

Abuse of library materials in selected Nigerian special libraries

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Abstract

An information Centre is an indispensable arm o/a viable research institute as it acquires and stocks previous intellectual endeavors. Timely access to collection is important as it has supported scholarship in the humanities, sciences and social sciences and remains the key to intellectual freedom. Mutilation and vandalism is a serious threat to the effective discharging of its responsibilities. This study used the descriptive research design with quantitative approaches to examine the extent to which library materials are vandalized in Nigerian research institutes' libraries. Schedule was used to elicit various forms of document abuses, collections vulnerable to theft, reasonsfor theft Result indicated Nigerian research institutes' libraries do experience tearing book pages (73.68 %.), borrowing books for friends/non staff(51.30 %.), deliberate mis-shelving q/' books (57.95 The study recommends regular orientation of staff and library users, provision of photocopier inside the library, regular stocktaking particularly of rare materials, digitalization of grey materials, training and retraining of security personnel posted to the library, and posting warning signs about the crime of vandalization of library materials.

Key Words: Library security, Research institutions, Nigeria, Resources

Introduction

Libraries all over the world, no matter the purpose of their establishment and the clientele they serve, are places where information services are rendered to users. Meeting the information needs of users entails amongst others, providing physical and bibliographic access to information. Research libraries are special in collections. They are to serve their parent body by providing information resources to meet goals and objectives. They are to research, collect, preserve and make available collections of resources needed by researchers and other users. To fulfil these objectives, there is need to control various forms of misuse associated with collections or resources. Abuse of library resources can come in various forms such as theft, mutilation of information materials, vandalism, hiding of materials, folding of books, tearing of pages of documents, etc. (Anyaoobi & Akpoma, 2012, Toka, 2005). In research institutes, abuse of library resources can also come in form of failure to return materials to time, failure to pay replacement bills, failure to respond to recall notices.

According to Fashae & Adedokun (2016), Ajegbomogun (2004), Holt (2007), the abuses listed above are being practiced by library users due to high demands of them in the libraries. Selfishness and inadequate number of copies can also lead to misuse of information resources in Nigerian libraries (Anyaoobi & Akpoma, 2012). Agboola (2001) & Afolabi (1993) added that theft is motivated by societal problems. Bello (1993), as cited by Eruvwe et al(2015), revealed that deviant behaviour is because demand outstripped the supply of library materials. These results in competition for resources, which invariably tempts users to steal, mutilate, or engage in illegal borrowing. Mutilation is the defacement or damage of library materials.

The danger of ill-use of collection in research and special libraries has continued unabated. Poor funding of libraries by Nigerian government has contributed to this problem. The effect of this behaviour on research and special libraries information resources

stimulated this work. Several studies have been carried out on the issue of mutilation and vandalism of information resources in Nigerian libraries, but only few works have been done on special and research libraries, hence this necessitates this study. The study therefore looked into reasons for mutilation, collections that are vulnerable and abuse in special and agricultural research libraries in Nigeria

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the extent of abuse of materials in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries.

Specifically, the study investigated the following among others:

1. The various problem of abuse of library materials in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries
2. Factors responsible for theft and mutilations of library materials in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries
3. Types of library materials vulnerable to theft and mutilations in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries

Research Questions

1. What are the various forms of abuse of library materials in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries?
2. What are the factors responsible for theft and mutilations of library materials in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries?
3. What are the types of library materials vulnerable to theft and mutilation in Nigerian research institutes ' Libraries?

Methodology

This study used the descriptive research design with quantitative approaches. The study location was Edo and Oyo States in Nigeria. There are two research institutes in Edo while there are eight in Oyo State. These locations were selected due to the proliferation of institutions with special libraries, therefore, purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting the special libraries that participated in the study. Ten research institutes were used

for the study. One instrument titled "Library Security in Research Institutes" (LSRI) was used to elicit information from respondents. Face and content validity were determined by the experts. The total sample size of seventy — six participated in the study. Data were analysed" using descriptive statistics such as frequency count and percentages.

establishment, the first in ranking is The Nigerian Institute for Oil Palm Research (NIFOR) (1939) and tenth in ranking is Nigerian Institute of Science Laboratory Technology, Ibadan, established in 2003.

Table I: Research Institute Libraries Surveyed and Year of Establishment

SIN	Name of Research Institute	Year Established
I	Rubber Research Institute of Nigeria (RRIN)	1961
2	Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN) P.M.B. 5244, Idi-Ayunre Ibadan	1964
3	Nigerian Institute of Science Laboratory Technology Ibadan.	2003
4	Institute of Agricultural Research And Training(IART) Ibadan	1956
5	National Horticultural Research Institute (NIHORT) P.M. 5432, Idi-Ishin, Ibadan	1975
6	Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ibadan. (NISER)	1977
7	The Nigerian Institute for Oil Palm Research (NIFOR)	1939
8	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Ibadan (IIT A)	1968
9	Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria, Ibadan (ERIN)	1954
10	National Centre for Genetic Resources and Biotechnology (NACGRAB)	1987

Results and Discussion of Findings

Table I. The table below shows the Research Institute Libraries surveyed and their year of establishment. Ranking by year of

Table 2: Demographic Information of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage%
Male	31	40.79
Female	45	59.2
Total	76	100
Marital status	Frequency	Percentage o
Single	5	6.6
Married	71	93.4
Total	76	100
Educational status	Frequency	Percentage ⁰ 0
Diploma in Librarianship	13	17.10
BLS	16	21.1
Bachelor's Degree (Non BLS)	10	13.1
MLS	12	15.8
Master degree (non-MLS)	5	6.6
PhD	3	3.9
Others	17	22.4
Total	76	100
Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage
I -5years	22	28.95
6-10 years	18	23.68
11-15years	8	10.53
16-20 years	13	17.11
21-25 years	4	5.26
26-30 years	11	14.47
Total	76	100

Result from Table 2 indicated that more than half of the respondents (59.2%) are females, majority (93.4%,) are married, 21.1% had Bachelor degree in Librarianship, 17.10% had Diploma in Librarianship while 15.6% had a Master's degree in Librarianship. Years of work experience of respondents indicated that 28.95% have between I to 5 years' experience of working in the library while 17.11% had between 16-20 years' experience.

Research Question 1. What are the various forms of abuse of library materials in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries?

Table3: Forms of abuse of library materials in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries

S/N	Security Issues	Agree%	Disagree %	I do not know%	Total%
1	Tearing of pages	73.68	26.32		100
2	Torn book spine	59.21	40.79		100
3	Book mutilation	51.32	48.68		100
4	Throwing books through the window	19.74	80.26		100
5	Borrowing books for friends/non staff	51.30	48.70		100
6	Deliberate mis-shelving of books	57.95	42.05		100
1	High cost of books	80.26	19.74		100
2	Inadequate library materials	53.95	46.05		100
3.	Selfishness	46.05	53.95		100
4.	High cost of photocopying	52.63	47.37		100

Table3: presents the various forms of abuse of Library materials in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries. Tearing of pages of books (73.68%) was the highest form of abuse closely followed by torn book spine (59.21 %.) while throwing books through the window was the lowest (19.74%) form of abuse.

Result on Table 4 shows reasons for loss of Library materials. High cost of books was observed to be the highest reasons (80.26%) for theft and mutilation of books in research institutes while inadequate library materials was seen to be the next reason (53.95%). Lastly, selfishness of the library users was the least (46.05%).

Research Question 3: What are types of library materials vulnerable to theft and mutilation in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries?

Research Question.2: What are the factors responsible for theft and mutilations of library materials in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries?

Majority of the respondents (72.37%) agreed that books were the most vulnerable to theft and mutilations among the library resources closely followed by journals (71.05%) while annual reports (26.32%) were ranked least.

Discussion of Findings

There are lots of security issues in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries. Such security issues include: books attacked by insects or worms and deliberate mis-shelving of books among others. The finding of this study (Table

Table 5: Types of library materials vulnerable to theft and mutilation in Nigerian research institutes' Libraries

SIN	TYPE OF COLLECTION	Agree	Disagree	I do not know	Total%
1.	Print materials in general	51.32	48.68		100
2.	Journals	71.05	28.95		100
3.	Reprints	38.12	61.88		100
4.	Annual Reports	26.32	73.68		100
5.	Books	72.37	27.63		100
6	Newspapers		6.58	93.42	100
	Thesis/Research projects	48.68	51.32		100
8.	Reserve collections	50.00	50.00		100
9.	Non-print resources	28.95	71.05		100

5) indicated that books were the most vulnerable to theft and mutilations among library resources closely followed by journals. This is in line with the findings of Fashae and Adedokun, (2016). Table 4 revealed reasons for theft in research Institutes Library as follows; high cost of books was observed to be the most common reasons for theft and mutilation of books in research institutes while inadequate library materials was seen as the next reason. Lastly selfishness of the library users was the least. This is similar to the findings of Anyaobi and Akpoma (2012) who reported that selfishness and inadequate number of copies can lead to destruction of library collections in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Findings of the study indicate that Nigerian research institutes' Libraries are faced with various problems such as books and journal theft, mutilation, non -return of library materials borrowed in due time or non- return at all. Due to poor funding of Nigerian research libraries, there is limited number of copies of a given title available to users. Therefore, selfish users deliberately mis-shelve books so they can be the only one that will have access to the library materials.

The following recommendations if implemented in Nigerian research libraries will curtail the abuse of library materials.

1. Research institutes in Nigeria should make photocopying services available in the library for users at a cheaper price compared to the prevailing prices around their places of operation. This will help their users such as scientists, farmers, students and other community users. It should be limited to Library materials so as not to give room for turning the libraries to photocopying centers.

2. Special funds should be made available to Nigerian research libraries for procurement of more materials that can meet the needs of users including electronic resources.

3. There should be an alternative power supply such as an inverter and stand- by generator in case there is power outage in the library.

4. Research Libraries in Nigeria can subscribe to electronic resources such as books and journals.

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