IMPACT OF THEFT AND MUTILATION OF INFORMATION RESOURCES IN SELECTED ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN NIGER STATE

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to determine the types of information resources in academic libraries in Nigeria that are mostly stolen and mutilated, the reason why users' resort to theft and mutilation, measures users' adopt to mutilate and steal information resources, possible disciplinary measures to exterminate library theft/book mutilation and library management frame work/policy necessary to stem future occurrences. Survey Research method was employed. The sampling method adopted was Simple Random sampling technique where three academic libraries were selected from all the academic libraries in Nigeria. Two types of validated questionnaires were designed and administered to both staff and users. Fifty (50) copies of the questionnaires were administered to library staff, out of which Nineteen (38) copies were returned and found usable and Two hundred and sixteen (216) copies of the questionnaires out of Two hundred and seventy (250) copies administered to the users were returned with valid data. The findings revealed that some of the offenders are students who use various methods to perfect their acts. It was discovered that such stolen materials were concealed in clothes, files and bags. Mutilation of materials were in form of tearing away of pages, writing on pages of books. It was also revealed that theft and mutilation were encouraged by lack of adequate copies of titles to meet the need of users among others. To arrest these problems, certain security systems, provision of photocopiers and extension of library opening hours were recommended.

Introduction and Background of the Study

Theft and mutilation of library materials have generated much concern information professionals since the invention of printing press and the consequent emergence of libraries across the globe. Attesting to the long existence of theft and mutilation of information resources are Kayode (1996), Chaney (1999) and Aguolu & Aguolu (2002) among others.

The term information resources (library materials) might be described as the summation of all carriers of information of diverse areas/needs which the library provides for her users. These are the carriers of information which form the major basis upon which the academic library (or indeed any type of library) being a reservoir of information provides/offers her services to the ever influx of library users namely: students, researchers, lecturers, etc. needs for their study, exploration, examination or findings, Olanlokun and Salisu (1985). Information resources (library materials) could be grouped into two distinct groups, the printed and non-printed according to their formats conveyance.

i.   **Printed format groupings:**

These are information in the printed format which can be used for study, research, reading, etc. they are textbooks, reprints from journals, past examination questions papers, reference books, journals, newspapers and newspapers cuttings, magazines, treaties, monographs etc acquired by library for study and consultation. Others are materials journals/periodicals in different subject fields, documents, manuscripts, pamphlets, government publications, conference papers; and research publications, etc form the backbone of the research library collections and also constitute the prints resources of academic library. They also include;

ii.   **Non-print format groupings:**

The non-print formats of information resources are carriers of information which are not in printed format. They are products of advanced technology, which also need not in printed format. They are products of advanced technology, which also needs special equipment for their usage. Collectively they are called audio-visuals materials which require auditory and visual appreciation to use them. These media could be divided into three namely; audio, visual and audio-visual.

Audio: These are sound recordings produced on magnetic tapes or vinyl. Examples of such information resources are phono-discs, audio-tapes, audio cassettes. Only the auditory senses are required for its appreciation, compact disc, Mp3 and Mp4.

Visual: Only the visual senses are required for their use. Materials in this group include; microfilms, microfiche, ultra fiche, micro-card, filmstrips, transparencies, slides, films-loops, film (slient), VCD, and DVD.

Audio-Visual: These information resources which require both visual and auditory senses for their use. These include sound films, tape/slides programs, videotapes, videocassettes, and videodiscs.

Longman Dictionary (1995:1495) described theft as an "act of stealing something". Similarly it is describes mutilation as "to damage or change something so much or in such a way that it is completely spoiled or ruined". Theft of library materials therefore involve illegal removal from the library of any material(s) with no intention to return it, while mutilation of library materials involve willful damage of library materials as a result of removal of page(s) of a book or any other material which eventually render such materials useless to other users in the future.

According to Akinfolarin (1992), specific threats to library materials are: theft, mutilation, of library and individual properties, users' disorderly conduct in the library, failure to return borrowed books etc. Among these, theft and mutilation rank highest among the above listed threats. Aguolu (1997) reported that the high incidence of book theft and mutilation would gradually deplete the information resources and reduce the libraries effectiveness in supporting the academic pursuits of the higher institutions.

Theft and mutilation has been a common menace that has plagued the academic libraries for too long. One of the basic functions of any library is the preservation and security of library materials. Despite all the efforts to preserve library materials, users still resort to different tricks to perpetuate this infamous act to library resources. Hence the need to provide adequate security for library materials and resources cannot be overemphasized; and this should remain a primary concern to all stakeholders.

Academic libraries exist in institution of higher education such as Universities, Colleges of Education, Technology and Polytechnics. These are largely tertiary educational institutions, or post- secondary education. There are variations in the extent and intensity in terms of their library holdings. Some colleges focus almost entirely on curricula needs, while University libraries in particular go beyond this to emphasis research and interest of the wider academic program to cater for users' population. Academic libraries are established

deliberately to support the academic pursuits of their parent institutions by acquiring relevant information resources needed for teaching learning and research. For educational institutions to be able to produce quantitative students, they must have well-stocked libraries. In support of the above view, Chaturvedi (1994) opined that, there is no better way to judge the quality of an institution than to look at its library, if the library is weak, the institution itself would be adjudged mediocre and the corollary, if the University or College has a strong library, there is every probability that the institution itself is outstanding; the better the library, the stronger the faculty.

One of the earlier reported cases of library users' malpractice in Nigeria, ranks "theft and mutilation" as top on the list", Onadiran (1984). This unhealthy development and unbecoming attitude of users and unwholesome effect of theft and mutilation of library materials on academic library resource development and growth cannot be overemphasized, as they reduce the efficiency of library services, render library users disappointed, frustrated, and loss of confidence in the services provided by the libraries.

Statement of the Problem

In modern times, instances of book theft and mutilation are so rampant that librarians are sometimes accused of being negligent of their duties. Nevertheless, modern librarians recognize book theft and mutilation as a serious problem that must be curb if the safety of books and other learning resources must be protected at all times.

These acts, according to Ajayi and Omotayo (2004), have deleterious effects on the academic performance of Nigerian higher institution students. These acts could also dampen the library staff's morale in having to re-provide services that had earlier been provided. High incidence of book theft and mutilation would gradually deplete the information resources and reduce the libraries' effectiveness in supporting the academic pursuits of the institutions of higher learning.

Objective of the Study

i. To establish whether mutilation and theft occurs in libraries under the study.

ii. To identify reasons why users resort to theft and mutilation of library materials in academic libraries.

iii. To examine which group of users commit the information resources crime.

iv.   To identify methods used to steal and mutilate information resources.

v.   To identify measures adopted by academic libraries to stem/curb future occurrence and protect information resources from mutilation and theft.

Significance of the Study

Advances have been made on the reasons underlying library malpractices by social scientist and psychologists, which include among others innate tendencies to theft: economic factors, a desire to build ones' own library etc. According to Yakusak (1994), some readers are born with innate tendencies to steal and so they will steal no matter what, even conditions of reformation. Such culprits may feel that a public property like an academic library book is nobody's property and therefore could be removed at will and used any how. This kind of reader therefore would remove pages of textbooks, serials or the whole item itself for the fun of it.

i.   This study will be of great importance to academic libraries to know the causes, forms and remedies for theft and mutilation of library materials.

ii.   Through this study, theft and mutilation can be minimized or reduced as the case may be.

iii.   More so this study will provide a means of apprehending delinquents of library materials users.

iv.   As a result of this study, there will be more vigilance on the path of library staff

v.   There will be a significant change in security measures used to protect library holdings.

Research Questions

Aina L.O (2004) explains that research questions are queries posed by researchers in relation to the problem at hand. The research question involves putting the objectives into a form of questions. Prior to carrying out this project some basic questions has been bore in the researcher's mind in determining the extent of theft and mutilation in academic libraries. These questions include:

i.   Does mutilation and theft occur in academic libraries under study?

ii.   How frequent does this observable incident occur?

iii.   Which group of users perpetuates this infamous act?

iv.   Why do users resort to theft and mutilation of library materials?

v.   What measures does the library management use to stem/curb future occurrence?

Assumption of the Study

It is the researcher's assumption that at the end of this study, the outcome will go a long way in providing ways of minimizing, or eradicating the incidents theft and mutilation of library materials. Also providing ways in which security in the library will be improved to protect library holdings from delinquent users and helping library staff to be more vigilant in carrying out their duties in academic libraries particularly in Nigeria and others in general.

Limitation of the Study

There are several threats to library resources which include theft, mutilation, theft of library and individual properties, mal-handling of borrowed or used materials, disorderly conduct of users, failure to return borrowed books. Fire and burglary, unauthorized access to Information Communication Technology equipment (ICT) in the library, re-shelving of books etc, but this research is limited to theft and mutilation in some academic libraries in Niger state.(Federal University of Technology, Minna, Niger State College of Education Minna and Nigerian Law School Library, Abuja).

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study covers selected academic libraries in Niger state namely; Federal University of Technology Minna, Niger State College of Education Minna and Nigerian Law School Library, Abuja.

Literature Review

The following literatures are reviewed under the following sub- themes to support the study.

i.   The Concept of Theft and Mutilation of Library Materials.

ii.   Factors Influencing Library Materials Theft and Mutilation.

iii.   Culprits' Method in Stealing Information Resources.

iv.   Theft and Mutilation of Library Materials in Nigerian Academic Libraries.

v.   Security Mechanism to Curtail Library Theft/Crime.

vi.   Summary.

The Concept of Theft and Mutilation of Library Materials

Theft and mutilation of academic library resources have continued to pose threats to intellectual development, and a lot of literatures have been written on theft and mutilation of library materials. Rana, cited by Kayode (1996) is of the opinion that "it is man's possessive attitude that drives him into such undesirable antisocial acts. Ratchiffe (1999) emphasized that 'increased library theft is due to increase in literacy rate and university enrolment in recent times".

According to Longman dictionary (1995), mutilation is described as, "to damage or change something so much that it is completely spoiled or ruined. Mutilation of library material(s) as a result of removal of a page(s) of a book or any other material will eventually render such materials useless to the users. Similarly it described theft as "acts of stealing something" that is wrongfully taking away of another person's belonging". Theft of library materials would therefore involve illegal removal from the library (any material without intention to return it).

According to Yakusak (1994) argued that mutilation like theft is in degrees, while others underline, scribble and make comments to certain portions or quotation and phrases, others engage in removing some pages or chapters of the book. Mutilation therefore poses a serious problem and frustration on the function of libraries, librarians and users respectively. To whoever knows the importance and use of books will prefer the whole item (book) being taken away. Edibo (2005) opined that mutilation of information materials deals with the removal of some pages or chapters or cutting of relevant information, heavily colored pictures from textbooks and other library materials. "The joy of using books is derived or preferred when the pages of information put together by the author is intact; hence the gravity of mutilation is regarded worse than that of stealing library materials. Once an item of information is mutilated, such a material becomes incomplete and the tendency of using it is drastically reduced". Adewoye (1992) reported the concept of theft and mutilation as being as "old as libraries themselves". The author observed these as" a major operating cost" because of their continued nature in many libraries today which is further compounded by lack of seriousness on the part of the library staff who are supposed to serve as overseers, protectors, watchdogs and custodians of books and other learning resources.

Nathe (2005) put forward that theft and mutilation is nothing new and had complained of the problem which has existed as long as the library itself. In conclusion the main concept of theft and mutilation has been in existence since the invention of printing press and the consequent emergence of libraries; and these act can be curtailed by providing multiple copies of books, providing photocopying services at a cheaper rate and having a good library building plan to prevent possible ways in which library materials can be taken out of the library, because the best protection libraries can have is a concrete building.

Factors Influencing Library Materials Theft and Mutilation

Several studies have shown that several factors influence theft and mutilation of library materials. For instance Omoniwa (1986) in his study on book theft identified three contributory factors namely:

i.   Poor attitude to public property;

ii.   Lack of commitment on the part of staff to their duties and

iii. Non- functional facilities and infrastructure.

Afolabi (1996) corroborated some factors which include:

i.   Inadequate services by staff on night duties and weekends;

ii.   Lack of multiple copies of highly demanded materials;

iii. Inadequate photocopy facilities and services;

iv. Inadequate periodic listing and

v.   Difficult to use reserve system.

Afolabi (1993) submitted numerous factors as been responsible for theft and mutilation, on security; the writer argued that potential book thieves are constantly watching the extent of library security. Therefore, the library needs to remain committed and maintain vigilance and conduct thorough search at the exit point of the libraries. The library should also provide modern electronic surveillance machines; to secure its buildings so as to minimize the incidence of theft and mutilation.   Akinfolarin (1992) adduced several reasons for book theft in academic libraries of developing countries. Prominent among them are indigence of students drastic reduction in book votes, poor security of library buildings, culprits desire to build their own libraries, belief that public property belongs to nobody in particular, selfishness on the part of some users, and absent- mindedness on the part of staff resulting in

failure to properly check out books, as well as screen readers/users bags coming and going out of the library. Particularly worth mentioning is the drastic reduction of libraries' book votes over the last two decades. Students' population increases annually in Nigerian higher institutions without corresponding increase in the vote for the purchase of books for their libraries, submitted by Adewale (2007). According to the author, this has in turn led to a competitive atmosphere concerning the use of few or inadequate copies of books and other materials available in the library which unfortunately encourages book theft. Aloa (2000) observed that theft and mutilation of books are generally unavoidable and an act of selfishness.

Yakusak (1994) stated that advances have been made on the reasons underlying library malpractices by social scientist and psychologists, which include among other innate tendencies to theft, economic factors, users'/culprits' desire to build ones' own library etc. Social scientist asserted that some readers are born with innate tendencies to steal, no matter whatever conditions of reformations. This kind of readers therefore would remove pages of textbooks, serials or the whole item itself for the fun of it.

Economically, it is common practice among students to steal or remove pages of textbooks because of the high cost of books in Nigeria since the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986, students find it difficult to make ends meet, talk less of buying recommended textbooks. The only way out for some therefore is to resort to going to libraries with nothing and move out with some items (books/materials) they do not officially borrow. Ogunleye (1998) argued that in some African countries, economic hardship is the major cause of increasing crime in libraries. Citing the Hezekiah Oluwasanwi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University Ile Ife as a case study, he reported an attempt to steal the library's computer system. Aguolu (1997) submitted that majority of the University students are from poor backgrounds, and depend on the meager support of their parents or relations or on bursary awards from the governments and organizations. There is little wonder then that many of the University students cannot afford to buy recommended texts, let alone those for collateral reading. Even the affluent students, who can afford to buy the books, do not often find them locally available; and the students have to depend on the libraries for their studies.

Moultoh (1994) in his research conducted in some selected school libraries in Nigeria

discovered that there are other factors; a desire to build one's own library since one cannot buy the books due to lack of money, so one decides to steal from the school collection while others remove the books with no intention to take away, but to prevent other students from having access to them.

Akinnigbagbe (2001) enumerated the following to be responsible for users' engaging in theft and mutilation of information resources:

The influence of mass media crime or war films; youthful exuberance or the inability to see the act as a crime since it is government property; the perception of library as a government establishment that has the financial capability to replace any lost or stolen item; and stealing to express anger aimed at symbolic target of the government or the rich to avenge injustice or a means of hitting back at the inequity or iniquity of society.

In conclusion, the factors influencing library theft and mutilation of materials include: lack of multiple copies of highly demanded materials, inadequate photocopying facilities, the desire to build one's library, desire to steal for the fun of it, economic hardship, youthful exuberance and the influence of mass media crime.

Culprits' Method in Stealing Information Resources

Adefarati (2003) listed methods adopted in stealing information resources include "hiding items in their clothes, throwing through the window and doors when people are not observing, putting library items in handbags or brief cases, collaborating with library staff to steal library collection, selling of library books by library staff to supplement the poor monthly salary and making friends with porters before carrying out their illegitimate plan". Chaturvedi (1994) stated that among the outrageous means of removing information resources is "the misuse of authority by some management staff who takes out books and other library resource materials for consultation without proper record". Example of this was cited of a Manchester University Professor who served as library committee chairman who had in his possession over 250 books belonging to the University library. Oyesiku (2004) adduced that there are devices used in stealing library materials. These devices according to the author are:

i.   **Concealment:**

Here, the stolen materials are concealed or hidden in the body of the culprits using

their overflowing traditional dresses like: (Agbada or Babariga), suit, jeans etc. to commit this infamous act. The users who have criminal tendencies and intention to steal, load their stolen books, journals etc. into their wears and go out of the library with them.

ii.   Borrowing Deception:

Library loans and circulation activities provide opportunity for theft for vandals. The users can be deceptive in their loan transaction with the library and as a result steal valuable materials from the library. They will borrow through the normal procedure and then keep detaching the *'Date Due Slip'* from the first book and sticking it on another book picked from the book shelves. Through this means, several books can be stolen until the date due slip expires. Some users may also steal other *users' borrowers' ticket* to transact loan with the library, in this case the owner of the ticket may be held responsible for such transaction.

iii.   Library Personnel Collaboration:

There have been instances of library personnel conniving with library users to illegally remove some materials from the library. Instances of library employee theft of library resources and equipment have equally been reported in many libraries, submitted by Oyesiku (2004). Some of the concerned employees abuse their borrowing privileges, others steal library materials and others collaborate with students in stealing library materials. According to the author, library security personnel and janitors are usually the prime suspects in employee collaboration, because they are seen as set of staff who may find it easy to aid and abet theft in the library.

iv.   Throwing/Passing out of Books:

This is very rampant in libraries that have gigantic buildings with large windows without well-fitted burglary proof and net tug. One will conclude that culprits' adopt methods in stealing information resources such as: misuse of authority, hiding items in clothes, throwing/passing out of books, borrowing deception and library personnel collaboration to steal.

Theft and Mutilation of Library Materials in Nigerian Academic Libraries

Rampant incidence of theft and mutilation as well as handling and defacing of library books and other materials are reported in Nigerian academic libraries, and seemingly uncontrollable. There have been many cases of massive mutilation of library books. For example the Ahamadu Bello University Library, Zaria suffered heavily from such crimes that the library had to organize an exhibition of mutilated books and list of stolen ones.

According to Bello (2001) the University of Port Harcourt library also announced the theft of 21 volumes of Lexican Universal Encyclopedia, and 10 volumes of World Book Dictionaries. These are pertinent and costly reference materials which cost millions of Naira. Also, the Law library of the University of Abuja was massively attacked in 1998. The University's Law library suffered a severe blow to her collection; 70 issues of Nigerian Weekly Law Reports; 49 volumes of Halsbury's Law of England and 7 volumes of Encyclopedia of Islam were reported stolen from the library.

Oyesiku (2004) submitted that also in 2004, a set of Nigerian Law Digest were stolen, a set of Gani Fawehinmi's Digest of Supreme Court Cases and Volumes of Encyclopedia of Forms and Precedents were equally burgled. These stolen/mutilated publications often translated to huge sum of money to replace and trauma of loss to the library cannot be quantified. Also the deprivation which innocent users suffer before such materials may be replaced becomes another issue of great concern. Ultimately the availability of the funds and time for replacement is a frustrating dilemma.

Bello (2001) reported that it has been observed that at the main library of Olabisi Onabanjo University Library, and its other branches, there are several cases of mutilation, defacing and stealing of library books. Several publications whose records of holding are available in library catalogue are often not found on shelves and records do not show that such items are on loan. They are either stolen, or illegally removed from the library by students, other categories of users or staff respectively. Equally at the National Library of Nigeria, Ogun State branch, Abeokuta, it was reported in 1989, a set of Encyclopedia of Science and Technology that was acquired at a huge sum was massively mutilated. Many of these unfortunate culpable cases abound in our libraries; many libraries have sad tales of this sporadic destruction to tell, Oyesiku (2004).

Security Mechanism to Curtail Library Theft/Crime

Kumar (1994) opined rules in the library to solely aim at "enabling the users to maximum use of library resources; borrow for a maximum period; certain number of items preventing misuse of library resources at the same time. The librarian in an effort to enable maximum utility of the resources, allow free access to library materials. However, such efforts and opportunity is abused by the attitude of some users who engage on either theft of the whole item or mutilation by the removal of certain portions of the item.

Afolabi (1996) explained why book insecurity has dominated the literature on library security. Library security mechanism requires extra vigilance and painstaking actions because there are some peculiar issues that border on library security, these issues according to Wrigley (1999) are public access, browsing, surveillance/supervision, vulnerability of the collection, stock taking, property identification, and staff safety.

Huska (2008) opined that just as crime in libraries fall into different categories, prevention strategies regarding library crime are also multifold. For the most effective crime prevention, libraries must adopt physical security measures, comprehensive administrative planning and adequate staff training as a way to curb or reduce theft/mutilation.

According to Donald (2001), there are 3 main principles to prevent crime in the library:

i. Natural access control which reduces the opportunity for crime such as theft and mutilation. Examples of this include having automatically locking doors on staff-only areas.

ii. Natural surveillance allows for monitoring of potential criminals, and thereby eliminates much of the opportunity for crimes to go unnoticed. Examples include: clear sight lines to all areas of the library, from staff desk and stakes arranged to be as open as possible eliminating hidden areas.

iii. Territorial reinforcement involving the creation of clear boundaries which will make individuals with suspicious behavior more noticeable. This can include security desks and entrances and exits and monitored reading rooms.

Jiriko (2004) suggested employment of vigilant porters, acquisition of multiple copies of books, provision of photocopying services, installation of electronic security system, circulating list of missing books to heads of departments and periodic search in students' hostel as preventive measures. Akinnigbagbe (2001), quoting Revil, opined that installation

of an electronic system is probably the most effective solution to book theft, and while installation of video camera system should be done to detect book mutilation, since electronic system can only prevent book theft and not mutilation. Oyesiku (1998) maintained that security of library materials or resources is indispensable to the effective functioning of library and the task should be a collective responsibility of every personnel in the library, most especially the security personnel and janitors. The role of the security unit of the library is helping to actualize the effort of maintaining and preserving library materials. Inadequate security for library materials may lead to the depletion if not empty the library and consequently leading to inefficient and non-proactive library services.

According to Shuman (1999) aside from all of the physical crime prevention initiatives that administration can utilize, it is important to realize that well trained library staff can be the strongest security measure. All staff members must be involved in the implementation of a security plan and take responsibility for carrying out the duties outlined within the library plan. Staffs that are aware and alert are the greatest deterrent to crime in the library.

Research Design

This study adopted the survey research design to gather relevant data from the respondents. Brohob (2001) attested that the survey research is a technique for gathering information from large number of users. This was considered appropriate for the study in sampling respondent opinions in Federal University Technology, Minna, Niger State College of Education, Minna and Nigerian Law School Library, Abuja. It also efficiently investigated conditions and problems in realistic settings thus gathering accurate and adequate information on which to base sound decision as submitted by Itanyi (2004).

Population and Sampling Technique

The population of this study consists of all undergraduate students and staff randomly selected from three higher institutions of learning in Nigeria namely:

a. Federal University of Technology, Minna
b. Niger State College of Education, Minna
c. Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai

Instrument for Data Collection

The main instrument for data collection was questionnaire designed by the researcher.

14

Cohen and Manion (2002) are of the view that "the questionnaire is widely used for data collection. The questionnaire was designed to embrace pertinent questions seeking opinion of subjects on the topic of the study and administered to subjects. The Section **A** of the **questionnaire** dealt on Respondent's Bio-Data, Section **B** examined the extent of theft and mutilation in the libraries under study, while Section **C** was on the types of information involved while Section **D** handled the group of users that perpetuated this infamous acts. Section E investigated on what time culprits' commit this acts. Section F sought to know why users resort to theft and mutilation, Section **G** examined measures that library management should adopt to stem/curb future occurrences, Section H dealt with possible disciplinary measures to safeguard information resources in the future. A total of 300 questionnaires were administered to the respondents of which 50 copies were administered to staff and 250 copies to students respectively of the institutions of under study. Of this number 254 questionnaires were returned with valid data.

Procedure of Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using simple percentage count and descriptive analysis statistics which was based on the opinions of the respondents of the selected academic libraries in Nigeria.

Table1:   Demographics of respondents according to sex.

Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Male	143	53.9	53.9	53.9
Female	111	46.1	46.1	46.1
Total	254	100.0	100.0	100.0

The table1 above provides data on respondents' sex distribution who participated in the study; from this it can deduced that 143 (53.9%) respondents were male while 111(46.1%) accounted for the female respondents.

Table 2: Theft and Mutilation in Academic Libraries

Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Strongly Agree	103	39.0	40.8	40.8
Agree	99	37.0	38.8	79.6
Strongly Disagree	19	7.1	7.5	87.1
Disagree	33	12.3	12.9	-
Total	254	95.5	100.0	100.0

Table 2 showed repeated incidences of theft and mutilation as a major threat to collection development in the affected academic libraries selected for study. 103(39.0%) of the respondents Strongly Agreed that the high price of information resources is the major cause of theft and mutilation and users laziness to consult/use information resource in the library was identified as a reason too, 99(37.0%) Agreed to this, 19(7.1%) Strongly Disagree while 33(12.3%) Disagree. The majority respondents also stated that innate inclination to steal also contributed to why users steal and mutilate library resources (books). Other observations includes man's drive towards undesirable anti-social acts, increase in literacy rate and high enrolment in university education as opined by Kayode (1996) cited by Rana.

Table 3: Frequency of Theft and Mutilation in Academic Libraries

Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Strongly Agree	47	18.2	18.8	18.8
Agree	104	39.6	40.9	59.6
Strongly Disagree	38	14.3	14.8	74.5
Disagree	65	24.7	25.5	-
Total	254	96.8	100.0	100.0

In the above Table 3, it was revealed through the respondent's opinion that the frequency of theft and mutilation were on the increase with 47(18.8%) Strongly agreeing with this and stated the desire to build personal library collection and assumption that academic libraries were government provisions to everyone. 104(59.6%) Agree also with the assumption that libraries belongs to "nobody" and made some to resort to theft and mutilation of library resources. While 38(14.3%) Strongly Disagreed with this and 65(24.7%) Disagree.

Table 4: Category of users responsible for Theft and Mutilation in Academic Libraries

Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Strongly Agree	97	37.0	38.3	38.9
Agree	102	39.0	40.3	78.4
Strongly Disagree	31	11.7	12.1	90.6
Disagree	24	9.1	9.3	-
Total	254	96.8	100.0	100.0

Table 4 revealed that 97(37.0 %) Strongly Agree that students of poor background were often found in the categories of users prone to theft and mutilation of information resources in the library. 102(39.0%) Agree these categories of users have strong inclination to committing these infamous acts. 31(11.7%) of the sample respondents strongly disagree and indicated academic pressures to meet deadlines were factors that contributed to this incidents while and 24(9.1%) Disagree. This submission collaborates with Aguolu (1997) that students from poor background who depend on the meager parental or relatives support, lack of bursary or scholarships awards were unfortunately found to be victims of book theft and mutilation. Aguolu further argued that these groups of students can't buy needed resource materials (texts books). Akinigagbe (2001) maintained that influences of mass media crime or war films, youth exuberance and their inability to see the act as a crime, to them library resources were governments property and that government, these criminals reasoned has the capacity to replace was a reason why such users of library resource steal and mutilate them.

Table 5: Factors responsible for Theft and Mutilation in Academic Libraries

Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Strongly Agree	114	39.6	44.9	44.9
Agree	50	17.5	19.9	64.7
Strongly Disagree	54	18.8	21.3	86.0
Disagree	36	12.3	14.0	-
Total	254	88.3	100.0	100.0

Table 5 identified factors responsible for theft and mutilation to include as disorderly conduct of users in the library, failure to return borrowed materials when due, unwholesome attitudes of users also contributed serious threats to this. From the data collected in above table it was clearly revealed that 114(39.6%) Strongly Agree on these, 50(17.5%) Agree, 54(18.8%) Strongly Disagree while 36(12.3%) Disagree.

Table 6: Examined measures taken against the occurrence of Theft and Mutilation in Academic Libraries

Responses	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Strongly Agree	68	24.0	27.0	27.0
Agree	113	39.6	44.5	71.5
Strongly Disagree	34	11.7	13.2	84.7
Disagree	39	13.6	15.3	-
Total	254	89.0	100.0	100.0

Table 6 revealed that 68(27.0%) Strongly Agree that provision of effective photocopying facilities/services should be made available in the library to stem theft and mutilation of library resources. 113 (39.6%) of the respondents Agree, 18(11.7%) Strongly Disagree and 21(13.6%) Disagree with this. Other measures these respondents suggested were for the training and re-training of staff on library security, alertness and monitoring. They equally maintained that more library porters should be employed to minimize incidence of theft and mutilation. This opinion collaborated with the findings of Afolabi (1996), on security of library institutions, Wringley, (1999) on Surveillance and Huska (2008) respectively which stated that clear boundaries settings be established to curb all suspicious users behaviour and help detect this culprits.

Summary

The study on assessment of theft and mutilation of library information resources (materials) in selected academic libraries was carried out in the following higher institutions libraries: Federal University of Technology, Minna, Niger State College of Education, Minna and Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai, all in Niger State, Nigeria. The study identified rampant incidences of theft and mutilation of library information resources (materials) common in these academic libraries. The study further revealed the following findings that culprits adopted method to remove "the date due slip" on book borrowed out to a user only to be stolen; hiding information resources/materials inside clothes, tearing or removal of important pages, throwing out of information item(s) out of the window; while some conspired even with library staff to steal library materials. The study also identified lack of effective and reliable photocopy services in library, lack of training of library personnel on library security, alertness and monitoring of library users and effective monitoring of library users, as well as general surveillance at all times to curb suspicious

library users and culprits of this anti-social acts.

Conclusion

This research examined theft and mutilation of library materials. The terms theft and mutilation were defined. The concept of theft and mutilation of library materials, factors influencing library materials theft and mutilation, culprits' method in stealing information resources, theft and mutilation of library materials in the affected academic libraries studied, and security mechanism to curb and curtail library theft/crime were highlighted, as well as useful suggestions were given. The researcher hopes that if the suggestions proffered here shall be religiously adhered to, the theft and mutilation challenges shall be greatly reduced.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations are hereby made:

i.   There is need to improve charging and discharging of library materials in a way of preventing clients' malpractice. This is by thorough examination of pages of the texts when issuing out books and at the point of returning them.

ii.   Library staff should always move around the library to monitor users' reading tables and areas. This is shall check and reduce users' infamous activities.

iii.   Daily shelve reading is equally important and should be religiously carried out. Library authority should continuously publicize penalties for anyone found guilty of theft and mutilation offence. Whenever anyone is guilty, the name, particulars and penalties awarded should be placed on the notice board in the library, affected department and faculty of such offenders for other users' to see, at the entrance of the library and other strategic places in the institution concern. This should serve as a deterrent intending offenders.

Iv.   Ex-service men should be employed and trained for the job of handling security in the libraries.

v.   To guard against users' who may hide information materials in dresses, file and/or bags, the institution's library management should consider it compelling and necessary the installation of electronic security system to strengthen security arrangements and routine checking during working hours to detect all authorized/unauthorized borrowings.

vi.   The provision of effective and efficient photocopying facilities in all academic libraries anywhere need not be overstressed. This will make it easy for users' to make their personal copies of documents interested to them within the library. Since students are the major offenders, librarians should henceforth embark upon serious library orientation to teach this group of users' not only how to use the library, but also the disadvantages of stealing and mutilation of library materials.

Above all, every library personnel should be vigilant conscious at all times, honest and be ready to search users' thoroughly but in a friendly and courteous manner.

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