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Compliance to Library Rules and Regulations by Students: A Case Study of Walton Whaley Library of Valley View University (VVU), Ghana.

Abstract

The study was set up to investigate compliance with library rules and regulations by students at Valley View University (VVU). The study employed a descriptive survey design and simple random sampling technique. The total population of the students at the time of carrying out this study was two thousand, two hundred and seventy-three (2,273). One hundred and twenty-six (126) students were sampled for the study. The instrument used for data collections was a questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed that a significant number of students were aware of the rules and regulations in the library as well as punishment and sanctions are given to offenders.

Keywords: Awareness, Compliance, Ghana, Library, Penalties, Rules and Regulations, Sanctions, Walton Whaley.

Introduction

Academic libraries are established to serve the needs of their parent institution; thus, to support learning, teaching and research needs of their clients in the academic community.

These libraries are perceived all over the world as a backbone of the university, because of this perception, the quality of the information they hold is adjudged by the services they offer to the intellectual community. The primary objective of every academic library is to provide relevant materials that will satisfy the needs of its patrons thus, providing information resources to support the aims and objectives of the parent institution through selection, acquisition, organization, and storage of materials demanded by the users.

University libraries play pivotal roles in the life of the library users to a large extent, guiding students and faculty where to locate materials in the library. Globally, university libraries are set to provide relevant information to enhance teaching, learning, and research to the academic community. This statement above confirmed that of Campbell (2006) which contended that university libraries are the complex institution with numerous functions and responsibilities. The author added that these functions of academic libraries are not limited to the supply of print materials and provision of space for learning, but offer services that enhance teaching, learning and research work which include bibliographies, reference services, and information literacy classes. Onwubiko (2005) also added that university libraries are established to support and improve the acquisition of knowledge through the delivery of learning resources such as; book and non-book materials.

Academic libraries all over the world are investing a colossal sum of money in both print and electronic resources to satisfy users. In view of this, there is the need to devise means to protect and guard these materials in the libraries, hence, the need for rules and regulations.

Libraries are set up to serve and fulfill their core objectives of the parent institution; therefore, rules and regulations are guiding the use and operations of the library irrespective of its location and nature. These regulations cover access, use of facilities, loans, fees, and charges.

It is essential for the library patrons to be familiar with these rules and regulations to keep themselves away from violating them. Alokun (2004) opines that patrons are, therefore, required to behave well in every corner of the library.

According to Williams cited in Whitemire (2001) outlined some services in a library as circulation services, photocopier services, periodicals services, reference services as well as reserve collections. The academic library is appraised by the quality of its collection and

availability of those materials to patrons; it is, therefore, crucial for academic libraries to set up disciplinary measures to prevent users from non-compliance or punish students who may defy these rules. Among disciplinary actions put in place is payment of fines, replacement of the lost/damaged materials or double pay for lost books, withdrawal of library card or suspension of the victim not to use the library for a certain period to serve others as a deterrent. In some libraries, patrons' bags are searched by library staff when they are exiting the library hall, and some libraries also install closed circuit television (CCTV-Cameras) to monitor users' movement and activities in the library.

Statement of the Problem

All over the globe, academic libraries have rules and regulations that are governing their day-to-day operations. These rules and regulations are enacted to ensure that library staff discharges their duties professionally by allowing patrons to learn in a conducive environment.

However, it is pathetic to note that students in some of these institutions appear not to comply with these rules and regulations in the libraries which Walton Whaley library of the Valley View University (VVU) is no exception. The non-compliance of these rules has given a gloomy picture about library staff not discharging their duties effectively. The level of this non-compliance varies from one library to another. The study of Ajegbomogun, (2004) reported that some individual patrons of academic libraries exhibit deviant and non-compliance attitude within the library and this cause security problem in the library. The problem may not necessarily be only in the form of theft to library materials alone, but non-compliance attitude among patrons may also cause an obstacle to the library staff which can impede library services, performance and other operations in the library as well. Again, if care is not taken it will lead to a severe famine of library collections which Valley View University library (VVU) has no option.

Observation by the researcher revealed that some users of Walton Whaley Library (WWL) of the VVU did not want to comply with library rules and regulations, in spite of the orientations and caution notes pasted in the library. Again, the majority of the students consistently violate these rules which are a nuisance to the library activities. These unpleasant attitudes of library users have prompted the researcher to conduct this study to find out why users are consistently violating these rules and regulations in the library.

The objective of the Study;

- i. To find out whether students are aware of the rules and regulations in the library.
- ii. To determine the type of rules and regulations in the library.
- iii. To establish the level of compliance with rules and regulations in the library.
- iv. To identify the types of sanctions and penalties in the university library.

Literature Review

The academic library is supposed to be a quiet place where patrons access and acquire knowledge. Any unacceptable behaviour in the library distracts other users of the library, often preventing them from concentrating on their studies. Patrons are advised to comply with the general rules and regulations in the library accordingly and avoid activity that could serve as a distraction to other users of the library. Library professionals need the assistance of all patrons and staff to help keep the library and its materials in good condition, hence the need for rules and regulations in the library to inform users about the "dos and don'ts" of a particular library; For instance, "do not mutilate, write, highlight or tear any material while using it". These are some of the rules and regulations designed to curb the indiscipline behaviour of Walton Whaley library of Valley View University users (Valley View University Library Policy, 2010).

Edem, Ani, and Ocheibi (2009) reported in their study that it is the responsibility of libraries to make their resources available to all users through an effective and efficient manner.

The study of Crumpton (2007) highlighted that noise within the library can divert the attention of users who appreciate the library and its resources as a convenient place for learning, hence, it is essential that the level of noise within the library ought to be controlled for patrons to have a sound and undivided attention while learning in the library.

Sola, Oluwafemi and Owolabi (2015) on awareness and compliance with library rules and regulations by undergraduate students in two university libraries in Southwest Nigeria revealed that out of 82 respondents, 57(69.5%) indicated that they know about library rules and regulations through library orientation, 6(7.3%) hinted through colleagues, 31(37.8%) reported that through regular visit to the library, while 11(13.4%) expressed that through the library staff. Although, academic libraries are non-profit entity, yet, they still need to make their clients aware of the types of services they provide as well as policies and rules governing the use of their products in the learning community through library orientations, seminars and user education for both old and new students. Akussah and Bentil (2010) asserted that library orientation as well as awareness creation for fresh and continue students should be taken seriously to curb the degree of damages cause to library resources. According to their study, libraries should adopt the use of flyers, leaflets, signs, notices newsletter as well circulars to create awareness to their users. Ashaver (2012) affirmed the views of previous authors that library orientation enables students to familiarize themselves with all the activities and operations of a library including rules and regulations. The findings of Omoisejimi, Ojeme and Eghworo (2015) on undergraduate students' awareness and compliance with library rules and regulations in Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun, Delta State, Nigeria reported that out of 250 respondents

242(96.8%) were aware of the library rules and regulations followed by 8(3.2%) who indicated that they were not aware of these rules and regulations.

The findings of Sola et al.,(2015) revealed that 81(98.8%) of the respondents agreed that they were aware of library rules and regulations while 1(1.2%) said they were not aware of the rules and regulations in the library. In the same study, 74(90.2%) of the respondents agreed that it is their duty to be silent in the library while 46(56.1%) of the respondents also expressed that doing group discussions in the library is not allowed, 51(62.2%) agreed that using mobile phones in the library is not permitted. Another 33(40.2%) expressed that reserving seats for colleagues is not allowed, 77(93.9%) agreed food items are not always allowed in the library, 68(82.9%) indicated that bags are not allowed in the library and 19(23.2%) participants said they were aware of payment of overdue fines in the library. The study of Utor (2014; Jimoh, 2008) enumerated some deviant behaviours that affect library services as defacing library materials, stealing, keeping of borrowed books beyond the due date. The rest are excessive borrowing, eating and sleeping in the library, hiding of books, throwing of books through windows and many more.

Interestingly, Afolabi (2013) and Tefera (2016) outlined similar deviant attitude towards library services as throwing out library materials through windows at night during a power outage, taking library materials without passing them through the borrowing process and also removing some relevant pages of a particular book/material. The rest include wiping away library property stamps with the aid of chemicals, taking out date due slips, removing book jacket as well as preliminary pages of books and so forth. Ogbodo (2004) posits that there is a need for library rules and regulations to control the behavior and attitudes of library users. In response to situations such as stealing, defacement of materials, and disorderly conduct, should not be left to an individual staff member's judgment. According to Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) added that one

of the advantages of patrons orientation is that it enables them to be introduced to the rules and regulations governing their conduct in the library use. Libraries set up disciplinary measures to prevent students from non-observance or punish students who violate library rules and regulations. These disciplinary measures comprise payment of fines, material replacement or double pay for lost books, a ban from using library collections.

Abosedo and Ibikunle (2011) reported that the positive attitude of the staff's response to students is an essential ingredient that encourages library use and compliance with library regulations. The staff's response to students' needs must be constantly re-assessed, and this will help the staff to encourage students' use of the library and their compliance with library regulations and rules.

A similar study conducted by Edoka (2000) revealed that convenient hours are an essential weapon that helps patrons to comply with the rules and regulations in the library. The findings disclosed that patrons agree to the fact that library working hours should be extended at weekdays and be opened during the weekends. Libraries charge fines for lost materials, mutilated, stolen, and keeping material beyond due dates. These fines are meant not only to generate income for the libraries but also to serve as a deterrent for users who take library rules for granted.

Udofia (2002) hinted that libraries should reinforce the rules governing charging fines for overdue materials and ensure that overdue fines payments are paid immediately to serve as a disciplinary measure as well as security for library materials. Jackson (2005) and Bello (2001) reported in their studies that there are a lot of deviant behaviours occur in libraries which management is aware of and are putting stringent measures to eliminate such activities from library's operations. The purpose of fines and other sanctions is to help libraries to ensure that all users get the best possible benefit from the Library service. Library rules and regulations

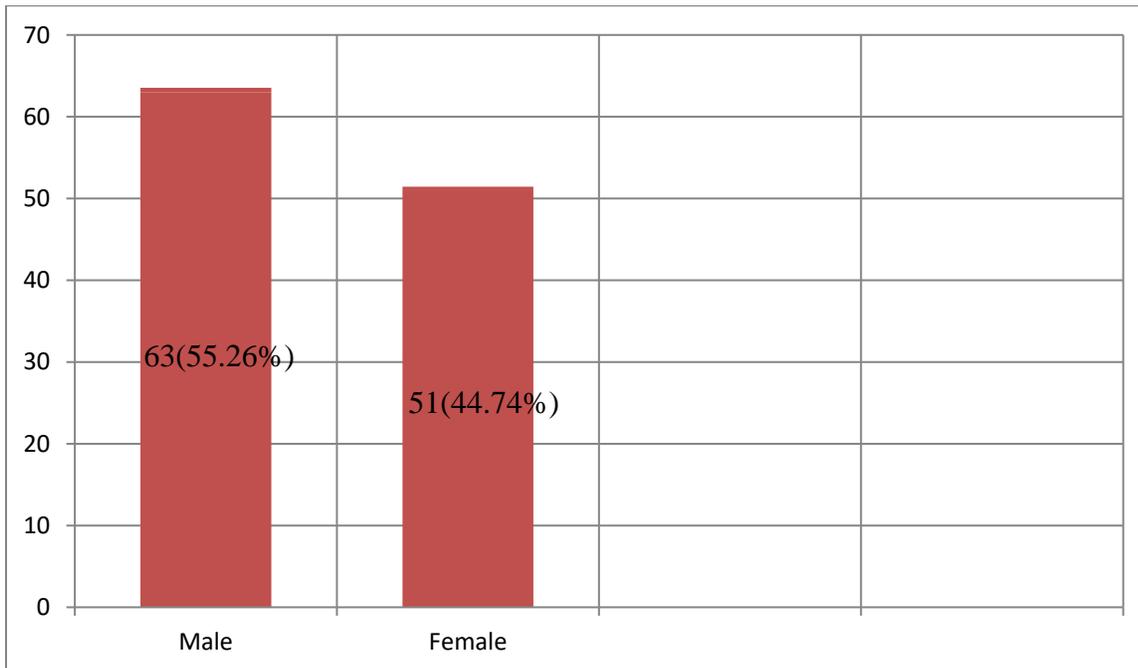
certainly are not intended to be punitive. Theft, mutilation or defacing of library materials or equipment (including folded pages, written marks with a pencil, highlighters, etc.) will subject the offender to the disciplinary committee. Library rules are designed to make sure that borrowers return library materials in the same condition in which they were loaned to them. Borrowers who are unable to return library materials in the same state will have to pay for the cost of replacement or maintenance. Lost library materials must be replaced to ensure continued access to information. Nina-Okpousung (2011) suggests that the library staff should organise a series of library orientation courses on library use, rules, and user conduct in every academic year. According to the author, this will help the library staff to check the level at which users violate library rules and regulations, thereby educating patrons on the use of libraries. Afolabi (2005) indicated that most students who attended library orientation do not break laws and rules in the library when compared with their counterparts who did not participate in the orientation exercises. Popoola and Zaid (2007) affirmed that Nigerian university libraries ought to take students orientation programme very serious as a means of encouraging the use of library collections and services. Since the university library is the storehouse of knowledge in the university environment, students can gain maximum benefit from it, only if they are taught how to fish out information from the myriad of resources in the university library. Ojo (2006) "noted that even though the mobile phones have become very indispensable in the day to day communication, it has become an object of worry to most parents and school administrators in Nigeria."

Methodology

The case study approach was adopted for the study. The instrument for data gathering was a questionnaire. The target population for the study was undergraduate students of Valley University, Oyibi Campus. The total population of the students at the time of carrying out this study was two thousand, two hundred and seventy-three (2,273). One hundred and twenty-six (126) regular users of the library were selected using the simple random sampling technique. Out of 126 copies of questionnaires distributed, 114 of the respondents returned their questionnaire representing 90.5% response rate. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, 17.0) was used to analyse the quantitative data.

Findings and Discussions

Figure 1. Gender of Respondents



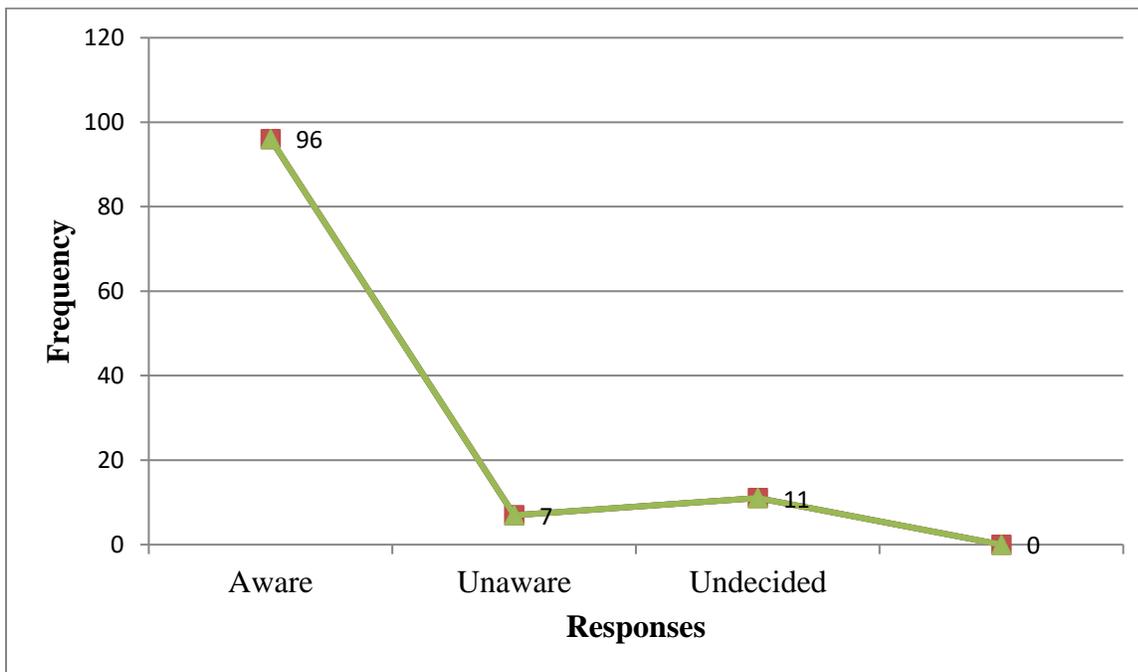
Source: Field Data, 2018

Figure 1. Above the results indicate that out of the total number of respondents, 63(55.26%) were male, with 51(44.74%) of the respondents being female who took part in the study.

Awareness of the Rules and Regulations in the Library

It is important for users to become aware of the rules and regulations governing the use of a particular library. Awareness is a catalyst that speeds up discipline among library users; it also helps users not to violate library rules and regulations but obedient to the rules and regulations.

Figure. 2: Awareness of the Rules and Regulations in the Library



Source: Field Data, 2018

The respondents were asked to express their views on awareness of library rules and regulations. From the Figure1 above, out of 114, 96(84.21%) indicated that they are aware of the rules and regulations in the library, followed by 7(6.14%) who indicated unaware while 11(9.65%) remained undecided. It can be inferred that the majority of the respondents are aware of the rules and regulations in the library.

Types of Rules and Regulations in the Library

Library rules and regulations are the laid down measures that explain how the library operates.

These rules and regulations are designed to provide sanity in the library operations and also to guard against deviant behaviours among library users.

Table 1: Types of Rules and Regulations in the Library.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided
Users must be registered in the library	22(19.3%)	67(58.77%)	15(13.16%)	6(5.26%)	4(3.51 %)
No reservation of seats for friends	19(16.66 %)	36(31.58%)	47(41.23%)	5(4.39%)	7(6.14%)
No food or water is allowed in the library	21(18.42%)	55(48.25%)	23(20.17 %)	15(13.16%)	-
Bags are not allowed in the reading area	23(20.18%)	61(53.51%)	18(15.79%)	3(2.63%)	9(7.89 %)
The use of mobile phones in the library do not hinder learning	33(28.95%)	64(56.14%)	9(7.89 %)	5(4.39%)	3(2.63%)
No group discussion in the library	28(24.56%)	24(21.05%)	55(48.25%)	2(1.75%)	5(4.39%)

Source: Field Data, 2018

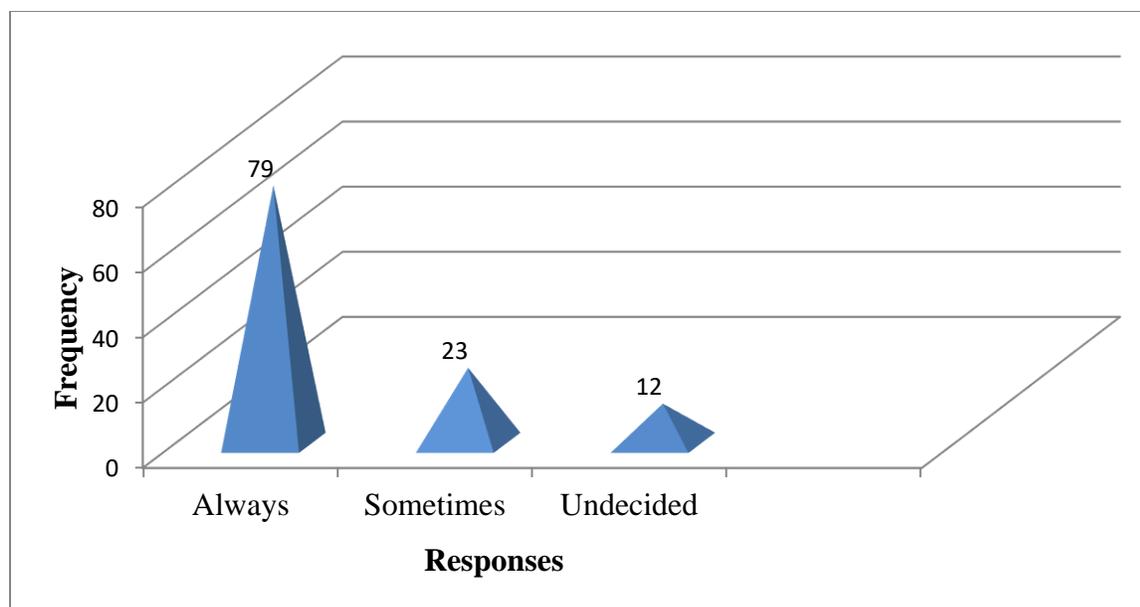
On the types of rules and regulations in the library, the study revealed that 67(58.77%) of the respondents agreed that users must be registered in the library, while 15(13.16%) strongly disagreed with the statement, followed by 4(3.51 %) of the respondents remained undecided to the question. On the other hand, the respondents were asked to indicate their views on no reservation of seats for friends. From the findings, 47(41.23%) of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, followed by 36(31.58%) of the respondents who agreed to the

assertion, while 7(6.14%) of the respondents remained undecided. Again, the researcher sought the views of the respondents concerning whether bags are allowed or not in the reading area of the library. The findings revealed that 61(53.51%) of the respondents agreed that bags are not allowed in the reading area of the library, followed by 18(15.79%) respondents who strongly disagreed to that statement, while 12(10.52%) of the respondents remained undecided. Subsequently, the respondents were asked to indicate whether the use of mobile phones in the library hinders learning or not, with this, 64(56.14%) of the respondents agreed that the use of mobile phones in the library impede learning, however, 17(14.91%) of the respondents strongly disagreed to that claim. The researcher again tried to find out if the library allows group discussion, with this 55(48.25%) of the respondents strongly disagreed while 28(24.56%) of the respondents agreed to the statement and 5(4.39%) respondents remained undecided.

Level of Compliance with rules and Regulations in the Library

The word compliance is a practice of obeying rules and regulations made by the library management to ensure discipline in the library. These rules and regulations are set of procedures established to make sure that users comport themselves when using the library facilities.

Figure. 3: Level of Compliance with rules and Regulations in the Library



Source: Field Data, 2018

To find out the level of compliance with the rules and regulations in the library, it became evident from the study that 79 (69.29%) of the respondents indicated “always” to the question while 23(20.18%) indicated “sometimes”, however, 12 (10.53%) of the respondents remained undecided. This implies that the majority of the respondents comply with the rules and regulations in the library.

Table .2: Types of Sanctions and Penalties given in the university library.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage(s)
Sanctioned for receiving and making mobile calls	66	57.90%
Seizure of phone(s) for breaking library rules	31	27.19%
Sacked from the library	17	14.91%
Total	114	100

Source: Field Data, 2018

Respondents opinions on sanctions and penalties in the library as displayed in Table 3 above revealed that out of the 114, 66(57.90%) of the respondents indicated that they had been

sanctioned for receiving and making mobile calls in the library. Another 31(27.19%) showed that their phones were seized for a semester for breaking the library rules and regulations, 17(14.91%) also indicated that they were sacked from the library while doing group discussions in the library. This is evident that a good number of respondents violated library rules and regulations.

Discussions

Awareness of the Rules and Regulations in the Library

This study was carried out to find out students compliance with library rules and regulations in Walton Whaley Library of Valley View University (VVU).

The finding established that majority of the respondents were aware of the rules and regulations in the library. This finding of the present study confirmed the study of Omosekejimi, Ojeme, and Eghworo (2015) whose results indicated that out of 250 respondents, 242(96.8%) were aware of the library rules and regulations at Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun (FUPRE), Delta State, Nigeria.

Types of Rules and Regulations in the Library.

The findings on the types of rules and regulations in the library reported that a significant number of respondents agreed that the use of mobile phones in the library did not distract their studies. This result is not in line with the studies of Crumpton (2007; Nwanne, 2001) which

reported that noise within the library, as well as the indiscriminate use of mobile phones in the library, could divert the attention of users which eventually affect their reading habit.

Level of Compliance with rules and Regulations in the Library

The findings on students' level of compliance with rules and regulations in the library indicated that an overwhelming number of respondents admitted that they comply with the rules and regulations in the library. The study corroborates with that of Omosekejimi, Ojeme, and Eghworo (2015) which reported that majority of the undergraduate students of Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun (FUPRE) comply with the rules and regulations in the library.

Types of Sanctions and Penalties in the University Library.

The findings on sanctions and penalties in the library revealed that 66(57.90%) of the respondents indicated that they had been sanctioned for receiving and making phone calls in the library which violates the rules and regulations of the library. The study affirmed that of Ogbodo (2004) which stated that library rules and regulations were enacted to control indiscipline behaviours.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It was reported from the study that users are aware of the rules and regulations in the library and they do comply with them. The users also consider the rules and regulations as a disciplinary technique for instilling discipline in library operations. The findings indicated that the library applies appropriate penalties and sanctions to those who violate the rules and regulations through payment of overdue charges, seizure of mobile phones and strict warnings to library users.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made;

- ❖ The library should organise periodic orientations to enable students to be fully aware of the categories of rules and regulations.
- ❖ The management of the library should intensify user education programmes to educate students on the rules and regulations in the library.
- ❖ The library management should install CCTV-Cameras in all areas or corners of the library to scare those who want to engage in deviant behaviours as well as breaking the rules and regulations in the library.
- ❖ The general rules and regulations such as;
 - Switch off your mobile phones before entering the library.
 - Conversation is not allowed in the library.
 - Leave bags and other luggage at the patron's bags section.
 - Drinks and foods should not be brought into the library.
 - Do not bring water into the library.
 - Library books and other materials are not to be torn, mutilated or defaced.
 - Library books are not to be underlined or highlighted.
 - Library books are not to be shelved after reading.
 - Do not take any newspaper away from the newspaper section.
 - Do not leave pieces of paper on the library table or floor.
 - Do not tamper with any computer or any electronic device or gadget.
 - Do not save or leave your personal information or document on any of the library's computers.
 - Visitors visiting the library for the first time should fill the visitor's form before using the library facility.

- All materials are to be submitted to the security on duty for inspection before leaving the library premises. These rules and regulations should be written in bold letters on the main entrance of the library or any nearby notice boards of the library.

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