

# Prevention of Library Collection Security Breaches in Ohangwena and Oshana Regional Libraries, Namibia

Esther Ndapewa Tobias<sup>1</sup>, Nelson Guvava<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Chief Librarian: Ministry of Education Arts and Culture, Namibia

<sup>2</sup>Lecturer, National University of Science and Technology, Zimbabwe

## Abstract

This paper focused on the prevention of library collection security breaches in Ohangwena and Oshana Regional Libraries. A qualitative research design was employed and a case study strategy was adopted for the study. The population consisted of 12 staff members from Ohangwena and Oshana Regional Library who were selected through purposive sampling. Data was collected through telephone interviews and presented qualitatively in form of descriptive narratives. The study revealed that most of staff members working in these libraries held qualifications which were not related to librarianship. The findings revealed that over borrowing of books, theft and vandalism of library collection were very common in these libraries and occurred on a weekly basis. Further findings showed that measures such as the use of 3M library security system, CCTV, security personnel and lockers to keep users' bags were in place to address security issues. Penalties such as replacement of lost or damaged items, suspension of offenders, fines for over borrowing were imposed upon users in these libraries. A major recommendation was that libraries should formulate national policies and guidelines to guide library staff on how to handle security breaches. Additionally, the government should recognize theft and vandalism of library materials as a crime because currently, users tend to commit these ill-acts since no criminal case is opened against them.

**Keywords:** Library Collection, Security Breaches, Library Collection Protection, Prevention of Library Material Loss, Library Resources Theft, Resource Vandalism, Namibia Public Libraries

## 1. Introduction to the study

Despite the efforts made by libraries to have collection security systems and several measures which prevent security breaches such as theft, vandalism, over borrowing and non-return of library collection, security breaches were still persistent in Namibian public libraries. Collection security issues in libraries are not a new concept, these issues have existed from the earliest time to the present and library professionals are worried about how to ensure the protection of library materials from theft and damages (Scott n.d; Akor 2016; Urhiewhu, et al. 2018). Library security has to do with taking necessary measures to ensure that the materials available for use in the library are kept in a good condition and prevented from being stolen (Akor 2013). Collection insecurity indicates that there is a need for libraries to provide, maintain and secure their collection to ensure durability, accessibility and effective provision of services to users. In order to accomplish the purpose for which a library is established, best practices have to be

established to ensure suitable security and protection of library collections from mutilation and theft (Amoah 2016).

Major security issues in libraries include theft and mutilation, vandalism, disasters, over borrowing, drinking in the library and purposefully displacing of materials (Akor 2013; Urhiewhu et al 2018). Theft is defined as the removal of library materials from the library without the normal procedures by library users, library staff or both of them. Mutilation and theft of library materials is intentional removal or attempted removal of library materials from the library without their being checked out. Similarly, successful unauthorised removal of library materials from the library, failure to return materials to the library is also regarded to be theft of library materials (Akor 2013). Security breaches such as theft and mutilation, hiding library materials, refuse to return overdue borrowed materials, have become a common occurrence in libraries, if this is not checked, it will lead to serious drought of information materials in the library and will increase serious threats to library collection and presentation (Adekunle et al. 2018; Urhiewhu et al 2018; Isebe 2015). The issue of collection security is of growing concern to all types of libraries and librarians (Akor 2013; Yamson et al. 2016). Maidabino (2012) noted that cases of loss, theft and vandalism are reported daily in libraries.

## 2. Statement of the problem

The goal of security systems in libraries should be able to provide a safe and secure capabilities of library resources (Akor 2013; Amoah 2016). Isebe (2015) argue that prevention of library materials from theft and vandalism is a major problem which needs urgent action to curb it. Thus, it is the responsibility of every Librarian to implement best security systems and measures (Kumbhar et al. 2016). It was against this background that this study was conducted to investigate ways to prevent library collection security breaches in Ohangwena and Oshana Regional Libraries. There are several researches that were done on security of library collection in the past; however, none was done in Namibia. Such researches include that of (Moswela 2010; Osayande 2011; Yamson et al 2016; Amoah 2016; Akor 2013; Newell et al 2013; Kumbhar et al 2016; Ozowa et al 2016; Maidabino et al 2011; Maidabino 2012; Urhiewhu et al. 2018). These researches focused on academic libraries with only one focusing on public libraries (Newell et al 2013) which was done in American and does not make part of the African perspective, Namibia included. Moswela (2010) study which was done in Botswana was based on book security in school libraries. As a result, there was no study done on prevention of library security breaches in public or community libraries within the African continent, thus this study filled this geographical gap.

## 2. Purpose and objectives of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the prevention measures of library collection against security breaches and it was guided by the following objectives:

- To investigate existing security breaches against library collection.
- To find out the security measures used to reduce and address security breaches in libraries.

In order to address the above objectives, the study was guided by the following research questions:

- What are the existing security breaches against library collection?
- What are the measures used to reduce and address the security breaches in libraries?

### 3. Significance of the study

This study was deemed significant because it might result in a more efficient and effective way of managing library collection security systems to prevent loss of resources in public libraries. Based on the researchers' knowledge, there was no research done on library prevention of library security breaches in public libraries in Namibia, thus this was the first study in Namibia. Findings of this study were expected to help policy makers in developing policies with regards to prevention of security breaches in libraries particularly in public libraries, therefore, reducing financial costs which results from loss of library collection.

### 4. Literature Review

Security in general refers to the freedom from danger and protection from illegal access, loss avoidance and damage prevention. Security also means the state of being safe, protection against attack and procedures to provide such protection (Kumbhar et al 2016). The concept of security is considered as an equipment set in motion to guide and reduce the unexpected rapid vanishing of valuable materials from their original position to an unknown destination (Ajegbomogun 2004; Erlianti, et al. 2018).

#### 4.1 Security systems in libraries

When a security system is implemented in a library, it is referred to as a library security which is strategically designed to protect library collections which comprises of both books and non-books against unlawful removal, loss and vandalism of library collection (Ajegbomogun 2004; Oyedum et al 2014; Erlianti et al 2018). This includes the protection of library collection from disasters and theft (Oyedum et al 2014). "In general, the law of library security is divided into two categories. First category focuses on mutilating or destroying library materials (vandalism) while the Second law is concerned with the not-return the material after the expiration of the loan term (theft)" (Erlianti et al 2018).

There are various security systems that are used by different types of libraries to help prevent unauthorised removal of collections and possible monitoring and detection of users in general reading and reference rooms, as well as shelves areas. Security systems have separated in terms of manual and electronic systems. Electronic systems were made by technological support whereas manual systems are totally based on human effort (Kumbhar et al 2016). Manual systems include locks and key system, installing grills on windows, single door entry-exit for staff and user, security guards employed to patrol, installing after-hours lighting, observation by library staff, fire extinguisher and security equipment, identity cards and access authorisation and physical checking of users (Kumbhar et al 2016). Electronic security devices may include electronic surveillance cameras, 3M library security systems, RFID system, perimeter alarm system, movement detectors Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) (Ozowa et al 2016).

#### 4.2 Security measures to reduce and address security breaches in libraries.

Even though a library might have security system that is deliberate and efficient, sabotage can take place at any point along the system's pathway. Nonetheless, library staff should make it a duty to ensure that such acts are reduced or eliminated through the implementation of strict measures (Ayoung et al 2014). This could be done through training of library staff to detect and prevent delinquent acts; writing reference hand books on what to do during emergencies; adequate staffing numbers, adequate provision of emergency equipment; and maintenance of existing facilities in the library (Ayoung et al 2014). Libraries should employ competent and dedicated staffs who are properly skilled to handle security threats and

should be supported with the appointment of a security supervisor and literate security guards as enforcement officers (Ayoung et al 2014; Akor 2013). Thus there is a need for a continuous training of library staff in order to familiarise themselves with new threats, knowledge about library collection and prepares them with necessary skills to tackle problems as and when they occur (Ayoung et al 2014). Library materials must be safe; therefore, security devices or security systems need to be provided by library to ensure that materials are not stolen or mutilated (Akor 2013). Customarily, security has been a matter of inventing protections in response to specific losses. That is to say, when a loss occurs a new safeguard is introduced to protect against repetition of that type of loss in the future (Yamson et al 2016). Security measures to reduce loss of library collection may consist of tightening security at library entrances and exits, expulsion of users involved in theft and mutilation, provision of multiple copies of heavily used text and reducing the cost of photocopying (Akor 2013; Amoah 2016). Libraries should provide photocopying services to enable the library users to photocopy books that are few in the library (Ayoung et al 2014; Akor 2013). It is observed that the best protection that a collection of books and non-book materials can have is a concrete building. Library security should be planned when the library building is constructed wherever possible, through architectural considerations which include the site design and building design (Akor 2013; Amoah 2016). When constructing a library facility, it is very important to ensure that safety features are incorporated into the design process so there will be no any compromise on security. This is because lack of planning results in easy security breaches in libraries (Ayoung et al 2014).

Measures such as constant supervision, searching users at the library exit, deploying security personnel of integrity to the library, condemnation of theft through mass media, vigilant against mutilation by library users, better educated security men to detect stolen books through thorough physical examination of books and gauzed windows could help to reduce the high rate of collection theft in the library (Akor 2013). In cases where machines are used as security systems, equipment should be positioned in such a way that it is in the view of staff to deter thieves and vandals. Moreover, equipment should be kept in good working order to deter tactical vandalism (Yamson et al 2016). Preventive measures also include ensuring that library users take maximum care of all library material hence libraries should ensure that library's guidelines for the use of collections must be visible to users at all times. Users may not enter the library with items that could harm the collection, items such as food, water, scissors, knives etc. (Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries 2003). According to Ayoung et al (2014) provision of orientation to users on how to handle and use library collection is a very crucial factor in preventing collection security breaches. This is due to the fact that some security breaches are caused by lack of user awareness (Maidabino et al. 2011; Ayoung et al 2014). Studies done by Isebe (2105) and Urhiewhu et al (2018) recommended that libraries should provide regular user education and user orientation.

Offenders are regularly punished and mostly they are just fined. However, some researchers feel that this punishment is not enough to prevent users from withholding overdue books, therefore the amount is insignificant (Ayoung et al 2014). In some academic libraries, users who are caught partaking in security breaches such as stealing materials are expelled for four semesters from the university and are also made to pay for the cost of the books (Isebe 2015). Users who are caught stealing books are made to pay for the book in question, reported to student disciplinary committee for action, library membership is usually withdrawn and in some cases users are dismissed from the college (Isebe 2015). All crimes should be reported to the police, the police should be provided with all necessary information including a full

description and photographs of stolen items (Resource: The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries 2003).

To curb these breaches by effectively protecting and granting access control to collection, a sensible and thoughtful effort must be made to endorse strategies and policies to handle and manage collections (Ayoung et al 2014). It is also recommended that electronic and information and communication technology may be used as a means of monitoring in order to improve security of collections (Ayoung et al 2014). These help libraries to control, minimise or avoid library material theft and unethical losses. However, it is worth to keep in mind that some technologies might have worked effectively in other countries whereas they might fail to work in some other countries especially in developing countries due to factors such as unreliable public electricity supply, poor maintenance regimes and sabotage (Ayoung et al 2014). It is imperative that libraries protect their resources, on the other hand this should be as impeccably as possible, without intrusive of the library's objective of providing a user-friendly environment (Ayoung et al 2014). The absence of measures to curb delinquent acts will lead to the recurrence of breaches (Ayoung et al 2014).

## 5. Methodology

The study employed a qualitative research design. A case study research strategy was adopted for the study and the population consisted of library management and library staff working in Ohangwena and Oshana regional library. Purposive sampling was used to select respondents that could give relevant information to the research's objectives. Research instruments used were Interview guides and data were collected through telephone interviews. Data were analysed qualitatively and presented in a form of narrative descriptive. To ensure credibility and trustworthiness, the researchers personally conducted the interviews and asked relevant follow up questions. To avoid cases of misrepresenting interview data, interviews were recorded with the permission from interviewees. All respondents participated in the study on a voluntary basis.

## 6. Findings of the study

### 6.1 Participant's highest qualification

Participants who took part in the study had different types of qualifications as outlined below:

- Master's Degree in Information and Technology
- Bachelor Degree in Library Science
- Bachelor degree in Business Information Technology
- Bachelor Degree in Library Science and Records Management
- Bachelor Degree in Information Systems
- Diploma in Library Science
- Diploma in Business Administration
- Honours Degree in Human Resources
- Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology
- National Vocational Certificate in Office Administration
- Grade 12



### 6.2 Participants’ job title and years of experience

Twelve (12) participants from Ohangwena and Oshana Regional Library took part in this study. In the two libraries data were gathered from participants who held different job titles which included Acting Chief Librarian, Senior Librarians, Senior System Administrators, Assistant Librarians and Watchmen. Participants have been in these positions ranging from less than a year to 11 years.

### 6.3 Library’s demographic information

**Table 1:** Library Demographic Information

	<b>Total number of professional staff</b>	<b>Total number of books</b>	<b>Total numbers of computers</b>	<b>Total number of headsets</b>	<b>Total number of DVDs/CDs</b>
<b>Library1</b>	14	±14000	84	28	427
<b>Library2</b>	14	±30000	±73	±30	±60

### 6.4 Existing security breaches against library collection

The first objective of the study was to find the existing security breaches in Ohangwena and Oshana regional library. Security breaches that existed in the two libraries included the following:

- Stealing and damaging of headsets
- Stealing of books, newspapers and magazines
- Tearing of pages from books, newspapers and magazines
- Removal of barcodes, date sheet and call numbers from books
- Over borrowing and non-return of books
- Stealing of library laptops
- Stealing of library USB flash drive
- Damaging of DVDs and CDs
- Noise making and disturbance of other users
- Unauthorised use of computers and sockets/plugs
- Chewing of gum in the library
- Stealing of passwords
- Writing and underlining in the books

### 6.5 Most common existing security breaches

Participants were asked to mention the most common existing security breaches. Among all these existing security breaches, the following were the most common which were happening on a weekly basis: These includes book theft; over borrowing; tearing of pages from books and newspapers and removal of barcodes, date sheets and call numbers from books.

### 6.6 Ways of identifying security breaches

Participants were asked how they identified the security breaches in their libraries. The study found that security breaches such as removal of pages from books were identified through shelving. When staff members shelved books, they detected missing pages from the books. Tearing of pages from books were

also identified when staff members patrolled in the library, they found users, particularly learners trying to remove pages with pictures from books. Damaging of books was identified through the borrowing process as staff members were required to page through books before issuing them to users, removed pages were discovered. A participant explained:

Theft and removal of pages from newspapers occurs mostly when there are a lot of vacancies advert, hence majority of users are applying for these vacancies. Users usually remove pages with vacancies advert and some just steal the whole newspaper and this is easy since newspapers do not have security strips. When another user come looking for the newspaper, that is when staff members realise that the newspapers is no longer available or pages with vacancies advert are removed.

A daily stocktaking of headsets was conducted and this is how missing headsets were identified. Users who borrowed headsets also informed library staff members that headsets were not functioning and it was through this, damaged headsets were identified. Laptops theft was identified by staff members when they realised a decrease in the number of laptops. There was also an incident whereby children were caught red-handed trying to throw the laptops over the wall at the children playground area. Book theft was identified through the use of 3M library security system at the exit of the library which rings when unauthorised books are removed. A participant narrated how unlawful removal of books were identified:

Users were caught red-handed, they usually hide library books between their personal books and use the “I forgot” excuse. In cases like this, staff members get to inspect these books and that is how it is discovered that barcodes, call numbers and date sheets are removed from the books. Users remove barcodes, call number labels and date sheets thinking that are the one that trigger the 3M library security system to ring.

It was found that over borrowing was identified upon return of books or when staff members ran the systems for overdue reports.

### **6.7 Effects of security breaches**

The researchers wanted to find out the effects that the security breaches had on the provision of library services. The findings showed that security breaches affect the library provision negatively as it affects both the library and its users. The library collection decreases, vandalised items become irrelevant as users miss out on the information that is on the removed pages from books and it forces the library to discard these damaged books. Over borrowing led to unavailability of library resources when needed by users. Stealing of newspapers and removal of newspaper pages, especially the ones with vacancies advert, disadvantage other users as they might not get access to this information and end up not applying for the vacancies. All these breaches limit the library in meeting users’ needs. These security breaches bring along financial implications as it cost the library a lot of money to replace stolen and vandalised books. In some instances, it becomes impossible to replace damaged and stolen materials especially books, as they might no longer be available on the market, thus affecting access to information by the future generation. Most used books are usually stolen and vandalised and these include NAMCOL and excellent books for grade 10 and 12 which learners used to prepare for their examination. All in all, it gives the library a bad image and reputation to the community at large.

### 6.8 Security measures to reduce and address security breaches in libraries.

Another objective of the study was to find out the security measures used to reduce and address security breaches in Ohangwena and Oshana regional library. The study found that the libraries had lockers where users keep their bags as bags were not allowed inside the library, food and drinks were not allowed inside the library, books have library ownership stamp; users are registered for library membership to borrow materials legally. The results indicated that the two libraries had security lights, provided cheap photocopy and printing facilities for as little as N\$0.50 per page; books and headsets have security strips, use of 3M library security system; CCTV and Watchmen who guarded the entrance and exit. Both libraries kept DVDs and CDs collection in lockable cabinets and are only issued upon request and users were only allowed to use them within the library.

The researchers enquired about how the libraries dealt with user who were caught stealing, vandalising and attempting to steal library materials. The study found that there is a slight difference in the manner that the libraries deal with these users. Both Library1 and Library2 call in users who steal and vandalise materials and question them while at the same time provided user education to make them understand the right procedures of using the resources. Users were asked to replace damaged items by buying the exact item or similar of the same value. Upon replacing the material, Library1 suspend users for 3 to 6 months. The study found that Library1 involved the police and parents of offenders. A respondent from Library1 explained:

When a user is caught stealing or damaging library materials, we call the police and the users will make a written statement at the police station declaring when to replace the material. In some instances, users are kept in custody until they replace the materials. For users under age, especially learners and students, we call the parents so they can make arrangements as to when they will replace the material.

The study also found that Library2 sometimes penalised users who stole and vandalised materials by making them clean the library and pick up rubbish. Participants from Library2 indicated that they felt they did not have the right to report the issues to the police and they had no right to deny users access to information. The study's findings revealed that the two libraries penalise users for over-borrowing, users are charged N\$0.50 for each day the book is late. Users with overdue materials are not allowed to borrow materials.

The researchers examined how the physical architecture of the library building contribute to the protection of the library collection. The study found that both libraries had a separate entrance and exit which was electronically controlled. The doors to the entrance and exit were also manually lockable. The entrance and exit was guarded by Watchmen and there was an 3m library security system at the exit. However, it was also found the door to children's playground was not controlled and does not have 3M library security systems. Participants further noted:

The door that exits to children's playground which is entered through children section is not controlled and there is no a 3M library security system. It was through this door that children stole laptops and tried to throw them over the wall with the aim of getting them when they leave the



library. We (Library2) do not have a telephone booth, so users who receive phone calls while in the library go to the playground to answer their calls and they can easily take out books and throw them over the wall.

Library's windows are installed far out or reach, a participant further noted:

The library's windows are installed up high which makes it difficult for users to throw materials through them. And also the side where users could possibly throw materials, they have no access to that area, as entry to this area is restricted and guarded by security guards.

The study revealed that the two libraries had short shelves which made it easy to see what users are doing.

### **6.7 Challenges to library collection protection**

The researchers sought to find out the challenges experienced by staff member in securing their library collection against security breaches. The study found that lack of policies and guidelines were the biggest challenges to curbing security breaches against library collection. A respondent further noted:

Once we capture user stealing or tearing pages from materials, there are no actions steps that tell us exactly what to do. We just try to do what we think will work and we might get into trouble one especially if we punish a user with a punishment that is against the law, we must at least have procedures in black and white to guide us.

It also found that electricity failure during operation hours was another challenge, it affected the 3M library security system as it cannot work without electricity. The 3M library security system becomes malfunctioning. Participants expressed that users continuously come up with new ways of stealing and vandalising the library collection, they outsmart the security systems in place, a participant narrated:

For example, instead of stealing the whole book, they instead remove pages that they need. Some users who over borrow, steal and vandalise library books do not replace them they just say they do not have money and the case ends there since we (Library2) do not do much about that. User's rights such as right to information are considered and it makes it a challenge to protect the collection.

Some library staff do not take the security issues seriously. A participant noted:

Sometimes the 3M library security system is ringing but no staff member is attending to it, staff are quiet. They do not protect the library collection as if it was their own.

During exam time, libraries get extremely full that made it difficult to monitor what all users are doing. It was discovered that there was lack of manpower at Library1, a participant noted:

Assistant Librarians are supposed to be assisting users in the shelves and the library which could help detect these ill-acts but now Assistant Librarians are performing the duties that were supposed

to be carried out by Librarians since there are no Librarians hence Assistant Librarians hardly check on users as it should be, thus only Watchmen do the patrolling of the library.

## **7. Discussion of the findings**

### **7.1 Participants and library demographic information**

The study found that most of staff members working in the libraries under study held qualifications which were not related to librarianship field. Even though majority of library staff did not have qualifications in librarianship, they have several years of experience in dealing with library collection security breaches. It is however bizarre that the findings revealed the libraries studied had inadequate staff. It was discovered that Library1 with ±14000 book collection and Library2 with ±30000 book collection had only fourteen (14) professional staff. This makes it difficult to control users partaking in security breaches. As indicated by Ayoung et al (2014) inadequate staff makes it almost impossible to carry out library routines and duties while at the same time being vigilant to ensure that opportunistic users do not deplete available resources through delinquent acts. It is further emphasized that the quality of staff has a major effect on arresting the increase tide of breaches.

### **7.2 Security breaches against library collection**

The findings to the question ‘what are the existing security breaches against library collection’ revealed that theft and vandalism of library books, headsets, newspapers and magazines existed in the two libraries understudy. It was also found that security breaches such as theft of library USB flash drive and laptops, over borrowing and non-return of library materials were occurring in the libraries. Among these security breaches, over borrowing of books, theft and vandalism of books and newspapers were identified as the most common breaches in the libraries which occurred on a weekly basis. These findings are in agreement with (Ayoung et al 2014) who noted that most common amongst these breaches include theft, mutilation and book non-return. Adekunle et al (2018), Urhiewhu et al (2018) and Isebe (2015) had the same sentiments as they stated that security breaches such as theft and mutilation, hiding library materials, refuse to return overdue borrowed materials, have become a common occurrence in libraries. These breaches are identified through shelving, library patrolling, library circulation process and daily stocktaking of library headsets. This shows that the two libraries are in line with Collection Security Management Model which explains that libraries’ circulation section is responsible for shelving of items, creates manual or computer systems to record and track the use of the collections, report on delinquent borrowings, items that are lost, misplaced, stolen, abused, decayed or damaged (Maidabino et al. 2011).

Participants stressed the importance of library collection and stated that security breaches against library collection lead to shortage of the collection and financial implications. Participants also emphasized that security breaches limit access to resources by other users hence, it might be difficult to meet users’ needs. This is consistent with (Maidabino et al. 2011; Idris 2013; Olajide 2017; Adekunle et al 2018) who highlighted that theft, vandalism and non-return of library materials deny other users the opportunity of using such materials. The findings also resemble the concept of (Akor 2013) that collection security breaches are regarded as formidable obstacles to information access and use. Adekunle et al (2018), Isebe (2015), Olajide (2017) and Urhiewhu et al (2018) asserted that if these ill-acts are not checked, they can lead to serious drought of information materials in the library and will increase a serious threat to library collection and preservation. This is because according to Ayoung et al (2014) loss of library collections

leaves a significant strain on delivering the mandate of any given library which results in financial implications substantial.

### 7.3 Security measures to reduce and address security breaches in libraries

Findings to the research question ‘what are the measures used to reduce and address the security breaches in the library’ show that measures such as library membership, cheap photocopy facilities, 3M library security system, CCTV, book security strips, library ownership stamps, security personnel, security lights, lockers to keep users’ bags were in place to address security issues. The results also showed that penalties such as replacement of lost or damaged items, suspension of offenders, fines for over borrowing were imposed up on users in both libraries. Library1 also suspended offenders for 3 to 6 months from using library services. These results were similar to those of (Isebe 2015) whereby it was discovered that in some academic libraries, users who are caught participating in security breaches such as stealing materials are expelled for four semesters from the University and are also made to pay for the cost of the books. Akor (2013) and Amoah (2016) also noted that security measures to reduce loss of library collection may consist of expulsion of users involved in theft and mutilation. However, findings from Library2 were not in total agreement as the results revealed that Library2 did not suspend users participating in security breaches, as they regarded it as a violation of users’ rights to information access. Other measures included searching users at the library exit (Akor 2013) on the other hand it was found that security personnel in Library1 and Library2 did not perform users body searches as they felt they did not have the power nor right to do that, moreover there was no mandate for them to do so.

The study’s findings showed that Library1 and Library2 provided cheap photocopying facilities from as little as N\$0.50 per page. The results correspond to (Akor 2013; Amoah 2016) who believed that security measures to reduce loss of library collection may involve reducing the cost of photocopying. However, the same findings were inconclusive to Urhiewhu et al. (2018) study which noted that most libraries do not have photocopying facilities for users in case of need, hence this lures the users to engage in such vicious acts. On the contrary, participants who partook in this study highlighted that some users tend to steal or vandalise library materials because they are unaware that they can borrow or make copies.

From the study’s findings, it was discovered that electronic devices such as 3M library security system and CCTV were deployed in the libraries to support curbing security breaches such as theft and vandalism of library collection. These findings deviate from Ayoung et al (2014) study which revealed that none of the libraries under study had deployed any electronic mechanism to complement the human effort in fighting library collection security breaches.

Parents of minor offenders and police officers were involved in dealing with security breaches in Library1, parents and police assisted with the enforcement of measures in place specifically the replacement of lost and damaged materials. However, this was not the case with Library2, the study outcomes showed that Library2 had little efforts when it comes to measures of book theft and vandalism as they let first-time offenders go unpunished. These findings were in line with Yamson et al (2016) whose study found that the library management is aware of the factors hindering security system, yet placed less effort to minimise the situation. Urhiewhu et al (2018) articulated that lack of security measures in libraries encourages users to perform immoral acts such as removal of information resources in illegal ways. It was evident from the findings that Library2’s participants pointed out that the measures they had in place are not effective in dealing with security breaches.

The study's results showed that library's windows did not have grills but they were installed far out of reach which makes it difficult for users to throw out materials. These findings did not confirm neither reject Akor (2013) opinion in which he stated that all library windows should be gauzed to make it very difficult for books to be thrown out. In a nutshell, these findings and Akor (2013) opinion are actually aimed at achieving the same result which is to prevent materials from being thrown out of the windows.

#### **7.4 Challenges to library collection protection**

The researchers sought to find out the challenges experienced by staff members in securing their library collection against security breaches. The study found that lack of policies and guidelines were one of the biggest challenges to curbing security breaches against library collection. Another challenge was electricity failure during operation hours; it affects the 3M library security system as it cannot work without electricity. Moreover, in some cases the 3M library security system did not function well which leads to failure of security breaches detection.

The study found that it was a challenge to secure library materials when users continuously came up with new ways of stealing and vandalising the library collection, they outsmarted the security systems in place. These findings concurred with Harwell (2014) who noted that people were still able to steal and outsmart security measures.

The study discovered that some library staff did not take the security issues seriously. In some instances, when the 3M library security system rings, no one attended to it. This results resonates with (Lowry et al 2003) who believed that some staff members tend to turn a blind eye to security breaches from a user coming in the library with a soft drink bottle to a gate alarm sounding. Even though (Lowry et al 2003) emphasised that all library staff need to retain a keen awareness of the fact that they are working in a busy environment that is open to the public for many hours a week, this study found that during examination time the two library get extremely full making it difficult to monitor what every user is doing and this is because of shortage of staff members, particularly in Library 1.

#### **8. Conclusion and recommendations**

Based on the findings, it was concluded that security breaches such theft, vandalism, over borrowing and non-return of library collection were a common occurrence in libraries. Even though there are several measures in place to address security breaches, they were not adequate to completely curb security breaches against library collection. Additionally, the researchers concluded that lack of policies, no training, power failure, and shortage of staff members were great challenges experienced by staff members in securing their collection. The following recommendations were suggested based on the study's findings and conclusions:

- There is a need for a national policy and guidelines with action steps on how library staff should handle security breaches.
- The government should recognize theft and vandalism of library materials as a crime because currently, users tend to commit these ill-acts since no criminal case is opened against them.
- Libraries should have back-up power such as solar energy and generators to ensure the 3M library security system is not affected.
- CCTV and 3M library security system must be maintained to ensure that it is properly functioning at all times.

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