

Deviant Behaviors in Library Use: A Case Study of Three Universities in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: Research on library deviance in Nigeria has largely relied on librarians' accounts, which often portray students as "deviants" and libraries as "victims". However, a holistic account should incorporate narratives from both students and librarians in the analysis of deviant behaviors in library utilization. Some common trends of deviance and the implication on library utility in selected universities were discovered through observations and interviews. The study reveals a gap in the security of students' personal belongings, inadequate electricity supply, and a wide range of deviant behaviors associated with the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the library. The impact of these lapses thus put much pressure on both librarians and student users. The study recommends proper funding of libraries to enable the adoption of a 21st Century Library Model, which guarantees a variety of spatial and safety arrangements in curbing the menace of deviants in library utilization.

I. Introduction

The main aim of university libraries is to provide access to both print and non-print collections. Accessibility therefore calls for proper planning and conduct between library staff and patrons. The important role that libraries play in modern day learning cannot be overemphasized (Wu and Liu, 2001).

However, there are quite a number of challenges facing libraries across the world, especially in Africa where a lot of archival materials are either missing or stolen from the shelves. These, among others, are some of the deviant and criminal activities entangling libraries over the years (Nwalo, 2000).

A number of studies have examined cases of criminal and deviant activities in the library from the viewpoint of librarians, neglecting the perspectives of users (mostly students) and

the implication on library utilization in recent times. This has created a gap in understanding the dynamics of deviant activities from a more holistic view.

In Nigeria, academic libraries serve widely diverse constituencies that encompass the university community, research institutions, and colleges or technical schools in the private or public sector. Some are small and some are large; some are rich and some are poor; some are located in rural and some are located in urban environs. But most fall somewhere in between small and medium-size and are moderately funded (Unagha, 2009).

The diversity of purpose makes it difficult for characterization. Similarly, trends in library usage may differ not only in terms of available materials and services provided but also in terms of security and behavioral components of staff and users whether overtly or covertly. These factors may be more pronounced for large research libraries than for smaller ones. By implication, behavioral trends will have the tendencies to impact on library personnel as well as the frequency of patronage in library space. But each of the trends may apply to a whole realm of academic libraries in varying degrees.

Globally, library design and usage have become a dynamic and ever-growing enterprise that requires more strategic, constant, and dynamic management skills (Worpole, 2004).

Inadequate financing and the increasing number of students in Nigerian universities have also put much pressure on state owned libraries (Ogunsola, 2004). With the increasing number of students gaining admission into higher institutions in Nigerian, libraries are likely to face a number of problems, one of which is the increasing number of deviant activities occurring in the library. This implies that most libraries in the country are behind in the modern trend of library operation, utilization, security, and continuous restructuring of library space.

Like most scholars on library abuse, Lorenzen (1996) and Holt (2007) described the most common forms of deviance relating to theft of physical materials, theft or alteration of data, and theft of money.

In an earlier research, Ewing (1994) identified other deviant behaviors to include breaches such as non-return of items by borrowers, theft of library equipment, personal theft (from staff and users), verbal and physical abuse against staff and users, vandalism against library buildings and equipment, and stock destruction, all of which can directly or indirectly affect library services.

Similarly studies have shown that most libraries in Nigeria are also aging and need expansion. They are insufficiently equipped with information technology and books are poorly arranged on the shelves (Ajayi, 2000; Ogunsola, 2004). These are also considered among the top threats to the success of higher education in Africa (Nwalo, 2000; Goldstein, 2006; Emmanuel & Sife, 2008).

Specifically in Nigeria, a number of researchers have investigated significant changes in academic library facilities planning in terms of differentiation of storage and user space, dispersal of special formats and equipment, and accommodation of non-library functions, retention of existing facilities, tighter programming, and increased security protection of rare and special collections (Abifarin, 1997; Bello, 1998; Momodu, 2002; Ajegbomogun, 2007; Maidabino & Zainab, 2011).

These literatures emphasize more on how best to secure library materials, with much lights and stereotypical focus on patrons as security threats. Justifying this assertion, Maidabino and Zainab (2011) in their study of collection security management at university libraries noted that balancing access and security in Nigerian libraries is a necessary task (p.16). In the same vein, behavioral conduct and misconduct of library users were highlighted from the perspective of librarians, not users, thus neglecting two possibilities: (1) the library can also be a threat to users, and (2) the users can be security threats to themselves. These shortcomings have prompted the need for this study to examine deviance in library utilization through interviews with both students (users) and librarians (service providers).

This study is limited to some selected libraries in Nigeria with several years of personal observations of students' compliance to rules and regulations and their behavioral misconduct.

II. Research Methodology

The study population comprised of sixty respondents (forty-five students and fifteen librarians) from three universities in South-West Nigeria: the University of Ibadan (UI), Ambrose Alli University (AAU), Ekpoma, and Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba (AAUA). The data collected was purely qualitative, based on five years of observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews which lasted for over a three-month period. The one-on-one interviews took place outside the libraries. They were recorded and lasted between 30 and 45 minutes.

Prior to the data collection, frequent visits were made to ascertain regular seating positions and frequent users of the libraries. All librarian participants for the study were above 24 years of age while student participants were from 17 to 33 years old. They were encouraged to talk freely and share examples from their personal and library experiences, from which the major themes of the findings and discussion of the study emanated. In the interview, research participants were guaranteed that this information will be treated with utmost respect and that their privacy will be protected. Accordingly, in the analyses of the interviews with respondents on their personal experiences and narratives, pseudo names have been used to conceal their identity.

III. Findings and Discussion

The major and most worrisome deviant behavior in the selected libraries for the study was described as "stealing of personal belongings". This was linked to the increasing use of electronic devices in libraries, especially cell phones since the arrival of the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) in Nigeria in the 1990s (Blake, 2004).

1. Insecurity and Incessant Stealing of Personal Belongings in Libraries

According to all the librarians interviewed, the GSM revolution created a number of problems, from library operations to security of students and staff cell phones, and other electrical gadgets.

An interview conducted in 2013 with library staff at the University of Ibadan revealed that stealing of phones became rampant with the flooding of the Nigerian markets with less expensive phones from Asia. Students and staff were able to afford varieties, which were

often displayed carelessly on the reading tables. After much reading, students often took a short walk within the library. And on returning, they found that their phones were gone. So they rushed to library staff or security for help.

Corroborating the above, a female student interviewed at the University of Ibadan in 2012 gave the following account:

In 2012, my friend lost her phone in the library. She was preparing for a test on this particular day. After reading for an hour, she dozed off and woke up only to realize that her Nokia phone was no longer by her side. She came to my seat to tell me about the incidence. We reported the incidence to a librarian, but nothing could be done about it.

Due to the incessant reporting of missing and stolen cell phones, library officials have made it a habit to always inform students verbally and through inscriptions on lockers and shelves to be very careful with their expensive items. In all three libraries observed, it is written in bold letters that valuables should not be kept in the open lockers or on any shelves. To be exact, in the University of Ibadan and Ambrose Alli University, it is written in bold letters that food items and valuables should not be brought into the library. "Valuables are kept at owner's risk." In Adekunle Ajasin University, an open shelf with many lockers is kept at the entrance of the library for students to keep their bags, with the warning sign "at owners' risk". Only academic staff are allowed into the library with their bags but must be checked when going out of the library premises. The security measures in place to safeguard students' properties are poor. However, there is much emphasis on securing books and properties in libraries. This is evident in the rigorous check on students and non-library staff whenever they are going out of the libraries.

In Adekunle Ajasin University, respondents were of the view that students' personal belongings are not safe in the library. This is captured in the statement of Janet, a second-year student, interviewed in 2012, "Placing valuables in the shelves outside the library is a foolish thing to do".

Halimat, interviewed in 2012, also told her story:

I remember that morning I left home early in order to secure a comfortable seat in the library. After about four hours, I was hungry. Then I realized that my purse was left in the bag outside. On getting there, I noticed that my bag was not on the first row of lockers but on the third and the zips were wide opened. My purse was gone. I told the security personnel stationed outside what had happened. He asked if I was new to the library. If not, I should know that students are not supposed to keep any valuables there other than bags.

The unwarranted searching of students' bags by other unidentified students was revealed as very common in the three universities but more in Ambrose Alli University and Adekunle Ajasin University as reported. This is probably because the two universities are more equipped for undergraduate and diploma studies whereas the University of Ibadan has become more of a postgraduate school than others in the country. The security measures to put off deviant behaviors were also more in the University of Ibadan with different sections for undergraduate and postgraduate students. There are two major outlets for students' entry and exit where the security personnel are conspicuously stationed at the corridors.

From staff and students interviews, it was learned that the University of Ibadan was the only university that has recorded cases of laptop theft within the library, mostly among postgraduate students in masters or doctoral programs. According to one of the accounts by a senior librarian of the University of Ibadan interviewed in 2013, carelessness was highlighted as the main reason why students do lose their laptops in the library:

The case of Luckman, a PhD candidate in peace and conflict studies, is well known among us. He said he came to the library that morning and was reading by the side of a female student. He went to meet a friend outside of the library. On his return, he found only his books but not his laptop. The lady sitting by his side was there. So he asked her about the laptop. She said that she was engrossed with her own work and did not notice who picked it up. On hearing her statement, he fainted. We later realized that he had not backed up the data on his laptop since he started his doctoral program in 2009.

Further discussion revealed that the girl sitting by his side could not be held responsible because he did not ask her to keep an eye on his laptop in his absence. Besides, she was not a friend of his.

There is another case about Mr. Abiodun. He was an elderly student. His laptop was stolen while he was taking a nap with his head down the table, inches away from his laptop:

Students who knew him said that there is no time he does not sleep in the library after a few hours of reading or working on his computer. On this particular day in 2008, Mr. Abiodun dozed off as usual. Unfortunately, electricity supply went off, and it took about 30 to 40 minutes for the library technical team to fix the generating plant. When it was eventually fixed, the excitement of other students woke him. By this time, his laptop was gone. This must have been stolen in the dark by someone who knows his napping habit.

Observation at the security checks shows that it is compulsory for students to show their identity or library cards in order to gain access to the library. For postgraduate students with laptops, there is a log book for laptop registration. For safety reasons, students are required to write down the serial numbers and model of their laptops while entering the library. At the door post, this is often done. However, while leaving the library, only students with bags are checked to ensure that library books are not stolen, especially those that are meant to be used within the library, and to make sure that only documented borrowable books are taken out. There is less emphasis on crosschecking laptops at the exit. Similarly, security is usually tightened whenever there are reported cases of stolen items. Interviewees were of the opinion that stolen items in the libraries are never found.

According to a student interviewed in 2012 at the University of Ibadan, “For my four years in this university, I have never heard of any student recovering his or her stolen phone or money.”

In Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, a student interviewed in 2012, stated that “anything stolen in the library should be just forgotten by the owner because it is impossible to recover a stolen item.”

Similarly, in Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba, a student interviewed in 2012, stated that “the only case of a recovered item was a student’s wallet, but the money was no longer in it.”

However, in the University of Ibadan, a staff interviewed in 2013, noted that “there are cases of recovered items once misplaced by students, such as those being left in the bathrooms or forgotten in between books and on shelves. There are some good students who have returned cell phones to the security section in the library, though these are cheap phones left in the bathroom or on shelves.”

A staff in Adekunle Ajasin University interviewed in 2013 corroborated that “I have heard of students returning items such as wallets with credit cards to other students, especially the ones with some forms of identification. Other times, they are dropped in the hands of any security staff on duty.”

In Ambrose Alli University, the case was similar. Only items of little value were returned. On exceptionally rare cases were students lucky enough to recover a valuable lost item in the library. This was a general consensus among all the students interviewed.

2. Mutilation and Theft of Books in Libraries

Mutilation and theft of library books are some of the oldest forms of deviance in library research (Ratcliffe, 1992; Ajidahun, 2010).

The act of mutilation is said to be done unconsciously most of the time from its simplest form of underlining or highlighting text in library books, tearing or annotating in books margins to a more complex form of removing pages of books or the complete book (Lorenzen, 1996).

Incidences of mutilation of books are not taken seriously by librarians even in the case of students’ complaints. Students felt that they are often seen as the culprit.

One of the respondents (Yinka, a final year student) echoed that library officials are not fair to students, “They will even accuse you if you report a case of mutilation. So I have stopped reporting incidences of mutilation.”

On the other hand, the responses of some of the library officials revealed that students are often childish and selfish whenever they get hold of relevant materials for assignments or research purpose. For example, Mrs. Eselebor from Ambrose Alli University said that she “once caught a girl on a shelf, trying to hide a book which she had not only mutilated but had the intention of stealing.”

In the University of Ibadan, Mr. Fred interestingly explained that sometimes students sit as a group and collectively engage in the act, pretending to be reading while they are not. Past incidences were some of the reasons why students are thought to be probable culprits.

At the Kenneth Dike Library of the University of Ibadan, institutional rare books were moved from the open circulation section to a reference section because of the increasing cases of theft. This was necessary for easy monitoring and account of usage.

The Kenneth Dike Library (KDL) boasts of many classical books as one the oldest libraries in the country. But over the years, the number of historical and classical books has been reduced. In a particular study by Ajidahun (2010), the University of Ibadan was mentioned to have lost about 225 volumes of law books in 1992. This was echoed by Mr. Fred in an interview conducted in 2013:

Students are either mutilating classical books or they are being stolen. Thus we have to use our discretion to move them to the reference section in the library. Such books are heavily guarded and must not be taken outside the section marked as “reference section only”.

Despite the attention on students as major culprits of library theft, there are abundant evidences to show that there are other culprits often underreported in Nigerian literatures, such as researchers, faculty members with impeccable credentials, con artists posing as scholars, librarians, archivists and even clergy (Mason, 1975; Wyly, 1987; Bean, 1992; Ajidahun, 2010).

Jenkins (1982) has put book thieves into five categories: “(1) the kleptomaniac, suffering from a compulsion to steal books, (2) the thief who steals books for his own use or possession, (3) the thief who steals in anger and is likely to destroy materials (4) the casual thief who steals when an opportunity presents itself, and (5) the thief who steals for profit.”

Among students, the mutilation of books was described as unfortunate and attributed to a series of assignment that requires specific text books or encyclopedia that are limited in copies and not readily available online.

Ajoke from Ambrose Alli University, interviewed in 2012, noted that most mutilated books in the library were handiwork of ex-students, who have graduated several years ago when the Internet was not readily available or still very expensive to access. In her opinion, non-availability of old books online is a problem:

If you take a look at most mutilated books, they are old. These are the books you cannot find online. The Internet has made it easier for our generation to access and share recent academic materials with one another without getting close to the library. These opportunities were not available in the past for older generations of students.

Two-thirds of the students interviewed agreed that some books have become fragile or worn out because of their regular consultations. This was linked to one of the reasons many books become mutilated unintentionally. Besides, irregular power supply during the hot sessions, poor ventilation, and body heat were other reasons associated with mutilation of books in the library. One student interviewed in 2012 said:

The months from October through February are the worst time to use the library. It is usually too hot, when electricity goes off. You will see us sweating profusely. The electricity is not there! Any book you touch becomes soaked with sweat. If care is not taken, it gets torn. What is left is for you to quickly return it to a nearby shelf to avoid being caught as a suspect.

For another student interviewed in 2012, mutilation of library books is not always intentional and could be as a result of discomfort in the library:

During the hot season, it is better to come to the library much earlier in order to secure a comfortable space very close to the windows for proper ventilation and comfort. If not, one will get tired and he or she will unconsciously scribble or engage in the act of squiggling on printed materials to ease stress.

Intentional or unintentional mutilation of books involved students deliberately underlining, highlighting or signing on books consulted, putting lipsticks on pages, and tearing off relevant pages or chapters from a book. This was also said to be common on shelves stocking humanities and social sciences books. For science students, mutilation of books in the library was only limited to science encyclopedias.

The stealing of books was completely denied by all students interviewee as almost not possible because of the penalty, which may lead to expulsion. A student interviewed in 2012 said:

Getting into the university nowadays is a very difficult process. So no one will like to lose his or her admission by stealing a library book. Rather, students steal note books of their classmates, not from the library. If one is caught, he or she will be thrown out of the school.

Thus, it is not also uncommon for library users to lose their note books while in the library. A joke, a victim of notebook theft, said during an interview in 2012:

Just like in the classroom, as the examination week approaches, lesson notes are targeted and stolen by fellow classmates. It is logical to trace it to students who are not regular in classes. They are seen restless in the library during the period of examinations, asking for one lecture note or another and pretending to be looking for notes to copy. In my first year, my anthropology note was stolen five days before the commencement of exams while I was searching for a textbook to complement the jottings in my notebook while in the library. I learnt my lesson in a bitter way after that incidence.

3. Misuse of Library Space: the Struggles and Fights

Examination of the various trends of deviant behaviors in the library reveals that male students were more likely than females to disobey library rules and regulations. This was stressed by a staff interviewed, who noted that “they (male students) are the ones with aggressive characters, usually abusive, and always in the habits of justifying any wrongful doings”.

Although female students were generally perceived as less problematic, they were not exempted as common “abusers of the library space” when it comes to loitering, misuse of seats, placing chewing gums and remnants of edibles on reading tables and chairs, noise, and unwanted gatherings and discussions in the library. Seating positions, choice of sitting partners, and study mates were ascribed to female students as some forms of deviance.

According to a library staff from Adekunle Ajasin University, interviewed in 2013, female students were described as always fond and cautious of who sits next to them:

You see them placing a book, bag or purse on a chair to either their left or right, just to reserve a space or two for their friends, or better still, to avoid unknown persons. The problems this create during the examination period disturbs us and other well-mannered students, especially when there are no vacant seats in the library. They are forced to report such students to any library official patrolling.

On the contrary, in the University of Ibadan, it was said to be a common deviant behavior among first-year students, irrespective of gender. A staff described it as a common feature for *freshers*¹ to do things in groups. “First-year students are often and easily identified in two ways: either they are ‘always walking in groups’ or through ‘their seating pattern in the library’. Therefore, it is not strange seeing them disturbing the quiet and peaceful atmosphere the library is noted for.”

Observations as well as discussions with older students supported the staff assertions. One of the students from Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba, concurred that “it is a hallmark of first-year students at the beginning of every session”. For another, “they are fresh and only rush down to the library towards the deadline of any given assignments. They approach the library aggressively, desperate to locate all their needs on one shelf like a computer on one click”.

A staff interviewed in 2013 described the trend of the deviant behavior in the first semester each year as follows:

A first-year student enters the library. First, he secures one or two seats for friends before settling down for study. In no time, the library becomes overcrowded with books on seats rather than students. Senior students often have had cause to complain. Sometimes, they got physical, throwing verbal abuse and tantrum at each other over reserved seats. It also puts a lot of pressure on library supervisors to checkmate these acts.

The struggle for space, tables, and seats is at its peak during the last two weeks preceding examinations and a week into examinations as observed. It is at this period that the usefulness of the library comes into play. In some instances, library hours are extended, rosters are rearranged, and *support students*² called upon for assistance. During this period, the various ideologies and positions of the library as a structural cum service or a center for learning and sharing of information are exploited fully, all working together not only as a collection space but also as user space (Orne, 1977; McAdams, 1984).

Thus the dynamic nature of the library space informs the interviewers of some of the most commonly and recent abuse or misuse of the library space that constitute user deviance.

Two issues emanated from those who had been interviewed: (a) misuse of the library as a charging station, mostly for phones and other electrical gadgets; and (b) misuse of the library as a relaxation center for watching movies, listening to music, and playing games. There were

¹ The term ‘fresher’ is often used in Nigerian universities to mean first-year students.

² Students from the library department undergoing training.

other minor abuses of the library space, including using the library as a reception place or a transit room for visitors, dates, and friends. These inevitably will make the library more congested with idle minds.

According to staff of the three institutions, poor electricity supply in Nigeria was linked to some of the recent and high rate of students' misbehaviors regarding the incessant misuse and abuse of the library. Mr. Oriaki from Ambrose Alli University was interviewed in 2013 and he revealed:

The misuse of the university library is associated with the irregular and incessant electricity outage not only on campus but the country in general. For this reason, a lot of students, staff, and sometimes visitors from adjoining communities come to campus, specifically the library, with a variety of electrical chargers to power their phones and rechargeable lanterns.

Yinka, Remi, and James, three regular users of the Adekunle Ajasin University Library, believed that the situation goes beyond the library to class rooms and anywhere there is electricity, a circuit or a socket.

Yinka was interviewed in 2012 and stated that "if not for the library, relaxation center, and class rooms, it would have been difficult for students to make use of their phones and laptops."

Remi was interviewed in 2012 and stated that

It is so common among us (students) to rush to the library, looking for a vantage position where there is a circuit and socket, not necessarily to read or conduct research, but for electricity sake where one can quickly charge his or her phone for an hour or two before or after lectures.

James was interviewed in 2012 and stated that

Although it is wrong for students to charge their phones or batteries in the library, that rule is often not obeyed. Once I was caught charging my phone in the library by a supervisor. He seized the phone and told me to pick it up the next day as a punishment for violating the library rule.

Of the three universities, Adekunle Ajasin University is the most vulnerable in terms of electricity. The university, established in 1999, is the youngest. It is situated in a rural community, unlike that of the University of Ibadan (established in 1948) and Ambrose Alli University (established in 1981), which have developed into big cities over time, with much infrastructure and government presence. Adekunle Ajasin University runs constantly on diesel in generating electricity from 9 AM to 4 PM daily except weekends. Nevertheless, it is adjudged as the best state university in Nigeria in 2005 and 2013 respectively (*Nigerian Tribune*, 2014).

Further observations revealed that both staff (library and non-library staff) and students were vulnerable to the electricity scourge and the violation of library rules and regulations. It is a common sight in the mornings and in the evenings after working hours for lecturers and librarians to be in possession of multiple chargers, and rechargeable lanterns of all shapes,

sizes, and colors, starting from the parking lot onward to their offices or in reverse order. Students also are not left out, dangling their chargers, sometimes tied round their necks, waiting for any available space and opportunities to charge their phones. For some students who have close personal relationships with their lecturers and other non-teaching staff, they simply drop their phones and make an appointment for a pick up. The library is also not left out. The general situation of the electricity supply makes it difficult for the enforcement of the library rules against students using electric sockets.

A staff from Adekunle Ajasin University gave his candid opinion during the interview in 2013:

For the fact that students see us doing what the library preaches against and not leading by examples, they are bound to disobey. They develop resistance and justify why they should not be punished. This often makes it difficult for library supervisors to enforce the rule. We are caught violating the maxim “He who comes into equity must come with clean hands” because we are also facing the same plight.

This is reminiscent of the work of Okoro and Chikuni (2007), who described Nigeria as a country characterized with inadequate electricity supply, incessant power outages, low availability of faulty generating plants, and high technical losses with negative snowballing effect on all aspect of the economy. The impact on the economy is multifaceted from the manufacturing to the knowledge producing industries, including university staff and students.

Little wonder that most universities have either sourced for alternative power supply or are in the process of sourcing for one. At the time of this study, Adekunle Ajasin University has already completed the first phase of a comprehensive solar panel project for electricity generation and supply. This was said to be limited to classrooms for students to use only. The second phase was speculated to extend beyond classrooms to offices for staff use.

Similarly, in the University of Ibadan, some departments do alternate between the national electricity and the solar system. In Ekpoma where Ambrose Alli University is located, it is still a proposal to have solar panels across some selected locations. The overhead cost of Nigerian universities to generate alternative electricity supply is quite enormous, considering other challenges such as inadequate manpower, laboratories and equipment hindering university education in Nigeria (Emmanuel & Sife, 2008).

Citing some of the strains and challenges the universities are facing, a senior librarian interviewed in 2013 stated that:

The cost of maintenance and the security in place to safeguard the panels from vandalism and from students making use of heavy and high consuming electricity gadget such as iron are draining the school purse.

The discussion reveals that students are in the habits of using classroom sockets for ironing their clothes at night. In order to prolong the life span of the solar panels, the school management of Adekunle Ajasin University had to remove all circuits and sockets in the lecture theaters as well as increase the number of security personnel patrolling the classrooms at night.

4. Deviant Behaviors Induced by Information and Communication Technologies

In his global information technology report, Greenhill (2011) observed that “The last decade has seen information and communication technologies (ICT) dramatically transforming the world, enabling innovation and productivity, connecting people and communities, and improving standards of living and opportunities across the globe.”

Numerous writers have noted the increased rate of adoption and utilization dynamics of information and communication technologies (Rogers, 2003; Comin & Hobijn, 2004; Greenhill, 2011).

Similarly, a growing body of literature has emerged that discusses technology and human computer interaction issues (Twyman, 2011; Druin, 2002).

However, the distractions these have created within the library are often overlooked. No doubts, computers, laptops, iPads, iPods, cell phones, and the Internet facilities have aided learning in the 21st century in a positive way, but not without some consequences in the changing traditional mode and operation in the library. The library, apart from its traditional function as a quiet place conducive for reading and learning, is gradually becoming a place for entertainment where students often come with laptops and other smaller electronic devices to watch movies and listen to music. This was described as very annoying by older librarians in the University of Ibadan as well as some students. A library staff interviewed in 2013 thus stated:

In this generation, it is difficult to stop students from entering the library with their phones, laptops, tablets, and iPads. At best, you can tell them not to make or receive calls within the library. Some of these phones are multifunctional. When students are bored reading, they often switch them on and watch movies. There are also those who come to the library to watch movies on purpose, sometimes in groups, disturbing the peace in the library. These are deviant behaviors associated with modern technology. It puts library personnel on their toes in checkmating these habits in recent times.

The disturbances associated with ICT come in different forms, such as the sharing of movies, songs, through Bluetooth devices, and memory sticks, with a whole lot of movements up and down the library. The growing technological attachment of students to these devices reiterates Alber Einstein’s fear of the day when “technology has surpassed our humanity” and the day when “the world will have permanent ensuing generations of idiots” (http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Talk:Albert_Einstein).

Uncontrolled behavioral effect of these devices disturbs and annoys library users, especially when the movements and noise get so intense through side talks, laughter, shifting of chairs, and whispering among students with these devices.

In the University of Ibadan, apart from the library staff, postgraduate students are more culpable of these behaviors; because they are the only ones officially allowed to make use of their laptops within the library. Notwithstanding this prerogative for postgraduate students, undergraduate students are also in the habit of sneaking smaller electronic gadgets such as mini-laptops, tablets, and iPads into the library to watch movies. The only difference is that undergraduate students do not have circuits and sockets in the section earmarked for them.

The absence of such sockets has been traced also to another deviant behavior associated with undergraduate students, who often disguise and sneak into the postgraduate section in order to use their laptops. In a particular incidence observed in the postgraduate section at the Kenneth Dike Library of the University of Ibadan, undergraduate students were chased out with their laptops during a routine check which involved every student to display their identity cards on the table.

The use of phones is prohibited in the libraries of the three universities, based on the instruction and symbol on the wall stating “all phones should either be switched off or be placed on silent mode activated”. However, this is the most violated and commonly overlooked act because almost every library user is said to have been caught one time or another, receiving or making urgent calls in the library. Students are not barred from entering the library with their phones. So they are more in numbers and more in the statistic of deviants. Most students are seen making use of their headsets to make call or receive calls, watching movies or playing music while reading. The volume of movies and songs was highlighted as another common disgusting issue among students.

Vivian, a student at the University of Ibadan, noted that, “some students often forget that they are in the library, not realizing how loud and discomforting the sounds from the movies or songs are to the persons seated next to them.” This shows that the engagement of students in a variety of ways can easily be of disturbance not only to the management of the library but other users (students and non-students) alike if caution is not adhered. Thus, uncontrolled use of ICT gadgets would definitely aid deviant activities in the library.

IV. Conclusion

The deviance in library utilization is dynamic, not just limited to students and general users. In comparison with librarians and university staff, the number of students patronizing the library is not a justifiable reason why students should be perceived as the only suspects whenever there are incidences of deviance in the library.

Four major reoccurring themes have emerged from the interviews with students and library staff, such as insecurity of patrons’ personal belongings, mutilation and theft of library books, misuse of the library space, and ICT-induced deviant behaviors. These findings revolve round two sensitive issues of insecurity and misuse of the library space. As observed, none of the libraries in the three universities have closed-circuit television for monitoring students and their activities. Besides, irregular electricity supply is a common problem.

Thus, the insecurity of patrons’ personal belongings in the libraries reveals the need for better and more modern security measures in state-owned university libraries. This will also guarantee the safety of library books against mutilation and theft. The misuse of library space for other purposes (i.e., leisure and entertainment) rather than reading and research can be curtailed by continuous sensitization of students and staff on the proper and expected conducts in the library. Similarly, librarians and the university administrators should also follow suit in the dynamic nature of modern library across the globe to make libraries more attractive to users and less stressful to librarians. This can only be done through adequate funding that will bring about transformation, renovation, expansion, digitization of books, sophisticated and hi-tech modern libraries that incorporate leisure and entertainment into research in Nigeria.

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