

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)

Libraries at University of Nebraska-Lincoln

---

Winter 2-1-2022

## Control Mechanism And Punishment Strategies As Correlates Of Deviant Behaviour Reduction Among Undergraduates In Public University Libraries In South-West, Nigeria

Olalekan Abiola awujoola

*Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies University of Ibadan, abileks132917@gmail.com*

oyinola Oluwaseun Bayowa

*Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies University of Ibadan, greatoyinola@gmail.com*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac>



Part of the [Scholarly Communication Commons](#)

---

awujoola, Olalekan Abiola and Bayowa, oyinola Oluwaseun, "Control Mechanism And Punishment Strategies As Correlates Of Deviant Behaviour Reduction Among Undergraduates In Public University Libraries In South-West, Nigeria" (2022). *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 6906. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/6906>

**CONTROL MECHANISM AND PUNISHMENT STRATEGIES AS CORRELATES OF  
DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR REDUCTION AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN PUBLIC  
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN SOUTH-WEST, NIGERIA**

By

**Olalekan Abiola Awujoola**  
**Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies**  
**University of Ibadan**  
**[abileks132917@gmail.com/08059432083](mailto:abileks132917@gmail.com/08059432083)**

**Oyinola Oluwaseun Bayowa**  
**Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies**  
**University of Ibadan**  
**[greatoyinola@gmail.com/08160124440](mailto:greatoyinola@gmail.com/08160124440)**

**Abstract**

This study assessed the menace of ICT induced deviant acts among library users most especially, undergraduates in public university libraries in South-west, Nigeria. The study looked beyond other reasons of deviance among undergraduates to see what libraries have in respect of their security mechanisms and punishment strategies to reduce deviant acts among undergraduates. Control theory was used as an anchor theory for the study because it gave a proper insight to the effectiveness of security and punishment measures on deviance reduction in the library. Survey research design was used for the study with a population of 352 library personnel in the 16 public university libraries in South-west, Nigeria. Questionnaire was used for data collection; analysis was done using percentage, frequency, standard deviant and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The results revealed that significant relationship exist between control mechanism and deviant behaviour reduction (N=275,  $r = -.185$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that negative significant relationship exist between control mechanism and deviant behaviour reduction. The result reveals that significant relationship exist between punishment strategies and deviant behaviour reduction (N=275,  $r = -.124$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that with severe punishment strategies, the bate of deviant acts can be adequately and effectively reduced.

**Keywords:** Deviant acts, deviant act reduction, control mechanism, punishment strategies, public university libraries.

**Introduction**

University library is attached to universities as no university can exist and operate without a library (Eyo, 2017). According to Eze and Uzoigwe (2013), university libraries are at the forefront of providing information services to the different categories of user-students, lecturers and researchers in order to support their teaching, learning and research needs. Singh and Kaur (2009) noted that preservation and access to knowledge and information is the main mandate of university libraries alongside supporting the mission of their parent. The university libraries in playing their supportive role to the university education as stated by Ajegbomogun, (2007) provide

necessary resources and services to undergraduates which enable the libraries to meet up their needs. Adesanya and Idogwu (2015) recorded that university libraries serve two complementary purposes; to support the institution's curriculum and the research of the university faculty and students. The mandate of the university library is therefore, to provide adequate and relevant information resources both in print and electronic for users.

Imam, Adeyoyin, Jegede and Adesanya (2008) stated that the basic role of a university library should include; provision of information, educational roles, research function, recreational/entertainment functions and promotion and preservation of culture, this is done through selective, acquisition, organisation, preservation and dissemination of informative materials stocked in the library. The existence and fulfillment of the library objectives and role is constantly being threatened by the activities of deviant user of the library. Public university libraries which are libraries that belong to the Federal and state governments face many challenges, these range from fund to acquire needed information resources to satisfy users information needs, also is the case of preservation and conservation of information resources. However, more important to this study is the issue of deviant users in the public university libraries. Rock (2000) affirmed that the most endemic threat to any library is an attack to its resources and its service delivery. Public university library users irrespective of their category commit one deviant act or another in the library. However, more of these deviant acts are believed to be perpetuated by undergraduates (Akussah and Bentil, 2010).

## **Literature review**

Undergraduates form the majority of the public university library users and they are characterised by youthful exuberance, they are adventurous and prone to deviant acts. The public university libraries (PUL) on their part must ensure reduction if not total elimination of deviance among its users (undergraduates). Deviance act/behaviour is any behaviour that strays and does not conform to the normal, acceptable norms of a society or human organisation (Downess and Rock (2003); Awujoola and Olapade, 2015). Deviant behaviour among undergraduates comes in many forms but this study is more concerned about some deviant acts that are ICT induced. ICT has revolutionalised several aspects of our lives, as well as activities in the library, however, ICT has also generated new deviant tendencies among library users (undergraduates).

Some of the ICT induced deviant acts among undergraduates include: phones ringing in the library; receiving calls in the reading section of the library; watching films in the library; listening to music in the library through headphones; stealing phones/flash drives, laptop, etc. in the library (Unibadan's case); charging phones beyond library restricted areas; cyber bullying of librarians by students; hacking into the library website; using the library internet IP for cyber frauds among others (Eruvwe, Akpojotor and Okonoko, 2015; Ikuomola, Okunola and fabunmi, 2014). Poor security measures and weak/ineffective punishment strategies in public university libraries may give rise to deviant acts among undergraduates. This is also the view of Control Theory which is the anchor theory of the study.

Control Theory was developed by a sociologist, Travis Hirschi (1969). The Theory was developed to explain why people deviate. Control Theory assumes that people are controlled by their inner conviction (conscience, fear, integrity) and some external factors (control system in place and punishment). Control Theory posits that social control depends on the effectiveness of the check and control institutions in place as well as people's anticipation of the consequences of

their behaviour. Control theory summarised that though humans are rational beings, they may sometimes find some deviance tempting, however, the thought of the system in place and the impending punishment deter them.

Most public university libraries (PUL) lack effective security measures to curb deviants acts among their users, many of these libraries do not have: surveillance cameras; radioactive devices in books; effective users search strategies; improved library supervision, good lightening in the library; security personnel at the entrance and exit of the library; library staff leading by examples among others (Awujoola and Olapade, 2015). Another factor that may influence deviant behaviour among undergraduates is weak punishment strategies used in the public university libraries. Control Theory suggested four reasons for punishment in any human organisation: retribution: this is a punishment on the individual deviant, it is meant to inflict the same pain as the benefit derived from the deviant act. Deterrence: this is meant to deter other potential deviants, here more punishment is given as a message to discourage other future deviants. Rehabilitation: this is a mild punishment to bring the deviant individual back to his normal state, this is because the reason for the deviant act is believed to be caused by the failure of the society or family life. Societal protection: this is a punishment on deviant intended to keep the society clean by getting rid of the deviant person. Deviant users in the library can be made to: pay full for damage caused; work on parole; his user card can be confiscated; face library disciplinary committee etc., Control theory also suggested rewards for conforming users, like students hall of fame, awards, letter of recommendation, etc

### **Statement of the problem**

Deviance is inevitable in all human organisations, public university libraries inclusive. Deviant behaviours among undergraduates have negative effects on information resources in the libraries, it impedes service delivery in the libraries, and it also threatens future scholarship. Personal observation and literature search have revealed that deviant acts abound among undergraduates in public university libraries. This may be as a result of the poor security measures in public university libraries. Another factor may be the ineffectiveness of the punishment strategies for deviance in public university libraries.

### **Objectives of the study**

- i. investigate ICT induced deviant acts common among undergraduates in public university libraries in South-west, Nigeria;
- ii. examine reasons for ICT induced deviant acts among undergraduates in public university libraries in South-west, Nigeria;
- iii. find out the control measures in public university libraries in South-west, Nigeria;
- iv. examine the punishment strategies in public university libraries in South-west, Nigeria;
- v. find out the relationship between control mechanisms and deviant act reduction in public university libraries in South-west, Nigeria;
- vi. find out the relationship between punishment strategies and deviant act reduction in public university libraries in South-west, Nigeria.

### **Methodology**

Survey design was adopted for the study, the population consisted 352 library personnel in the public university libraries (PUL) in South-west, Nigeria. Total enumeration sampling

technique was adopted for the study as the population was small and manageable for the study. The questionnaire and interview schedule were the data collection instruments. The instrument was validated by 5 professionals in the field of librarianship. While, 30 copies of the questionnaire were administered on library personnel in the University of Ilorin library to test for the reliability of the questionnaire. Copies of the questionnaire were personally administered by the researcher with two trained assistants. Data was analysed using the percentages, tables, mean and standard deviation and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).

## Findings and discussion

**Table 1: Common ICT-induced Deviant acts among Undergraduates using PUL in South-west, Nigeria**

S/N	Variables	Mean	Std dev.
1	Phone ringing in the reading section of the library	3.16	.827
2	Receiving calls in the reading section of the library	3.06	.838
3	Watching films in the reading section of the library	3.03	.823
4	listening to music in the library through headphones	3.04	.778
5	Stealing phones/flash drives, laptops etc. in the library	2.98	.839
6	Stealing of CCTV cameras and computer hard disks	2.44	.043
7	Charging of phones beyond library restricted areas	3.09	.776
8	Cyber bullying of librarians by the students	2.34	.132
9	Hacking into the library website	2.84	.827
10	Using the library internet IP for cyber frauds	2.97	.782

**Weighted mean = 2.90**

**Criterion mean = 2.50**

Table 1 shows the common ICT-induced deviant behaviours among undergraduates. The result in the table revealed that the most predominant deviant behaviour among undergraduates was phone ringing at the reading section of the library ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.16; std dev=.827), followed by charging of phones in the restricted areas of the library ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.09; std dev=.776), receiving calls ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.06; std dev=.838), listening to music ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.04; std dev=.778), and watching of films and videos in the reading section ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.03; std dev=.823). The least observed deviant act among undergraduates was cyber bullying of librarians ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.34; std dev=.132), followed by stealing of CCTV cameras and computer hard disks ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.44; std dev=.043). The result further demonstrated high prevalence of ICT-induced deviant among undergraduates as revealed by the value of the weighted mean, which was found to be above the criterion mean.

**Table 2: Reasons for ICT-induced deviant acts among undergraduate in PUL in South-west, Nigeria**

S/N	Variables	Mean	Std dev.
1	Lack of library security	3.36	.611
2	Porous library security	3.12	.751
3	Weak library rules and regulations	3.07	.868
4	Weak library punishment system	3.04	.778
5	No supervision of students while using the library	2.89	.839
6	Users believe they won't be caught	2.93	.864
7	Lack of anti-deviant act detectors	3.09	.889
8	Some librarians aid the act	2.95	.907
9	Library rules are so strict, no one can keep it	2.60	.843
10	Inadequate service staff at night/weekend	2.97	.782
11	Poor library operating system	2.61	.093

**Weighted mean = 2.69**

**Criterion mean = 2.50**

Table 2 shows some of the reasons provided by the undergraduate for engaging in ICT-induced deviant acts in the library. As revealed in the table, the reasons for engaging in ICT induced deviant act among undergraduates were lack of library security ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.36; std dev=.611), porous library security ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.12; std dev=.751), lack of anti-deviant act detectors ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.09; std dev=.889), weak library rules and regulations ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.07; std dev=.868). The least reason indicated for ICT-induced deviant acts among undergraduates was the weak library rules ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.60; std dev=.843), followed by poor library operating system ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.61; std dev=.093). The result confirmed that ICT induced deviant acts were prominent among undergraduates due to weak and ineffective control measures. This was shown by the value of the weighted mean which was found to be above the value of the criterion mean.

**Table 3: Anti-deviant devices/mechanism used in PUL in South-west, Nigeria**

S/N	Variables	Mean	Std dev.
1	Strict compliance to library rules	2.75	.917
2	Installation of security cameras	2.88	.751
3	Provision of e-resources to print	2.7	.935
4	Using users as watchdogs	2.64	.867
5	Video surveillance	2.89	.839
6	Reinforcing security check points at library entrance	2.84	.827
7	Users search systems(at library entrance)	2.97	.863
8	Use of Radio frequency Device(RFD) in books	2.95	.907
9	Use of barcodes	2.83	.907
10	User education	2.52	.987
11	Supervision of users in the library	3.15	.735
12	Restricting users entrance to some areas	2.55	.997

**Weighted mean = 2.80**

**Criterion mean = 2.50**

Table 3 shows some anti-deviant devices/mechanism in university libraries in Southwest, Nigeria. The result showed that the most prevalent anti-deviant device used in PUL waere supervision of users in the library ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.15; std dev=.735), users search system ( $\bar{x}$ = 2.97; std dev=.863), use of Radio Frequency Device (RFD) in books ( $\bar{x}$ = 2.95; std dev=.907), using video surveillance ( $\bar{x}$ = 2.89; std dev=.839). The least anti-deviant device available was the use of user education ( $\bar{x}$ = 2.52; std dev=.987), followed by restriction of users entrance to some areas ( $\bar{x}$ = 2.55; std dev=.997) and using users as watchdogs ( $\bar{x}$ = 2.64; std dev=.867). The result showed that PUL in South-west use anti-deviant devices/mechanism to curb ICT-induced deviant acts among undergraduates (WM = 2.80; CM=2.50).

**Table 4: Punishments/Rewards used in public university libraries in South-west, Nigeria**

S/N	Variables	Mean	Std dev.
1	Banning users from using the library	2.33	.624
2	Making users to face disciplinary committee	2.21	.804
3	Making users to pay fully for the damages or pay fines	1.61	.676
4	Public display of defaulters' identities	2.07	.804
5	Making the deviant users to work for the library for a specific time	2.09	.893
6	Hall of fame for complying library user(s)	1.58	.896
7	Confiscation of library users' identity cards	2.28	.930
8	Providing certain privileges to law abiding user(s)	2.23	.899

**Weighted mean = 2.63**

**Criterion mean = 2.50**

Table 4 shows the punishment/rewards for library users in curbing the hazard of deviant act among them. As revealed by the table, the most prominent punishment/reward used in public libraries in Southwest Nigeria was banning users from using the library ( $\bar{x}$ = 2.33; std dev=.624), followed by confistication of library users' identity cards( $\bar{x}$ = 2.28; std dev=.930), providing certain privileges to law abiding users( $\bar{x}$ = 2.23; std dev=.899). The least punishment/reward measures used in PUL in South-west was the hall of fame for complying library users ( $\bar{x}$ = 1.58; std dev=.828), followed by making users to pay fully for the damages or paying fines ( $\bar{x}$ = 1.61; std dev=.676). The result further confirmed the effectiveness of some of these measures (punishment/reward measures) put in place by the authorities in PUL in South-west, Nigeria. This was shown by the value of the weighted mean which is found to be higher than that of the criterion mean.

**Table 5: showing relationship between control mechanism, punishment strategies and deviant reduction**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>St. Dev</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Sig</b>
Control mechanisms	2.54	.917	351	-.185	.007	S
Punishment strategies	2.75	.868	351	-.124	.022	S
<b>Deviant act reduction</b>	3.45	.624				

Table 6 revealed that there is presence of significant relationship between control mechanism and deviant behaviour reduction (N=352,  $r = -.185$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that negative significant relationship exists between control mechanism and deviant behaviour reduction.

Similarly, the same table (Table 6) explained that significant relationship exists between punishment strategies and deviant behaviour reduction (N=352,  $r = -.124$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that with severe punishment strategies, the rate of deviant behaviour can be adequately and effectively reduced.

### **Conclusion**

Deviant acts among undergraduates can be curbed or greatly reduced if public university libraries put in place effective security measures and ensured that adamant deviant users do not go unpunished in the library. Deviant act especially among undergraduates cannot be totally eradicated, however, it is the library that must stand and be proactive in deterring deviant acts in them. The study also concluded on these two common Yoruba (a language generally spoken in South-western region in Nigeria) adages: Owon ti a ba file, lenu ewure nto (A food left unprotected will be easily accessible to a goat), Agbara ojo o lowun onilewo, onile ni koni gba fun (the ultimate aim of the flood is to destroy a building but it is the building owner that would not permit it).

### **Recommendations**

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

1. There should be proper awareness/education for undergraduates on activities that constitute ICT induced deviance in the library.
2. Librarians should also lead by example as undergraduates claimed that some librarians also commit deviant acts.
3. Public university libraries are advised to adopt ICT tools in their security measures.
4. There should be a written policy of punishment to crimes committed in the library, this should also include ICT induced deviant acts committed in the library.
5. Public university libraries are advised to devise innovative ways of rewarding and appreciating conforming students to encourage other students to do same.

## References

- Eze J. U. and Uzoigwe, C.U. (2013). The place of academic libraries in Nigerian University Education: contributing to the 'Education for All' initiative. *International Journal of Library and Information Science*. 5(10): 432-438
- Adesanya, O. O. and Idowu, K. U. (2015). "The Evolution of E-Library in Nigerian Academic Libraries: Challenges and Way Forward". Lagos: *Asian Journal of Education and e-Learning*. 3 (4).
- Imam, A., Adeyoyin, S. O, Jegede, R. O and Adesanya, O.O. (2008). *Library and Information Studies: an introductory text for Students in Tertiary Institution*. Abeokuta (Eagule Publishers).
- Singh, J. and Kaur, T. (2009). *Future of Academic Libraries in India: challenges and opportunities*. A paper presented at the International Conference on Academic Libraries (ICAL) held at the University of Delhi, India. 52.
- Ajebomogun, F.O. (2007). Users' assessment of library security: A Nigerian university case study. *Library Management* 25 (8/9):386-390.
- Akussah, H and Bentil, W. (2010). Abuse of library materials in academic libraries: a study of the University of Cape Coast Main Library. *African Journal of Library and Information Science* Vol 20, no 2: p103-112.
- Bello, M.A. (1993). Library security: Material theft and mutilation in technological university libraries in Nigeria. *Library Management* 19 (6): 378-383.
- Eruvwe, U, Akpojotor, O.L. and Okonoko, V.N. (2015). Defiant attitude among library users in Federal University of Petroleum Resources Library, Effurum, Nigeria. *Information and Management* Vol 5. No 3.
- Ikuomola, A.D, Okunola, R.A. and Fabunmi, S.O. (2014). Qualitative engagement of Nigerian students and librarians in the analysis of deviance in library utilisation. *Library Philosophy and Practice*.
- Awujoola, O.A. and Olapade, T.C. (2015). Curbing deviant behaviour among library users: the control perspective view. *International Journal of education and evaluation*. Vol 1. No.8

