
A Review of Deviant Behaviors in Library Usage: Insights from Knowledge Resource Centers

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Abstract

Libraries and knowledge resource centers serve as vital hubs for academic, professional, and personal development. However, these institutions are not immune to deviant behaviors, which can undermine their intended purpose. This review explores the spectrum of deviant behaviors observed in library usage, categorizing them into theft, vandalism, misuse of resources, disruptive conduct, and technological abuse. By synthesizing existing research, this paper highlights the implications of such behaviors on library operations and user experience while suggesting potential strategies for mitigation.

Introduction

Libraries, as bastions of knowledge, play a critical role in societal advancement. They provide access to diverse resources, enabling individuals to pursue education, research, and leisure activities. Despite their noble mission, libraries face challenges from deviant behaviors exhibited by users. Such behaviors disrupt the operational flow, compromise resource availability, and create an unpleasant environment for other patrons.

This paper reviews the various forms of deviant behaviors encountered in libraries and knowledge resource centers. It aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of these issues, examine their root causes, and propose measures to address them effectively.

Objective

To examine the various types of deviant behaviors observed in library usage and their impact on library operations.

To explore the factors contributing to deviant behaviors in knowledge resource centers and propose strategies for mitigation.

Review of literatures

The reviewed literature presents an array of studies that highlight various issues and challenges faced by academic libraries in relation to resource management, user behavior, and security measures. Mamatha and Khasier (2016) explored the impact of book theft and damage in college libraries, noting that missing pages from expensive textbooks were a significant concern. Verma and Kalra (2015) examined the role of CSIR libraries as knowledge resource centers,

stressing the importance of adapting to a competitive information society through skill development and technology integration. Omosekejimi et al. (2015) highlighted the persistent reliance on traditional security methods in libraries, even as digital security measures gain importance. Ayyar (2014) focused on the information-seeking behavior of library users in Tamil Nadu, revealing the challenges posed by time constraints and staff shortages. Isebe (2014) pointed out that theft and mutilation of library materials are widespread issues in Delta State's academic libraries, often resulting from improper handling and shelving of books. Inyang (2013) studied library use malpractices in the University of Calabar, Nigeria, concluding that despite awareness of these issues, management efforts have been largely ineffective. Akor (2013) examined the causes of book theft and mutilation in Benue State University libraries, attributing these problems to insufficient resources and financial constraints. Natarajan (2013) reviewed the information-seeking behavior of students in Delhi's management institutions, noting that internet resources are a key source of information. Studies by Saikia and Gohain (2013) in Tezpur University and Hussain and Kumar (2013) in the Master School of Management explored user satisfaction with library services, showing that regular visits and resource utilization were common among students and researchers. Oyesiku et al. (2012) highlighted disruptive behaviors in academic libraries, particularly at Olabisi Onabanjo University, while Ranganathan (2012) discussed the perceptions and expectations of users at Bharathidasan University, finding that students primarily use libraries for academic purposes and prefer search engines like Google. Collectively, these studies underscore the importance of security, user education, resource accessibility, and technological advancement in maintaining effective library services. Patel et al. (2021) investigated awareness and usage of electronic resources by library users in Solapur University, finding that mobile phones are widely used, but lack of awareness and training hinder broader adoption. Omoike and Alabi (2020) examined theft, mutilation, and abuse of library materials in the University of Ibadan, identifying selfishness, inadequate resources, and financial constraints as major causes. Rakshikar and Powdwal (2020) explored wayfinding behavior in Mumbai university libraries, noting user confusion due to complex layouts and inadequate signage. Perumalsamy and Kannan (2019) studied the information-seeking behavior in public libraries of Tamil Nadu, emphasizing the role of district libraries in catering to users' diverse needs. Wadekar and Nagarkar (2018) highlighted challenges in managing online databases in Maharashtra, citing lack of policies and staff training. Okuonghae et al. (2018) investigated user delinquency in Nigerian libraries, linking it to reduced service effectiveness. Bajpai (2017) reported high awareness of e-resources among Delhi NCR special library users but noted barriers like slow networks and lack of guidance. Sharma and Madhusudhan (2017) analyzed mobile device usage among LIS students in Uttar Pradesh, identifying productivity tools and mobile apps as key academic aids but constrained by poor internet connectivity. Lastly, Raji et al. (2017) linked book theft in Nigerian university libraries to inadequate resources, financial constraints, and user dissatisfaction. Collectively, these studies reveal common themes of resource accessibility, user behavior, technological challenges, and the evolving role of libraries in education. M. Sohail and Andleeb Alvi (2012) explore reading habits at the Delhi Public Library,

finding that time constraints limit library visits, and that magazines and newspapers are commonly read. Mohammad Nazim and Bhaskar Mukherjee (2012) discuss knowledge management techniques in university libraries, highlighting the use of codification over personalization. S. Thanuskodi (2011) examines the use of electronic resources at Madurai Kamaraj University, recommending better access to high-speed internet. Ogbonyomi (2011) identifies security issues in academic libraries, such as theft and intellectual property concerns. R. Sankari et al. (2011) analyze information-seeking behavior at Vinayaka Missions Engineering College Library, offering suggestions for improving user satisfaction. N. Parvathamma and S. Reddy (2010) assess public libraries in Gulbarga District, Karnataka, noting the popularity of newspapers and reading room services among low-income users. Aditya Joshi and S. Nikose (2010) explore information-seeking behaviors at private technical education libraries, recommending workshops on online resource usage. M. Scarnò (2010) studies digital library user behavior, noting a shift toward magazine browsing rather than searching. These studies underscore the need for libraries to adapt to user needs, improve resources, and provide better training to enhance user engagement and satisfaction.

Research Gaps in Current and Older Studies

Research on deviant behaviors in library usage, while extensive, reveals several critical gaps in both current and older studies. Most existing literature focuses on traditional issues like theft, vandalism, and misuse of physical resources, with limited exploration of how digital resources and online platforms influence user behavior. As libraries evolve with digital transformations, emerging concerns such as digital piracy, unauthorized access, and misuse of online databases are not sufficiently addressed. Additionally, there is a lack of comparative studies examining deviant behaviors across different types of libraries, such as academic, public, and corporate, despite their distinct user bases and resource management strategies. Research also neglects the role of advanced technologies like AI-driven monitoring systems and automated access control in mitigating deviance, relying on traditional security measures. Longitudinal studies assessing the long-term effectiveness of behavioral interventions, such as user education and policy enforcement, are scarce. Furthermore, there is limited exploration of the psychological and social factors that drive deviant behaviors, leaving a gap in understanding user motivations and attitudes. Cross-cultural studies are also underrepresented, and research seldom examines how various cultural contexts shape deviant behavior. Finally, a holistic approach to user experience, considering how multiple deviant behaviors interact and affect overall library operations, is needed to develop more effective strategies for fostering responsible library use.

Future Scope

Future research should explore the impact of digital resources on deviant behaviors, the role of emerging technologies in prevention, and comparative studies across various library types. Additionally, investigating user motivations, cross-cultural differences, and longitudinal effectiveness of interventions will provide valuable insights into mitigating deviance and enhancing overall library management.

Discussion

The studies demonstrate the evolving landscape of library usage, highlighting the increasing importance of electronic resources and digital platforms. Users are shifting from traditional library materials like books to more dynamic sources such as electronic journals and magazines. However, barriers such as inadequate internet access, security concerns, and limited time prevent users from fully utilizing library resources. Libraries must adapt to these changes by providing better access to digital resources, investing in security measures, and offering user training, particularly in the use of online databases and digital tools.

The issue of deviant behavior, such as theft and vandalism, is a serious concern for libraries, especially in the context of public and academic libraries. These behaviors have significant implications for library operations, including the loss of resources and increased maintenance costs. Addressing these behaviors requires a multifaceted approach, including improved monitoring, policy enforcement, and user education about responsible library use.

Findings

The studies reviewed indicate several recurring trends and challenges in library services and user behavior. Common findings across the studies include:

Time Constraints: A major barrier to frequent library visits is the lack of time, particularly for working individuals and students (Sohail&Alvi, 2012; Parvathamma& Reddy, 2009).

Reading Preferences: Magazines and newspapers are the most commonly used materials in libraries, reflecting users' inclination toward easily accessible and up-to-date information (Sohail&Alvi, 2012; Parvathamma& Reddy, 2009).

Electronic Resources: There is a strong use of electronic resources, especially among students at higher education institutions, though challenges like internet access and resource availability were noted (Thanuskodi, 2011; Joshi & Nikose, 2010).

Deviant Behavior: Libraries face various challenges related to deviant behaviors, including theft, vandalism, and misuse of resources. These behaviors affect library operations and resource availability (Afolabi&Olatunji, 2018; Nwankwo, 2019).

Cultural Differences: The occurrence of deviant behavior varies across cultures and institutions, influenced by local norms and practices (Chen & Wang, 2020).

Knowledge Management: Libraries, particularly in academic settings, adopt both codification and personalization techniques for managing knowledge, though some aspects of these approaches are underutilized (Nazim& Mukherjee, 2012).

User Satisfaction: Library users generally express satisfaction with library collections, though there is a need for better user training, especially in the use of online resources (Joshi & Nikose, 2010; Sankari et al., 2011).

Conclusion

The findings of these studies highlight the need for libraries to evolve in response to changing user behaviors and technological advancements. To improve library services, institutions should focus on expanding access to electronic resources, enhancing user training, and addressing security concerns. Additionally, fostering a better understanding of user needs, including preferences for reading materials and information-seeking behavior, can help libraries

design more effective and user-friendly services. By adopting a proactive approach to these challenges, libraries can better serve their users and improve their overall effectiveness.

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