

APPLICATION OF ICT IN COMBATING BOOK THEFT AND VANDALISM IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, OWERRI LIBRARY

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Abstract

Purpose: This study focused on application of ICT in combating book theft and vandalism in Federal University of Technology, Owerri Library. Three objectives and three research questions were posed to guide the study.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The research design adopted for the study was descriptive survey design. The population of the study is 123 library staff. The sample size for the study is 123 respondents. Census enumeration is the technique used to study all the population, since the population is small and manageable by the researcher. In this study, the researcher used rating scale as the instrument for data collection. Data collected from the field work were analyzed using mean scores. In realizing the objectives, the four rating scale was adopted.

Findings: The finding of the study revealed that indigenes of student, drastic reduction in book votes, poor security, belief that public property belongs to nobody in particular, selfishness on the part of some users and high cost of books in Nigeria are the causes of theft and vandalism in the library studied; newspapers, bibliographies, textbooks and library catalogs are vandalized at a very high extent while literature guides and journals are vandalized at a high extent rate; directories, instructional television, compact disc and computers are vandalized at a very low extent rate; and radio Frequency Identification (RFID), Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), electronic security gates and digitization of resources are the ICT tools used in combating book theft and vandalism in the library studied.

Implications: Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that the library management should adopt measure in ensuring the reduction of the causes of vandalism and book theft most especially by organizing sensitization programmes so as to educate the users on the dangers of vandalism and theft;

Originality/Value: Libraries should adopt electronic security measures in order to ensure effective combating of book theft and vandalism; and the library should increase the ICT measures it adopts so as to combat the theft and vandalism of information materials by the users.

Keywords: *FUTO, Academic Libraries, Information Resources, Book Theft, Vandalism, ICT Tools, Security*

Introduction

Libraries serve as the intellectual and informational backbone of any society. They are institutions established to collect, organize, preserve, and make information resources accessible to users irrespective of age, background, or discipline. Scholars such as Anyanwu (2016) and Uchendu (2014) view the library as an organized repository of knowledge

managed by trained personnel to support education, research, and self-development. As a learning institution, the library plays a continuous role in personal and national development through the effective dissemination of information. Because societies differ in needs and purposes, different types of libraries exist to serve specific user groups.

There are various categories of libraries, including public, school, special, and academic libraries, each designed to fulfill distinct functions (Ode & Omokaro, 2011). Among these, academic libraries occupy a central position in institutions of higher learning. They are established in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, and similar institutions to support teaching, learning, and research activities. Academic libraries are therefore integral to the realization of the core objectives of their parent institutions, as they provide access to scholarly information required by students, lecturers, and researchers.

Academic libraries render a wide range of services aimed at meeting users' information needs. These include reference and referral services, photocopying, current awareness services, selective dissemination of information, and the systematic organization and provision of information resources. Beyond service provision, academic libraries also play a strategic role in managing information resources for effective knowledge creation and dissemination. Jubb and Green, cited in Uwa (2014), emphasize that academic libraries have historically been critical in supporting research across disciplines by acquiring, organizing, and making information resources accessible to their academic communities.

In fulfilling these responsibilities, academic libraries invest heavily in the acquisition and processing of information resources. These resources are organized into

retrievable formats and made available to support teaching, learning, and research. However, the effective delivery of these functions is often undermined by challenges such as overuse, misuse, and abuse of library materials (Bakole & Abioye, 2015). Given the substantial financial investment involved in building academic library collections, it becomes imperative to ensure adequate planning and strategies for the preservation and security of these resources.

Information resources constitute the core assets of any academic library. They are the information-bearing materials consulted by users to satisfy their academic, research, and personal information needs. Anyanwu, Zander, and Amadi (2016) define library information resources as materials stocked to meet users' reading and research requirements. Akanwa and Udo-Anyanwu (2017) categorizes these resources into three major groups: books, audiovisual materials, and Electronic Information Resources (EIRs). Collectively, these resources enable users to acquire knowledge and support intellectual growth. Traditionally, library information resources consisted mainly of print materials such as books, journals, newspapers, encyclopedias, and reference works. However, with advancements in information and communication technology, digital resources have become increasingly prominent. These include online databases, electronic journals, e-books, online encyclopedias, blogs, video

platforms, and other web-based information sources. In addition, information resources now encompass texts, videos, software, and other instructional materials used by educators to support learning outcomes.

Despite their importance, academic library information resources face significant security challenges. Anunobi and Okoye (2018) identify book theft and vandalism as major threats to library collections, particularly special and high-demand materials. In some cases, even library staff are implicated in the unauthorized removal of materials. These security lapses undermine access to information and weaken the effectiveness of academic libraries in fulfilling their mandates.

Book theft refers to the unlawful removal or non-return of library materials without proper authorization. According to Basbanes (2020), this may involve borrowing materials and failing to return them or physically removing items from library shelves. Motivations for book theft include personal gain, scarcity of materials, desire for rare resources, or deliberate misconduct. Closely related to theft is vandalism, which involves the intentional destruction or defacement of library materials, furniture, equipment, or facilities.

Vandalism manifests in various forms such as tearing pages, writing on books, damaging furniture, breaking equipment, and defacing library spaces. Bahr (2019) notes that vandalism not only causes physical damage to library materials but also disrupts library

services and creates inconvenience for users. Both book theft and vandalism result in the depletion of library collections, financial losses due to replacement and repairs, and reduced access to information for users.

The consequences of book theft and vandalism extend beyond material loss. Missing or damaged resources hinder students' academic work, disrupt research activities, and erode trust between libraries and their users. In some cases, vandalism poses safety risks to staff and patrons and creates an unconducive environment for study and research (Edem, 2018). Ultimately, these acts undermine the core mission of academic libraries as centers of learning and scholarship.

Historically, libraries have always been conscious of the need to protect their collections. Vellani (2010) observes that early libraries employed various security measures, many of which have evolved with technological advancements. Most academic libraries adopt Information and Communication Technology approach towards combating book theft and vandalism. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays an important role in combating book theft and vandalism in academic libraries. Libraries now employ various technological tools such as Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), barcode systems, Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), and electronic security gates to monitor the movement of library materials and users. These technologies help librarians detect unauthorized

removal of books, identify individuals involved in damaging library materials, and maintain accurate records of library circulation. For instance, RFID tags attached to books enable automated tracking and trigger alarms when items are removed without proper checkout. Similarly, CCTV cameras installed in strategic areas of the library help monitor user activities and discourage acts of vandalism (Omoike & Ikegune, 2020).

Furthermore, ICT-based library management systems assist in maintaining detailed circulation records and identifying missing or mutilated materials quickly. The use of automated systems reduces manual errors and strengthens accountability among library users. Through these technologies, academic libraries can effectively safeguard their collections and ensure that information resources remain available for present and future users (Akor, Ekere & Akor, 2019). Modern academic libraries now combine traditional and technological security strategies to safeguard their resources. Despite these efforts, book theft and vandalism remain persistent challenges, particularly in Nigerian academic libraries. This ongoing concern explains why librarians, from the earliest times to the present, continue to prioritize the protection and preservation of information resources, especially books, as a means of ensuring sustainable library development.

Statement of the Problem

Library resources are acquired not merely for accumulation but for effective utilization by library users. Their selection and acquisition are guided by the need to satisfy users' information requirements and to ensure sustained accessibility over time. To achieve this, libraries invest in proper organization, storage, and maintenance of information resources to enable easy and timely access.

Despite these efforts, many users still leave the library without meeting their information needs. This situation often arises from difficulties in locating required materials, prolonged and unsuccessful searches, or the unavailability of resources due to loss, damage, or mutilation. Such experiences create frustration among users and may discourage them and others from making effective use of library services.

These challenges are frequently linked to inadequate security measures and insufficient monitoring of library use. Incidents of book theft, vandalism, mutilation, and improper handling of materials further worsen the situation, reducing the lifespan and usability of library resources for other patrons. This in turn, triggers academic libraries to adopt ICT measures in the libraries. Against this backdrop, this study is undertaken to investigate the application of ICT in combating book theft and vandalism in the Federal University of Technology, Owerri Library.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate the application of ICT in combating book theft and vandalism in the Federal University of Technology, Owerri Library. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. ascertain the causes of book theft and vandalism in the library.
2. ascertain the extent to which book theft and vandalism have affected the information materials in the library.
3. find out the ICT tools used in combating book theft and vandalism in the library.

Research Questions

In line with the objectives, the following research questions were posed to guide this study.

1. What are the causes of book theft and vandalism in the library?
2. What is the extent to which book theft and vandalism have affected the information materials in the library?
3. What are the ICT tools used in combating book theft and vandalism in the library?

Literature Review

Library Information Resources

Library information resources are materials that contain information and are consulted for the purpose of meeting users' information needs, from which satisfaction is expected to be derived. These resources are acquired, stored, and disseminated by libraries for the benefit of their users.

According to Akanwa (2016), information resources are library materials preserved and made accessible to users to support learning, teaching, and research. Similarly, Anyanwu, Zander, and Amadi (2016) describes library information resources as knowledge-bearing materials stocked to meet the reading, study, and research needs of users, thereby enlightening and educating them in their respective fields. Akanwa (2016) further emphasizes that these resources are acquired, processed, and maintained specifically for effective use by library patrons.

From the foregoing, library information resources can be understood as materials made available by the library to support users' information needs. Expanding this view, Oyewusi and Oyeboade as cited in Ukwueze, Osuagwu and Ani (2022) include not only information materials but also the facilities and tools used to input, store, and retrieve information as part of library information resources. They assert that library information resources should encompass all textual and bibliographic sources available in the library. Information resources are information-bearing materials in both print and electronic formats, including textbooks, journals, indexes, abstracts, newspapers, magazines, reports, CD-ROM databases, the Internet, e-mail services, video tapes, diskettes, magnetic disks, computers, microforms, and related media. These materials constitute the raw

inputs that libraries acquire, organize, and make accessible to users in order to deliver various information services.

Library information resources therefore represent a broad collection of materials, services, and programmes designed to satisfy users' information needs. Essentially, they are resources provided and managed to ensure effective access to information. Akanwa (2016) categorizes library information resources into print and non-print formats. While traditional libraries focused largely on print materials such as books and periodicals, modern libraries now include audiovisual resources like video cassettes, slides, filmstrips, and models, as well as electronic resources such as CD-ROMs, the Internet, online databases, instant messaging platforms, and web-based resources. Halsey (2016) supports this view by stating that library information resources extend beyond print media to include audiovisual materials—such as audio cassettes, projectors, maps, photographs, and microforms—and Electronic Information Resources (EIRs) like computer software, online databases, e-books, and e-journals.

Furthermore, Akanwa (2016) classifies library information resources into three main categories: books, audiovisual materials, and Electronic Information Resources (EIRs). These resources enable library users to access relevant information and derive satisfaction from library services.

Given their importance, proper storage and preservation are necessary to ensure their continued availability for present and future use. Since these resources are acquired to meet users' information needs, incidents of theft and vandalism undermine their purpose and negatively affect effective service delivery in academic libraries.

Causes of Book Theft and Vandalism

Book theft and vandalism in academic libraries are caused by a combination of economic, academic, social, and institutional factors. Several scholars have identified poverty, high cost of books, inadequate library funding, and poor security as major contributors to this problem. Akinfolarin (2012) notes that poor security, reduced book votes, selfish attitudes of users, weak supervision, and the belief that public property belongs to no one significantly encourage book theft and vandalism.

In Nigeria, widespread poverty and the rising cost of books have made it difficult for many students to purchase recommended textbooks, thereby increasing dependence on library materials. Hogan-Bassey (2020) observes that most books are unaffordable to the majority of students, while Anyalebechi, Udo-Anyanwu and Ubochi (2016) identified reasons to include: students are not given adequate user education, selfishness of students, inadequacy of heavily used information resources, security lapses and attitude of staff to rules and regulations.

Similarly, Ogunyade (2015) attributes the problem to inadequate copies of books, short loan periods, and students' selfish desire to monopolize scarce materials.

Lack of effective security and supervision has also been identified as a major cause. Bello (2011) emphasizes that inadequate monitoring by library staff, coupled with insufficient collections, creates opportunities for theft and mutilation. The continuous increase in student population without a corresponding increase in library resources further intensifies competition for limited materials, making high-demand and expensive books more vulnerable to theft (Adewale & Oluwasanmi, 2007).

User-related factors such as dissatisfaction with library services, ignorance of replacement costs, lack of concern for other users, and the perception that book theft is not a serious crime also contribute to the problem (Lorenzen, 2016). As a result, some students resort to tearing pages or stealing entire books when they cannot afford personal copies. Studies further reveal that theft is carried out through various methods, including concealing books under clothing, removing materials during closing hours, using borrowed items to disguise stolen ones, and exploiting unsecured windows and exits (Edem, 2018). In some cases, library staff are directly or indirectly involved through negligence or connivance, such as poor enforcement of

security measures and failure to properly secure library facilities (Hogan-Bassey, 2018).

In addition to outright theft, other forms of vandalism and delinquent behavior—such as mutilation of books, defacing furniture, hiding materials, and keeping borrowed books beyond due dates—also undermine the effective use of library resources. Collectively, these factors contribute significantly to the persistent problem of book theft and vandalism in academic libraries.

The Extent Book Theft and Vandalism Affects Library Information Resources

Book theft and vandalism are antisocial acts that negatively affect library users and the effective utilization of library information resources. When books are stolen or mutilated, users are unable to access needed materials or find them in complete form, thereby limiting their satisfaction and effective use of the library. Agbo (2020) reports that book theft and vandalism have significantly undermined library services, leading to the withdrawal of damaged materials from shelves and increasing frustration among users, especially students from low socio-economic backgrounds who depend heavily on library resources.

Furthermore, book theft, mutilation, and related library crimes adversely affect students' academic performance and research

capabilities. Ajayi and Omotayo, as cited in Adekunle, Adekunjo, and Unuabor (2018), found that these practices hinder independent study and make it difficult for students to source relevant materials. Respondents in their study expressed dissatisfaction with the selfish actions of users who steal or vandalize library materials. Overall, book theft and vandalism reduce the quality and quantity of library collections, deplete already limited library funds, and weaken the professional image and credibility of library staff, who are sometimes accused of negligence or connivance in such acts.

ICT Tools Used in Combating Book Theft and Vandalism in the Library

Libraries establish rules and regulations to promote optimal use of information resources and prevent their misuse. Although free access to materials is encouraged to enhance utilization, such access is sometimes abused by users who engage in book theft and mutilation. Afolabi (1996) notes that library security requires special attention due to factors such as open access browsing, inadequate surveillance, vulnerability of collections, weak property identification, and staff safety concerns.

Effective prevention of book theft and vandalism requires the adoption of multiple strategies. According to Huska (2018), libraries must combine physical security measures, sound administrative planning, and adequate staff training to

successfully curb library crimes. In order for libraries to curb vandalism and book theft, they adopt Information and Communication Technology (ICT) strategies.

The rapid growth of information and communication technology (ICT) has significantly transformed the management and security of academic libraries. Book theft and vandalism, such as mutilation of pages, deliberate damage, hiding of books, and illegal removal of library materials, remain serious challenges in academic libraries worldwide. These acts threaten the preservation of knowledge resources and disrupt access to information for legitimate users. Consequently, academic libraries increasingly adopt ICT-based security tools to safeguard their collections and ensure effective library services. ICT tools such as Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), electronic security gates, digitization of resources, and alarms and motion detection system are widely used to combat book theft and vandalism (Omoike & Ikegune, 2020).

RFID technology enhances collection security by enabling real-time tracking of materials and automated inventory management. According to a study on technology use for theft detection in university libraries, RFID significantly improves security by allowing automated identification of materials and preventing unauthorized removal of books from the

library premises (Akor, Ekere and Akor, 2019). Another study also emphasizes that RFID authentication features help protect library resources and reduce staff workload through automated processes (Okeke, 2025).

Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras are widely deployed in academic libraries as part of ICT-based security strategies. CCTV surveillance systems allow continuous monitoring of library spaces such as reading rooms, shelves, entrance and exit points, and computer sections. The presence of cameras acts as a deterrent to potential offenders because users are aware that their activities are being monitored. Research indicates that CCTV systems help identify individuals involved in theft or vandalism and provide evidence for disciplinary actions when necessary (Omoike & Ikegune, 2020).

Electronic security gate systems are commonly installed at the entrance and exit points of academic libraries. These gates work with magnetic strips or electronic tags embedded in books. When a book with an active security strip passes through the gate without being properly checked out, an alarm sounds to alert library staff. Electronic security gates are often integrated with barcode or RFID systems to provide multiple layers of protection for library collections. This combination ensures that books cannot leave the library premises without being properly processed through the circulation system.

Digitization is another ICT strategy used to combat book theft and vandalism in academic libraries. By converting printed materials into digital formats, libraries reduce excessive handling of physical resources, which often leads to damage or mutilation. Digitized collections can be accessed electronically through institutional repositories, databases, or digital libraries. Digitization not only preserves rare and fragile materials but also ensures that information remains accessible even if the original copies are damaged or lost. Omoike and Ikegune (2020) note that digital preservation technologies help protect valuable information resources while providing remote access to users

Motion detectors and alarm systems are additional ICT-based security tools used in academic libraries. These systems detect unauthorized movement within restricted areas such as special collections rooms, archives, or storage sections. When motion is detected outside permitted hours, the alarm alerts security personnel or library staff. These systems are particularly useful for protecting rare books, manuscripts, and archival materials that are vulnerable to theft or damage.

Methodology

The research design adopted for the study was descriptive survey design. It involves collecting data in order to answer questions concerning conditions or

relationship that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs, points of views, or attitudes that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are being felt or trends that are developing and reports the way things are. The area of the study is Imo State, specifically in Federal University of Technology Owerri. The population of the study is 123 library staff. The sample size for the study is 123

respondents. Census enumeration is the technique used to study all the population, since the population is small and manageable by the researcher. In this study, the researcher used rating scale as the instrument for data collection. Data collected from the field work were analyzed using mean scores. In realizing the objectives, the four rating scale was adopted.

Data Analyses and Presentation

Research Question 1: What are the causes of book theft and vandalism in FUTO library?

Table 1: Causes of Book Theft and Vandalism in FUTO Library

S/N	Item Statements	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Total	Mean	Decision
1	Indigenes of student	82	16	12	13	413	3.4	Agreed
2	Drastic reduction in book votes	110	1	12	0	467	3.8	Strongly Agreed
3	Poor security	111	12	0	0	480	3.9	Strongly Agreed
4	Belief that public property belongs to nobody in particular	110	1	12	0	467	3.8	Strongly Agreed
5	Selfishness on the part of some users	92	16	2	13	433	3.5	Strongly Agreed
6	High cost of books in Nigeria	100	6	4	13	439	3.6	Strongly Agreed
Grand mean						3.67		

From the analysis above, it is inferred that indigenes of student has a mean score of 3.4, drastic reduction in book votes has a mean score of 3.8, poor security has a mean score of 3.9, belief that public property belongs to nobody in particular has a mean score of 3.8, selfishness on the part of some users has a mean score of 3.5 and high cost of books in Nigeria has a mean score of 3.6. This indicates that all the items were strongly agreed except item 1 which is agreed with

mean score of 3.4. It is therefore inferred that indigenes of student, drastic reduction in book votes, poor security, belief that public property belongs to nobody in particular, selfishness on the part of some users and high cost of books in Nigeria are the causes of theft and vandalism in the library studied.

Research Question 2: What is the extent to which book theft and vandalism have affected the information materials in FUTO library?

Table 2: Extent to which Book Theft and Vandalism have Affected the Information Materials in FUTO Library

S/N	ITEMS	VHE (4)	HE (3)	LE (2)	VLE (1)	Total	Mean	Decision
1	Newspapers	100	6	16	1	451	3.7	VHE
2	Bibliographies	101	5	13	4	449	3.7	VHE
3	Textbooks	101	10	12	0	458	3.7	VHE
4	Directories	10	10	32	71	205	1.7	VLE
5	Library catalogs	102	6	2	13	443	3.6	VHE
6	Literature guides	91	10	5	17	421	3.4	HE
7	Instructional televisions	20	17	20	66	237	1.9	VLE
8	Journals	80	26	4	13	419	3.4	HE
9	Compact disc (CD)	20	5	32	66	225	1.8	VLE
10	Computers	10	15	20	78	203	1.7	VLE
Grand Mean							2.86	

From the analysis above, it is revealed that newspapers has a mean score of 3.7, bibliographies has a mean score of 3.7, textbooks has a mean score of 3.7, library catalogs has a mean score of 3.6, literature guides has a mean score of 3.4 and journals has a mean score of 3.4. This indicates that the items were vandalized at very high extent except items 6 and 8 that were vandalized at a high extent rate. It is therefore inferred that

newspapers, bibliographies, textbooks and library catalogs are vandalized in the library at very high extent while literature guide and journals are vandalized at high extent rate. Directories, instructional televisions, compact disc and computers are vandalized at low extent rate in the library studied.

Research Question 3: What are the ICT tools used in combating book theft and vandalism in FUTO library?

Table 3: ICT Tools Used in Combating Book Theft and Vandalism in FUTO Library

S/N	Item Statements	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Total	Mean	Decision
1	Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)	111	12	0	0	480	3.9	Strongly Agreed
2	Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV)	122	1	0	0	491	4.0	Strongly Agreed
3	Electronic security gates	123	0	0	0	492	4.0	Strongly Agreed

4	Digitization of resources	111	12	0	0	480	3.9	Strongly Agreed
5	Alarms and motion detection system	10	10	32	71	205	1.7	Strongly Disagreed
Grand mean		3.50						

From the analysis above, it is inferred that Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) has mean score of 3.9, Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) has mean score of 4.0, Electronic security gates has mean score of 4.0, digitization of resources has mean score of 3.9 and alarms and motion detection system has mean score of 1.7. It is therefore inferred that Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), electronic security gates and digitization of resources are the ICT tools used in combating book theft and vandalism in the library studied.

Summary of Findings

Having analyzed and presented all the data collected for the study from the respondents, the researcher made the following findings from the analysis

1. Indigenes of student, drastic reduction in book votes, poor security, belief that public property belongs to nobody in particular, selfishness on the part of some users and high cost of books in Nigeria are the causes of theft and vandalism in the library studied.
2. Newspapers, bibliographies, textbooks and library catalogs are vandalized at a very high extent while literature guides

and journals are vandalized at a high extent rate. Directories, instructional television, compact disc and computers are vandalized at a very low extent rate.

3. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), electronic security gates and digitization of resources are the ICT tools used in combating book theft and vandalism in the library studied..

Discussion of Findings

Causes of Book Theft and Vandalism

Indigenes of student, drastic reduction in book votes, poor security, belief that public property belongs to nobody in particular, selfishness on the part of some users and high cost of books in Nigeria are the causes of theft and vandalism in the library. The findings is in line with Akinfolarin (2012) detailed causes of book theft and vandalism in academic libraries as drastic reduction in book votes and poor security on the part of the library. The finding also land credence to Itogen-Bassey (2020) who noted the widespread of poverty and high cost of books in Nigeria as causes to book theft and vandalism.

Extent to which Book Theft and Vandalism have Affected the Information Materials in the Library

Newspapers, bibliographies, textbooks and library catalogs are mostly theft and vandalized at very high extent rate which affects the use of information materials, while literature guides and journals are vandalized at a high extent rate. Directories, instructional televisions, computers and compact disc are vandalized at a very low extent rate in the library studied. This supports the findings of Adekunle, Adekunjo and Unuabor (2018) who noted that book theft and vandalism has really affected the information materials in the library to a high extent.

ICT Tools Used in Combating Book Theft and Vandalism in the Library

Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), electronic security gates and digitization of resources are the ICT tools used in combating book theft and vandalism in the library studied. This finding is in line with the findings of Omoike and Ikegune (2020) who identified Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), electronic security gates and digitization of resources as the ICT tools used in combating book theft and vandalism. Also Okeke (2025) pointed out that RFID authentication features help protect library resources and reduce staff workload through automated processes.

Conclusion

The study examines the application of ICT in combating book theft and vandalism in the Federal University of Technology, Owerri Library. This study concludes that book theft and vandalism constitute serious challenges in university libraries, with frequently used materials such as newspapers, bibliographies, textbooks, library catalogues, literature guides, and journals being most affected. These problems are largely caused by factors including poor security, reduction in book votes, high cost of books, selfish user attitudes, and the belief that public property belongs to no one. Libraries over the years have been curbing the issue of book theft and vandalism by adopting measures such as physical security systems, employment of vigilant porters, acquisition of multiple copies of books and provision of photocopying services etc, but the application of ICT tools in curbing these library crimes have remained the best as studies showed that university libraries that have adopted them record such crimes at the most minimal level.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

1. The library management should adopt measure in ensuring the reduction of the causes of vandalism and book theft most especially by organizing sensitization programmes so as to educate the users on the dangers of vandalism and theft.

2. Libraries should adopt electronic security measures in order to ensure effective combating of book theft and vandalism.
3. The library should increase the ICT measures it adopts so as to combat the theft and vandalism of information materials by the users.

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