

**MUTILATION AND PILFERING OF LIBRARY MATERIALS:
IMPLICATION AND SECURITY MEASURES IN SELECTED
LIBRARIES IN ABUJA.**

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the rampant issue of mutilations and theft of library materials in libraries in Abuja. The research carried out sampling on special library; Arts and Culture library Abuja, Academic Library; University of Abuja, National Library; Public Services Department. The population of the study consisted of 60 users and 30 librarians, who were physically present at the time the study was conducted. The respondents were exposed to fill a questionnaire and hypothesis were postulated and tested. The data were analyzed using Likert's summated Rating scale and result showed that there is correlation between security measures and theft of library materials. Recommendations for curbing the above problems were also suggested for reversing the trend. **INTRODUCTION** The Library occupies a sensitive position in the society and in-view of the fact that its responsibilities are enormous, such as keeping informational materials (Books and Non-Books), It becomes important to safeguard library with all security consciousness from the hand of mutilators.

Therefore a study of this kind is necessary to unveil factual causes, based on various records and observations and possible solutions to reverse the trend. The library is known as a citadel of knowledge. Knowledge is kept in the library for posterity. Vital information that money can not buy are also hanging on the shelves and in the computer's database in the library. This information need a secure environment so that any time it could be accessed. Among other important role the library play that is vital is conflict resolution in the society.

TERMINOLOGY

1. Academic library: - According to Harrod's Librarian's Glossary defined academic library as library in educational establishment at any level - universities, polytechnics, Colleges and Research Associations. The Library provides a range of textbooks and background reading to support the teaching and course undertaken.

2. **Book Detection System:** - Equipment normal consisting of two upright panels through which all library users must exit, which detect mutilated library materials and can also lock a security gate or exit door.
3. **Library Materials:** - These are materials of books and non-books of all kinds assembled by a library for its clientele, for reading, reference and research purposes.
4. **Mutilation:** - The concise Oxford Dictionary, tenth edition defined mutilation as injure or to damaged severely, typically so as to disfigure.
5. **National Library:** - A library maintained out of government funds and serving the nation as a whole. Usually this library exist to gather, store and preserve the publishing output of a country through donation, copyright or legal - deposit for posterity purpose.
6. **Pilfering:** - The chambers dictionary defined pilfering as stealing in small quantities or petty theft as stealing things of little value.
7. **Security:** - Security can be defined as free from danger; to make safe; to prevent; and to guard someone or a particular thing.
8. **Special Library:** - A library of information centre, maintained by an individual, corporation, association, government agency or any other group.
9. **Rebranding:** - An attitudinal change from bad behaviour; such as mutilation and theft of library materials, to good behaviour; as to contribute to the development of the library, through book donation, helping the security to prevent theft and reporting suspects of library materials theft and so on.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Book has been many things to many people. Olanlokun 1984; Isaac (2007) fervently believed in the power of the book as an instrument of change, development and modernization, therefore library contain the inherited wit, wisdom, humor, life, cream of all the jets of all the centuries during which man has left a record of what he's thought and done. Oke 1991; Isaac (2007) explained library theft as the illegal removal of any property of library. He further identified methods used in removing books illegally from the libraries as:

- Student hides library books among their own and attempt to beat the security at the entrance.

- Others hide library books in their bags or flowing dress.
- Removal of date due slips from books not yet due for return and stick them into of unborrowed books for free passage at the security entrance.

Hugh (1978:23) states that Pilferage takes numerous forms and is by no means an exclusive activity of low level people. There are different kind of Pilferage; casual thievery, systematic repetitive thievery, thievery that victimizes clients or employee theft and so on.

CAUSES OF MUTILATION

Poverty causes vandalization and stealing of government properties. Many of the library users are undergraduate, unemployed, distant learning students, researchers and leisure readers. An unemployed graduate preparing for an interview or examinations for further studies that have no money to make photocopies yet need to study to keep themselves fit for employment interviews or examinations could be tempted to steal. Although this could not justify stealing or mutilating of library materials, but then it contributes to the cause of the problem. Due to deviance act of students and lack of adequate moral teachings from Parents and teachers, some readers write on the textbooks, cut, and paint some part of textbooks when reading. These cause damages to the materials and reduces their live span for future consultation. Another cause of the problem that could be attributed to poverty is low living wages. The salary of an average civil servant cannot fund buying of textbooks for tertiary students. This influences but not justifies employee's pilferage of library materials. In other word it means most of the library materials suffer in the hands of employee pilferage by lending and not returning of library materials. This act is theft and it contributes to the decreasing of library holding, and this act does not leave any staff innocent because in one way or the other you might have taken an official A4 paper or a pen or pencil home without seeing it as theft. According to Mohammed (2006:125) books are often unnecessarily damaged during photocopying. Photocopying machines with flat copy platens necessitate Jamming the binding flat in order to get a good image and this causes damage to the spine.

WAYS TO AVOID MUTILATION AND THEFT FROM LIBRARIES According to Chingwin (1994:82) many modern libraries include detection devices at their issue desks to act as a deterrent to would be thieves. Some system operates by ensuring that each book is fitted with trigger; which is a small strip usually attached inside the spine of the book. Triggers are sensitized with automatic equipment, as books are returned. Books which are being taken from the library pass through two diction pillars at either side of the exit unless the books have been desensitized, when they were properly issued, they will activate an audio or visual alarm system .

Chingwin further explained that other system use simple pressure- sensitive labels which incorporate a simple printed circuit and can be quickly fixed onto or inside books and other item to be protected, a very low frequency radio signal activates the label triggers. These systems operate electronically can be effectively incorporated with computer issue systems, when properly installed and operated reduce theft of library materials. Label stickers fixed on books not for sale and books donated to the libraries, even when they are stolen cannot be sold, because any removal of these stickers renders the book title cover useless. Braksma 1988; Omoniyi (2001:5) suggested that each library should form its own task force to work with police to control the crime wave in academic libraries. Chadwick 1998; Omoniyi (2001:5) recommended prevention measures detection, inventories and deaccession control systems to protect library materials, cost of lost items should be recovered through a deduction from salary of the individual whose negligence is responsible for the loss of the library materials. Allen 1998; Omoniyi (2001:15) stated that security procedures should include the evaluation of security needs, deciding which items need to be protected, i.e security within and outside the library building and environ should be envisage. Disaster preparedness programmes should include firefighting causes, flood controlling courses, first aid administration and so on. Moreover, Odufuwa, (2006:105) stated that files and programmes on a network can be designated as "Copying of programmed i.e. digitalized information pass words can be established for specific directories to restrict access to unauthorized users. Graham (1991:1) defined copyright as a property right intended to protect the rights of those who create works of various kinds. The protection is to prevent exploitation of their works by other. Therefore, library has a limit of photocopying of materials to users. No user can be supplied with a copy of more than one article in the same periodical issue, likewise, textbooks has a limit of pages to photocopy on page numbers that follow each other. The users are always desperate for information in the library and are ready to do anything to get it, that is why copyright law is maintained. Any photocopying that is beyond the stipulations of copyright law in the library results to theft. According to Michael (1990:177) lending of books in library is feasible. Loan facilities should be provided to readers who want to make use of the book outside the library, borrowing device should be provided in a form of identity card/tickets that contain information that could trace the borrower if he fails to return the books at a stated date. He further stated that photocopy is an important aid to providing scace resources and facilitates document supply. If a library provide its own photocopier and photocopy at a reduce cost, it will go a long way in alleviating, if not eradicating the thought of theft and pilfering of library materials by users.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Is there correlation between poverty and pilfering of library materials?
- Is there correlation between lack of adequate security measures and rate of theft in the library?
- Is there correlation between rebranding policy and alleviation of mutilation and theft of library materials?

METHODOLOGY

The date for study was generated through the use of a structured questionnaire entitled. "Mutilation and pilfering of library materials by users of library in general". The questionnaire was designed to obtain information about librarians and library users of Arts and Culture Library, Abuja; University of Abuja Library and Public Services department of National Library of Nigeria, Abuja. 90 copies of the questionnaires were administered to 30 librarians and 60 library users respectively. Likerts summated rating scale was used to test the hypotheses.

Table 1: Questionnaires Administration and retrieval

S/N	LIBRARIES	NUMBER LIBRARIANS	SAMPLED USERS	NUMBER RESPONDED LIBRARIANS	USERS
1	Arts & Culture Library Abuja	10	20	6	17
2	University of Abuja Library	10	20	8	20
3	Nat. Library of Nig. Public Service Dept	10	20	10	20
	Total	30	60	24	57

Number administer: $30 + 60 = 90$

Number Responded: $24 + 57 = 81$

DATA ANALYSIS

Interpretations of the results obtained from research statements. The point allocated to the variables as stated in Likerts summated Rating Scale are as follows:-

Strongly Agree (SA)	=	5 points
Agree (A)	=	4 points
Undecided (U)	=	3 points
Disagree (D)	=	2 points
Strongly Disagree (SD)	=	1 point

Formula for calculation as used in this study is by multiplication of number of responses for each option with its point rating, this is then added up and divided by the total number of responded generated. The answer would represent the mean rating. Based on the rating, an interpretation of the statement is given:-

Table 2: Relationship between Poverty factors and Mutilation of library materials

	Variables	SA	A	U	D	SD	F	X Rating
1	Poverty is the cause of temptation to steal	75	-	6	-	-	81	
		375	-	12	-	-	87	4.8 SA
2	Lack of money to Photocopy is the Cause of book mutilation	59	-	22	-	-	81	
	Unemployment	295	-	44	-	-	39	4.1 A
3	Contributes to the rate of Mutilation and Theft of Library material.	40	-	41	-	-	81	
		200	-	82	-	-	82	3.9 A

The above table revealed that poverty through its reflections of lack of money causes users to mutilate and steal library materials with the mean ratings of 4.8 Strongly Agreed, 4.1 Agreed and 3.9 Agreed respectively

Table: 3 Relationship between Security factors and theft of library materials

Variables	SA	A	U	D	SD	F	XRating
1. Lack of competent security personnel causes loopholes for users to steal.	68	-	-	13	-	81	
	340	-	-	26	-	366	4.5 SA
Inadequate or	70	-	-	11	-	81	
lack of electronic security measure increases chances of theft in the library.	350	-	-	22	-	377	4.7 SA
Lack of security education of Librarians contributes to the rate of theft by users.	66	-	-	15	-	81	
	330	-	-	30	-	36	4.0A

The table revealed that lack of competent security personnel, inadequate or lack of electronic security measures and lack of security education for librarians contributes to theft of library materials. This is shown with the mean rating of 4.5 Strongly Agreed 4.7 strongly Agreed and 4.0 Agreed respectively.

Table 4: Relationship between rebranding policy and alleviation of mutilation & theft of library materials.

Variables	SA	A	U	D	SD	F	Xrating
Uncared attitude to public property causes mutilations of library materials	50	-	-	31	-	81	
	250	-	-	62	-	312	3.8A
Lack of ethical practices by leaders encourages the followers in wrong directions	71	-	-	101	-	81	
Will rebranding of Nigerians	355	-	-	20	-	375	4.6A
Alleviate mutilation Or library materials.	45	-	-	36	-	81	
	25	-	-	72	-	-	3.6A

Interpretation The above table indicated that lack of ethical practices by leaders encourages the followers in wrong directions, with the mean rating of 4.6 (strongly agree) a mean rating of 3.6 (agreed) to the fact that rebranding policy of the federal government could reverse the trend.

The above table indicated that lack of ethical practices towards library materials causes mutilations and theft. To this effect, a mean rating of 3.8 and 4.6 which was derived indicated that it was agreed and strongly agreed to, more so, a mean rating Agreed to the fact that rebranding policy of the federal government could reverse the trend.

RECOMMENDATION

Omoniyi (2001:5) stated that as part of security measures needed to protect library equipment and other materials from being stolen, libraries have been advised to employ the following strategies:-

- Installation of an electronic security system
- Installation of a panic button system
- Installation of dummy surveillance camera
- Recruitment of additional staff/security staff
- Improved opening hours e.g. night shift
- Provision of law enforcement security system
- Improvements to economic circumstances of individuals and employee. I therefore submit that the above recommendations; if considered will go a long way in curbing mutilations and theft of library materials.

I also recommend that:-

- Loaning of books should be allowed if library holdings are enough and if clientele have identity card /contact address which could locate them. This borrowing device should be applicable to Academic Library and Special Library staff and clientele and National Library staff only. On no account should National Library Clientele take books outside the library without passing through the above process.
- Librarians and security officers should be sent on security consciousness training in order to be alert to their environment.
- Library Management should provide lowest cost photocopy service or contract it out for two to three people so as to reduce monopolization of the business.
- Method of photocopying should be considered to avoid damaging the spine or the binding of books

- Provision of functioning internet café to create room for sourcing and printing of materials online, in order to reduce concentration on photocopying of physical book.
- Libraries should have back up system in a digitalized format in case of lost of material.
- Both the librarians and users should be rebranded, this will halt the issues of mutilation and theft of library materials, because of attitudinal change, the policy of rebranding is promising.
- Constant awareness of what is going on within and around the library should be made known to the staff to create security consciousness.
- The readers should be properly checked when leaving the library
- Constant electricity supply for proper functioning of the library.

CONCLUSION

You tell me if government gazette is mutilated, what will the coming generation lean on. That is why all consciousness is needed to safeguard library materials and no amount of money spent on security can be counted as waste, because library materials are to be kept for posterity. Therefore, I conclude that appropriate security measures are adopted; rebranding policy of the federal government will bring attitudinal change among Nigerians if practices, poverty alleviation are a necessity. These will affect the library positively and cause library holdings to appreciate, since mutilation and theft of library materials will no longer be in practice

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