

COMBATING DEVIANT BEHAVIOURS AMONG USERS OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY OWERRI AND COAL CITY UNIVERSITY, ENUGU LIBRARIES

Stephen Chukwudi Ani

Coal City University Enugu

Heman Uchechukwu Osuagwu

Coal City University Enugu;

Ferdinand Chinedu Oparanozie

Enugu State University of Science and Technology;

and

Constance Nnenna Ugwu

Enugu State University of Science and Technology

Abstract

The research work focuses on combating deviant behaviours among users of Federal University of Technology, Owerri, and Coal City University, Enugu Libraries. Three specific objectives and three research questions were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted a survey research design. It was carried out in the libraries of the Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO), and Coal City University, Enugu. The population of the study comprised 134 library staff, and the entire population was used as the sample. A census sampling technique was adopted because the population was small and manageable. The instrument used for data collection was a rating scale. The data collected for the study were analyzed using mean scores. The findings revealed, among others, that theft, mutilation, defacement, impersonation, vandalism, noise-making, refusal to return overdue borrowed books, answering phone calls in the reading hall, smuggling food and drinks into the library, and verbal and physical abuse of staff and users were the major deviant behaviours exhibited by library users in the libraries studied. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among other measures, that library management should devise different strategies to ensure that these deviant behaviours among library users are effectively curbed.

Keywords: Library, academic library, deviant behaviours, library users, kinds of deviant behaviours exhibited by library users

Introduction

The library is an organized institution established for the collection, acquisition, processing, storage, retrieval, and dissemination of information resources for use by its clientele. It serves as a repository of knowledge and plays a crucial role in providing access to information for educational, research, recreational, and enlightenment purposes. Libraries exist in different forms, including school, public, special, national, and academic libraries, each designed to meet the information needs of specific groups of users. Among the various types of libraries, academic libraries occupy a central position in institutions of higher learning, such as universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, and other tertiary institutions. According to Egbuchu & Osuagwu (2023), academic libraries are libraries established in institutions of higher learning to support teaching, learning, and research activities. They are regarded as the intellectual hub of academic institutions because they provide access to information resources necessary for academic excellence. Similarly, Uwandu (2020) describes academic libraries as libraries attached to tertiary institutions that provide information resources and services to facilitate teaching, learning, and research.

Academic libraries support the educational objectives of their parent institutions by acquiring, organizing, preserving, and making available relevant information resources in both print and electronic formats. They also offer a variety of services, including reference

services, user education, information literacy training, and access to research materials. These libraries are maintained and funded by their respective institutions to satisfy the information needs of students, lecturers, researchers, administrative staff, and members of the host community. To perform these responsibilities effectively, academic libraries provide information resources in adequate quantity and quality and ensure that they are readily accessible to users.

Library users are individuals who utilize library resources and services to satisfy their information needs. Okorie & Njoku (2016) define library users as people who make use of one or more library resources or services within a given period. They are individuals who visit the library to utilize its resources for information purposes. Similarly, Whitaker (2014) describes library users as persons who use one or more library services at least once within a year. These users differ according to the type of library and the range of services provided.

In the context of academic libraries, users include students, lecturers, researchers, non-academic staff, professionals, and members of the surrounding community. Okorie & Njoku (2016) note that academic library users are individuals who utilize libraries established in universities, polytechnics, monotechnics, and colleges of education. According to Singh and Kaur (2019), the user population of an academic library comprises undergraduate and postgraduate students, academic staff, administrative personnel, technical staff, and external researchers. These users possess diverse social, cultural,

educational, and economic backgrounds, which may influence their attitudes toward the library and their patterns of library use.

The effectiveness of academic libraries largely depends on the proper use of available resources and strict adherence to established rules and regulations. Libraries are expected to provide an environment conducive to teaching, learning, and research. Gelf, as cited in Maidabino (2010), observed that the library serves as a centralized environment where information resources and emerging technologies are integrated to support modern educational and research activities. Consequently, the achievement of library objectives depends largely on users' compliance with acceptable standards of conduct.

However, academic libraries often face challenges arising from inappropriate user behaviour. Uwandu & Osuji (2022) observed that academic libraries are confronted with numerous management challenges, one of which is disruptive and deviant behaviour among users. Deviant behaviour refers to actions that violate library rules and regulations, thereby hindering the effective utilization of library resources and services. Such behaviours negatively affect the library environment and impede the achievement of its objectives.

Common forms of deviant behaviour exhibited in academic libraries include theft, mutilation of library materials, vandalism, concealment of books, failure to return borrowed materials, noise-making, eating and drinking within the library, and other forms of misconduct. According to Jet (2015), these behaviours have become increasingly common in academic libraries and constitute a major challenge to effective service

delivery. They often result in the loss, damage, or destruction of valuable information resources, thereby limiting access for other users and reducing the overall quality of library services.

The persistence of deviant behaviour in academic libraries poses serious threats to the preservation and availability of information resources. If not adequately controlled, such behaviours may lead to the depletion of library collections and undermine the ability of academic libraries to fulfil their educational and research responsibilities. It is against this backdrop that studies on deviant behaviour among users of academic libraries have become necessary, particularly to understand its forms, causes, and implications for effective library service delivery.

Statement of the Problem

Academic libraries are established primarily to provide access to both print and electronic information resources in support of teaching, learning, research, and community service. Consequently, the indispensable role they play in contemporary education cannot be overemphasized. Through the acquisition, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information resources, academic libraries contribute significantly to the achievement of the educational objectives of their parent institutions.

Despite these important roles, academic libraries continue to face numerous challenges that hinder the effective delivery of their services. One of the most persistent challenges is the prevalence of deviant behaviour among library users. Across many academic libraries, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria, cases of theft,

mutilation, vandalism, concealment of library materials, noise-making, failure to return borrowed materials, and other forms of misconduct have become increasingly common. These behaviours often result in the loss, damage, and deterioration of valuable information resources, thereby limiting their availability to other users.

Academic libraries in Imo State, like those in other parts of Nigeria, were established to meet the information needs of students, lecturers, researchers, and other members of the academic community by providing adequate information resources and services. However, despite public concern and the implementation of stringent measures aimed at curbing deviant behaviour, violations of library rules and regulations continue to occur among library patrons, including students, staff, and other members of the academic community.

Previous observations and studies have revealed that some library materials have either been stolen, mutilated, defaced, or subjected to improper handling, thereby reducing their usefulness and lifespan. These incidents raise important questions as to whether such losses are primarily associated with the deviant behaviour of library users or with lapses in the libraries' preservation and security measures. Although these issues have been widely acknowledged, the extent to which deviant behaviour contributes to the deterioration and loss of library resources in the selected institutions has not been adequately established.

It is against this background that this study seeks to ascertain ways of combating deviant behaviours among users of the libraries of the Federal University of Technology, Owerri, and Coal City University, Enugu. Specifically, the study intends to identify the

various forms of deviant behaviour exhibited by library users, determine the factors responsible for such behaviours, and examine the measures adopted by the libraries to curb these behaviours and protect their information resources.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study;

1. What are the kinds of deviant exhibited by library users in the library studied?
2. What are the causes of deviant behaviours by library users in the library studied?
3. What are the measures already in place to curb deviant behaviours among library users in the library studied?

Literature Review

Deviant Behaviours

Deviant behaviours refer to actions by library users that violate established library rules and regulations, thereby disrupting the effective utilization of library resources and services. Such behaviours are regarded as antisocial because they hinder access to information resources and negatively affect both library collections and other users. Common forms of deviant behaviour in academic libraries include theft, mutilation, vandalism, concealment of library materials, failure to return borrowed materials, disorderly conduct, deliberate mis-shelving of information resources, noise-making, and other forms of misconduct. According to Michael (2016), deviant behaviour has become a growing concern in libraries because it contributes significantly to the deterioration,

damage, and loss of library collections. Similarly, Singh & Kaur (2019) observed that one of the major challenges confronting libraries is the prevention of theft, vandalism, and mutilation of information materials. These acts are particularly detrimental to academic libraries, where information resources are often limited, expensive to acquire, and difficult to replace due to inadequate funding.

The increasing incidence of deviant behaviour has serious implications for effective library service delivery. Users are frequently denied access to valuable information resources that have been stolen, damaged, mutilated, or improperly handled. Consequently, the library's ability to support teaching, learning, and research is significantly undermined. Theft and mutilation of both print and electronic information resources constitute major challenges in academic libraries, resulting in financial losses, disruption of library services, and frustration for both library staff and users. Akinfolanrin (2012) identified theft, mutilation, failure to return borrowed materials, and disorderly conduct as major threats to library resources. Among these, theft and mutilation remain the most prevalent. Ukwueze & Osuagwu (2023) further emphasized that persistent cases of theft and mutilation gradually deplete library collections and reduce the effectiveness of libraries in fulfilling their educational and informational responsibilities. Mutilation involves the deliberate tearing, cutting, marking, highlighting, or destruction of library materials, whereas theft ranges from the unauthorized removal of individual items to the large-scale stealing of information resources.

Therefore, deviant behaviour remains a significant challenge confronting academic libraries because it threatens the preservation, accessibility, and effective utilization of information resources. Addressing this problem is essential for ensuring quality library services and sustaining academic excellence. In many cases, these deviant behaviours are exhibited by users who fail to appreciate the value of library resources or recognize that such resources are acquired and maintained for the benefit of the entire academic community.

Library Users

Library users are individuals who directly or indirectly utilize library resources and services to satisfy their information needs. Nwalo, as cited in Uwa (2014), opined that library users are people who visit the library with the primary purpose of utilizing its resources to satisfy their information needs. Similarly, Okorie & Njoku (2016) defined users as a generic term for individuals who utilize one or more library resources or services at least once within a year. Library users may also be referred to as library patrons, clients, clientele, library audiences, information users, information seekers, members, consumers, customers, or readers. They are the principal beneficiaries for whom library resources and services are established. According to Uhegbu (2013), library users are individuals who seek information, receive it, and put it to effective use.

Library users constitute diverse groups with varying characteristics. Okorie & Njoku (2016) stated that library users may be categorized according to factors such as profession,

environment, gender, geographical location, health status, psychological characteristics, level of experience (experienced or inexperienced users), nature of activities (students, researchers, lecturers, among others), and occupation (business owners, managers, workers, etc.). They further classified library users into four major groups, namely potential users, expected users, actual users, and beneficiary users. In another classification, they identified general readers, subject readers, special readers, non-reading users, and non-users.

The categories of library users vary according to the type of library. In academic libraries, users include undergraduate and postgraduate students, lecturers, researchers, librarians, professors, administrative staff, security personnel, and other members of the academic community. These users visit the library to access information resources and services that support teaching, learning, research, and personal development.

Despite the important roles played by academic library users in achieving the objectives of the library, some users engage in various forms of deviant behaviour that adversely affect the growth, development, and effective functioning of academic libraries. Such behaviours not only endanger valuable library collections but also hinder other users from accessing the information resources they require for academic and research purposes.

Kinds of Deviant Behaviourss Exhibited by Library Users

There are various forms of deviant behaviour exhibited by library users. These behaviours differ from one individual to another and may be influenced by factors such as upbringing, educational background, personal experiences, level of exposure, organizational policies, government regulations, and individual attitudes toward library resources. Such behaviours undermine the effective utilization of library resources and services and pose serious challenges to library management.

Velnampy (2012) defined behaviour as the feelings and beliefs that largely determine how individuals perceive their environment, commit themselves to intended actions, and ultimately behave accordingly. Similarly, Adesina (2013) postulated that behaviour is acquired through learning and can be modified through proper orientation and education. According to the author, behaviours developed over time shape an individual's interaction with people, objects, and the environment.

People's behaviour is dynamic and continually evolves as they are exposed to new experiences, ideas, and environments (Adesina, 2013). Consequently, behavioural patterns may either improve or deteriorate depending on prevailing circumstances. Ogunsola (2014) reported that any behaviour, belief, or condition that violates the accepted norms and values of a society or group constitutes deviance. Within the library environment, deviant behaviour refers to any action that contravenes established library rules and regulations and interferes with the effective utilization of library resources and services.

Library users commonly exhibit several forms of deviant behaviour. These include theft and mutilation of library materials, hiding or concealing books on the shelves to

prevent other users from accessing them, refusal to return overdue borrowed materials, answering or making telephone calls in reading areas, bringing food and drinks into the library, writing on or defacing library books, making unnecessary noise, vandalizing library furniture and equipment, unauthorized removal of library materials, and engaging in other disruptive behaviours that violate library regulations. Ukwueze, Osuagwu, and Ani (2022) further identified additional forms of deviant behaviour, including the non-return of borrowed library materials, theft of library equipment, theft of personal belongings belonging to staff and users, verbal and physical abuse directed at library staff and patrons, vandalism of library buildings and facilities, and the deliberate destruction of library collections. These behaviours adversely affect the quality of library services and reduce users' access to valuable information resources.

The prevalence of these deviant behaviours has become a major concern for academic libraries because they contribute to the deterioration of information resources, disrupt library operations, increase replacement and maintenance costs, and hinder the achievement of the library's educational objectives. Consequently, the implementation of effective control measures has become essential for preserving library collections, maintaining discipline, and ensuring the efficient delivery of library services.

Causes of Deviant Behaviour by Library Users

Deviant behaviour among library users arises from several factors related to both individual characteristics and the library environment. Academic libraries serve users from diverse cultural, social, educational, religious, and economic backgrounds. These

differences often influence users' attitudes toward library resources, facilities, and regulations. Consequently, some users intentionally or unintentionally engage in behaviours that violate library rules and regulations. According to Akinfolanrin (2012), major causes of deviant behaviour in libraries include inadequate security systems, poor monitoring and supervision of users, insufficient information resources, ineffective user education programmes, and inadequate funding. When library collections are insufficient or difficult to access, some users may resort to hiding, mutilating, or stealing information materials for personal use. Likewise, weak security systems and ineffective surveillance provide opportunities for users to engage in acts of misconduct without fear of detection.

Lack of proper library orientation has also been identified as a significant cause of deviant behaviour. Ukwueze, Osuagwu & Ani (2022) noted that many users engage in inappropriate activities because they are not adequately informed about library rules, regulations, and the proper use of library resources and facilities. Inadequate user education often leads to ignorance of acceptable library conduct and fosters negative attitudes toward the proper handling of information resources.

Another major cause of deviant behaviour is the misuse of mobile phones and other electronic devices within the library. Eruvwe (2015) reported that, despite regulations restricting the use of mobile phones in reading areas, many users continue to make and receive calls, watch videos, listen to music, and engage in other distracting activities while in the library. These activities generate unnecessary noise, disturb other users, and disrupt the quiet environment required for effective study and research.

Peer influence and poor moral upbringing also contribute significantly to deviant behaviour among library users. Some students imitate inappropriate behaviours exhibited by their peers without considering the consequences of their actions. In addition, poor reading culture, lack of self-discipline, pressure to meet academic deadlines, and inadequate availability of multiple copies of heavily demanded library materials may encourage users to hide, steal, or mutilate library resources.

Furthermore, inadequate sanctions against offenders may encourage the persistence of deviant behaviour in academic libraries. When users perceive that disciplinary measures are weak or inconsistently enforced, they may be more likely to violate library rules without fear of punishment. Similarly, overcrowded libraries, inadequate staffing, and poor supervision can make it difficult for library personnel to effectively monitor users' activities.

Therefore, factors such as inadequate security, insufficient information resources, poor user education, weak supervision, misuse of electronic devices, peer influence, poor moral values, inadequate sanctions, and overcrowded library environments contribute significantly to deviant behaviour among library users. Addressing these factors is essential for maintaining discipline, protecting library collections, and promoting the effective utilization of library resources and services.

Measures already in place to Curb Deviant Behaviours of Library Users

Academic libraries around the world have implemented various measures to reduce deviant behaviour among users and protect their information resources. These measures

are designed not only to safeguard library collections but also to promote discipline, maintain a conducive learning environment, and ensure equitable access to information resources for all users. The effectiveness of these measures largely depends on the commitment of library management, staff, and users to complying with established library policies and regulations.

One of the most common measures adopted by academic libraries is the formulation and strict enforcement of library rules and regulations. Libraries often display warning notices and awareness messages that discourage theft, mutilation, vandalism, noise-making, and other forms of misconduct. According to Eruvwe (2015), theft and mutilation of library materials constitute criminal offences and should attract appropriate disciplinary actions. Clearly communicating the consequences of violating library regulations serves as a deterrent and encourages users to handle library resources responsibly.

Another important strategy is the strengthening of library security and monitoring systems. Ukwueze & Osuagwu (2023) recommended thorough checks of users and their belongings at library exits, periodic inspections of students' hostels where necessary, the deployment of competent and trustworthy security personnel, and continuous public awareness campaigns through student associations, notice boards, newsletters, and other communication channels. These measures help to discourage deviant behaviour and promote responsible use of library facilities.

In recent years, many academic libraries have adopted electronic security technologies to enhance the protection of their collections. According to Mark (2014),

traditional security methods alone are no longer sufficient to address the increasing rate of theft and vandalism in libraries. Consequently, many libraries now utilize technologies such as Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), electronic security gates, barcode systems, and perimeter alarm systems to monitor users' activities and prevent the unauthorized removal of library materials. Among these technologies, Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) has become one of the most widely used security measures in academic libraries. Jet (2015) observed that CCTV systems enable continuous surveillance of library users and significantly reduce incidents of theft, vandalism, and mutilation of library materials. Similarly, RFID technology enhances the security of library collections by attaching electronic tags to library materials. These tags activate alarm systems whenever materials are removed from the library without proper authorization, thereby helping to prevent theft and unauthorized circulation of information resources.

Another effective measure is the provision of comprehensive user education and library orientation programmes. New users should be adequately introduced to library rules, regulations, available services, and the proper handling of information resources. Continuous user education helps create awareness of the importance of preserving library collections and encourages responsible behaviour among library patrons. Information literacy programmes also equip users with the knowledge and skills required to utilize library resources ethically and effectively.

Academic libraries also employ disciplinary measures to discourage misconduct. Depending on the nature and severity of the offence, penalties may include verbal or

written warnings, suspension of borrowing privileges, payment for damaged or lost materials, temporary suspension from library use, or referral to the institution's disciplinary committee. The consistent application of these sanctions serves as a deterrent to potential offenders and reinforces compliance with library regulations.

Furthermore, improving the availability of information resources can significantly reduce deviant behaviour. Libraries that maintain adequate copies of high-demand materials and provide access to electronic information resources reduce users' frustration and minimize the temptation to steal, mutilate, or conceal library materials. Adequate funding is therefore essential for acquiring current resources and maintaining effective security systems.

In addition, regular supervision by library staff, routine inspection of reading areas, proper shelving of library materials, and the cultivation of cordial relationships between library staff and users contribute significantly to minimizing deviant behaviour. When users perceive library staff as approachable and supportive, they are more likely to comply with library regulations and report suspicious activities.

Methodology

This study adopted the survey research design, which was considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to obtain data from respondents regarding their opinions and experiences on deviant behaviours among library users. The study was carried out in the libraries of the Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO), and Coal City University (CCU), Enugu. The population of the study comprised 134 library staff,

consisting of 129 library staff from the Federal University of Technology, Owerri, and 5 library staff from Coal City University, Enugu. The sample size for the study was 134 library staff. A census sampling technique was adopted because the population was relatively small and manageable. Consequently, all members of the population were included in the study. The instrument used for data collection was a structured rating scale questionnaire, designed to elicit information from the respondents regarding deviant behaviours among library users. The data collected were analyzed using mean scores to answer the research questions. A criterion mean of 2.50 was established for decision-making. Any item with a mean score of 2.50 or above was regarded as accepted (positive response), while any item with a mean score below 2.50 was regarded as rejected (negative response).

Result

One hundred and thirty four (134) research instruments were distributed to the libraries studied and one hundred and thirty (130) were well filled and returned, showing 97% return rate.

Data Analysis Based On Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the kinds of deviant behaviours exhibited by library users in the library?

Table: Kinds of Deviant Behaviours Exhibited by Library Users

(N=130)								
S/N	Item Statement	Freq.	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Total Score	Mean Decision
1	Theft	Freq. Score	47	53	10	20	387	2.9 Positive

			188	159	20	20			
2	Mutilation	Freq.	36	35	30	29	338	2.6	Positive
		Score	144	105	60	29			
3	Defacement	Freq.	101	10	9	10	462	3.6	Positive
		Score	404	30	18	10			
4	Impersonation	Freq.	100	11	8	11	460	3.5	Positive
		Score	400	33	16	11			
5	Vandalism	Freq.	95	15	9	10	453	3.5	Positive
		Score	380	45	18	10			
6	Noise making	Freq.	110	10	9	10	498	3.8	Positive
		Score	440	30	18	10			
7	Refusal to return overdue borrowed books	Freq.	80	45	5	0	465	3.6	Positive
		Score	320	135	10	0			
8	Answering calls in the reading hall	Freq.	130	0	0	0	520	4.0	Positive
		Score	520	0	0	0			
9	Smuggling food and drinks into the library	Freq.	120	10	0	0	510	3.9	Positive
		Score	480	30	0	0			
10	Verbal and physical abuse against staff and users	Freq.	105	5	15	5	470	3.6	Positive
		Score	420	15	30	5			

The analysis of Table 1 revealed that theft, mutilation, defacement, impersonation, vandalism, noise making, refusal to return overdue borrowed books, answering calls in the reading hall, smuggling food and drinks into the library and verbal and physical abuse against staff and users are the kinds of deviant behaviours exhibited by library users in the libraries studied. This is evident in their responses which were above 2.5 average.

Research Question 2: What are the causes of deviant behaviours by library users in the library?

Table 2: Causes of Deviant Behaviours by Library Users

(N=130)

S/N	Item Statement	Freq.	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Total Score	Mean	Decision
1	Poor library orientation	Freq.	36	35	30	29	338	2.6	Positive
		Score	144	105	60	29			

2	Poor library security	Freq.	101	10	9	10	462	3.6	Positive
		Score	404	30	18	10			
3	Lack of punishment to defaulters	Freq.	100	11	8	11	460	3.5	Positive
		Score	400	33	16	11			
4	Inadequate information resources	Freq.	95	15	9	10	453	3.5	Positive
		Score	380	45	18	10			
5	Ignorance of gravity of the offence	Freq.	110	10	9	10	498	3.8	Positive
		Score	440	30	18	10			

The analysis of Table 2 revealed that poor orientation, poor library security, lack of punishment to defaulters, inadequate information resources and ignorance of gravity of the offense are the causes of deviant behaviours by library users in the libraries studied. This is evident in their response rates which are above 2.5.

Research Question 3: What are the measures already in place to curb deviant behaviours of library users in the library?

Table 3: Measures Already in Place to Curb Deviant Behaviours of Library Users (N=130)

S/N	Item Statement	Freq.	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Total Score	Mean	Decision
1	Searching users thoroughly at the library exit	Freq.	80	45	5	0	465	3.6	Positive
		Score	320	135	10	0			
2	Unannounced searching of students hostels	Freq.	47	53	10	20	387	2.9	Positive
		Score	188	159	20	20			
3	Posting security personnel of integrity to the library	Freq.	100	11	8	11	460	3.5	Positive
		Score	400	33	16	11			
4	Constant supervision of security personnel by library staff to ensure that they are alert and are carrying out their duties as stipulated	Freq.	95	15	9	10	453	3.5	Positive
		Score	380	45	18	10			
5	Vigilance by library staff	Freq.	110	10	9	10	498	3.8	Positive
		Score	440	30	18	10			

6	Condemnation of deviant behaviours through the mass media, student newspapers and magazines	Freq. Score	110 440	10 30	9 18	10 10	498	3.8	Positive
7	Proper orientation of new library users	Freq. Score	95 380	15 45	9 18	10 10	453	3.5	Positive

Searching users thoroughly at the library exit, unannounced searching of students hostels, posting security personnel of integrity to the library, constant supervision of security personnel by library staff to ensure that they are alert and are carrying out their duties as stipulated, vigilance by library staff, condemnation of deviant behaviours through the mass media, student newspapers and magazines and proper orientation of new library users are the measures already in place to curb deviant behaviours of library users in the libraries studied. This is evident in their response rates which are above 2.5 average.

Results and Discussion

Kinds of Deviant Behaviours Exhibited by Library Users

The findings of the study revealed that theft, mutilation, defacement, impersonation, vandalism, noise-making, refusal to return overdue borrowed books, answering phone calls in the reading hall, smuggling food and drinks into the library, and verbal and physical abuse against library staff and users are the major forms of deviant behaviour exhibited by library users in the libraries under study. This finding is consistent with that of Ogunsola (2014), who postulated that theft, mutilation, defacement, and impersonation are among the common forms of deviant behaviour exhibited by users of academic libraries.

Causes of Deviant Behaviours by Library Users

The study further revealed that poor user orientation, inadequate library security, lack of sanctions for offenders, and inadequate information resources are the major causes of deviant behaviour among library users in the libraries under study. This finding agrees with that of Akinfolanrin (2012), who identified poor library security systems, inadequate monitoring of library users, insufficient information resources, and ineffective user education programmes as major factors responsible for deviant behaviour among library users.

Measures already in place to Curb Deviant Behaviours of Library Users

The findings also revealed that thorough searching of users at library exits, unannounced inspections of students' hostels, deployment of trustworthy security personnel, constant supervision of security personnel by library staff to ensure that they effectively perform their duties, vigilance by library staff, public condemnation of deviant behaviours through the mass media, student newspapers and magazines, and proper orientation of new library users are the major measures already in place to curb deviant behaviour among library users in the libraries under study. This finding is consistent with Ukwueze & Osuagwu (2023), who recommended thorough checks at library exits, periodic inspections of students' hostels, deployment of trustworthy security personnel, and public awareness campaigns through student newspapers and other media to discourage deviant behaviour in academic libraries.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Library management should develop and implement effective strategies and policies aimed at preventing and reducing deviant behaviours among library users.
2. Since poor user orientation, inadequate security, lack of sanctions, and insufficient information resources were identified as major causes of deviant behaviour, library management should strengthen monitoring, improve user education programmes, and enforce appropriate disciplinary measures to minimize these behaviours.
3. Library management should continuously explore and adopt additional preventive measures, including modern security technologies, periodic user education programmes, and regular review of library policies, to further reduce deviant behaviour and ensure the effective protection and utilization of library resources.
4. Students that uphold good attitudes in the library should be regularly encourages as this will motivate others to do same.

Conclusion

This study is centered on combating deviant behaviours among users of the libraries of the Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO), and Coal City University, Enugu. The findings revealed that behaviours such as theft, mutilation of library materials, noise-making, concealment of books, and non-compliance with library rules and regulations negatively affect the effective utilization of library resources and services. These behaviours limit access to information resources and undermine the library's ability to

support teaching, learning, and research. The study further established that inadequate user education, poor monitoring and supervision, weak security measures, and insufficient information resources contribute significantly to the occurrence of deviant behaviour among library users. The study therefore concludes that improving user orientation programmes, strengthening library security systems, enforcing library rules and regulations, and adopting effective preventive measures will help reduce deviant behaviour and enhance the preservation and effective utilization of library resources.

References

- Adesina, B. T. (2013). Guide to large scale production of moringa oleifera for sustainable aquaculture development in Nigeria: prospects and challenges. *Agrosearch*, 13(3): 186-194.
- Akinfolanrin, I. K. (2012). *The place of financial management in personnel psychology*. A paper presented as part of personnel psychology guest lecturer series. Department of guidance and counseling, university of Ibadan, Nigeria.
- Egbuchu, C. C. & Osuagwu, H. U. (2023). Impact of advertisement on the use of library information resources in Federal Polytechnic Nekede, Owerri Library. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. Available on <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/7964>
- Eruvwe, U. (2015). Defiant attitude among library users in Federal University of Petroleum Resources Library Effurun (FUPRE) Nigeria. *Information and Knowledge Management (Online)*, 5 (3), 131-141.
- Jet, M. (2015), Causes and effects of delinquent behaviour in academic libraries (Kenneth Dike Library as a case study). *Owena Journal of Library and Information Science* 2(1): 25-34.
- Maidabino, A. A. (2010). *Collection security issues in Malaysian academic libraries: An exploratory survey*. Unpublished dissertation, faculty of computer science and information technology, University of Malaya, Malaysia.
- Mark F. A. (2014). An overview of library security. *Nigerian Journal of Library, of Library Archives and Information Science*, 1(1& 2), 95-97.
- Ogunsola, L. A. (2014). Nigerian University Libraries and the Challenges of

- Globalization: The Way Forward. *Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship* 5: .2-6.
- Okorie, N. & Njoku, L. (2016). Library user characteristics and needs. In P. C. Akanwa & R. U. Ononogbo (eds.). *Basic concepts of library practice*. Owerri: Supreme publishers.
- Singh, J. & Kaur, T. (2019). *Future of academic Libraries in India challenges and opportunities: A paper presented at international conference academic Libraries (ICAL) held at the university of Delli, India*. P. 52.
- Ukwueze, P. O. & Osuagwu, H. U. (2023). Exploring the perception of students on library education in enhancing their use of library services in Coal City University. *Nigerian Academic and Research Libraries Journal*, 2(2), pp.67-80.
- Ukwueze, P. O., Osuagwu, H. U. & Ani, S. C. (2022). Exploring the impact of library education in addressing library anxiety among first year students of Coal City University, Enugu, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. Available on <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/7825>
- Uwa, E. D. (2014). *Libraries and librarianship*. Great Stars Publishers International Company.
- Uwandu, L. I. (2020). Job stress in academic libraries: Causes and management strategies adopted by librarians. *The Information Management*, 4, 91-102
- Uwandu, L. I. & Osuji, C. E. (2022). Use of social media for service delivery by library staff in academic libraries in Imo State: A case study of Federal University of Technology, Owerri. *International Journal of Research in Library Science (IJRLS)*, 8 (2), 1-8.
- Velnampy, T. (2012). Job attitude and employees performance of public sector organizations in Jaffna District. Retrieved from *researchgate.net* on 13th June, 2026
- Whitaker, K. (2014). *The Basics of Library-based User Service*. Michigan: *Library Association*, 133.