



Assessment of Security Threats and Control Measures in Academic Libraries: Implications for Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology Library, Igboora, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study assesses security threats and control measures in academic library with special focus on the academic library of the Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology, Igboora, Oyo State, Nigeria. The research design used for the study was "Explorative Design" with "Purposeful sampling technique using total enumerating method. The data collection instruments used for the study were direct observation through participation to determine and measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the security measures, already, in use. Semi-structured interview was, also used by the researchers. Descriptive and inferential statistics of frequency counts and percentages were used to analyze the data gathered. A total of ten copies of structured interview were administered. All were duly completed and retrieved from the respondent. The study discovered that, the academic library of the Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology suffers adversely and heavily from security issues and other antisocial menaces and that, if all recommendations advanced by the this paper could be implemented, there would be drastic improvements on the situation.

Key words: Library security threats, library security measures, library security control.

Introduction

The library is regarded as one of the pillars on which civilization flourishes. There is no nation in the world that can function effectively without proper involvement of the library. In the medieval era, materials of information were chained to the shelves so as to keep them from damage or any form of insecurity attempts such as theft and mutilation like underlining of sentences, writing words in the margin, joining and sometime ripping pages from books and other similar activities (Parul Gupta and Margam Madhusudhan (2019) and Grewal (2004).

According to Aloken (2003), libraries are essentially established to cater for the information needs of different categories of users which cover different areas of life such as economic, political, social and cultural aspects. In order to achieve these established purposes, libraries have to do their best in acquiring, managing and preventing library collections from whatsoever security threats in order to meet the demands of the heterogeneous users she is responsible to.

On the other hand, academic libraries are a set of library that is reflectively a complex institution that must have in possession, a large

quantity of information resources to timely meet the intellectual joints like students, lecturer, faculty officers and offices, researchers and the likes. Consequently, the need to protect information materials or resources from divergent attacks of insecurity becomes imperatives. It is often said that "Prevention is better than cure". So, as information professionals, it is a generic responsibility towards mankind to explore all possibilities of finding measures of securing, managing and preventing library and information materials. Consequently, this paper focuses on the general overview of the security of library materials and emphasizes the need for adequate library security measures to put in place.

Objectives of the study

The study aims to:

- i. investigate security threats associated with the academic library in Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology, Igboora, Oyo State, Nigeria;
- ii. examine security control measures associated with the academic library in Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology, Igboora, Oyo State, Nigeria;



- iii. assess the adequacy of security measures in the academic library in Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology, Igboora, Oyo State, Nigeria;
- iv. suggest security control measures capable of curbing security challenges associated with the academic library in Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology, Igboora, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Scope of the study

The study reviewed and examined library security challenges and measures, basically, in Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology, Igboora, Oyo State, Nigeria. The work covers an investigation into the security challenges as experienced in the College: the security policies in places, the causes of the security challenges and the types of information that are prone to this challenge.

Review of related literature

"Security could be considered as "assured freedom from poverty or want, precautions taken against theft, espionage or a person or things that secures or guarantees. (Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus, 1992). Accordingly, Lavanga (2017), Fischer and Green (2004), security implies a "Stable, relatively predictable environment in which an individual or a group may pursue its ends without disruption or harm and fear of disturbance or injury: Traditionally, security may be the provision of private services in the protection of people, information and assets for individual safety and community wellness. (Craighead, 2003); while such a private security services may be considered a paid service in preventing undesirable, unauthorized or detrimental loss to an organization's asserts. In addition, security cannot be detached from safety; therefore, safety means freedom from danger, protection from unauthorized access, harm prevention, loss avoidance, discount of long-term hazard crated by ways of unsuitable environmental conditions.

Likewise, security means "a state of being or feeling safe, freedom from danger, fear, anxiety, doubts, etc; state or sense of safety, tranquillity, certainty, etc; protection or defence against escape procedure to provide such protection or defence (Agnes, Micheal, Webster Dictionary, 2007).

Consequently, library security is a broad term that can be regarded as an arrangement provided for safe and secure facilities of library staff, library resources equipment and users. According to ParulGupta and Madhusudhan (2018), the security system should be allowed to perform her functions as seamless as possible without interfering with the primary objective of the library that is, providing user services with ease and simplicity. Library security include protection of personnel (staff and users); collections, equipment, physical facilitates and information resources from harm such as mutilation, theft, physical attack, accident, other than the hand of God.

Mostly, people consider security issues associated with any system as protection against theft and deliberate destruction alone, while taking into consideration, the concept of security for planning aside theft and deliberate steps to destruction. There are also other security threat which could either be man-made or natural such as accidents through fire, flood, earthquake and any other tsunami to be taken into consideration. The events of accident do not only cause loss of material and other equipment but also missing of collections. These are the surface answers to the quest for needs and important security measures ranging from library buildings to collections.

However, as identified by scholars, security issues in academic libraries can be ranged from:

- a. Theft and mutilation: Theft and mutilation are two basic different concepts combating libraries and her resources. According to ParulGupta and Madhusudhan (2018) Muostapha (2022) academic library collection theft is a deliberate and common challenge deserving serious attention from the library management and librarians and para-professionals working in the library and other stakeholders. It is considered as immoral act to mutilate library materials and deny others the opportunity of gaining access to it.
On the other hand, mutilation is carried out by lazy and uncultured users for their selfish ends. Both attitudes are by students always while some adults are not also left out.
- b. Vandalism: Vandalism was derived from the Germanic Tribe word "Vandals" and defined in the eyes of the law as a crime of intentionally damaging property belonging



to other people or something that was good. Theft and vandalism cause costly and in many instances, irreplaceable damage to the holding of archives, libraries and other special collections.

- c. Descriptive behaviour: This is another challenging act of insecurity in the library. It is synonymous to criminal behaviours or attitude which is capable of causing security challenges in the library. Difficult and disruptive users include those who are intoxicated or uses drugs, mentally challenged ones and others found out juvenile attitude (Ajegbomogun, 2004, Momodu, 2002 and Lorenzen, 1996). To curb this behaviour as postulated by DeRosa (1980) and follow measures can be put in place: admonishing disruptive patron, ordering the patron from the library, refusing admittance to the patron in the future, communicating with the patron's parent if the patron is under 18, getting police or court protection or injunction, remaining calm and impersonal with the patron, setting limits with the patron and sticking to them, repeating requests to comply with rules or to leave as often as necessary, offering the patron the option of challenging behaviour or leaving, avoid humour and personal remarks, alerting other staff to the problem and remaining considerate with the patron among others.
- d. Damage and disaster: Damages and disaster is another security challenge that threatens library and her collections. Disaster can be natural as well as man-made; there is little or no control over disaster which comes naturally as flood, earthquake, landslides, storm, cyclone or hurricane. (Aziagba and Edet, 2008).
- e. Book mis-shelving: This is another appearance of security mishap in the academic library. It is false appearance of library collection missing items because of wrong placement on the shelves, by either a library patron or incompetent library assistance. Book mis-shelving can either be accidentally done by library users and staff alike as well as cases of mis-shelving by those wishing to have unique access to the materials at a later point.
- f. Mutilation by humidity and microbe: There is no place on earth without humidity or the presence of water molecules in the atmosphere. The presence of high humidity provides a good medium for

microorganisms such as fungi, algae, or bacteria to sustain life and flourishes where there is high humidity, books of any library provides a medium for food and shelter to these microbes and become damp due to moisture.

Reasons for theft and mutilation of academic library materials

Mutilation of information resources in the library can be a result of several reasons. The reasons could be traced to human, nature, animals and other climatic conditions including hazards Parulgupta and Madhusudhan, (2018) and (Afolabi, 1993). Among possible causes as stipulated are direct access to the library shelves, placement of high risk resources such as rare and vulnerable resources on vulnerable places or in low visible areas, access to too many keys to the building and in particular circulation, apathy or indifferent about library crime, high cost of library resources, lack of photocopy machine, insufficient copies of information resources in the library, high demand for a particular information resources, user's expectation and behaviors, inadequate security measures, inordinate behaviors and attitude of library staff among others as well as inadequate security measuring among other things.

Security Systems associated with the academic libraries

- a) Conventional or manual security systems include: fire extinguisher & security equipment, use of identity cards and access authorization, use locks and key system, use of security clearance procedure, use of security guards employed to patrol, gate registration (signature of every user) among others.
- b) Modern or electronic security system include the use of, 3M exit detection, use of burglar alarm systems, biometrics system, use of close circuit television cameras, use of electronic eye detective system, use of electronic recording mechanism, use of radio-frequency identification system, smart card system, use of x-ray machine, use of robotic security system (RSS) among others

Research Methodology

Explorative research design was adopted for this study. The target population for the study was, mainly, the staff members of the college



library of Oyo State College of Agriculture and Technology, Igboora. Purposeful sampling technique was adopted using total enumerating method. The data collection instrument used for the study was direct observation and administration of structured interview guide and personally conducted by the researchers. Simple descriptive analysis such as frequency and percentages was used analyse.

Findings of the study

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	4	40.0
Female	5	60.0
Total	9	100.00

Table 1 represents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. It shows that the female respondents were 5 (60.0%) while male was 4 (40%). This implies that the majority of the respondents that constituted the target population were, dominantly, females.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
31-40	4	44.4
41-50	2	22.2
51-60	3	33.3
Total	9	100.0

Table 2 shows the age difference of respondents. It indicates 4 (44.4%) of the respondents were between the age of 31 - 40. 2 (22.2 %) were of 41 - 50 years and 3 (33.3%) were between age 51-60. This implies that, all members of staff in the library were adults.

Table 3: Distribution by educational qualifications

Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage
Ph. D	1	11.11
MLIS	3	33.33
Degree	2	22.22
HND	3	33.33
Total	9	100.0

Table 3 shows that, only 1 (11.11%) of the library staff had Ph.D., presently in the field of Library and Information Science. 3 (33.33) has MLIS. 2 (22.22) has Bachelor Degree in Library and Information Science and, another 3 (33.33) has Higher National Diploma in Library and Information Science. By indication, there is a urgent need for the staff to go on further studies as soon as possible, while the library staff capacity should be improved on employing more qualified staff to work in the library.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents by marital status

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	-	-
Married	9	100.0
Divorce	-	-
Total	9	100.0

Table 4 shows the marital status of respondents. All the staff in the library are married 9 (100 %). This indicates that, they are all matured and should be responsible to effectively man the library and prevent it from any form of threat, should all other prerequisites are in place.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by job status

Job Status	Frequency	Percentage
Library Assistant - Library Officer	3	33.33
Assistant Librarian - Librarian II	-	-
Librarian I - Senior Librarian	4	12.5
Principal Librarian - Deputy	1	11.11
College Librarian	-	-
College Librarian	1	11.11
Total	9	100

Table 5 shows the job status of each of the staff working in the library as 3 (33.33) are between the level of Library Assistant and Library Officer. 4 (12.5) are between the rank of Librarian I and Senior Librarian, while only 1 (11.11) is between Principal Librarian and Deputy College Librarian and College Librarian respectively.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents by job experience

Year of Experience	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 5	-	-
6 - 10	1	12.5
10 - 15	3	37.5
16 years +	4	50.0
Total	8	100

Table 6 shows the level of each of the staff in the Library. 1 (12.5) is between 6-10 years, 3 (37.5) have been in the service for between 10-15 years and 4 (50.0) are have had the practical experience for over 16 years.

Table 7: Distribution of respondents by religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Christianity	5	60.00
Islam	4	40.00
Aethist	-	-
Total	9	100.00



Table 7 shows that 5 (60%) are Christians while 4 (40%) are Muslims. This implies that, everyone working in the Library should have faith that should be expressed in their relationships with users and library resources.

Table 8: Distribution of respondents by personal annual income

Personal annual income Percentage	Frequency	
<1 million	1	11.1
>1 million < 2 million	2	22.2
> 2 million < 3 million	4	44.44
> 30000 < 4 million	1	11.1
> 40000	1	11.1
Total	9	100.00

Table 8 highlights the various levels of personal income of each of the respondents per annum. It was revealed that, only 1 (11.1 %) less than of the respondents earn lower than a million naira, while 2 (22.2 %) earns between a million to two million naira, 4 (44.4) earn between the range of 2 to 3 million and 1 (11.1 %) each earns between the annual income range of 3million to 4million and 4million respectively. By implication, it is expected that, none of the library staff is expected to abet users or library client in the uncultured attitude of threat to any of the resources in the library.

Further findings revealed that, the College Management in collaboration with the Library Management has a lot to do in minimizing the present security threat's level in the library. It was discovered through the structured interview administered on the staff in the library that, the College Library has no security policy in place since the start of the College. It was, also, established that, on several occasions, library staff have been exposed to abuse from users ranging from intentional disobedience to library directives, confrontations, and the likes. It was unanimously agreed that, the College Library neither has resources' redemption policy nor disaster control measures and training has ever been implemented. It has been evaluated to be on record that, the library is prone to natural disasters such as flooding because of the recent happenings or experience in the library, although, attention has been paid to of recent. All respondents to the guided interview attested to the fact that, the college has no disaster measures in place at all to check and forestall any disaster occurrence as at the moment and that, the

Library has not been enjoying the expected institutional recognition and independence attach to academic library as being experienced in other academic institutions among other things.

Recommendations

This paper postulates a lot of recommendations which are expected to be used in ensuring library management's assistance to alleviate security threats to library resources among which are:

1. The library management should work with the college management to have an ultra-modern library set up on campus.
2. The library management should advance for the incorporation of electronic security control measures and devices to forestall library security breaches.
3. The Library should give adequate library use literacy a wider publicity among the college community staff and students in compliance with the recent Information and Communication Technological development.
4. The library management should have a written security policy that covers all aspects of information resources' preservation and conservation and such should be brought to the awareness of all stakeholders.
5. The library should have comprehensive insurance policies that could serve to mitigate losses that could arise from disasters.
6. The library management should be made to enhance the manual methods of safeguarding libraries materials, especially periodic random checks on users by the staff, installation security patrol, portal at the entrance of the library, while emphasis should gradually shift to electronic measures which have gained the expected global awareness and recognition.
7. The library needs to be adequately staffed for the purpose of staff job productivity.
8. The library administration should endeavour to provide continuous in-service training as well as institutionally based and sponsored programmes for library staff capacity development in order to acclimatize them with the



9. current security information and maximize their skills. Academic libraries, especially, OYSCATECH, should improve on her Collection Development Policy to cover security measures that will help both the staff and other members of the academic community.
10. These should be an installation of ICT compliant security devices as revealed in the review of related literature.
11. The college library should be given the deserving operational autonomy as in practice in other academic institution.
12. The college library administration should make, as a matter of urgency, exit entries, in case of emergency purposes

Conclusion

It is obvious that the major factors encouraging illegal activities in the library are due to poor security system and criminal nature of individuals. Libraries in general have been facing a lot of challenges in this part of the world, unlike in the developed countries where information is held in high esteem. Perhaps, because of the low level of importance attach to the use of information for development in Africa. Among these limiting factors is defective orientation on the use of library, whether virtual or non-virtual. Traditionally, manual checking of patrons' bags is both inefficient and often, not user-friendly, therefore, the need for a better way to deal with security challenges in academic libraries is to embrace the modern security systems that will better ensure an effective security of life and resources from theft, mutilation, or other forms of criminality that are alien to library development.

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