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Reading Materials and Reading Trends of Youth Incarcerated in Mississippi's State-Run Training School

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Master's Research Project, May 2014

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Introduction

The Division of Youth Services (DYS) is the arm of the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) that is responsible for providing a wide range of rehabilitative, probationary, and institutional services to juvenile delinquents throughout the state of Mississippi. DYS works with youth courts and local law enforcement agencies throughout Mississippi to compile statistical data on juvenile delinquency cases and dispositions (Division of Youth Services, 2012, pp. 1-3). According to the *2012 DYS Annual Report*, 14,690 youth were processed through Mississippi's youth court system, and 12,905 were found to be delinquent. The most severe disposition for juvenile delinquents is placement in a juvenile correctional facility. Of the youth found to be delinquent, 425 (3%) were ordered to detention and 234 (1%) were committed to the training school (pp. 17-20).

Juvenile Correctional Facilities

Youth correctional facilities in Mississippi are comprised of local-level juvenile detention centers and the state-operated training school. Robertson and Dunaway (2006) completed a compliance report that outlined the operational structure of Mississippi's juvenile detention centers. At the time of the report, there were sixteen juvenile detention centers throughout the state, operated by local law enforcement agencies, youth courts, or private companies. Facilities were located in Adams County, operated by the Adams County Youth Court; Alcorn County, operated by the Alcorn County Board of Supervisors; DeSoto County, operated by the DeSoto County Sheriff's Department; Forrest County, operated by the Forrest County Sheriff's Department; Harrison County, operated by Mississippi Security Police, a private company; Hinds County, operated by the Hinds County Board of Supervisors; Jackson County, also operated by Mississippi Security Police; Jones County, operated by the Jones County Sheriff's

Office; Lauderdale County, operated by the Lauderdale County Board of Supervisors; Lee County, operated by the Lee County Sheriff's Department; Leflore County, operated by the Leflore County Youth Court; Lowndes County, operated by the Lowndes County Youth Court; Rankin County, operated by the Rankin County Sheriff's Office; Warren County, operated by the Warren County Youth Court; Washington County, operated by the Washington County Youth Court; and Yazoo County, operated by the Yazoo County Youth Court (Robertson & Dunaway, 2006, p. 2). These facilities housed juvenile delinquents from their respective counties as well as from neighboring municipalities and counties that lacked facilities for juveniles. Detention centers hold juvenile delinquents aged 10 – 17. Under MS statute 43-21-605(1)(l), delinquents may be held in a detention center for up to 90 days (Mississippi Code 1972 annotated, 2013).

The training school, Oakley Youth Development Center (OYDC), is operated by DYS and is Mississippi's only state-run juvenile correctional facility. OYDC is located in Raymond, Mississippi, in Hinds County. OYDC houses juvenile delinquents from all counties of the state who have been court-ordered to attend the training school. OYDC admits juveniles aged 10 – 17 (DYS, 2012, p. 3). The length of stay at OYDC varies, dependent upon several factors. Under MS statute 43-21-605(1)(g)(iii), once admitted, delinquents may be retained at the training school up to their twentieth birthday (Mississippi Code 1972 annotated, 2013).

Statutory Requirements: Access to Education and Reading Materials

Youths committed to detention centers and the training school are of school age and are required by law to receive educational services. The Mississippi Compulsory School Attendance Law, MS Code 37-13-

91, states that children aged 6 – 16 must be enrolled in and attend a public school or legitimate nonpublic school for the period of time that the child is of compulsory school age. Additionally, MS Code 43-21-321(5)(a) states that all juvenile detention centers must provide or make available an educational program for their incarcerated youth (Mississippi Code 1972 annotated, 2013). Therefore, juvenile correctional facilities are bound to give committed youth access to educational services during the youth's length of stay. The educational programs provided by these facilities fill the educational gap until delinquents return to their communities.

In addition to providing access to education, juvenile correctional facilities are also required to provide youth with access to reading materials. Having reading materials is an important component of a youth's stay in a correctional facility. Although a youth's confinement is filled with structured activities, youth still have spare, unstructured time, particularly when they go to their cells. One way to positively fill that void is through books. In recounting her experience working with juvenile delinquents, Herald (2009) noted that incarcerated youth have stated that reading helped them escape their problems and their cells; gave them something to do besides talk, watch television, or do push-ups; and triggered an interest in continued reading. The requirement to make reading materials available to incarcerated youth falls under MS Code 43-21-321(5)(i). MS Code 43-21-321(9) further requires juvenile detention centers to develop written policies on educational programs and availability of reading materials (Mississippi Code 1972 annotated, 2013).

ALA Guidelines for Incarcerated Youth

The American Library Association (ALA) recognizes incarcerated youth as an underserved group, and posits guidelines to protect the rights of this group to have access to reading materials. In its "Prisoners' Right to Read: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights," ALA principles state that correctional librarians should select materials that reflect the needs of the prisoners and that incarcerated youth should have access to a wide range of fiction and nonfiction reading materials. This policy takes into account that laws, court decisions, and facility

policies may restrict access to certain materials. However, ALA makes it clear that incarcerated youth should be afforded the same intellectual freedoms as those who are not confined to a correctional facility (American Library Association, 2010, para. 4-5).

Monitoring Report: Availability of and Access to Reading Materials

In 2006, researchers Angela Robertson and R. Gregory Dunaway published a compliance report on the juvenile detention centers throughout Mississippi. Among the areas monitored were availability of and access to reading materials. The data indicated that none of the detention centers had a fully functioning library on site; however, all of the facilities kept some type of book collection for juveniles to read. All of the facilities allowed youth to read in their spare time with the exception of the Jones County facility. The Adams, Alcorn, DeSoto, Forrest, Harrison, Jackson, and Lee County facilities allowed youth to take reading material to their cells, while the Hinds, Jones, Lauderdale, Leflore, Lowndes, Pike, Rankin, Warren, Washington, and Yazoo facilities restricted reading materials to common and educational areas. Only the DeSoto, Lee, and Leflore facilities had written policies on availability of reading materials (Robertson & Dunaway, 2006).

OYDC was not included in the Robertson and Dunaway report. OYDC does have a library/media center that is run by a certified school librarian. Juveniles are allowed to check out books, read in their spare time, and take books to their cells. OYDC does not have a written policy on the availability of reading materials (DYS, 2011, p. 4).

Problem Statement

While MS Code 43-21-321(5)(i) requires juvenile detention centers to make reading materials available to delinquents, it fails to define specifics about the types of reading materials to which youth are to have access. Likewise, while the Robertson and Dunaway (2006) report identified facilities that provided materials and levels of access, it fell short of providing specific information on the reading materials available in the juvenile detention centers because it was not within the scope of the report. Thus, there is no clear picture of what materials

delinquents have access to or read when they are placed in a juvenile correctional facility in Mississippi. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the circulation records at one facility, OYDC, to determine the types of reading materials that it provides or makes available to the juveniles it houses and to determine the reading preferences of delinquents during their incarceration.

Research Questions

- R1. How many titles are available to the incarcerated youth in this study?
- R2. What are the classifications of the circulated titles?
- R3. What classifications do incarcerated youth in this study prefer to read?
- R4. What are the highest circulating titles in this study?
- R5. Which authors do incarcerated youth in this study prefer to read?
- R6. Who are the publishers of the highest circulating titles?

Definitions

Delinquent – A child who has reached his tenth birthday and who has committed a delinquent act. A delinquent act is any act, which if committed by an adult, is designated as a crime under state or federal law, or municipal or county ordinance other than offenses punishable by life imprisonment or death (Mississippi Code 1972 annotated, 2013).

Detention – care of children in physically restrictive facilities (Mississippi Code 1972 annotated, 2013).

Disposition – The sentence given to or the treatment prescribed for a juvenile offender (*Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Law*, 1996).

Exploratory study – Any preliminary study designed to provide some feeling for or general understanding of the phenomena to be studied. A good exploratory study will yield cues as to how to proceed with the major investigation (*The Penguin Dictionary of Psychology*, 2009).

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

This study focused only on reading materials at OYDC and the reading preferences of youth confined to this facility. Information from other juvenile detention centers in Mississippi, from adult correctional facilities, and from other states was excluded from this study; however, such information was included in the review of literature. Also, reading materials was limited to those not required in the educational program; textbooks and textbook supplements were excluded.

Assumptions

It was assumed that the information about OYDC's collection of reading materials as well as the circulation data furnished by the institution in this study were accurate. It was further assumed that the circulation data were representative of what incarcerated youth in Mississippi read.

Importance of the Study

By examining the reading materials available to incarcerated youth and exploring the reading trends of youth during incarceration, this study can assist juvenile correctional librarians and library staff in developing appropriate, interesting, and relevant collections that appeal to the delinquent population. The availability of adequate collections will help fill the idle time of delinquents by providing a constructive alternative to watching television or sleeping in a cell and will encourage and promote a joy for reading.

Literature Review

The body of literature relating to reading materials in juvenile correctional facilities and the reading trends of incarcerated youth is scarce. A review of scholarly literature yielded no studies that included quantifiable data that specifically identified what reading materials incarcerated youth had access to or read while they were detained in a correctional facility. However, exploratory studies and informal surveys on prison libraries at adult and juvenile correctional facilities provided a snapshot of the availability of reading materials and inmates' access to those materials. Additionally, studies were found that utilized circulation statistics to analyze collections and determine trends. Further, much of

the literature on reading materials in juvenile correctional facilities described outreach programs that made reading materials and library services available to juvenile inmates.

Exploratory Studies: Prison Libraries

Shirley (2003) conducted an exploratory study to determine how adult correctional libraries perform in the areas of service, programs, and collections. An online survey was sent to 110 prison librarians to determine the performance levels of the libraries in various service and management areas, including collections and collection development. Thirty-five responses were received from twelve states.

Reported findings indicated that prisoners read the same type of literature that average citizens read; prison populations consisted of diverse individuals with varying reading and education levels, tastes, and cultural interests; and that collections consisted of well-balanced materials, general fiction bestsellers, and low level/high interest materials. The survey indicated that self-help, career, true crime, and biographies topped the nonfiction list. Science fiction, horror, romance, fantasy, and mysteries were top categories in the fiction list. Respondents noted that factors which prevented delivery of effective library services included stringent security measures and inadequate funding. This study is similar to the current study in that the respondents provided a general picture of the types of materials that make up a prison library collection and the most circulated genres in the responding libraries. Further, the findings from this study could also be found in juvenile settings. However, this study differs from the current study in that it does not provide specific titles or circulation statistics to verify the findings and accurately determine trends.

Herring (2009) conducted interviews with four librarians who worked for the Ohio Department of Youth Services Juvenile Library System (Ohio DYS) in order to find out more about the facilities and populations for which they worked. The interviews were conducted in person and consisted of sixty-eight questions covering a variety of characteristics related to their employment in a juvenile correctional facility. Relevant areas of inquiry included collections, patron usage, patron access, and

collection development. Responses indicated that collections consisted of high-interest books including fiction, nonfiction, periodicals, biographies, magazines, and newspapers. Circulation policies varied based on facility, and students were allowed to check out books for a two-week period. Librarians were responsible for collection development, evaluation, and maintenance. Participants also indicated that discipline and security issues, restrictions on certain materials such as hardback books and certain content, and limitations on where material could be read hindered effective service delivery. This study is similar to the current study in that it provides a peek into the types of reading materials and access levels available to incarcerated youth in the Ohio DYS system. However, this study does not provide quantitative data to support the responses.

Conrad (2012) conducted an online survey of adult prison libraries to determine if the facilities followed ALA guidelines in the areas of collection development and circulation policies. The survey consisted of eight questions, including questions relating to library collections and selection of materials. Seventeen responses were received from correctional facilities in ten states. Responses indicated that collection and circulation policies differed from institution to institution, even those within the same state. Fifty-three percent of libraries had no circulation policy, seventy-six percent had a collection development policy, and twenty-six percent had no collection development policy. Nearly all respondents noted that books, magazines, and newspapers were available to inmates to read. Respondents also indicated that the primary purpose of prison libraries is to provide recreational reading material and that material selection is similar to public libraries with the exception of restrictions on certain content. Six respondents reported that inmates sometimes had input in the selection of materials. Although this study provides general information on available types of materials and policies, it does not provide any statistical data on circulation and collections.

Circulation Studies

A study was conducted in 2008 that utilized circulation data to evaluate the science collections

housed at Swain Hall Library on the campus of Indiana University. Checkout and in-house use statistics were exported from the library's automation system and entered into a spreadsheet. Data were manipulated to determine the count, average number of checkouts, and usage percentage of materials acquired in 2003 by subject, publisher, and publication year. The findings provided usage information on subjects and publishers that was used to indicate patron interest and guide collection development decisions (Adams & Noel, 2008). The current study used a similar methodology to determine what patrons read and to determine preferences.

Henry, Longstaff, and Van Kampen (2008) conducted a study at Saint Leo University's Cannon Memorial Library to determine the usefulness of its collections and to evaluate whether the library met ALA and regional library association standards. In this study, the WorldCat Collection Analysis tool was used in combination with a list of the physical inventory to evaluate the physical and electronic holdings. Data analyzed included total holdings, interlibrary loan statistics, publication dates, checkouts of print collections, and number of e-book collections. The data were then compared with the collections of peer librarians. Findings revealed the strengths, weaknesses, and imbalances in the collection, including aging, unbalanced, and inadequate print collections in some areas (Henry, Longstaff, & Van Kampen, 2008). Similarly, the current study used circulation statistics to identify strengths and weaknesses of the collections held at OYDC.

Hallyburton, Buchanan, and Carstens (2011) conducted a study that used circulation statistics to evaluate the recreational materials in Western Carolina University's Hunter Library. Circulation data were pulled from the library's automated management system for a three-year period. Categories of the collection that were analyzed were general collection, new books, recreational books by Library of Congress (LC) classification, and recreational books by genre. Statistics that were analyzed included the number of circulations of the whole collection by patron type, the checkout and renewal of recreational material by patron type, and

circulation by genre. Findings indicated that recreational materials circulated more than eighteen times more often than the general collection; the genre collection circulated more than 4.3 times as much as the general collection; undergraduates checked out and renewed more recreational materials; and romance and thrillers were the subtopics in the recreational collection that circulated the most. The current study used circulation statistics to yield similar information on available reading materials.

Tucker (2012) designed a study to analyze two e-book collections at the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) Libraries to determine the most used collection, the highest used subject areas, and the most used publishers. Over a three-year period, usage data were collected from the NetLibrary and Ebrary collections. The data were exported into an Excel spreadsheet and manipulated to compare usage by collection and subject area, and to analyze publishers. Findings indicated that Ebrary had more usage, with a fifty-four percent increase in usage and a twenty-six percent increase in pages viewed over the three-year period. The most used subject areas were liberal arts, health sciences, and business areas. The most used publishers were Wiley and Routledge. The current study also utilized usage data to determine the highest circulating publishers.

Outreach to Juvenile Correctional Facilities

Many juvenile correctional facilities do not have on-site libraries to service its inmates. In such cases, facilities must seek collaborations and partnerships to make reading material and library services available to their detainees. Jones (2004) described an outreach program called Great Transitions, a collaborative project of the Hennepin County Library in cooperation with the Hennepin County Home School (CHS), a facility for incarcerated boys and girls aged twelve to eighteen, Epsilon School, and Minneapolis Public Library. Great Transitions provided reading and writing programs to CHS and created a 5,000 item library. After all of the Great Transitions programs were completed, the library conducted a survey of the CHS residents to measure the impact of various programs on their reading attitudes and behaviors. The majority of the youth

believed that they would be more likely to use a public library and school library upon release than before they entered; residents believed their reading level increased and they read more while at CHS; and a majority had a more positive attitude about reading than before entering. Residents also compiled a list of fourteen favorite titles (Jones, 2004). The current study did not use youth surveys; rather, usage statistics were used to determine reading trends and identify the most circulated titles.

Librarian Sean Rapacki of the Wadsworth, Ohio Public Library delivered outreach services to the Medina County Juvenile Detention Center via monthly book discussion groups. He conducted an informal poll among the teens who frequented his library and teens incarcerated at Medina to find out the top ten preferred adult authors. The results were as follows: Dean Koontz, John Grisham, Stephen King, V.C. Andrews, Dan Brown, Anne Rice, Tom Clancy, Jodi Picoult, Nora Roberts, and Carl Hiaasen (Rapacki, 2007). The current study used circulation data to determine the most circulated authors.

The article “600 Pod: Learning Resource Center and Library” describes the juvenile detention branch of the Pima County Public Library in Tucson, Arizona. Books are not cataloged, and the estimated number of titles is 7,000 to 8,000. The collection is geared toward incarcerated teens; there are few adult and children’s books. The collection includes science-fiction, fantasy, classics, westerns, nonfiction, Spanish-language items, and magazines. There is no automated circulation system, but students’ identification numbers are entered on the back cover to track usage. For security purposes, access is limited to paperbacks only. Circulation per month stood at 4,500 in June 2007 (“600 Pod,” 2007). The current study used automated data to identify the number of titles and genres and to provide circulation statistics.

The literature shows that circulation analysis has been used to evaluate various characteristics of collections and usage in a variety of library settings. This methodology has been used to extrapolate a wide range of statistical data that aid in collection management. This method can aid juvenile

correctional library and facility staff in evaluating the current state of collections and guide future decisions.

Methodology

A letter requesting access to circulation data was sent to the OYDC school superintendent to obtain approval to use OYDC’s records. Circulation data for a one-year time span, including usage statistics, available titles, genres, authors, and publishers, were requested from the school’s library. A circulation report for the time period January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013, was printed from OYDC’s automated library management system. The report was in columnar form with the following relevant column headers: item usage, author’s name, title, report class, and publisher. The information from the report was entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and sorted into separate worksheets by usage, title, classification, author, and publisher. Data in each worksheet were analyzed to discover the highest circulating class of items (or classification), highest circulating titles, authors with the most circulated titles, authors with the most overall usage, the most circulated publishers, and publishers with the most overall usage. Percentages were calculated in Excel and rounded.

Results

Available Titles

R1: How many titles are available to the incarcerated youth in this study?

The circulation report from OYCD’s automated library system listed a total of 2,393 titles. Of these titles, 230, or 10 percent (10%), were checked out during the January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013 timeframe. The report further indicated that these 230 titles were checked out 920 times during the time frame. *Table 1* shows the collection usage percentage for the study timeframe.

Table 1: Available titles

Total Available Titles	Titles that Circulated	Collection Usage Percentage
2,393	230	10%

Since the remainder of the research questions in this study deal with popularity, the number of circulating titles—230—was used for all subsequent data analyses involving titles.

Available Item Classes

R2: What are the classifications of the circulated titles?

Classification type in OYDC’s library management system is listed as “item report class.” The circulation report listed five item report classes: fiction, nonfiction, biography, easy books, and large print. From the 230 circulating titles, fiction accounted for 198, or 86 percent (86%) of the titles; nonfiction accounted for 20, or nine percent (9%) of the titles; and biography accounted for 12, or five percent (5%) of the titles. None of the titles were listed as easy books or large print. The distribution of available genres is represented in *Table 2*.

Table 2: Classification distribution

Type	Number of Titles	Distribution Percentage
Fiction	198	86%
Nonfiction	20	9%
Biography	12	5%
Easy Books	0	0%
Large Print	0	0%
Totals	230	100%

Preferred Classification Types

R3: What classifications do incarcerated youth in this study prefer to read?

Usage data indicated that of the 920 times that items were checked out in the timeframe, fiction items were checked out 871 times, or 95 percent (95%); nonfiction items were checked out 25 times, or three percent (3%); and biographical items were checked out 24 times, or three percent (3%). Preferred genres are represented in *Table 3*.

Table 3: Preferred Classifications

Type	Item Usage	Usage Percentage
Fiction	871	95%
Nonfiction	25	3%
Biography	24	3%
Totals	920	100%

Highest Circulating Titles

R4: What are the highest circulating titles in this study?

The criterion used to determine the highest circulating titles was all titles that were checked out 10 times or more. Twenty-four, or 10 percent (10%) of the 230 titles, circulated 10 times or more. Of the 920 circulated items, these 24 titles had a collective usage of 343, or 37 percent (37%), of the total usage. Titles and usage data are listed in *Table 4*.

Table 4: Highest circulating titles

Rank	Title	Usage	Usage Percentage
1	Bluford High: A Matter of Trust	26	3%
2	Twilight: New Moon	21	2%
3	Twilight	19	2%
4	Bluford High: Until We Meet Again	18	2%
5	Bluford High: The Fallen	18	2%
6	Bluford High: Search for Safety	17	2%
7	A Boy Called Twister	17	2%
8	Bluford High: No Way Out	16	2%
9	Bluford High: Summer of Secrets	16	2%
10	Bluford High: Shattered	14	2%
11	The Battle of Jericho	13	1%
12	Twilight: Eclipse	13	1%
13	Bluford High: Secrets in the Shadow	13	1%
14	Unchained	13	1%
15	Forged by Fire	12	1%
16	Bluford High: The Gun	12	1%
17	To Be a Man	12	1%
18	Bluford High: The Bully	11	1%
19	No Fear	11	1%
20	Outrunning the Darkness	11	1%
21	Bluford High: Schooled	10	1%
22	Leap of Faith	10	1%
23	Shadows of Guilt	10	1%
24	Leviathan	10	1%
Totals		343	37%

Preferred Authors

R5: Which authors do incarcerated youth in this study prefer to read?

A total of 118 authors accounted for the 230 titles that circulated. Data were analyzed from two different approaches to determine preferred authors. The first approach viewed authors with the most circulated individual titles. The authors in this analysis had five or more different titles that were checked out during the study timeframe. Eight of the 118 authors, or seven percent (7%), had five or more different titles that circulated. Anne Schraff topped the list with 33 titles, or 14 percent (14%). Paul Langan was next with 11 titles (5%), followed by Sharon Draper with 10 titles (4%). Walter Dean Myers (eight titles), Zachary Sherman (eight titles), and John Grisham (six titles) followed, each accounting for three percent (3%) of number of titles circulated. Next were Ayshia Monroe and Stephanie Moore, each having five titles and accounting for two percent (2%) each of number of titles circulated. Collectively, these authors accounted for 37 percent (37%) of total title circulation. This analysis is represented in *Table 5*.

The second approach viewed authors with the most overall usage across all of his or her titles during the one-year study timeframe. This analysis was based on the total usage of 920 items circulated, and yielded the top ten authors in overall usage. The data yielded the following results: Anne Schraff (33 titles) had a usage of 235, or 26 percent (26%); Paul Langan (11) titles had a usage of 116, or 11 percent (11%); Sharon Draper (10 titles) had a usage of 58, or 6 percent (6%); Stephanie Meyer (4 titles) had a usage of 56, or six percent (6%); Zachary Sherman (eight titles) had a usage of 33, or four percent (4%); John Grisham (six titles) had a usage of 27, or three percent (3%); L.B. Tillit (three titles), had a usage of 26, or three percent (3%); Walter Dean Myers (8 titles), had a usage of 18, or two percent (2%); Jada Jones (three titles), had a usage of 16, or two percent (2%); and Peggy Kern (1 title), had a usage of 16, or two percent (2%). These 10 authors represented nine percent (9%) of all authors and 65 percent (65%) of total usage. This analysis is represented in *Table 6*.

Table 5: Preferred authors (most circulated titles)

Rank	Author	Number of Titles Circulated	Title Circulation Percentage
1	Anne Schraff	33	14%
2	Paul Langan	11	5%
3	Sharon Draper	10	4%
4	Walter Dean Myers	8	3%
5	Zachary Sherman	8	3%
6	John Grisham	6	3%
7	Ayshia Monroe	5	2%
8	Stephanie Moore	5	2%
Totals		86	37%

Table 6: Preferred authors (most overall usage)

Rank	Author	Number of Circulating Titles	Overall Usage	Overall Usage Percentage
1	Anne Schraff	33	235	26%
2	Paul Langan	11	116	13%
3	Sharon Draper	10	58	6%
4	Stephanie Meyer	4	56	6%
5	Zachary Sherman	8	33	4%
6	John Grisham	6	27	3%
7	L.B. Tillit	3	26	3%
8	Walter Dean Myers	8	18	2%
9	Jada Jones	3	16	2%
10	Peggy Kern	1	16	2%
Totals		87	601	65%

Publishers with Highest Circulating Titles

R6: Who are the publishers of the highest circulating titles?

A total of 62 publishers accounted for the 230 titles that circulated. Data were analyzed from two different approaches to determine the publishers with the highest circulation. The first approach viewed publishers with the most circulated individual titles, and the top ten publishers in this category were gleaned from the analysis. Saddleback Educational was first, with 58 circulating titles that accounted for 25 percent (25%) of title circulation. Stone Arch/Capstone had 24 titles, accounting for 10 percent (10%) of title circulation. Next was Scholastic Press with 17 titles accounting for seven percent (7%) of title circulation, followed by Townsend Press with 15 titles that accounted for seven percent (7%) of circulation. AV2 by Weigl had 12 titles, accounting for five percent (5%) of title circulation. HarperCollins and Little and Brown each had eight titles accounting for three percent (3%) of title circulation, and Simon Pulse accounted for three percent (3%) of circulation with six titles. Dell-Laurel Leaf and Puffin Books both had five titles each and accounted for two percent (2%) of title circulation. Collectively, these 10 publishers accounted for 158 titles, or 69 percent (69%) of title circulation. *Table 7* shows the top ten publishers with the most circulated titles.

Table 7: Publishers with most circulated titles

Rank	Publisher	Number of Titles Circulated	Title Circulation Percentage
1	Saddleback Educational	58	25%
2	Stone Arch/Capstone	24	10%
3	Scholastic Press	17	7%
4	Townsend Press	15	7%
5	AV2 by Weigl	12	5%
6	HarperCollins	8	3%
7	Little and Brown	8	3%
8	Simon Pulse	6	3%
9	Dell-Laurel Leaf	5	2%
10	Puffin Books	5	2%
Totals		158	69%

The second approach viewed publishers with most overall usage across all of their titles during the one-year study timeframe. Overall usage is based on 920 items checked out, and the top ten publishers in this category were as follows: Saddleback Educational, with a usage of 272, or 30 percent (30%) of total usage; Townsend Press, with a usage of 162, or 18 percent (18%) of total usage; Stone Arch/Capstone, with a usage of 76, or eight percent (8%) of total usage; Little and Brown, with a usage of 70, or eight percent (8%) of total usage; Simon Pulse, with a usage of 43, or five percent (5%) of total usage; Scholastic Press, with a usage of 39, or four percent (4%) of total usage; AV2 by Weigl, with a usage of 20, or two percent (2%) of total usage; Puffin Books, with a usage of 16, or two percent (2%) of total usage; Dell-Laurel Leaf, with a usage of 15, or two percent (2%) of total usage; and HarperCollins, with a usage of 14, or two percent (2%) of total usage. Collectively, titles by these publishers were checked out 727 times, or 79 percent (79%) of total usage. This analysis is represented in *Table 8*.

Table 8: Publishers with most overall usage

Rank	Publisher	Overall Usage	Overall Usage Percentage
1	Saddleback Educational	272	30%
2	Townsend Press	162	18%
3	Stone Arch/Capstone	76	8%
4	Little and Brown	70	8%
5	Simon Pulse	43	5%
6	Scholastic Press	39	4%
7	AV2 by Weigl	20	2%
8	Puffin Books	16	2%
9	Dell-Laurel Leaf	15	2%
10	HarperCollins	14	2%
Totals		701	79%

Discussion

Summary and Implications of Research Findings

The first research question addressed the number of titles that were available to the incarcerated youth at OYDC. OYDC's automated library system listed a total of 2,393 available titles. When analyzed, the results indicated that only 230 titles, or 10 percent (10%) of the collection, actually circulated. With the availability of so many titles, the utilization

percentage was surprisingly low. Therefore, the library's overall collection is under-utilized. The implications are that the library has outdated and uninteresting titles, and that the collection has books with which the youth cannot relate. There are also implications for the collection selection process. One factor that contributes to the under-utilization of the collection is OYDC's policy on checking out books. The facility has a policy that only allows youth to check out paperback books. This policy was implemented as a security measure because students were using hardback books to jimmy the locks on their cell doors. This policy limits the number of titles that students can check out of the library. Students may read hardback books while in the library, but the books do not actually circulate, and OYDC does not track titles that are read within the library. This leads to another factor: the ratio of hardback to paperback books. If the library has more hardback books than paperback books, then the number of titles that could be checked out would be limited from the start.

The under-utilization of the available titles highlights the need for a thorough evaluation of the collection. A collections evaluation would provide relevant information such as the age of the titles, the physical condition of books, the ratio of hardback to paperback books, and books that have themes that are not relevant to today's youth. The collection could then be weeded. In terms of the selection process, books could be ordered that appeal to the facility's population and are in-line with the facility's book check-out policy. Student and staff input could be used in the selection process to help build collections that have a wide range of appeal and that would result in higher overall title circulation. This research can be used by OYDC to improve its collections.

The second and third research questions addressed classification types. OYDC's library management system reported classifications as "item report class." Five item report classes were listed: fiction, nonfiction, biography, easy books, and large print. The results indicated that of the 230 titles that circulated, 198 (86%) were fiction titles, 20 (9%) were nonfiction, and 12 (5%) were biographies. Fiction represents the greatest portion of the circulated

materials. The findings indicated that students checked out fiction books more than any other classification. Results indicated that of the 920 items that were checked out during the one-year timeframe of the study, fiction books were checked out 871 times (95%), nonfiction books were checked out 25 times (3%), and biographies were checked out 24 times (3%). There are several possible implications that need further investigation. First implication of these findings is that the circulated materials needs to be compared to the overall collection to determine what percentage of the uncirculated materials were classifications that were not popular with these detainees. Secondly, a detailed look into content or subject of the materials available and circulated may provide additional insight into collection development. Factors that might have influenced the results include the aforementioned facility book check-out policy and the ratio of hardback to paperback books that are in item class other than fiction. If the collection has a disproportionate number of types other than fiction that are in hardback format, then circulation of those genres would be limited. The research process addressed the question completely and provided relevant information about the circulation of genres that can be used in book selection process.

The fourth research question was posed to determine the highest circulating titles in the study. Item usage data were sorted in descending order by title to yield the titles that were checked out the most and the overall usage percentage of those titles. The findings included all titles that were checked out 10 times or more. The result was a list of 24 titles (see *Table 4*), which was 10 percent (10%) of the 230 titles that circulated. Together, these titles circulated 343 times, accounting for 37 percent (37%) of the overall usage of 920 items checked out during the study timeframe. All 24 titles in this analysis were fiction books, which was not surprising. The titles provided an interesting snapshot of the types of books that were checked out during the timeframe of the study. First, almost all of the titles (23 of 24, or 96%) were part of a book series. Eleven titles were part of the Bluford High series, six titles were part of the Urban Underground series, three titles were part of the Twilight series, one title was part of the Gravel Road

series, one was part of the Jericho trilogy, and one was part of the Hazelwood High trilogy. This implies that the youth prefer to read books that are included in a series or are parts of intertwined stories with the same characters and/or settings. Next, most of the titles had themes that are common to today's youth. Twenty-two of the 24 titles (92%) had a wide range of contemporary, realistic, urban themes and social issues faced by teens such as pressure to use or sell drugs, dealing with abusive parents, fitting in, bullying, handling relationships, poverty, gangs, crime, violence, and self-esteem. The implication is that youth prefer to read books that depict events or situations that they have experienced or may encounter.

Perhaps the main factor that might have contributed to the titles that were checked out the most was that the youth could relate to the situations, characters, and settings depicted in most of those titles. The incarcerated youth at OYDC come from a variety of backgrounds. Many of them have experienced the blight of the inner city, including drug and alcohol use, violence, and gangs. Some have bullied, and some have been bullied. They all have committed crimes. Many come from poor families and neighborhoods, and have been abused. Therefore, when they select books to read, they select ones with which they can form a connection. The titles gleaned from this analysis represent their own experiences. The findings can be used by the OYDC library to continue to build collections that meet the reading preferences of the youth at the facility.

The fifth research question addressed the authors that the youth preferred to read. Data were manipulated and compiled in two different ways to address this question. First, data were analyzed by author with the most number of individual titles that circulated. Results were limited to those authors who had five or more different titles that were checked out during the study timeframe. Eight authors fell into this category, which accounted for seven percent (7%) of all authors who had titles that circulated. Rankings were as follows: Anne Schraff (33 titles, or 14% of total circulation by number of titles); Paul Langan (11 titles, or 5%); Sharon Draper (10 titles, or 4%); Walter Dean Myers (8 titles, or 3%);

Zachary Sherman (8 titles, or 3%); John Grisham (6 titles, or 3%); Ayshia Monroe (5 titles, or 2%); and Stephanie Moore (5 titles, or 2%). Combined, these authors accounted for 86 of the 230 titles (37%). Then, data were analyzed by author with the most overall usage for all of his or her titles. Results were limited to the top ten authors in this category. Books by Anne Schraff were checked out 235 times, accounting for over one-fourth (26%) of the 920 items that were checked out. Books by Paul Langan were checked out 116 times (13% usage). Books by Sharon Draper were checked out 58 times (6% usage), closely followed by Stephanie Meyer, whose titles were checked out 56 times (6%). Next were Zachary Sherman, with a usage of 33 (4%); John Grisham, with a usage of 27 (3%); and L.B. Tillit, with a usage of 26 (3%). Books by Walter Dean Myers circulated 18 times (2%), books by Jada Jones circulated 16 times (2%), and one book by Peggy Kern circulated 16 times (2%). Combined, books by these authors were checked out 601 times and accounted for 65 percent (65%) of the 920 items that were checked out. The names of five authors appeared in both analyses. The information gleaned from the findings implies that when youth read and enjoy a book by a particular author, they are likely to check out another book written by that author. Further, they are likely to tell their peers about that author's books. OYDC can use these results to look into additional titles by these authors, as well as to research authors who employ similar writing styles.

The sixth research question addressed publishers with the highest circulating titles. Data were analyzed by the publishers with the most circulated individual titles and by publishers with the most overall usage across all titles. For each analysis, results were limited to the top ten publishers. When analyzed by publisher with the most titles, the results were as follows: Saddleback Educational, with 58 titles that accounted for one-fourth (25%) of circulation by title; Stone Arch/Capstone, with 24 titles (10%); Scholastic Press, with 17 titles (7%); Townsend Press, with 15 titles (7%); AV2 by Weigl, with 12 titles (5%); HarperCollins and Little and Brown, both with eight titles (3%); Simon Pulse, with six titles (3%); and Dell-Laurel Leaf and Puffin Books, each with five titles (2%). These 10 publishers

accounted for 158 of the 230 titles that circulated, or 69 percent (69%). When analyzed by publisher with the most usage across all of their titles, the same publishers made the list, but the order changed slightly. Books published by Saddleback Educational were checked out 272 times, accounting for 30 percent (30%) of the overall usage of 920. Townsend Press books were checked out 162 times (18% usage); Stone Arch/Capstone books were checked out 76 times (8% usage); Little and Brown books were checked out 70 times (8% usage); Simon Pulse books were checked out 43 times (5%); Scholastic Press books were checked out 39 times (4% usage); AV2 by Weigl titles were checked out 20 times (2% usage); Puffin Books titles were checked out 16 times (2% usage); Dell-Laurel Leaf books were checked out 15 times (2% usage); and HarperCollins books were checked out 14 times (2% usage). Collectively, books by these publishers were checked out 727 times, accounting for 79 percent (79%) of total usage.

From the publisher analyses, it can be implied that these 10 publishers engage in publishing books that appeal to the teen population. While teen readers may not pay attention to what company publishes a book, this piece of information would be beneficial for the OYDC librarian during the collection development process. The librarian could use this data to visit the Web sites of the publishers to find new titles, as well as look for these publishers on the list of titles from her vendors. Knowledge of the publishers who produce materials that youth frequently check out would help the librarian to build a strong collection that meets the needs and preferences of the students.

Recommendations for Improving the Study

The researcher acknowledges that just because a book is circulated, it does not mean that it was actually read. Therefore, this study could be improved if there were some means of tracking whether students really read a book that they checked out. Perhaps OYDC could develop a reading incentive program that requires students to complete a brief general assessment that shows that they read the book. The assessment could be turned in to the librarian, and the librarian could have a way of

keeping a record of materials that were indeed read by students.

Another way that the study could be improved is by breaking down the study timeframe to coincide with the average length of stay of the youth. The OYDC population is transient, and the average length of stay is about 16 weeks. Analysis of the data in this manner would provide a wider picture of whether the reading patterns remain the same or change as different students rotate in and out of the facility.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Future studies could examine the availability of reading materials and explore the reading patterns and preferences of youth who are incarcerated in other juvenile correctional facilities in the state of Mississippi. Such an expansion of the study would provide valuable information about how juvenile correctional facilities comply with statutory requirements to provide incarcerated youth with reading materials. Future studies could also be conducted to compare the reading preferences of incarcerated youth to the reading preferences of youth who are not incarcerated. Additionally, future studies could be expanded to other states, and the results could be used to develop and improve library programs at juvenile correctional facilities throughout the nation to ensure that they have adequate collections to meet the needs and preferences of the incarcerated youth population.

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Appendix
Letter of Consent

March 5, 2014

Rodney Ashmore
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601-624-3867
rodney.ashmore@eagles.usm.edu

Approved 3/6/14

Donald Daniels

Mr. Dennis Daniels
Superintendent
Oakley Youth Development Center
2375 Oakley Rd
Raymond, MS 39154

Dear Mr. Daniels:

I am currently enrolled in the Master of Library and Information Science Program at the University of Southern Mississippi. As part of my degree requirements, I must complete a research project that relates to some aspect of library and information science.

I am requesting your approval to use circulation data from Oakley's automated library management system for my project. The title of my study is *Reading Materials and Reading Trends of Youth Incarcerated in Mississippi's State-Run Training School*. I request permission to obtain circulation data for the time period of January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013 that includes usage statistics and the total number of titles with authors, genres, and publishers. The data will be used to determine the titles and genres that are available to incarcerated youth at Oakley, the genres that the youth prefer to read, the highest circulating titles, the preferred authors of the youth, and the publishers of the highest circulating titles. The intended outcome of this project is to compile data that will help libraries in juvenile correctional facilities build strong, adequate collections that meet the needs of incarcerated youth.

Only circulation data will be used. This study will not use any patron information, only usage statistics. No student names or demographic information will be required. The information will be used exclusively for academic research.

Thank you for your consideration in helping me with this project. You may contact me by phone at 601-624-3867, or by e-mail at rodney.ashmore@eagles.usm.edu.

Regards,


Rodney Ashmore