“Library Crime & Vandalism in Engineering College Libraries of Marathwada: A Case Study”

ABSTRACT

Libraries are considered venerable, quite peaceful and safe places for study, learning and research, libraries are soul of the educational institutes and play vital role by providing resources and services according to curriculum of the faculty and students. Library is a social institution preserving and disseminating knowledge in the form of documents so anything which defiles its sanctity, decorum, discipline, beauty concerning library is called as vandalism in library. All forms of library abuses and crimes in the library come under vandalism in the library.

Vandalism is recognized as crime, when a person willfully damage or deface the property of others or the commons, some vandalism qualifies as culture jamming on sniggling. It is artistic in nature as well as being carried out illegally or without the property owner’s permission. Vandalism is not senseless property damage, individuals vandalize intentionally property, popularly referred to vandalism such as equipment, buildings, furniture etc, for variety of reasons such as to convey a message, to express frustration, to take revenge, to make money or as a part of fun and competition, or game, vandals may work alone or as a members of a loose or organized group.

Cohen (1973) outlined the categories of vandalism, such as acquisitive; tactical; ideological; vindictive; play or malicious; Gouke and Marjorie (1980), studied on periodicals mutilation following an anti vandalism educational campaign. Lincoln (1989), discusses the types of vandalism that occur in libraries and a number of prevention strategies; Pedersen (1990), present the findings from her survey university students about the problem of mutilations of library material; Goswami (1989) focuses on the causes and solutions for theft, mutilation and misplacement, complete with illustrations & poetic prose; Shuman (1994) periodical mutilation finding that most mutilation occurs within three years after publication.
There were several studies conducted on different aspects of safety and health issues. Lincoln (1984) reported on the Library Crime Research Project. It was a three year study using a survey method of the library crime and disruption patterns in public libraries in the United States; study assessed the problems of crime and disruption, problem patron behavior, assault and arson were addressed. Arndt (2001) Training should be two fold, occurring both in the library from other staff and security personnel, as well as with formal training opportunities outside the library.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study has been undertaken with a view
1. To identify different types of crime & vandal activities.
2. To find out causes of crime & vandal activities.
3. To undertake opinions of users on crime & vandal activities.
4. To survey steps taken by library staff, committee, management and Government to control the vandalism.

HYPOTHESIS

Following hypothesis were formulated for the study;
1. Unsatisfied users are root cause of crime & vandalism.
2. Male users are more prone to library crime & vandal activities.
3. Urban the users more the vandalistic activities.
4. Open the access in libraries more the vandal activities.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is confined to library crime & vandalism in Engineering College libraries affiliated to Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University (BAMU) Aurangabad & Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University (SRTMU) Nanded which is in Marathwada region.

POPULATION SAMPLE

Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University (BAMU) and Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University (SRTMU) both were one of the oldest University in the Marathwada region, according to university
dairy and annual report of BAMU (2011), there were total 358 professional and non-professional affiliated colleges, of the total 358 affiliated colleges 168 are Arts, Commerce and Science colleges, which are known as non-professional, while 190 colleges are professional colleges, located in urban and rural areas of Aurangabad, Jalna, Beed and Osmanabad district, of the 168 colleges, 19 colleges were recognized during the year 2009-10 which have been omitted from the study, hence present study includes 23 Engineering colleges. Out of them one was Government college while other 19 colleges were private aided and unaided

The Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University (SRTMU), Nanded was established at Nanded by bi-furcating the Marathwada University, Aurangabad on 17th September 1994, the day on which in 1948 Hyderabad State was liberated from rule of the Nizam. Nanded is a district headquarters as well as a holy city situated on the banks of Godavari River in southeastern part of Maharashtra state.

The University is to cater for southern part of Marathwada Region of Maharashtra State, specifically to the districts of Nanded, Latur, Parbhani and Hingoli. The 12 Engineering colleges are from these four districts. Of the total population of 12 engineering college libraries the researcher has randomly selected the sample of 12 college libraries as per sample size given by (Karejcie and Morgan 1970) table.

METHODOLOGY

The present study used survey method to collect the data from Engineering College Libraries affiliated to Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University (BAMU) Aurangabad & Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University (SRTMU) Nanded, to find out the prevailing situations.

Data Collection

“Data are raw materials of reflection until by comparison, contrast an evaluation they are stepped up to successively higher levels of generation”. (Das, 1986).
The data was also collected from annual report of BAMU Aurangabad. The researcher also visited a number of relevant websites on internet.

8.2 Design of Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was designed separately for users and librarians.

Broad details regarding both the questionnaires are given in Chapter No. 1.

Two separate questions included in the questionnaire on targeted material for vandalism and impact of vandalism on teaching learning and research. It was estimated that it would take about 10 to 15 minutes of user time for responding to the questionnaire.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

Collected data has been analyzed and presented in tabular as well as graphical form. In graphical form, bar charts, line graphs are used for presentation. For the purpose of analyzing the data collected, the fixed variables were user’s place of residence, gender, age, and income group, the statistical software package (i.e. SPSS) has been used.

CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS

In response to the Vandal acts, majority 70.18% users have seen library crime & vandal acts on college library property, of the total rural users 31.94% and of the total urban users 90.55% were aware of vandal activities. Therefore, it can be stated that 'Urban the users more the vandalistic activities' (Hypothesis No.3) is valid. Further among the total male users 62.05% and amongst total female users 53.14% respondents were acquainted with vandalistic activity on library property, which indicates that 'Male users are more prone to vandal activities' (Hypothesis No.2) is valid. Amongst the younger age group of 17-25 nearly 58% were found more tempted in vandalism, the income group of these users was below 20000/-.
The chi-square test results showed that pulling table & chairs, nosily rustling the books & other documents lifting of equipment and statues are found significant at both the level 0.01 and 0.05. The calculated chi-square value 34.750 reveals positive responses towards pulling table & chairs whereas only removing flower plots 8.212 was not found significant at both the level. The table 4.2.5 indicates that 68.82% users were not allowed in the stack to select the books, while only 31.18% users were allowed to enter inside the library. Even though very few users were provided with open access the vandal activity is taking place, which indicates that ‘Open the access in libraries more the vandal activities’ (Hypothesis No.4) is valid.

Regarding vandalism in college libraries 70.19% respondents felt that the vandal acts observed were drawing cartoons on newspapers, periodicals and books, while 50.58% respondents observed on library buildings and walls. As regards engraving 41.3% respondents noticed books and periodicals and 36.53% on furniture and equipment, while 25% indicated on library building. Scratching and breakage mostly found with tables, walls, catalogue card cabinets, library buildings etc. The reasons thereof were fun or competition and as a part of group behavior. It can be also noted from Table 4.2.4 that 60.63% users were unsatisfied with the library collection and services, it can be stated that ‘Unsatisfied users are root cause of Vandalism’ (Hypothesis No.1) is valid.

As regards year of establishment of Engineering College before the independence in Aurangabad only one government college was in existence. After the establishment of BAMU & SRTMU the steady growth of colleges were notable during the year 1957-1967, 1967-1977 and 1987-1997. After 1979-2011 due to privatization policy of Maharashtra government 88% non grant colleges were established during 1997-2007. Which indicates mushroom growth of colleges in the Marathwada region. Amongst them 75% were granted and 24.04% were non granted colleges located in rural area and in urban
area of four districts. While 0.96%, that means only one Government College was in Aurangabad.

3 As regards the access to collection 0.96% libraries were providing open access facility to the users, while 99.04% libraries were providing close access facility to the collection.

3 Regarding external vandalism 84.14% respondents noticed sitting on vehicles parked, 51.83% respondents were moving the mirrors, 10.89% respondents noticed, breaking glasses and lights, 8.99% respondents noticed vandal acts of removing vehicle parts, of staff and users. While the reasons thereof were, no proper parking stand with a gate provided by the library, no watchman appointed by the library or if appointed is not doing his duty faithfully and a part of group behavior.

3 Regarding arson to the library 45.21% respondents together had been tempted to put fire and loot property of the library, communal riots, broken glasses of doors and windows, devastated the garden / lawn of the library. While the reasons thereof were for fun or competition, to acquire something like money, valuables etc. kept or present there and to protest against operating policies of college libraries.

SUGGESTIONS / IMPLICATIONS

Following are the implications which is based on the results/finding of the study.

3 UGC & AICTE should make sufficient provision of funds to install modern security systems in college libraries to prevent theft, vandalism etc

3 Government should enact legislation on vandalism

3 Government should undertake comprehensive studies on book loss from academic libraries and crime rate in academic libraries as well as the cost involved in repairing, repainting, vandalized, library building, furniture, equipment and collection
As per staffing pattern the management should provide the library staff which is specially appointed and trained for smooth functioning of the library, further the management should also provide additional library staff to serve the students enrolled for various non grant courses, by which the burden of existing staff will be reduced.

Management should provide finance for installation of modern security technology in college libraries like CCTV, RFID etc, to prevent library property from theft, mutilation, misplacement, non-return of books, un-authorised borrowing and vandalism.

Library building design should be theft preventive, one exit and entrance, wire mesh windows, provision of property counter, eliminate hidden location, plantation of tree should be away from library building, provide adequate visibility in parking and inside building, proper parking facility with gate and watchman should be provided.

With regard to loss of books due to theft mutilation, 3 books for open access and 2 books for closed access, per thousand books issued/consulted in an academic year may be considered as negligible loss and hence be written off by the principal/governing body of the college, if librarians negligence is not proved, If the loss is beyond prescribed limit the matter may be referred by the principal to the higher authority concerned.

The principal and the authority should organize the state/national/international seminars and conferences with the financial assistance from UGC on library safety and security issues to educate and inform the professional as well as to make library staff aware about preventive measures for library security and safety.

The library should subscribe comprehensive Insurance policy for risk coverage & old and broken furniture should be repaired or replaced by new one.

Authorities should invest more in electronic resources which will reduce to a large extent the incidence of users physically handling
documentary materials. This will also enhance multiple accesses to library materials with little damage.

3 To prevent theft, mutilation from libraries, librarians should make available number of text books and quality reprographic equipment in cheaper cost of photocopying with trained operator.

3 Well documented Library policy and procedures should be framed by the librarian as per the ACRL and ALA guidelines when there is a case of vandalism, it should be available for all staff members and users to read, either as a separate booklet or as part of library manual or in college prospectus

3 The record of the illegal incidences in college libraries should be maintained in prescribed format along with loss in monetary terms.

3 The report of every stock verification work should be submitted to the concerned University, Principal and Joint director of higher education and UGC by which any person can study and calculate actual loss from college libraries.

3 The library should aim to create an atmosphere conducive to honesty and pro-library feelings, while at the same time acknowledge the necessity to set up sensible and thorough security arrangements.

3 The users should be made aware of the difficulty and expense involved in replacing, repairing damaged and stolen library property.

3 A vigorous publicity campaign through posters on acts of vandalism and with emphasis on the penalty of expulsion to culprits can, to a certain extent, check the malfeasance of vandalism in libraries.

ORGANIZATION OF STUDY

The thesis has been presented under the chapters:

Chapter 1 - INTRODUCTION

Deals with the emergence of concept, historical development followed by an account of the proposed research, its objectives, hypothesis & methodology.
Chapter 2 - VANDALISM IN COLLEGE LIBRARIES: A REVIEW
Expects definitions of vandalism, theft, mutilation, misplacement, over borrowing, problem patron or vandal etc. and other concepts are presented in review of related literature.

Chapter 3 - SURVEY OF DATA COLLECTION
This chapter presents details regarding the procedures adopted in data collection from College Librarians & Users / Students using a structured questionnaire.

Chapter 4 - LIBRARY CRIME AND VANDALISM IN ENGINEERING COLLEGE LIBRARIES
Deals with analyzed data collected from users under the following major headings viz. mutilation, theft, misplacement, over borrowing etc. and control of vandalism.

Chapter 5 - PREVENTIVE AND CONTROL MEASURES OF LIBRARY CRIME AND VANDALISM
Presents detailed outline of vandalism and preventive measures taken by college libraries.

Chapter 6 - MAJOR CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS
Summarizes the major findings and implications based on the study.

The study ends with a list of bibliographical references and appendices