

SECURITY STRATEGIES FOR THE PROTECTION OF INFORMATION RESOURCES FROM USERS' MISDEMEANOURS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN IMO STATE.

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The main purpose of the study was to examine security strategies for the protection of information resources from users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State. In addition, it sought to: identify the level of prevalence of users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State; ascertain the relationship between application of electronic security gadgets and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State; determine the relationship between provision of security personnel at the entrance of the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State and identify the relationship between construction of burglary proofs in the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The study adopted survey and correlation research designs. The entire population of 220 library staff in the public universities in Imo State were studied, hence the adoption of census sampling technique. A rating scale tagged "Security Strategies on the Protection of Information Resources from Users Misdemeanours (SSPIRUM)" was used to collect data for the study. Research question one was answered using mean and standard deviation and hypothesis one tested using one sample t-test while research questions 2-6 were answered using Pearson correlation and the t-test of significant correlation was used to test hypotheses 2-6 at 0.05 level of significance.

Findings: The findings of the study indicate that: users' misdemeanours are prevalent in the public university libraries studied; there is a low and negative relationship between application of electronic security gadgets, provision of security personnel at the entrance of the library, construction of burglary proofs, and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State.

Practical Implications: Users of the library exhibit certain levels of misdemeanours and applying security measures such as electronic security gadgets, security personnel and construction of burglary proofs can help bring it to minimal level.

Originality/Value: The value of this work is on the identification of the extent security strategies in libraries can go in curtailing users' misdemeanours. Its originality lies in the fact that it has not been published elsewhere.

Keywords: Security, Strategies, Electronic Security Gadgets, Security Personnel, Burglary Proofs

Paper Type: Empirical

Introduction

Information resources are basically sources through which information can be sought to meet the information needs of the users. They are media through which the intellectual content of human knowledge, ideas, opinions, or feelings are preserved and secured. University libraries provide both print and Electronic Information Resources (EIR) for the use of the library patrons.

Ezekwe in Ukwueze and Osuagwu (2023) defines information resources as those materials, whether in physical or digital form, that support library patrons in their quest for knowledge. Some of these library materials are to be read and kept back on the shelves, but some are taken out of the library for use through lending (Okogwu & Nnam, 2013). In the course of using the university library resources, some users engage in activities

which are detrimental to the achievement of the library's goals and objectives.

These negative attitudes are referred to as user misdemeanours, library crimes, user delinquency, user misconducts. According to Egbuchu (2016), misdemeanour is an act perpetrated in violation of rules and regulations. Library misdemeanours rank from the negative user behaviour to attacks on library and information resources, library facilities, equipment and assault on staff of the library. As a result of the varied use of the library resources by patrons from different backgrounds, the library stands to be susceptible to all kinds of misdeeds and security challenges from users. Security breaches in libraries include; pilfering, defacing or mutilation of pages, pictures, diagrams, tables, writing on library walls and furniture, chewing gum, eating food items, noise making, mishandling of library materials, holding borrowed books beyond their due date and displaying unruly behaviour and impersonation. All these can have adverse effects on the use and growth of libraries. Natural factors usually known as disasters such as: earthquake, flood, fire, storm, cyclone or hurricane, humidity, landslides, rodents, insects, and many others also serve as destroyers of library materials and can cause loss of all or part of the library's collection. All of these have been experienced by libraries in different countries.

Disasters, whether natural or man-made affect library materials. However, for the purpose of this study, only man-made disasters are studied. These valuable resources housed by the library such as books and other information materials are targets for criminal activities by deviant users. These have been attributed to security lapses, insufficient or limited number of essential materials, and user's financial constraints. Boss cited in Nwaogu (2023) also identified physical weaknesses in libraries in terms of unsecured windows, faulty emergency exits, unstaffed computer rooms, poor policies and procedures, lack of security plans, poor security points (exits, loading areas, windows, special collections) inadequate loans and renewal periods, lack of security' manuals and poor signage as some of the causes of security breaches. Tom-George and Aforomo (2023) opine that there is need for libraries to safeguard their materials against harm and improper conduct. As crucial as offering efficient services in response to the community's information demands is ensuring adequate security and safety of its holdings. Some of the security measures proposed by Mmejim and Umahi (2019) are user education, use of gadgets, electronic security, maintaining of security at the exit doors of the library, effective burglary proof on windows and doors of the library, discipline of culprits, among others. To handle issues of security in libraries, Udo-Anyanwu and Osuagwu (2026)

recommend that university management should provide adequate security personnel in and around libraries. In order to meet the expectations of patrons, libraries anticipate and take reliable steps to avoid loss of their worth by ensuring the security of the information resources. These steps are logically described by Edom (2012) as considerable security measures which libraries establish to curb the situation. The paucity of funds released to public university libraries calls for adequate protection of the few books acquired.

Maintaining the security of information resources and services is an integral library operation that can make libraries remain perpetually useful. Security is the state or condition of being protected from harm, danger, or threats. It includes physical, digital, and organisational security, among other aspects. Security can have variety of connotations in the library world. Internet security and security of library materials are both important aspects of library services, but more important is the safety of the library collection, patrons and staff (Agboola & Aduku, 2019). Security is seen by Ochogwu and Abdulrahman (2018) as the state of being free from danger or risk, a situation where an entity or organization is protected against an espionage or attack of any sort.

The rapid growth of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has brought a great change in the operations of

the libraries. Mmejim and Umahi (2019) maintain that the installation of security and monitoring gadgets relates to the use of modern security devices in the form of Closed-Circuit Television known as CCTV and video surveillance. These gadgets can be installed to observe the activities of users in the library. The awareness that these gadgets are installed in the library will go a long way in restraining users of the library from engaging in misuse of the library as well as ensure the security of the library resources. The idea behind this is to prevent the library and its collections from vandalism and delinquent behaviours. The various ICT facilities that can be used to curb theft and mutilation of resources in the library include: Close Circuit Television (CCTV), surveillance tapes and chips, computers, Automated Fingerprint Identification Systems (AFIS), Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) systems, computerized charging system, among others. The electronic gadgets should be monitored by human beings.

The presence of security personnel is also a security strategy to ensure the safety of information resources in libraries. Aguolu and Aguolu cited in Amadis (2023) assert that one of the feasible ways of ensuring effectual security of library materials is by increasing security alertness and through the use of uniformed security guards as well as engaging some library assistants as surveillance attendants. The presence of porters at their

duty post to check patrons in and out and checking users' bags if they are going away with library materials is a welcomed idea for the security of library resources. Well trained security personnel mounted at the library entrance and exit doors to assist the porters in their security endeavour is ideal to checkmate some of the deviant activities of patrons in the form of theft in the library. Some users try to outsmart the security personnel at the exit door by not going out with the library materials rather, they find a way of throwing them out through unprotected windows and coming out to pick them.

Fixing of burglary proofs on windows and doors to a great extent is a further way of ensuring the security of library resources. Burglary proofs, wire gauze and mosquito nets fixed on the windows of the library will help to stop library users from throwing books and other library materials out of the library through the windows. Although Cherdantseva and Hilton (2013) maintain that securing the window through the use of guards, grilles, or bars is not always architecturally acceptable, although they can be a cost effective solution in certain circumstances, the protection of the library's resources ensures her continued existence and enhances the availability of her information resources and efficient services.

Statement of the Problem

Security of library resources is very paramount in the provision of efficient library

service delivery. Where there is insecurity of library collections, the resources are exposed to dangers such as theft, mutilation, and vandalism among others. Kishan and Chakravarthy (2021) alluded that many libraries face challenges related to security threats and loss of information due to unethical practices, such as vandalism, theft, defacement and mutilation.

In university libraries where the number of students is more than information resources available, these users' misdemeanours seem to be prevalent. The researcher wonders if the persistence of these misdemeanours is as a result of inadequate security strategies adopted by university libraries. Also, with some security strategies on ground, the researchers want to identify their relationships with users' misdemeanours to identify which ones are more effective in curbing them.

Objectives of the Study

This study examined the security strategies for the protection of information resources against users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State. Specifically, this study sought to:

1. identify the level of prevalence of users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State;
2. ascertain the relationship between application of electronic security gadgets and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State;

3. determine the relationship between provision of security personnel at the entrance of the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State;
4. identify the relationship between construction of burglary proofs in the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State.

Research Questions

The following questions are posed to guide this research:

1. What is the level of prevalence of users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State?
2. What is the coefficient of relationship between the application of electronic security gadgets and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State?
3. What is the coefficient of relationship between provision of security personnel at the entrance of the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State?
4. What is the coefficient of relationship between construction of burglary proofs in the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for this study:

Ho₁: The mean score on the level of prevalence of users' misdemeanour in public university libraries in Imo State is not significantly greater than the expected mean of 30.

Ho₂: There is no significant coefficient of relationship between the application of electronic security gadgets and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State.

Ho₃: The coefficient of relationship between the provision of security personnel at the entrance of the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State is not significant.

Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between construction of burglary proofs in the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State.

Literature Review

Misdemeanour is the infringement of a laid down law or the perpetration of an offense. It is also seen as a crime. Opp (2020) defines crime as an illegal act that is worthy of blame, condemned by the public and sanctioned by the state. There are different classifications of crime, namely; felonies, misdemeanours, and infractions. In the library environment simple offenses otherwise referred to as infraction vis-à-vis insults, arson, mutilation, vandalism, treason, defacing of information material and users'

personal belongings are predominant crimes. Nnam, Okogwu and Adinde (2018) identified mutilation, burglary, arson and theft as common of crimes committed in the library. Relating misdemeanour to librarianship, as stated by Broadhead cited in Mmejim and Umahi (2019), it applies to the action of rendering an information resource defective either by carting it away or destroying the whole of it or part of it.

Libraries are repository centres set up to cater for the educational, cultural, research, recreational and information needs of their clientele. Hence, library users in our contemporary society anticipate easy access to electronic and physical information resources. The responsibility of securing these information resources solely lies on the analogue and digital librarians (Agboola & Aduku, 2019). The issue of security has become a growing concern to university libraries and librarians.

Library security is a simple technique for effective methods of protecting information resources. Gupta and Madhusudham (2018) observed that library security is a broad term and can be defined as the arrangements provided for safe and secure facilities for library staff, library resources, equipment, and library users. Gupta and Sharman cited in Ogedoihu and Adinchezor (2022) stated that library security practices encompass both technical and non-technical issues to safeguard organizational assets from

a variety of threats. Information Systems (IS) in libraries support the delivery of images, services and collections to local and remote patrons and its availability over the internet inevitably exposes it to security threats. Libraries and archives must have safety and security plans in place to ensure that staff are prepared to respond to fire, water emergencies, and other large scale threats to collections. Olajide (2017) expressing security as concern of library argued that libraries are 'systems' and security is a vital part of maintaining balance in the system. Some empirical studies carried out in relation to the subject matter are reviewed below.

A survey was carried out by Omoike and Alabi (2020) on theft, mutilation and abuse of library and information materials by undergraduates of University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The study investigates theft, mutilation and abuse of library information materials by undergraduate students of the University of Ibadan. Descriptive research design was used. The population used was 105 undergraduates who are library users. The random sampling technique was used. The questionnaire was adopted for data collection. Data collected were analyzed using frequency, tables and percentages. The reliability was tested using Cronbach alpha. The results revealed that financial constraints, selfishness on the part of students, and high demand of books were major causes of theft and mutilation of library materials. The study

further revealed that monitoring attitude of people in the library, mounting of cameras in the library, having qualified staff and good library orientation exercise, among others, were the major methods libraries adopt to prevent information resources from theft, mutilation and abuse.

Similarly, Ufuoma and Urhefe (2019) researched on control mechanism of deviant behaviour among library users. The study was conducted in government-owned universities in Delta State, Nigeria. The study aimed at assessing the deviant behaviours of library patrons and the feasible avenues for the control of these behaviours. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design having a population of 1,216 users of the library. A structured questionnaire was utilized as instrument for data collection while percentages, frequency distribution, bar charts and pyramid were used in analyzing the data obtained. Based on the findings of the study, deviant behaviours of library users entailed answering calls in reading halls, defacing library books and smuggling drinks and food into the library. The cause of users' deviant behaviours as indicated by the findings of the study was ignorant of the rules and regulations of the library and the steps to be taken in order to ameliorate the situation is adequate orientation of new users of the library on the rules and regulations guiding the use of the library and the punishment attached to each offense.

Bakare, Akanbi and Orejoko (2021) researched on a comparative assessment of disruptive behaviours among users in selected university libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria. The paper employed a survey research design with a population of 150 staff from three universities in Kwara State. A structured questionnaire was used to gather information for the study while the data was analysed using simple percentages and frequency using tables. According to the findings of the study, users' misbehaviour includes noisemaking, fight, misuse of library space, theft and mutilation of books. The study attributed the causes of users' misdemeanours to the absence of CCTV installation, ineffective surveillance and nonchalant attitude on the part of library staff. The study concluded by relating that the negative behaviours of library users have had adverse impact on the library environment making it unable to meet its purpose of establishment.

A study was done by Ezeabasili (2018) on impact of electronic security systems in the security of information resources in federal university libraries in Southern Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were to find out the impact of electronic security systems in the security of information resources in federal university libraries in Southern Nigeria; to ascertain the challenges to the use of electronic security systems in federal university libraries under study and to determine the strategies to

overcome the challenges to the use of electronic security systems in the academic libraries under study. The population and sample of the study comprised of one hundred and eleven (111) librarians drawn from seven federal universities. Purposive sampling was used to select seven federal universities from Southern Nigeria. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The major findings for the study revealed that electronic security systems have impacted positively in the reduction of the following security threats to information resources in the library: book theft; mutilation; misuse of library's internet; illegal borrowing of books; defacement; and arson; theft of patron's belongings; tearing of filled catalogue cards; and eating in the library. The study reviewed the challenges to the use of electronic security systems to include: inadequate funding to support the electronic security systems; lack of university management attention on the security needs of the library, power outage, system failure or downtime, and poor maintenance.

Madaki and Yakasai (2021) examined the consequences of security breaches to print-information resources and preventive measures in university libraries of North Western Nigeria. Three research objectives were stated for the study. Quantitative research methodology through cross sectional survey design was employed for the study.

The population of the study was 145 library staff of the readers' services departments of the seven university libraries' headquarters in the North West geo-political zone. Data were collected through questionnaire, using simple random sample. Descriptive statistics using frequency percentages through the use of SPSS 16.0 versions were used for data analysis. The study revealed that majority of the information resources mostly affected by security issues are printed resources. And that the major security breaches in the libraries are inadequacy of security personnel, scarcity of library materials, Poor arrangement of library materials, poor environmental condition, unsecured environment, juvenile users, disasters, among others. It also revealed that information availability, information accessibility and use and information resources development as the major consequences of security breaches in libraries.

In 2019, Musa, Faga and Ejeh carried out a study on the effect of library security on service delivery in Federal University Lafia, Library- Nigeria. The study was guided by three specific objectives. The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised 16 library staff and 491 registered students. Instrument for data collections was questionnaire. Two set questionnaire were developed, one for library staff and the other for students. The research questions were answered and frequency and percentages (%) were used in

analysing the data. For clarity, each item was presented in a table and all findings were presented as the tables revealed. Findings revealed that of all the security apparatus identified by the researcher such as surveillance cameras, radio frequency identification, panic alarms, perimeter alarm system, door intrusion alarms, nexpak/amaray secure cases, alpha security cases or extreme-pac cases, clear-vu one-time and em security tags, the library did not adopt any of them. In addition, it was discovered that poor budgeting /inadequate funding of the library, inadequate staff/personnel, epileptic/erratic power supply to implement electronic security, lack of institutional security policy, among others were some of the challenges faced by the library in the area of security of library materials. The results however point out that the strategies to enhance the implementation of library security are; improve funding of university libraries, employ more staff in the library, there should be security policy for the library among others.

Research Methodology

The study adopted a survey and correlation design. The population comprised

220 library staff in the public universities in Imo state. The entire population was used as the sample size. hence the adoption of census sampling technique. A rating scale tagged “Security Strategies for the Protection of Information Resources from Users Misdemeanours (SSPIRUM)” was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was validated by two specialists in Library and Information Science and One specialist in Educational Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha which yielded coefficient of 0.86. Research question one was answered using mean and standard deviation and hypothesis one tested using one sample t-test while research questions 2-4 were answered using Pearson correlation and the t-test of significant correlation was used to test hypotheses 2-4 at 0.05 level of significance.

Data Analyses and Presentation

Research question 1: What is the level of prevalence of users’ misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State?

Table 1: Mean responses of library staff on prevalence of users’ misdemeanours in Public university libraries.

S/N	Item statements	HP	P	LP	NP	Mean	S.D	Decision
1	Hiding of books	94	77	49	0	3.20	0.78	Prevalent
2	Vandalism	35	93	75	17	2.66	0.83	Prevalent
3	Theft of library materials	67	78	66	9	2.92	0.87	Prevalent
4	Mutilation	86	51	74	9	2.97	0.94	Prevalent

5	Non return of borrowed materials	26	94	92	8	2.63	0.73	Prevalent
6	Cybercrimes	69	74	60	17	2.89	0.94	Prevalent
7	Illegal borrowing	16	68	111	25	2.34	0.77	Low prevalence
8	Impersonation	33	77	76	34	2.50	0.92	Prevalent
9	Assault to library staff	26	43	126	25	2.32	0.82	Low prevalence
10	Throwing information resources out through unprotected windows	25	52	75	68	2.15	0.99	Low prevalence
11	Bringing food items to the library	86	67	59	8	3.05	0.89	Prevalent
12	Theft of library users items	44	69	82	25	2.60	0.93	Prevalent
Mean of item means						3.22		

Data on Table 1 show the mean responses of the library staff on users' misdemeanours in public university libraries. From distribution of the responses, it is seen that all the items except items 7 (2.34), 9 (2.32) and 10 (2.15) have their mean scores above 2.50 which is the criterion mean. The low mean for items 7, 9, and 10 indicate that illegal borrowing, assault to library staff and throwing information resources out through windows are not prevalent in University

libraries. The mean of item means is however given as 3.22 which is greater than 2.50 criterion mean. This implies that majority of the respondents are of the view that many misdemeanours are prevalent in university libraries in public universities in Imo State.

H₀₁. The mean score on the level of prevalence of users' misdemeanour in public university libraries in Imo State is not significantly greater than the expected mean of 30.

Table 2: One sample t-test of significance of responses on prevalence of users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State

Variable	N	Mean	S.D	Df	t-statistic	p-value	Decision
Users' misdemeanours	220	32.24	6.72	219	4.949	0.000	Significant

On Table 2, the data on one sample t-test of significance on the responses of library staff on prevalence of misdemeanours are presented. The general mean is 32.24 which is greater than the criterion mean of 30. More so, the p-value is given as 0.000 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and it is concluded that the mean responses of library

staff on the prevalence of misdemeanours in university public libraries is significantly greater than 30.

Research question 2: What is the coefficient of relationship between the application of electronic security gadgets and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State?

H₀₂. There is no significant coefficient of relationship between the application of electronic security gadgets and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State.

Table 3: Summary statistics for coefficient of relationship and significant correlation between application of electronic security gadgets and users' misdemeanor

Variables	N	Σ	R	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Extent of relationship	Decision
Application of electronic security gadgets	220	3800	-0.452	219	7.481	1.97	Moderate and negative	Significant
Users' misdemeanours	220	7092						

Σ = summation of variables, r = correlation coefficient, df = degree of freedom, t -cal= t-test calculated value, t -tab= t-test tabulated value

Data on Table 3 show the correlation coefficient and t-test of significant correlation between application of electronic security gadgets and users' misdemeanours in university public libraries in Imo state. The correlation coefficient is -0.452 which represents a moderate and negative correlation between application of security gadgets and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State. This negative relationship implies that an increment in application of electronic security gadgets is followed by a commensurate level of decrease in users' misdemeanours and vice versa.

The t-test of significant correlation revealed that the t-calculated value is 7.481

which is greater than the t-tabulated value of 1.97. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between application of electronic security gadgets and users' misdemeanours in university public libraries in Imo state.

Research Question 3: What is the coefficient of relationship between provision of security personnel at the entrance of the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State?

H₀₃. The coefficient of relationship between the provision of security personnel at the entrance of the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State is not significant.

Table 4: Summary statistics for coefficient of relationship and significant correlation between provision of security personnel at the entrance of the library and users' misdemeanours

Variables	N	Σ	R	df	t-cal	t-tab	Extent of relationship	Decision
Security personnel	220	3684	-0.391	219	6.272	1.97	Low and negative relationship	Significant
Users' misdemeanours	220	7092						

Σ = summation of variables, r = correlation coefficient, df = degree of freedom, t -cal= t-test calculated value, t -tab= t-test tabulated value

From Table 4 the coefficient of relationship between provision of security personnel at the entrance of the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State. The coefficient of relationship between the two variables is -0.391 which is a low and negative relationship. The negative relationship implies that an increase in the variable of provision of security personnel at the entrance of libraries leads to a decrease in prevalence of users' misdemeanours and vice versa.

The corresponding hypothesis shows a calculated t-test value of 6.272 which is greater than the t-tabulated value of 1.97. since the t-calculated value is greater than the

tabulated value, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is therefore concluded that there is a significant relationship between provision of security personnel at entrance of library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries.

Research Question 4: What is the coefficient of relationship between construction of burglary proofs in the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State?

H₀₄. There is no significant relationship between construction of burglary proofs in the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State.

Table 5: Summary statistics for coefficient of relationship and significant correlation between construction of burglary proofs and users' misdemeanours

Variables	N	Σ	R	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Extent of relationship	Decision
Burglary proofing	220	3688	-0.216	219	3.266	1.97	Low negative relationship	and Significant
Users' misdemeanours	220	7092						

Σ = summation of variables, r = correlation coefficient, df = degree of freedom, t -cal= t-test calculated value, t -tab= t-test tabulated value

Data on Table 5 show the relationship between construction of burglary proofs in the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo state. The correlation coefficient is -0.216 which is a low and negative relationship. This relationship implies that increment in the

variable of burglary proofing leads to a decrease in the variable of users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State.

The corresponding t-test of significant correlation shows a t-calculated value of 3.266 which is greater than the t-tabulated

value of 1.97. Since the t-calculated value is greater than the tabulated value, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between construction of burglary proofs in libraries and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries.

Discussion of Findings

Prevalence of users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo state

Findings from the study showed that many misdemeanours are prevalent in university libraries in public universities in Imo State and the corresponding hypothesis showed that the responses of librarians on prevalence of misdemeanours are significantly. This finding indicates that unwanted user behavior is a common issue in public university libraries in Imo State. User misdemeanours can negatively impact academic environment and discourage utilization of library services while reducing effectiveness of library services. If left unaddressed, misdemeanours may erode trust between users and library management. In line with this finding are the findings of Omoike and Alabi (2020) who in a similar study, recorded a high prevalence of misdemeanours such as theft, mutilation and abuse of library information resources in public university libraries. Also, in line with the study's finding on prevalence of misdemeanours are the findings of Ufuoma and Urhefe (2019) who reported prevalence of deviant behaviours among library users

such as answering calls in reading halls, defacing library books and smuggling drinks and food into the library.

Relationship between application of electronic security gadgets and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State

From the findings, it is seen that there is a low and negative relationship between application of electronic security gadgets and users' misdemeanours in university public libraries in Imo state and the relationship is statistically significant. The low, negative and significant relationship indicates that as the use of electronic security gadgets increases, misdemeanours tend to decrease. Electronic security acts as a deterrent, as users are aware they are being monitored. The study's finding gives credence to the findings of Ezeabasili (2018) who recorded a strong and significant relationship between use of electronic security devices and users' misdemeanour. The presence of electronic security gadgets significantly deterred deviant library behaviours. Also, in line with this finding, Bakare, Akanbi and Orejoko (2021) recorded in a similar study that users' misdemeanours in public libraries were prevalent as a result of lack of CCTV cameras and ineffective electronic surveillance of the libraries.

Relationship between provision of security personnel and user misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State

The findings from the study reveal that there is a low and negative relationship between provision of security personnel at the entrance of the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries and the relationship is statistically significant. This finding is similar to the use of electronic security gadgets as a deterrent to user misdemeanours. This finding validates the belief that the physical presence of security staff is very effective in preventing user misdemeanours. This finding coincides with the findings of Urhiewhu, Emojorho and Omah (2018) who reported reduction in deviant library behaviours as a result of security personnel present at strategic areas in the libraries. Also, the findings of Musa, Faga and Ejeh (2019) revealed that lack of security personnel and surveillance cameras in a university library in Lafia, led to an increase in deterrent behaviours among library users.

Relationship between construction of burglary proofs and user misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo State

From the study's findings, it was seen that there is a low and negative relationship between construction of burglary proofs in the library and users' misdemeanours in public university libraries in Imo state and this relationship is statistically significant. This finding highlights the effectiveness of physical security infrastructure in buildings. This negative and significant relationship indicates that the more a building or structure

is physically secured, the less misdemeanours such as burgling, pilfering etc., are prone to occur. This is likely because it prevents unauthorized entry and makes the theft of library property more difficult. In line with this finding, Madaki and Yakasai (2021) recorded significant positive relationship between poor environmental conditions of library structure (lack of burglaries) and security breaches i.e., security breaches were intensified as a result of inadequate provision of burglary proofs.

Recommendations

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

1. To reduce misdemeanours among library users in academic libraries, a library "code of conduct" agreement for new users should be enacted by librarians to be signed by users upon registration in the library.
2. Management of university libraries should install electronic security gadgets in strategic areas where there are expensive hardware and resource materials.
3. University administration should train security personnel not only in security protocols but also in customer service and conflict resolution as they are the first point of contact and should be able to handle situations professionally without escalating them.

4. Librarians should conduct a regular audit of their physical security infrastructure to identify and address vulnerabilities.

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