

## Information Behaviour of Juvenile Delinquents at Adigbe Borstal Training Institution in Abeokuta Metropolis

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### Abstract

*This paper investigates information behaviour of Juvenile delinquents at Adigbe Borstal Training Institution in Abeokuta Metropolis. The study employs survey research design, with a questionnaire serving as the main research instrument, supplemented with interview, observation and secondary document reviews. Seventy (70) juvenile delinquents participated in the study out of the one hundred and forty-six (146) juveniles in conflict with the law. Out of the seventy (70) copies of questionnaire administered, 65 were returned and found usable. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics. Findings revealed that juvenile delinquents needed information on how to leave the facility, family and social service, legal rights information, health information, societal information, and personal development information. These juvenile delinquents mostly sourced their needed information from clerics visiting the facility, counsellors/social workers, guest speakers, workshops, books, and the library. Finding revealed that most juvenile offenders were not satisfied with the information they received. Surprisingly, the inmates claimed the information they accessed in the home are useful to their rehabilitation process. The challenges to access to information identified in this study include fear, experiences of stigmatisation and judgment, absence of guidance or support, lack of confidence, and limited access to computer and internet. The outcome of this study contributes to the scarce literature on information behaviour of juvenile offenders in Borstal institutions in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Information behaviour, information needs, information seeking behaviour, juvenile delinquents, correctional home, Borstal institutions

### Introduction

Juvenile delinquency is a major social issue that affects communities in both developed and developing countries around the globe. In fact, it has become increasingly rampant in Nigeria, posing a serious threat to society. In recent times, there has been an increase in the number of reported juvenile delinquents in Nigeria (Olashore, Ogunwale, & Adebowale, 2016; Abhulimhen-Iyoha & Oseghale, 2020). Even though the problem of juvenile delinquency has persisted over

time, apparently the manifestation of juvenile delinquency in the past is not comparable to the magnitude with which it is experienced nowadays (Famuyiwa, 2017). The anti-social behaviours connected with juvenile delinquency in recent times, include but not limited to vandalism, drug abuse, weapon carrying, alcohol abuse, rape, examination malpractices, school violence, bullying, cultism, truancy, and school drop-outs (Abubakar, 2018; Arowolo, 2021). Another extreme form of criminal behaviour among juveniles reported in recent times is murder (Ifedigbo, Anyaorah, Okafor, & Uzoma, 2023). The prevalence of delinquent acts among a significant number of Nigerian juveniles, as reported by scholars, researchers and commentators are often attributed to family instability and dysfunction, poverty, peer influence, lack of access to educational opportunities, poor physical and mental health (Adegoke, 2015; Abubakar, 2018; Onyenagubor, 2021).

In order to combat the increasing instances of anti-social and criminal behaviours among juveniles in Nigeria, Borstal Training Institutions were established by the government. These institutions, created under Section 4 of the Borstal Institutions and Remand Centres Act LFN, 2004, serve as reformatory and corrective centres for these juveniles. The goal is to reform their characters and re-integrate them into society as productive members upon their release. While detained in the facility, whether they are awaiting trial or serving their punishment, juvenile delinquents receive vocational and educational interventions aimed at their reformation and re-integration into the society. At this point, it is crucial to define who a juvenile is. The literature often defines a juvenile as an individual who has not reached the age (usually under 18) at which, like an adult person under the law of the land, can be held accountable for their criminal actions (Mirić, 2021). However, contextual observations have established the existence of misconception of who constitute a juvenile, as most Nigerian Borstal Institutions, admits children aged between 12 and 21 years. With this development one becomes more confused of who juveniles are. Although, the literature recognises that in some cases individuals older than 18 years may be heard in a juvenile court, and therefore will still be considered juveniles (Young, Greer & Church, 2017). For the purpose of this paper, juveniles are individuals who fall within the age range of 12 to 21 years.

Access to information is a fundamental human right and is at the core of all essential human needs. Despite their being committed to the institution, juvenile inmates have the right to access information, which is a resource for individual and societal growth (Emasealu & Popoola, 2016).

Therefore, it's crucial that these inmates receive relevant information to meet their needs. The study of juvenile offenders' information needs and their information seeking behaviour is known as information behaviour. Understanding the information needs of juvenile is crucial in order to provide information services that can address their varied information needs. Information is a resource for growth and development of an individual, organisation, or a nation (Adeyemi, Awojobi, Appah, Ezeudu, & Eghe-Ohenmwun, 2014). It strengthens the individual's ability for survival. As such, juvenile inmates in Borstal institutions must be well acquainted with relevant information that will satisfy their diverse needs. This study, therefore, aims at finding out the information behaviour of the juvenile delinquents. Specifically, it aims at accessing their information needs, their sources of information, whether they are satisfied with the information they acquired, the usefulness of information they acquire to their rehabilitation process and challenges facing the juvenile delinquents when accessing information.

### **Research questions**

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the information needs of the juvenile delinquents in the home?
2. What are the sources of information available to juvenile delinquents and how satisfying is the information acquired by the juvenile delinquents in the home?
3. Is the information they acquire useful to their rehabilitation process?
4. What are the challenges facing juvenile delinquents when accessing information?

### **Contextual Background**

#### **Borstal Training Institution, Adigbe, Abeokuta**

The Borstal Training Institution (BTI) located at Adigbe in Abeokuta is one of the five Borstal institutions in Nigeria, and it holds the distinction of being the sole facility in the South-West region. The other four BTIs are situated in Ilorin, Kaduna, Enugu, and Abuja. Out of the five BTIs, only three (Abeokuta, Ilorin, and Kaduna) are fully operational. As of 2021, Nigeria had three operational Borstal Training Institutes (BTIs) in Abeokuta, Ilorin, and Kaduna. In the same year, the Enugu BTI, which had been abandoned for several years, was reopened and began admitting juvenile offenders, albeit not at full capacity. Furthermore, in 2023, the Abuja BTI was established

in a facility formally operated as a rehabilitation centre. The institute has begun operations, but the handover documentation was still underway at the time of this research. BTIs operate as a correctional centre where juvenile offenders are committed between 1-5 years (depending on the severity of the offence committed) for correction, training, reformation, rehabilitation, and re-integration.

The Adigbe facility, which only admits boys, provides both educational and vocational training to rehabilitate and reform the juveniles before their reintegration into the society. The facility offers a range of educational opportunities, including classes for primary and secondary education. Students pursuing higher education in the facility are only required to be physically present at the school during exams. Additionally, computer training is available for those who are interested. The vocational training includes a variety of skills such as tailoring, barbing, shoemaking, knitting and weaving, carpentry, arts and design, photography, and video recording. The Abeokuta Borstal facility, originally intended for young offenders from the South West, South East, and South-South regions of Nigeria, now admits juveniles from across the country.

Although the facility is designed to institutionalise three categories of juvenile offenders, only two categories were in the facility at the time of the research: juveniles beyond parental control and those in conflict with the law. The latter category is further divided into those awaiting report and those serving their sentences. They are differentiated by the colour of uniforms they wear- those awaiting report wear blue uniforms, while those serving their sentences wear pink uniforms. The facility, which ideally was designated to admit offenders between ages 16 and 21(as provided by the Borstal Institutions and Remand Centres Act of 1962), now admits juvenile offenders below or above the stipulated age bracket. The length of stay in the home depends on the offence and legal rulings, but the maximum is 5 years. Unlike adult prisons, individuals who have completed their sentences in BTIs are not labelled as ex-convicts.

## **Literature Review**

### **The Concept of Juvenile Delinquency**

Over time, an extensive literature has developed on the concept of juvenile delinquency. The term juvenile delinquency also known as juvenile offending is complex in nature (Maric, 2021; Lakusic,

Lolic & Racic, 2022), the definition of which varies from one society to the other (Yekini & Salisu, 2013). Nonetheless several scholars have attempted to define the concept in their own understanding. For instance, Lakusic, Lolic, and Racic (2022) mirrored juvenile delinquency as actions of minors that violate both moral and legally prescribed norms of a society. Gupta, Mohapatra, and Mahanta (2022) see juvenile delinquency as a habit of committing criminal offences by children or young person under the age of 18 years and can be held accountable for their criminal behaviour. Similarly, juvenile delinquency refers to the criminal behaviours committed by children and young persons, that are unacceptable and contrary to the social norms of the environment in which they live (Dauda, 2016). In the context of Nigerian society, a juvenile delinquent is classified based on the age of the offender, rather than the nature of the crime committed. Kudrat-E-Khuda (2019) considers a juvenile delinquent as a person who is typically under the age of 18 and commits an act that otherwise would have been charged as a crime if they were an adult.

According to Ugwoke (2010) juvenile delinquent are young persons who violate the provision of the criminal law. Ugwoke added that during the period of trial, the young offenders are governed by the Children and Young People (CYPL). Adegoke (2015) observed that delinquency is often depicted and characterised as a state of drift, misalignment, dysfunction, disruption, moral depravity, and disorderly behaviour. He further stated that the understanding of juvenile delinquency, as well as the concern for its occurrence and regulation, is shaped by a combination of historical, political, social, and economic circumstances. Juvenile delinquency was legislated into existence as a clearly identifiable social problem after the appointment of the first social welfare officer in Nigeria in 1914, though it was reported to have been in existence as early as 1920s when there was organised pick pocketing and prostitution (Fourchard, 2006). It is noted in the literature that the earliest surviving law on juvenile justice in Nigeria is the Children and Young People Act (CYPA) of 1943 (IRIN, 2010).

### **Information Behaviour**

Information behaviour is a broad term that encompasses a set of action an individual takes to express information needs and how they seek information from sources and resource that will satisfy their needs. In other words, it is an umbrella term for information needs and seeking

behaviour. An information need reflects the gap in an individual's knowledge that, when experienced at the cognisant level as a question, translates to a search for an answer (Oketunji, 2016). This according to Sambo, Usman and Rabi (2017), leads to seeking information from required sources so as to satisfy the need. If the need is urgent, the search may be pursued as diligence until the desire is fulfilled. Information need is a recognition that one's knowledge is inadequate to satisfy a goal. Mohan (1998) argued that in spite of the hopeless situation of children in Nigerian juvenile remand homes, access to information can be a catalyst in providing hope for the children's future. Eze (2016) stated that information is crucial for individuals to achieve their full potential.

More so, Rafedzi and Abrizah (2014) expressed that juvenile offenders, like adults, have information needs that, when addressed, can help them solve problems in specific situations. In the opinion of Haruna and Mabawonku (2001), needs arise when the state of possessed knowledge is less than what is needed to deal with some issues and that information needs are diverse, constantly changing and not amendable to generalisation. Nevertheless, Ezeani (2010) observed that reasonable amount of information needs of children are unmet even though children are the most precious and at the same time the most vulnerable in need of protection. Some juveniles in remands homes may not be conscious of the fact that they need information until something happens or something is missing, which necessitates the search for information that might contribute to understanding or filling a knowledge gap (Mnubi-Mchombu & Ocholla, 2014).

Several previous empirical studies on the information needs of inmates abound. A study was carried out by Tarzaan et al. (2015) on 90 inmates in a medium-security prison. The study identified the inmates' information needs in various areas such as legal matters, health, religion, and education (which included basic literacy, vocational education, legal education, health education, and religious education), as well as recreation and vocational information. To meet these needs, the inmates utilised a range of sources including billboards/posters, television, lawyers, religious organizations, and prison wardens. Another study by Onwubiko (2022) revealed the staff's perspective on the needs of the inmates, which encompassed areas such as education, spiritual development, health, legal matters, vocational training (for career options exploration), relaxation and recreation, and emotional growth. Most recently, Gardner (2023) in her study on

the information needs and seeking behaviour practices of prison inmates, established that the information needs of prison inmates spanned areas such as legal matters, education, spirituality, health, prison life, and reintegration. Findings from her study also found that there were unmet needs, particularly in the areas of education and spirituality.

According to Humbhi, Tareen and Humbhi (2022), information-seeking behaviour refers to the actions that an individual takes to express their information needs, search for relevant information, evaluate and select the most appropriate information, and finally use it to satisfy their information needs. The need for information seeking behaviour arises due to information needs and the seeker makes demand on both formal and informal information sources and services (Adebayo, Owolabi, Fagbola, & Itsekor, 2015). Similarly, Yusuf, Baba, Mahmood, and Badia (2023) stated that the behaviour an information seeker exhibits while seeking information depends on their information needs. Juvenile delinquents seek information for various purposes, such as coping with personal problems, learning new skills, finding opportunities, avoiding risk and fulfilling curiosity. Several empirical studies have been conducted to explore the information seeking behaviour of inmates. For instance, Ijiekhuamhen and Aiyebilehin (2018) conducted their study on prison inmates, where they identified the categories of information sources. These included personal connections such as family members and friends, lawyers, radio and television, physicians and nurses, prison wardens, church/mosque, newspapers, and prison visitors. More recently, the study by Garner (2023) revealed the information-seeking behaviour practices of prison inmates. The study revealed that inmates primarily depend on non-expert information sources, such as custodial staff, fellow inmates, and family and friends, to obtain information on crucial matters like their ongoing legal issues and health. Garner (2023) emphasised that the information sources used by inmates are crucial in fulfilling their information needs.

### **Importance of Information to Juvenile Delinquents in Borstal Homes**

Sarki, Abdullahi, and Mukhtar (2018) highlight that the primary goal of modern Borstal training institutions is to rehabilitate juvenile inmates, enabling them to become responsible, law-abiding citizens who can contribute positively to society after their release. While juvenile offenders are detained in an isolated place for a duration that depends on the severity of their crime, it is crucial to cater for their information needs and provide them with access to information materials (Rafedzi

& Abrizah, 2014). Studies have indicated that the key to rehabilitating and reintegrating juvenile delinquents back into society lies significantly in the provision of the right information (Obiano, Ogueri, Chima-James & Bernard, 2020), especially for those who have been incarcerated for a considerable amount of time in the home. The access to information is one of the human rights of juveniles in remand, since it is provided in the Child Right Act (2003). Information, therefore, is a term that entails the knowledge derived from study, experience or instruction. It is a veritable tool for the transformation and reformation of juveniles in the Borstal homes in the society. This is so because once they are reformed, they are ready to be release to the society for positive impact.

### **Methodology**

This paper examines the information behaviour of juvenile delinquents in Borstal training institution in Abeokuta. This research employs a mixed method, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative techniques, within the framework of a descriptive survey study. The population for this study consists of five hundred and twenty one (521) inmates in the Borstal centre. At the time the study was conducted, there were 375 juveniles beyond parental control and 146 juveniles in conflict with the law (those who had committed crimes similar to adult crimes). As inclusion criteria, offenders who were in conflict with the law were selected. However, juveniles who had pending court hearings were excluded in the study. With this in mind, a total of 70 juvenile offenders participated in the study. Out of 70 copies of the questionnaire administered to them, 65 were adequately completed and found usable for the study, resulting in a response rate of 92.9%. The collected data was analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency count and simple percentages. The researcher conducted a pilot interview prior to the actual research to improve the questions and the contextual background of the institution and its inmates. However, the pilot interview data was not included in the analysis In addition to using questionnaires and interviews, the study also utilised field observations and secondary document reviews were employed as methods for collecting data. Official approval was sought from the principal and controller of the institution before the researcher was able to elicit data from the staff and the young offenders.



## **Findings**

### **Demographic Analysis**

The majority of respondents in the study were between the age of 16-17 years 28(43%), with the rest being 14-15 years old 13(20%), 18-21 years old 12(18.5%), over 22 years old 7(10.8%), and under 14 years old 5(7.7%). Before incarceration, majority of the respondents were attending secondary school 41(63.1%), some were in primary school 9(13.9%), had completed primary school 6(9.2%), had completed secondary school 3(4.6%), were attending tertiary institutions 2(3.1%), or were not in school or learning vocational skills 3(4.6%). Only 1(1.5%) had dropped out of school. In the facility, most of them are currently attending secondary school 33(50.8%), followed by those acquiring vocational skills 15(23.1%), those neither in school nor acquiring vocational skills 10(15.4%), those in tertiary education 3(4.6%), and those in primary school or computer training 2(3.1% each).

More than half of the respondents were born in Ogun State 37(56.9%), with others born in other South-West States 20(30.8%), South-South State 7(10.8%), and a Northern State 1(1.5%). Similarly, majority of the respondents 38(58.5%) originated from Ogun State, with others from other South-West 17(26.2%), South-South 9(13.8%), and Northern States 1(1.5%). More than half 22(33.8%) had been in the facility for 2-3 years, followed by those who had stayed for 7-9 months, 4-6 months, 1-3 months, 10 months-1 year, and over 3 years (33.8%, 18.5%, 7.7%, and 3.1%, respectively). Before incarceration, most juvenile offenders were living with both parents 28(43.1%), followed by those living with a single parent 21(32.3%) or a relative 13(20%). Only a few were living with non-relatives 3(4.6%) when they committed the offence.

## Analysis of Research Questions

**R Q 1:** What are the information needs of the juvenile offenders in the home?

**Table 2: Information needs of Juvenile offenders in Abeokuta BTI**

S/n	Information need	Agreed	Disagree
1.	Legal right and responsibility	51 (78.5%)	14(21.5%)
2.	Health information	50 (76.9%)	15(23.1%)
3.	Information about society	48 (73.8%)	17(26.2%)
4.	Behavioural and mental health information	18(27.7%)	47(72.3%)
5.	Information on how to leave the home	54(83.1%)	11(16.9%)
6.	Family information and social services	52(80%)	13(20%)
7.	Educational opportunities	41(63.1%)	24(36.9%)
8.	Personal development and recreation	48(73.8%)	17(26.2%)

Table 2 presents the responses to the information needs of juvenile offenders. A considerable majority of the respondents (83.1%) expressed a need for information on how to exit the home. This suggests a significant inclination towards societal re-integration and living normal lives. 80% of the respondents expressed family information and social service as being crucial to them. This suggests that minimal interaction with parents, relatives or guardians lead the respondents missing their families and desiring regular updates about them. 78.5% of the respondents sought legal information, while 21.5% did not see a need for such information. 76.9% of the respondents expressed need for health information, especially on treating certain ailment. This underscores the significance of health awareness and access to medical information within the facility. Interestingly, despite being confined, 73.8% of the respondents expressed a desire to stay informed about societal happenings and their immediate surroundings. A good proportion of the respondents (78.8%) needed information on personal development and recreation, while only a few (26.2%) disagree to having such needs. 63.1% of the respondents needed information about educational opportunities, reflecting the aspiration of these school-aged individuals to continue their education. Lastly, only 27.7% of the respondents showed interest in information related to behavioural and

mental health support. This could point to a lack of awareness or stigma associated with mental health issues.

**R Q 2:** What are the sources of information available to juveniles delinquent and how satisfying is the information acquired by the juvenile delinquents in the home?

**Table 3: Sources of information available to Juvenile offenders Abeokuta BTI**

<b>Information sources</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
<b>Television</b>	10(15.4%)	55(84.6%)
<b>Religious bodies</b>	63 (96.9% )	2(3.1%)
<b>Guest speakers and workshops</b>	62 (95.4%)	3 (4.6%)
<b>Counsellors/ Social workers</b>	62 (95.4%)	3 (4.6%)
<b>Books</b>	45(69.2 %)	20(30.8%)
<b>Newspaper</b>	0(0%)	65 (100%)
<b>Library</b>	50 (76.9%)	15(23.1%)
<b>Internet</b>	0 (0%)	65(100%)
<b>Radio</b>	0 (0%)	65 (100%)

The findings from Table 3 indicate that the primary sources of information for the juvenile offenders are the religions bodies (pastors and imams) who visit the home to preach (96.9%), guest speakers and workshops organised in the home (95.4%), and counsellors/social workers at the facility (95.4%). A significant number of respondents also gain information from the library (76.9%) and from books they read (69.2%). However, only a small percentage (15.4%) indicated that they source information from TV. Surprisingly, none of them indicated the newspapers, internet and radio as their source of information. The results suggest that young offenders lack access to newspapers, are devoid of internet connectivity, and the home does not furnish them with a radio.

**Table 4: Information satisfaction**

<b>Information satisfaction</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	7	10.8
<b>Moderately satisfied</b>	20	30.8
<b>Not satisfied</b>	38	58.4
<b>Total</b>	65	100

The findings in Table 4 reveal a mixed level of satisfaction among the respondents regarding the information they acquired in the home. A majority of the respondents (58.4%) expressed dissatisfaction with the information they received. On the other hand, 30.8% of the respondents claimed to be moderately satisfied. A minority of the respondents, 10.8%, reported being very satisfied with the information they received at home. This group (VS) seems to find the current information adequate for their needs. In summary, while 41.6% of the respondents were satisfied to some degree, the fact that a larger percentage (58.4%) were not satisfied underscores a need for review and potential enhancement of the information provided in the facility.

**RQ 3:** Is the information acquired useful to their rehabilitation process?

**Table 5: Usefulness of the information acquired to their rehabilitation process**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>Disagreed</b>
<b>Is the information useful to your rehabilitation process</b>	49 (75.4%)	16(24.6 %)

Table 5 shows the responses to the question of how useful the information they acquired to their rehabilitation process. A majority of the respondents (75.4%) agreed that the information they acquired are useful to their rehabilitation process, while a few of them (24.6 %) disagreed on the usefulness of the information to their rehabilitation process.

**RQ 4:** What are the challenges facing juvenile offenders when accessing information

**Table 6: Challenges faced by juvenile delinquents when accessing information**

<b>S/n</b>	<b>Challenges of access to information</b>	<b>Agreed</b>	<b>Disagreed</b>
1.	Fear	47 (72.3)	18( 27.7)
2.	Lack of confidence	38 (58.5)	27 (41.5)
3.	Limited access to internet	38 (58.5)	27 (41.5)
4.	Limited access to educational materials	30(46.2)	35 (53.8)
5.	Limited access to computer	38(58.5)	27(41.5)
6.	Stigmatisation and judgment	43(66.2)	22(33.8)
7.	Lack of guidance or support	41(63.1)	24(36.9)

In Table 6, respondents were asked to indicate challenges impeding their access to information. The findings revealed that majority (72.3%) of the respondents indicated fear as the most challenging factor to their access to information. They agreed that they are afraid to approach the social workers for information. This was followed by stigmatisation and judgment (66.2%), lack of guidance or support (63.1%), lack of confidence, limited access to internet, limited access to computer (58.5%, 58.5%, 58.5%, respectively). Only (46.2%) of the respondents agreed that they are facing the challenge of limited access to educational materials.

### **Discussion of findings**

The findings from this study established that participants expressed information needs across seven areas. These include information on how to leave the facility, family and social service information, legal rights information, health information, societal information, educational opportunities and personal development information. The findings in this paper are in consonance with results from previous studies. For instance, Akintola and Onifade (2011) found that the information need for the juveniles in a remand home in Asero, Abeokuta were information about their families, health, future, adjustment, educational and environment. Similarly, Tarzaan, Chorunand and Mbatsoron (2015), Rafedzi and Abrizah (2014) and Garner (2023) found similar range of information needs in their respective studies of information needs of inmates. These include needs for family information, health information, re-integration information, recreational information, legal information, vocation, and academic or educational information.

Also revealed in this study is the information seeking behaviour of the young offenders. The information seeking behaviour is operationalised as how young offenders seek for the information from sources that will satisfy their needs. The results of the present study indicate that juvenile offenders sourced most of their information from religious bodies such as pastors and Imam that come to the home from time to time to preach to them. This indicates that religious leaders play a significant role in providing information to the juvenile offenders. This is corroborated by the qualitative study by Cox and Matthew (2007) which found that faith-based programs are very important in rehabilitating juvenile offenders. Findings also revealed guest speakers and workshops, and counsellors/social workers as sources of information for the inmates. These sources may have more credibility and relevance for the inmates, as they can address their specific

needs and concerns. Supporting this study is the findings by Garner (2023) which revealed that inmates primarily rely on social workers, fellow inmates, and family and friends for information on critical issues like their legal matters and health.

Findings in this study reveal that library and books were also identified as sources of information by the juvenile inmates. Only a small fraction of respondents used TV as their source of information. However, none of the respondents indicated radio, newspapers and internet as their source of information. Interview with the social worker revealed that the home did not provide these media for them. Contrary to the present study, Ijiekhuamhen and Aiyebilehin (2018) found that the prison inmates have access radio and newspapers as their primary sources information and that the inmates in the facility are kept abreast with information from radio, newspapers and internet. However, they lamented that the internet provision is inadequate for the inmates.

The finding of this study indicates that a majority of the respondents in the study are not satisfied with the information they get. This could be as a result of the unavailability of some types of information sources such as radio, newspaper and internet. The internet can provide a lot of useful information and opportunities for juvenile delinquents who are pursuing diploma/degree distance learning programs online. As revealed in this study, apart from those taking classes for primary and secondary program, there are juvenile offenders running a distant learning program from the facility. This group of inmate needs internet connectivity for effectiveness of their educational pursuits. Also, Rafedzi and Abrizah (2014) expressed that newspapers can help inmates stay connected with the outside world, which can make it easier for them to rejoin the society after their reform. Surprisingly, the participants indicated that the information they acquire from the sources available to them is useful for their rehabilitation process. This result is rather contradictory to their response regarding their non satisfaction of the information they get as seen in Table 4 and 5.

Regarding the challenges juvenile delinquents face while accessing information, respondents expressed fear as the most common challenge to their access to information. This implies that the respondents do not feel comfortable or safe to approach the social workers for information, possibly due to previous negative experiences or lack of trust. This clearly connotes that the social workers are unapproachable, and this explains the proportion of 58.5% of the respondents who

expressed lack of confidence to approaching the social worker for information. This could limit their motivation and interest in seeking information from the social workers.

The finding of the study identified stigmatisation and judgment as another factor challenging the respondents' access to information. It can be inferred that stigmatisation and judgment can have adverse effects on the respondents' confidence and self-esteem, as well as their willingness to seek help or information. These findings therefore underline the importance of creating a safe and supportive environment for juvenile offenders to access information. The challenge of lack of guidance or support was also identified in the study. This suggests that the respondents do not receive adequate assistance or direction from the social workers in accessing information. This might hinder their ability to seek information and utilise it effectively. The challenge of lack of access to internet was also revealed in the study. This indicates that the respondents face technological barriers in accessing information especially those running diploma/degree distance learning program online. This limits their ability to find more varied, updated, or relevant information online than offline. Further, results indicate that limited access to computer pose a challenge to the respondents. This implies that the respondents face infrastructural barriers in accessing information from the social workers. They may not have access to functional, available, or accessible computer facilities, or they may not have the computer skills or software to use them. This could constrain their access to digital sources of information, which could be more interactive, engaging, or personalized than non-digital sources.

Lastly, limited access to educational materials was seen a challenge as well. This suggests they may not have access to sufficient, appropriate, or quality educational materials. This could reduce their access to educational sources of information, which could be more informative, instructive, or empowering than non-educational sources. It is in line with the study of Rafedzi and Abrizah (2014) where they showed that the educational materials provided in the library does not meet their academic needs.

## **Conclusion, suggestion for further research and recommendation**

It is evident that juvenile delinquents like every other individual have diverse information needs, most especially on how to leave the facility, family and social service, and legal rights information. They sourced information mostly from clerics visiting the facility, counsellors/social workers, guest speakers, workshops, books, and the library. However, sources like radio, newspapers and internet were not provided for. Since the reason for them being in the home was mainly for correctional purposes, they should be exposed to all kinds of information that can positively affect their behaviours and perception of life, both in print and media such as posters and home videos with good moral lessons. Most juvenile offenders were not satisfied with the information they received, even though they claimed the information they acquired from the sources available to them is useful for their rehabilitation process. It is believed that the provision of more relevant information using educational materials and access to internet in the library, the institution can fulfil the inmates' needs for educational opportunities and encourage behaviour modification. This paper presents a quantitative analysis of the information-seeking behaviour of juvenile offenders. However, to gain a more thorough understanding of these inmates' information needs and behaviours, the paper recommends conducting detailed qualitative research on the sample. Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended:

1. The principal and Controller of the Institution should see to it that the Borstal library is well stocked with relevant information materials to meet the information need of juvenile inmates pursuing secondary, vocational, and diploma/degree program.
2. Radio, internet, and newspapers are excellent sources of information, but it's unfortunate that these resources are not available in the home. As such, it's crucial for the facility's controller and principal to ensure the availability of these information sources for the inmates. This will allow them to stay connected with the outside world, despite their isolation.



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