the objectives of the prison (Omagbemi and Odunewu 2008). The library plays an important role in supporting the prison's mission to rehabilitating the inmates (Lemon 1997) and should provide the resources necessary to

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meet the informational, cultural and recreational needs of the prison community (Collins and Boden 1997). Stevens and Usherwood (1995) found that the role of the prison library in the reform and rehabilitation process identified a number of areas in which the work of the prison library can have an important influence. There have been a number of studies that examined the use of prison libraries, from their collections, and technologies, to the management of the prison library (Gilman 2008; Stearns 2004; Bowden 2003; Shirley 2003; Knudsen 2000; Pendleton, and Chatman 1998; Wilhelmus 1998; Collins and Boden 1997; Lemon 1997; Rubin and Suvak 1995; Cheeseman 1994; Bayley, Greenfield and Nogueira 1981; McClaskey 1977). However, most of these studies focused on meeting the information needs of adult prisoners.

For juvenile delinquents, using the prison library, can make them “journey out of the facility to distant lands, to happier times with imaginary friends and entirely new personalities” (Cheeseman 1977, p. 126). Cheeseman’s opinion about the library is echoed in the Guidelines for Library Service to Prisoners (Lehmann and Locke 2005) that states that “the prison library is a substitute for the library at home and consequently it reaches nearly every prisoner and this is one good reason why it should be developed into one of the best libraries”. Rubin and Suvak (1995) who agreed with Cheeseman, stated that one thing has to be considered by the prison authorities is that inmates need to be taught library skills as part of their life skills, because these skills are not only relevant in the prison library but also serves a re-entry purpose by presenting any library as a familiar place which former inmates can use on the outside after release. Gilman’s (2008) study found that the library is important for juvenile delinquents to gain skills that will help them find employment on the outside, and it is even more important that they gain skills that will enable them to be socially competent when they return to their communities. Gilman who conducted a survey at Juvenile Detention Centre (JDC) in Washington, Oregon and Idaho found that 89% of respondents believed the most important functions of a library in a detention center were providing recreational reading to pass time, and developing literacy skills. The survey also indicated that juveniles used the library services effectively with 50% using readers’ advisory, and 44% forming book discussion groups. Gilman reported that juveniles have access to a wide range of educational, skill-building treatment and intervention resources that are appropriate and responsive to their interests and needs, as well as those of the community.

Several scholars have mentioned the challenges faced by prison librarians in rendering information services (Lemon 1997; Koons 1988 and McClaskey 1977). According to Koons (1988), libraries have grown in response to their specified needs, and not by what someone says should be available to them. Lemon (1997) agreed and added that the prison library has become a hub for inmates, to assist them with legal issues, education, computer skills, career information, resumes and treatment. He added that the library should provide supplementary materials for inmates’ learning and for on-the-job training courses offered at the institution, such as air-conditioning and refrigeration, electrical and construction trades. The collection in the library must frequently be disproportionate to the size of the population, because it must serve a wider age range than the average school library, and it does not have the resources of a public library with children, young adult and adult collections to draw on (Cheeseman 1977). Gilman (2008) suggested that it is important for each prison to teach the juvenile delinquents to

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use the library. They need to know the call numbers, book spines, the differences between fiction and nonfiction and the general layout of library resources and facilities. These basic library skills can help them feel comfortable using the public library and the instructions about the library ethos can help them feel more comfortable when they are back in the community at large.

In the emerging digital behaviors' via computer-mediated communication over the Internet, inmates have the same information needs as person in regular society but, with a greater number of them having low education skills, they experience difficulties in articulating their information needs or in their attempts to seek information (Glennor 2006). Prison library service must be designed to meet the informational, cultural, educational, vocational and recreational needs of its users and libraries should determine their roles that must be compatible with the facility's mission (Shirley 2003). The collections in prison libraries play an important role in supporting the curriculum of prison education or hobbies, or pleasure reading to help pass the large amounts of unstructured time in a positive way. As such Dixen (2001) emphasized that the prison libraries' collections should have some nonfiction and educational materials for general learning and character improvement.

OBJECTIVE AND METHOD

The objective of this study is to explore how the prison information environment supports the information needs of male juvenile delinquents in Malaysian correctional schools. Specifically, the study focused on the following research questions:

- a) To what extent is the prison library used as the environment for information seeking?
- b) How does the prison library affect the juvenile delinquents' information needs?

For the purpose of this research, an information need is considered to be the desire or necessity to acquire the materials required by a juvenile delinquent, in his eyes, to ease, resolve, or otherwise address a situation arising in his daily life in prison. Such materials might include facts, interpretations, advice, opinions, or other types of resources carrying information such as books, newspapers and magazines. Our research took the form of a qualitative research design to establish what information was available for male juveniles in prison and what more could be made available. Qualitative research is primarily concerned with meaning, interpretations and giving research participants 'a right of voice' (French and Swain 2004). There is a commitment to see 'through the eyes' of research participants, and a belief that social behavior cannot be grasped until the researchers have understood the symbolic world of the research participants. According to Bailey (2007), qualitative field research requires flexibility, because it can be chaotic, emotional, dangerous and lacking in rigid rules to guide some aspects of the research process. Luck, ambiguity, time constraints and feelings often affect the planning, execution and analysis of field research, making it all the more important for the researchers to be well prepared and trained in this methodology before engaging in it.

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The first researcher is committed to get close to the sample being observed in its natural setting and also looks at the library environment, sources and services prepared for young prisoners which will help them in their rehabilitation and education process. This method is useful to support our earlier interview findings ((Rafedzi and Abrizah 2014); by looking and finding out the needs and interests of the existing sources and services in their prison libraries. According to Grimshaw (2001), the field researcher should observe what is going on in the field, logging the minute detail of every aspect of tribal life; daily routines, the preparing of foods, details of the care of the body, conversations and social life. Forsythe (1998) explains that by asking people to describe their information behavior is less trustworthy than direct observation, because (a) self-report (like eyewitness testimony in court) is often neither accurate nor complete; (b) respondents may believe that their answers reflect their level of professional competence; and (c) investigators may not understand the context of respondents' answers.

This study involved an observation of 27 participants from a population of 2,010 (until 20th April 2013) male juvenile delinquents from four Integrity Schools and the Henry Gurney School in Malacca under the jurisdiction of Malaysian Prison Department. Each school was taken from the northern, central, eastern and southern parts of West Malaysia). Male juvenile delinquents were chosen because juvenile delinquents in Malaysia are predominantly male (with a male-female ratio of 30 : 1) (Jabatan Penjara Malaysia 2013). The male juveniles who met at least one of the following criteria were purposively sampled. The number in parentheses indicated the number of participants who gave their consent to be interviewed and observed for each category specified:

- a) Those who have outstanding academic achievements based on PMR, SPM and STPM results (5)
- b) Those who are still studying at the diploma or degree level (6)
- c) Those who are not academically inclined, but are very interested in technical skills / vocational skills (8)
- d) Male juvenile delinquent in 3M classes (4)
- e) The youngest male juvenile delinquents (4)

To avoid identification, all participants are referred to by code numbers. Table 1 summarizes the profiles of the participants observed for each school. There was no detailed information about the participants observed reported in this paper; except for the information about their ethnic origin. The observation was done in covert situation, where the researcher's status is not made known to the participants. In terms of ethnic groups, 27 participants were of Malay ethnics, 1 was Malaysian Chinese and 4 were Malaysian Indians. The observation sessions were held at each prison school library (Table 2).

To explore how the male juvenile delinquents take support from the prison information environment, the researcher was given a place in the library to observe the participants. The researcher's observation usually started at 9.00 am and finished at 13.00 pm on schooldays. Sometimes, it finished much earlier due to the prison school activities or due to the lack of prison staff to monitor the field observation session. The participants in general were aware that they were involved in a study on prison libraries, however at the point of observations, they only knew that the

first researcher came to the library and was doing her reading or studying (covert situation). As such, they comprehended that the researcher was studying and they did as what they normally used to do at the library. The field observation finding was limited to the behaviour of participants in the library. Most of the time, the researcher was just sitting in the library, watching the participants' behaviour. A field log book was used to write the observation notes.

Table 1: Participants Observed Based on the School Location

No	Code numbers	Location of school	No of participants for observation
1	CO	Central Observation Kajang, Selangor	5
2	EO	Eastern Observation Marang, Terengganu	4
3	NO	Northern Observation Sungai Petani, Kedah	5
4	SO	Southern Observation Kluang, Johor	3
5	CSO	Central Southern Observation Henry Gurney, Melaka	10

Table 2: Observation Schedule

Sample Location	Date
Kajang Integrity School (CO)	02 January 2013 – 04 June 2013
Marang Integrity School (EO)	14 February 2012 – 16 February 2012
Sungai Petani Integrity School (NO)	09 April 2012 – 02 May 2012 22 April 2013 – 30 May 2013
Henry Gurney School (CSO)	05 September 2012 – 17 September 2012 09 January 2013 – 06 February 2013
Kluang Integrity School (SO)	01 December 2012 – 31 January 2013

The participants knew the first researcher as another teacher who wanted to know about how is it like teaching in a correctional school. They refer her as “Ustazah”, most probably because she conveys herself as a religious teacher. Most of the times, the researcher was accompanied by a prison staff and other times, she used to sit alone. The prison staff attended only to ensure the safety of the researcher in the library. In many instances, the prison staff sat outside the library to observe the activities inside the library. There was no change in the furniture position of the library, to keep the participants unaware of the research and to ensure their normal behaviour. Before the participants were allowed to enter the library, the researcher took her place first. The researcher also brought with her some current magazines on technology and comics. The only reason of having those reading materials and put them nearby the researcher was to see whether the participants took the materials to read or not. The selection of magazine for this observation session was decided based on our earlier findings (Rafedzi and Abrizah 2014). From this, it was assumed that it was possible to recognize whether

the prison information environment supports the male juvenile information needs and process by lessening their barriers to access the information.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research question 1: To what extent is the prison library used as the environment for information seeking?

The researchers observed a few patterns of the prison library use from their data collection.

a) The library spaces are used mainly by juvenile delinquents taking national-based examination, with the presence of their teacher.

Our first observation shows that the prison library is mainly used by juvenile delinquents who are currently enrolled in examination-based classes (PMR, SPM and STPM). Their subject teacher accompanied them to the library for a specific purpose, and gave them instructions on what to do, for example to read or refer to a book or reference works. We noticed that when in doubt, or to get further information, they would approach their teacher, instead of searching for the information from other library resources.

(EO, 14 February 2012, 9.00am to 10.00am)

Four (4) participants enter the library accompanied by their English language teacher. The teacher gives them clear directions of the reason why they go to the library. "Boys, find an English reference textbook to read, or you can answer the PMR sample exam questions". The participants nodded as symbol of understanding their teacher's instruction. After releasing them to find the book, the teacher sits at a reading desk and does her works. The participants choose their books and sit together at another table. Each has a book in their hand. The library condition is very warm and humid most probably because the school is located close to the beach. The four participants quietly read, and appear to be disciplined and diligent while they are in the library. Once in a while, I hear that they tried to pronounce difficult words. EO3 suddenly gets up from his chair and approaches the teacher for help. He asks his teacher the meaning of words in the Malay language and how to pronounce the English words.

b) Male juvenile delinquents refer to resource person available in the library to address their information needs

Another observation illustrates that the male juvenile delinquents have their own mission when entering the library, even without the presence of a class teacher. Despite the absence of their teacher in the library, they are still being monitored by a prison staff. There are participants who desire to read religious books as advised by their religious education teacher. However, when they require further information or in need of an advice, they would again refer to a resource person, whoever is available in the library.

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(CO, 23 January 2013, 9.15am to 9.53am)

I realize that CO5 has been staring at me ever since he was at library entrance. Once he enters the library, he directly approaches and stands in front me. He smiles and said "Assalamualaikum, ustazah." After that, CO5 goes to the bookshelves. Three participants are talking about religious matters; and one of them is holding a religious book. After a few minutes, CO5 approaches me again. The prison officer asks him to stay back and instructs CO5 to leave the room in his loud and strong voice. CO5 explains to the prison officer that he would like to ask my opinion on a religious matter. The prison officer looks at me and I nod as an okay signal to help CO5. Once I offer CO5 a seat, he slowly pulls a chair and carefully sits down. He shows me a book on Nabi Musa (Moses) and wanted to know if it can be used for a write up on the history of prophets. I tell him that it is suffice and that he could also write about the Firaun (Pharaohs) and the glimpse of challenges Moses faced. He thanks me saying.. "Ok. Ok. Thank you, ustazah, Assalamualaikum" and leaves smiling.

c) Male juvenile delinquents enjoy reading light reading materials such as magazines and comics

Our interview findings in Rafedzi and Abrizah (2014) revealed that the majority of the participants acknowledged that reading was not a hobby or interest during their life in the outside world. However, while in prison, most of them indicated that they were more likely to spend time reading novels, short stories, magazines, religious and academic books. Juvenile delinquents who attend diploma or degree classes address their information needs during classroom instructions and when using the Internet. They do not use the library facilities as a result of the lack of suitable reading materials for them. The 3M students choose to use pre-school books to enhance their reading proficiency, but they show the tendency to like comics and magazines as their reading sources. Most of the magazines are published by the Prison Department of Malaysia. According to a research by Shirley (2003), the prison population mostly uses homegrown newspapers and magazines.

(NO, 23 April 2013, 10.45 am to 11.27am)

NO4 from the 3M class seems interested in the magazines that I bring along with me. He browses towards me, walks to and fro, and touches the magazines laid on my table. He seems to look doubtful and looks around the library. NO4 then moves away and goes straight to the bookshelf next to him, joining in a chat with his friends. He then approached his teacher who is two tables away from me and said something to her. After a while, NO4 comes back towards where I sit, looked at me and asked loudly; "Ustazah, are these yours? Can I read?" I was surprised with the question but quickly smiles to NO4, and then nod as an agreement. NO4 smiles at me, takes one magazine and joins his friends behind the bookshelf. I noticed NO4's happy face when he holds the magazines. I suspect he asks for his teacher's permission to borrow it from me. Sometimes, I hear laughter from behind the bookshelf, as if he and his friends really enjoy the material.

Most of the participants we observed have materials such as magazines and comics in their hand when they are in the library. Although they did not get the chance to read the

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latest and popular magazines in the market, they gave us the impression that they are pleased with the remaining magazines in the library. It appeared to us that they were surprised but interested in the magazines that we brought in the library. We discovered from the teacher that current and popular magazines as well as comics are prohibited in the library. That was perhaps the reason why the participants looked cautious and sought permission as they did not want to be in trouble if caught with forbidden materials.

(CO3, 23 January 2013, 9.15am to 9.53am)

CO3 looks at me and then lays his eyes on the magazines close to me. He comes towards me, and whispers, "Can [I] see?". I nod and smile simultaneously. CO3 chooses one magazines, but then he quickly put it back. He stands still for a few seconds, and then lifts another magazine, flips through one page after another and then he put it back. He looks around and then turns to me and asks if he can bring the magazine over to his friends, while pointing to front direction. I said, 'Take it'. He quickly picks up the magazine and heads towards his friend, CO4. There are two of them. Then all three walks towards the back of the library and stand behind the last row of bookshelves. I cannot see them but I believe they are still under the observation of the prison officer. Another participant, CO5 who stands not far from me and is holding a religious book, places the book on a table and join the two boys. At 9.50 am, all three come towards me and CO3 carefully shove the magazine back on my table and thank me before leaving the library. They all seem happy and I hear them laugh quietly.

Research question 2: How does the prison library affect the juvenile delinquents' information needs?

Our observation at all research sites has led us to conclude that the prison library does not play that much roles in addressing the participants' information needs. The following findings demonstrates the need for a well-thought-out library sources and services, especially if the prison library are committed to serving the educational, recreational and rehabilitational information needs of these young prisoners.

a) The prison library houses books on religion but has limited, irrelevant and outdated resources

Shirley (2003) listed several collections of items that should not be allowed in a prison library, such as true crime story with inmate's photographs, bombs, disguises, karate or self defense materials, pornography, and nude photographs. As expected, none of the libraries we observe have materials of these topics. All prison libraries we observed house collections of references books and textbooks for national examination, and teenage and family novels. All libraries have many reference works on religion such as the Al-Quran, its translation, stories of the prophets, biographies and memoirs of national personalities, and self-motivational magazine and pamphlets. According to Sullivan (2008), religion and religious readings help to reform the character of inmates and have contributed to a number of redemptions. Prisoners have admitted to have a dire need for information that could give them spiritual and emotional stability to be in good terms with God and men and become better citizens in the society (Eze 2014).

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However, there are limited titles of children's story books, dictionaries and encyclopedias. Based on the web portal Books to Prisoners (www.bookstoprisoners.net), the highly requested books from prisoners in 2014 are dictionaries, thesauruses, any books on starting or running business, and trade books.

Our inspection of the bookshelves confirmed that many books are outdated, especially the collections of references books and textbooks for national examination, which were out of current syllabus. There were practically no academic books suitable for those pursuing their bachelor and diploma degree, as well as books for technical or vocational classes. Ajogwu (2005), cited by Eze (2014) enumerated prisoners' information needs as ranging from legal needs, religious, health, educational, vocational and recreational to financial needs. Prison library can develop collections that include a broad range of materials for self-help, self-education, community resources, housing, job availability, and vocational training opportunities (Shirley 2006). By having these types of information, it will encourage the inmates to make full use of the prison library.

The researchers had the opportunity to see several boxes received by the prison library as gifts and donations to the prison. All the boxes have reading materials contributed either by private or government agencies. The prison management usually does not preclude any types of reading materials contributed by these agencies. Typically, the materials are sorted out before they are placed in the library. We found these materials are mostly outdated, irrelevant, and the contents are not useful for the current information needs of the juvenile delinquents. Some of these materials include the examination books for PMR, SPM, and STPM that are no longer used in the present school syllabus and a set of encyclopedia published in 1980's. There are even nine copies of the 1992 Annual Report of a company in the library! The teachers we met indicated that they were aware of the presence of the books, however they said that they did not comment or act upon it, because of the prison authority had consented to accept the donations of the materials.

b) *The prison library does not provide a resource person*

Our earlier observation notes, as well as the one below, clearly show the absence of a resource person for the inmates to refer to when they are in the library. The resource person can be a library media specialist who plan and team teach with subject teachers and to integrate reading and information skills programs into the classroom curriculum. Literature indicates that it is possible for library media specialists to realize their potential as resource persons who co-plan and implement instruction in collaboration with teachers (McGiffin 1990). A peer support group is extremely valuable for self-directed educational growth and rehabilitational development among the young inmates and the presence of a resource person may facilitate this process.

(SO, 28 January 2013, 11.00am to 12.04pm)

A female Malay language teacher directs her three students into the library. She instructs them to find any information on general issues in Malaysia; from any newspapers, magazine and books. She tells them that all the information would be used for quizzes and short essays. The boys listen without asking any questions, and after

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about three minutes, they move to the bookshelves and look for the relevant materials. Initially, their attention is only on the books that are available on the bookshelves. They browse the shelves and when each has book in hand, they sit at the nearest table and begin to flip the book page by page. After a while, they seem not interested with the materials and they appear to be restless. All three of them stop looking at the books. SO3 stands up and goes to the teacher who is standing at the library counter. He says something to her, perhaps telling her that he is not able to get anything relevant to the topic. The teacher goes to the bookshelves, checks around and tells SO3 something. SO3 nod his head and he quickly goes to SO1 and SO2. The teacher goes back to the counter. After a while, they go to the big wooden cabinet at the corner of the library. They open the cabinet and release some old newspapers and bring them to the table. They start looking for the information and appear concentrating, and at times the following utterances are heard: "Can this be?" "Can I choose this?" and sometimes it seems like they are discussing with each other.

c) Prison staff intervention in the information seeking process inhibited or curtailed library usage

The prison authority comprises personnel such as the prison officers, prison staffs, and warden. It is common for juvenile delinquents to be scared of prison officials as most of them have strict and fierce look, which worked well while intimidating inmates; but there others who are easy going and friendly. Based on earlier our observation notes, as well as the one below, the young inmates appeared not at a comfort with the close presence of the prison staff in the library. Encouragement from prison staffs is very important for the male juvenile delinquents to comfortably use the library collection.

(CO, 23 January 2013, 9.15am to 9.53am)

After choosing the reading materials, the 3 boys take a sit on the clean concrete floor in the aisle between the bookshelves. They sit close to each other. [Researcher's notes: I am not sure why they act in such a way, the library is not that cold as the air conditioner has just been turned on]. I notice that the boys habitually look at the prison officer rather than having their eyes on their books. There appears some other inmates who are not interested in choosing books, but had to find one to be read.

CONCLUSION

Lehman (2000) wrote that incarcerated persons generally have the same reading interests and information needs as individuals in the free world, and we could observe this behaviour among our participants. The prevalence of unmet information needs in the prison library was apparent in this study, yet this did not come as a surprise to the researchers, as much past work has given similar impression. Curry (2003) study's for example, found that information needs among inmates were not fulfilled. With regards to information access failure, Curry (2003) discovered a general lack of success among many of her participants using libraries, and Burt (1997) and LeDonne (1977) realized that their participants appeared to lack the necessary skills to use the library resources effectively.

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Information needs of juvenile delinquents are more likely to their academic needs and interests and just to fill their time while in prison. Apparently, it may be tempting to assume that information seeking failure must be due in large measure to shortcomings on the part of the prison libraries themselves, but the findings of the study indicate that this condition is by no means always the cause. Clearly, it is not because of the young inmates' lack of desire to seek for information, rather they made inappropriate choices of sources. This is undermined by an ignorance of the prison authority of the information seeking options to the inmates, and of the approaches most likely to be effective when finding information. There were instances of what may be termed as "source and user dislocation" (Pickard 2004) where adult intervention disrupted the youth's efforts to seek for information.

The data collected for this study is important in that it provides evidence of how the prison library is used, and this data could be useful at the beginning of designing information services for juvenile delinquents. This study has two main implications to prison libraries. The prison libraries in Malaysia come under the auspices of the National Library. In terms of information resources and materials, a special guideline should be adopted for developing the collection of prison library. This is to prevent the dumping of irrelevant and outdated materials in the prison library and to promote appropriate reading materials as needed for different subject matters. In terms of teaching information skills, the findings highlight the importance of programmes that develop a more collaborative atmosphere between teachers and/or prison officers with the young inmates. Opportunity must be given to inmates to engage interactively with teachers and prison officers in the former's information seeking process.

Malcolm X, who frequently used the library during his imprisonment at Norfolk remarked, '*A book can change a man*'; (Malcom X and Haley 1987) and this famous quote illustrates the importance of books in prison. The prison library is part of treatment facilities and should provide supplemental materials for inmates, whether for their rehabilitation, education or training processes (Lemon 1997). It is most important that the informational needs of inmates be met. If one believes in library service, one must believe that everyone should have the opportunity for it, including inmates. There should be special concern that the young prisoners of correctional schools be provided with the best possible information sources and services, because as aptly put by Burt (1977), "those on the "inside" now will be on the "outside" soon" (p. 36), signifying that very means of assuring that the juvenile delinquents return to the society as good citizens should be utilized.

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