Overview of Security Measures in Nigerian University Libraries

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Abstract

The paper examines the incidence of theft and mutilation of library materials, and gives users' assessment of library security and factors that influence theft and mutilation among library users in Nigerian university libraries. Librarians across the world are increasingly concerned with the safety and physical integrity of valuable intellectual properties. Reference and periodical materials are the most likely materials that will be mutilated. All of the libraries still rely solely on manual checks carried out by unskilled personnel at the library entrance and exit. The high cost of photocopying and frequent breakdown of copiers was the causes of library material theft and mutilation. The results show that all the university libraries stamps specific pages, with security personnel and porters are at the entrance door of the libraries checking in and checking out users of the library. Findings from the study revealed that university libraries in Nigeria aresome security measures.

Keywords

security measures, theft, Library materials, Libraries, Library management, Library users,

Electronic access

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INTRODUCTION

Security is an important and complex challenge in contemporary societies. Not only do individuals require security and safety of their lives and properties, but also, organizations such as libraries. In medicine, prevention is better than cure, and also in libraries, good preventive measures particularly of storage and security, should be adopted to prevent damages and missing of information resources (Isebe, 2014). Academic libraries face a number of security challenges with their collections (both print and electronic). Library collections are the bedrock for services provided to the community, and serve as important assets to the library. As such, securing and protecting the collections can help libraries provide an effective service in response to the information needs of the university community (Maidabino&Zainab (2011). Theft of library material is a problem dating from ancient times. The looting of the great Alexandria library by soldiers of the prophet in the seventh century is the first recorded example (Maidabino and Zainab, 2011). Academic libraries are information hubs that provide a place for students and faculty to do their research and advance their knowledge. So essential is it that an adequately stocked one is a fundamental criterion for accreditation of tertiary institutions of learning the world over.

The study investigates security challenges in university libraries in Southwest Nigeria. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data for the study. Findings from the study revealed that university libraries in Southwest Nigeria are confronted with security challenges. The challenges include noise making through the use of cell phone, theft, mutilation, and defacement of library materials and hiding of book to prevent other users from having access to them. The study also found that textbooks, serial publications, and reference materials were the materials highly susceptible to abuse by users. The problems are attributed to factors like a harsh economic situation that makes it difficult for library users to buy books and ineffective library security systems. Libraries should therefore ensure the security and safety of their collections. These problems indicate the need to determine the current state of collection security and in academic libraries. Library and information managers must have a clear vision and focus on the contemporary reality of security breaches in university libraries, especially those targeting the collections. This is one of the many things librarians should concern themselves

with; if they are to successfully manage a flourishing and efficient library.

Literature Review

Security measure shows that security breaches often happen when the library premises are left unsecured. Oder (2004) maintains that security measures such as supervision, patrolling, and surveillance are lacking in libraries and keys are kept unsecured, if not in plain sight of the users. Thomas (2000) notes that the major challenge for new or renovated space is to incorporate flexibility while providing a safe and secure library environment. Non-return of library materials is a threat to the effective use of resources. Udoumoh and Okoro (2007) suggest that libraries create policies to ensure library resources are used effectively. Security Measures refers to a process designed to protect library collections against un-authorized removal or loss. This involves protecting resources against disasters as well as thieves or intruders (Ajegbomogun, 2004). Information security governance is the manner in which information security is deployed (Da Veiga and Eloff (2007). Collection security management in libraries can be conceptualized to mean the overall manner in which collection security policies, programs, procedures, or measures are deployed to mitigate risk and ensure access.Studies have been carried out to determine the security measures adopted in academic libraries in three tertiary institutions. Omosekejimi, Ijiekhuamhen and Ojeme (2015) carried out workson library and information resources' security: traditional and electronic security measures. The security of information/knowledge is essential to its effective exploitation or use. As knowledge expands, the need to organize it and to provide adequate security becomes more pressing. This study describes how the information bearing materials of the library can be secured using traditional and electronic methods. Literature were reviewed on the concept of information resources security, features of good security measures (traditional and electronic), securing the library resources traditionally, securing the library using telecommunication, benefits of securing the library resources, problems associated with the use of electronic security system in the library, and ways of solving problems with the use of electronic security system in the library.

A structured questionnaire was designed to gather information based on the research objectives. The following were deduced from the findings: Disruptive behaviour is a common phenomenon among users of academic libraries; limited materials, selfish interest and lack of photocopying facilities aid stealing and unlawful removal of parts of books and other materials ; Self-interest among users, author's, integrity and limitation/scarcity of materials encourage users to hide library materials ; lack of orientation, lack of discipline, ignorance, and group discussion give room for users distortion in the library; library materials may not be easily located when needed, and strike actions among others make users to hold overdue materials; high registration fees and loss of original card were the reasons for using fake library card .and users eat in the library due to lack of discipline, fatigue, and to avoid sleeping during reading exercise. Chaney and MacDougall (1994) state that, "collections are very vulnerable to abuse of one sort or another and library managers need to keep this characteristic well to the forefront of the library." Ensuring effective use, longevity, and accessibility makes an effective program of collection security necessary. This program must include assessment of collection security issues and the measures use in curbing security breaches. This study explores collection security issues and measures used or adopted by the Malaysian university libraries to curb security breaches. Oyewusi and Oyeboade (2009) discuss the importance of access to collections in supporting the mission of the university. The researchers view the importance of good collections as a pointer to the need for safety and security for those collections.

This study has successfully shown the various security measures in Abia State University, *Michael Okpara University of Agriculture*,Federal University of Technology Owerriand Kenneth Dike Library. It is observed that the security practices implemented in libraries vary in number. Already, Uzuegbu (2011) has shown that there is no relationship between the security practices and theft and mutilation of the library collections. But, no one is sure as to say that: the higher the security practices the lower the rate of crimes against library collection. Thus, the researchers suggest that a study can be conducted to find if the number of security practices enforced in a library influences the extent of criminal occurrences and incidence in the library.

Theft and non-return of library materials are the main collection security breaches in the Malaysian university libraries. This is indicated by 90 percent (54) of the respondents in the libraries studied. This is closely followed by tearing of pages and torn book spine collection as indicated by 82 percent (49) of

respondents respectively. Other security breaches include borrowing books for friends and family members; staining of book pages; tearing and yellowing of books; and insects or worms attacks on books. Writing on or in books and purposely mis-shelving by users constitutes another form of collection security breach.

Table 1: Types of Security Issues

S/N	Security measures or issues in the libraries	Agree (percent)	Disagree (percent)	I don't know (percent)
1	Book theft	54 (90 percent)	2 (3 percent)	4 (7 percent)
2	Non return of library materials	54 (90 percent)	6 (10 percent)	-
3	Tearing pages	49 (82 percent)	11 (18 percent)	-
4	Torn book spine	49 (82 percent)	10(16 percent)	1 (2 percent)
5	Book mutilation	46 (77 percent)	12 (20 percent)	2 (3 percent)
6	Using someone else ID to borrow	46 (77 percent)	7 (12 percent)	7 (12 percent)
7	Barrowing books for friends and or family members	45 (75 percent)	8 (13 percent)	7 (12 percent)
8	Book pages are stain, torn or yellow	45 (75 percent)	13 (22 percent)	2 (3 percent)
9	Books attacked by insects or worms	42 (70 percent)	17 (28 percent)	1 (2 percent)
10	Writing on or in books	41 (68 percent)	13 (22 percent)	6 (10 percent)
11	Purposely mis-shelving	40 (67 percent)	12 (20 percent)	8 (13 percent)

The findings of this study confirmed the literature on collection security breaches in university libraries. Chaney and MacDougall (1994), Lowry and Goetsch (2001), and Holt (2007) all stress the need to have an urgent concern about library collection security.

Collection which are Vulnerable to Security Issues
Print materials are more vulnerable to security measures, indicated by 87 percent (52) of the respondents..

Table 2: Types of Collection on Vulnerable Security Issues

S/N	Type of collection	Agree (percent)	Disagree (percent)
1	Print materials in general	52 (87 percent)	8 (13 percent)
2	Periodical collections	44 (73 percent)	16 (27 percent)
3	Reference collections	44 (73 percent)	16 (27 percent)
4	Reserve collections	43 (72 percent)	17 (28 percent)
5	Non-pint resources	37 (62 percent)	23 (38 percent)

Among the print resources, periodicals and reference collections shared the highest rate of security breaches. This is similar to the findings of Bello (1998) and Ajegbomogun (2004).

REDUCING SECURITY ISSUES

TABLE 3: Measures Used to Reduce and Address Security Issues in Libraries

S/N	Security measures used to reduce breaches	Agree (percent	Disagree (percent)	I don't know (percent)
1	Electronic security system such as use of alarm and surveillance cameras	55 (92 percent)	5 (8 percent)	Nil
2	Manual security approach such as: monitoring users at the circulation desk	52 (87 percent)	8 (13 percent)	Nil
3	The use of security guards	46 (77 percent)	14 (23 percent)	Nil
4	Checking users ID card before	50 (83 percent)	10 (17 percent)	Nil

	they are allowed access to the library.			

Table 3 above indicates the measures used to reduce and address security breaches. The libraries surveyed use a combination of measures. The majority (92 percent, 55) believe that electronic security systems such as alarms, surveillance cameras, etc., can help address security breaches. The libraries use approaches such as monitoring users at the circulation desk, checking identity cards allowing access, and using security guards (77 percent, 46). The application of information and communication technology in libraries would increase collection security. Younis (2002) indicates that librarians have realized that information technology can enhance collection security. Libraries today employ technology to ensure the security and safety of collections. Shahid (2005) describes how RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) allows an item to be tracked and communicated with by radio waves.

SECURITY ISSUES IN THE LIBRARY

Book theft is a major security issue in libraries, particularly in academic libraries, with special collections being the most targeted materials, (Bello, 1998)discovered a relationship between high rates of security problems and the growth of the university. Not all thefts are committed by patrons. Some library staff takes materials from the library without checking them out. This kind of theft, according to Lorenzen (1996), is one of the hardest to prevent, since library employees know how to defeat the security system. Ewing (1994) describes theft as only one type of collection security breach. Others include non-return of items by borrowers, vandalism, and stock destruction.Bello (1998) conducted a study on theft and mutilation in technological university libraries in Nigeria, revealing that there is a lack of security in university libraries. Users resorted to delinquent behavior because demand outstripped the supply of library material. This results in competition for resources, which invariably tempts users to steal, mutilate, or engage in illegal borrowing.Mutilation is the defacement or damage of library materials. Mutilation of academic library collections has been reported by many researchers (Ajegbomogun 2003; Bello 1998; Lorenzen 1996). Mutilation or vandalism occurs when users knowingly tear, mark, or otherwise damage or destroy materials, (Quincy Public Library, n.d). Lorenzen (1996), observes that collection mutilation takes many forms, ranging from underlining and highlighting text, tearing and or removing pages, and tampering with the content. Lorenzen identifies several causes for mutilation, including:

1. Students' dissatisfaction or unfamiliarity with library services
2. A lack of knowledge of replacement costs and time
3. A lack of concern for the needs of others
4. Few students think of library mutilation and theft as a crime.

Disruptive behavior is another security issue in libraries. A number of studies (Lorenzen, 1996; Momodu, 2002; Ajegbomogun, 2004) acknowledge that disruptive or criminal behavior can cause security problems in the library. Difficult patrons include those who are intoxicated or using drugs, mentally disturbed, and some juvenile users. Momodu (2002) asserts that libraries have faced varying degrees of delinquency in the use of their resources. The extent of this problem varies from one library to another, but seems to be universal. Disasters are a security issue that threatens library collections. Aziagba and Edet (2008) identify disasters as natural and man-made. We have little or no control over natural disasters, which come usually as a result of flood, landslides, earthquake, storm, cyclone, or hurricane. All of these have been experienced by universities in different countries. Flood and water damage are particularly threatening to library collections. Shuman (1999) describes flooding as abnormally high water flow, and it is generally conceded to be the most destructive and costly natural disaster libraries can experience. According to Evans, et al. (1998), disasters can destroy thousands of volumes within a short time. Insect infestation, environmental factors, and human cause constitute a serious security threat and may have devastating consequences. There is a need for constant security measures, such as vigilant staff and user education, to handle security threats cause by this type of disaster. Brown (2007) suggests coordinated policies to address all these threats.

SECURITY MEASURES

Libraries and archives must have safety and security plans in place to ensure that staff is prepared to respond to fire, water emergencies, and other large-scale threats to collections.

Emergency and disaster planning in the library is essential. A library or archives emergency or disaster plan is but one element in a larger safety and security strategy to guide the entire institution's policies and procedures during such events as wars, terrorist actions, criminal acts, natural disasters, structural fires, serious medical emergencies, or releases of dangerous fumes and gases. Developing a manual of procedures to anticipate all these threats to the entire institution (for example, a university campus in the case of an academic library) is a process in which librarians and archivists must participate.History has shown the wisdom of taking precautions before events that no one wants to happen or can imagine happening—whether war or any other catastrophe likely to affect the entire structure of an institution and the security of its collections. Advance planning can significantly reduce the loss of rare materials.

Taking precautions against theft

Protecting the collection should include ensuring good security to prevent theft. This is especially a concern when libraries and archives must provide remote storage for overflow materials or special cold storage facilities for vulnerable materials such as microfilm, motion picture film, and film and color negatives.

Inventory control

The essence of theft prevention is inventory control and vigilance. If a library is uncertain about the types and quantities of materials it has in its possession, determining whether and when a theft has been committed will be almost impossible. If library materials are not clearly identified and described, proof of ownership will be difficult to establish even if stolen materials are discovered in someone's possession. If possible, inventories can help determine the state of completeness of the collection. If the collection is too large for a full inventory, parts of the collection can be inventoried on a rotating schedule, with special collections of rare and unique materials being checked on a regular basis.

Marks of ownership

All library and archive materials should be clearly identified with a mark of ownership. This ownership mark not only identifies artifacts as the property of the library, but also discourages theft, especially if the mark is not readily removable. Indelible marks are especially important, since staff commit most thefts from rare book and manuscript collections. Marks of ownership should be made with a prominent and permanent ink stamp on an inseparable portion of the artifact. Generally the stamp should be small (no more than 2 centimeters), and the ink made from a no greasy, nonoil substance. In books the mark is typically placed on the verso (back) of the title page. Bookplates, perforated stamps, and pressure stamps can easily be removed and are not effective. The mark should clearly state the name and general address of the library owning the artifact. If a tasteful, appropriate stamp is used, and applied in a way that does not disfigure the artifact, the mark can be considered an important piece of provenance. For this reason, dealers likely to be offered a stolen item bearing the mark will be made aware of its existence and meaning.

Accessibility and use

Access to secure storage areas must be carefully monitored. Cleaning, maintenance, and janitorial staff should always be admitted in the company of a staff member, and unauthorized visitors should never be left alone in storage areas. Allowing a potential thief unsupervised access to library materials is potentially encouraging theft. Ideally, Users areas should be separated from secure collection areas by a locked door that can be opened only by an electronic keypad or a magnetized card. Readers using rare or unique materials should be closely supervised at all times to ensure that works or portions of works are not stolen or damaged, intentionally or accidentally. Works consisting of multiple parts, such as unbound periodicals or collections of letters, should be allotted to reader’s one piece at a time. When artifacts are issued in a protective enclosure, the contents of the enclosure should be checked when returned by the reader. Permanent records should be made of all uses of rare and unique materials, and readers should be required to verify their identity and affiliation. Readers working with original and microfilm materials should be checked to ensure that they use only soft pencils for taking notes (the library should make soft pencils available for readers to encourage their use). Staff should make sure that readers understand how to handle library materials correctly, and should be ready to supply cotton gloves when they are required.

Guarding against mutilation and vandalism

Whether a library uses open stacks (allowing readers direct access to the bookshelves) or closed stacks (requiring readers to locate a book in the catalog and rely on staff to retrieve it), staff need to observe readers from time to time to discourage deliberate mutilation or vandalism of library materials.

Mutilation often takes the form of cutting out book leaves or illustration.

Protecting materials in book drops

Some libraries, especially those serving the general public, use book drops so that readers may return books when the library is closed. Using book drops is best avoided, but if the circumstances require it the following recommendations should be implemented. The drop should be a hinged slot in the wall or door of the building, to avoid the risk of damage that curbside book drops can suffer when struck by a motor vehicle or engulfed by a street flood. The books should drop no more than 20 centimeters, and they should land on a spring-loaded surface that allows the books to sink into a box container. The entire book drop structure should be in a metal container to prevent arsonists from setting the building on fire through the slot.

Protecting materials on exhibit

Materials on exhibit are especially vulnerable to theft and mutilation. Exhibits featuring rare or other special materials can attract thieves or vandals. Exhibit cases should be within a controlled area so that they are under surveillance, and safely secured when the control point is closed. The cases should be securely locked and constructed from materials difficult to dismantle or damage. For example, rather than ordinary glass, which can be easily broken, a sturdy plastic sheet should be used, such as Lexan, Plexiglas, or Perspex. Libraries sometimes connect exhibit cases to an alarm system to further discourage theft. Flat exhibit cases should never be in areas where drinks or other liquids are available, as a carelessly placed container can spill into the case through the seams on the upper surface. Artifacts displayed in wall-mounted frames should similarly be within a controlled area. The frames should be constructed from materials that are difficult to breach and secured to the wall by a method that requires considerable effort to remove.

Controlling entrances and exits

Ideally, all bags and coats should be checked at the entrance to libraries, which should ensure that there are safe areas for storing them. And while it is acceptable for readers to bring laptop computers into a research area, all readers should understand that their computer case must be checked when they leave the area. If possible, libraries should use an electronic detection system at the exit to prevent unauthorized removal of books tagged with magnetized strips. If that is not possible, libraries should have some system for examining the status of books removed for circulation. Libraries operating with open windows should ensure that the window openings are secured with tightly fitting insect screens to prevent thieves from tossing books outside.

SECURITY PRACTICES IN THE LIBRARY

The ***Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)*** uses a video camera to transmit a signal to a specific or limited set of monitors. The first CCTV system was used in 1942 for the purpose of viewing the launching. As a result, CCTV came into use in Rocket launching sites to film and records the scenes of rocket launching. At present CCTV, has become an indispensable accessory in civic management in modern cities. It provides digital or video recording of crime, violence, theft, antisocial behavior, etc. Accordingly, libraries are also increasingly using this technology for safeguarding their valuable resources. The major benefits of CCTV are:

• It acts as a deterrent.
• It can enable attendants to be deployed more effectively.
• Recordings can assist in post incident investigation.
• It can be used to assist with entry control arrangements into non-public areas.
• It can provide more general information to assist in the management of the premises.
• Where the premises are guarded out of hours it is a valuable aid for site monitoring.

Theft Detective Security Gadget– is a security system used in the university libraries, such as Kenneth Dike Library, U.I. It is mainly used at the entrance door of the library for the purpose of safeguarding library materials and equipment, The detective device is more effective and efficient with or without electricity. These security measures are enforced to safeguardthe collections of the library. It is observed that theft security divers/machine is the new practice in some libraries.The following are other security practices in university libraries:

1. The porters in the library are on ground from opening of library to its closing of each day's service
2. There is a photocopy service very close to the reader services units (main circulation, reference and serials units)
3. There are at least two porters or security personnel in every reader services unit of the library
4. Staff ensure that all users are searched thoroughly at the library exit

5. There is only one entrance door and one exit route for its users
6. The windows are fortified with strong wire gauze
7. Users are sensitized to the dangers of stealing or destroying materials of the library
8. There is a written statement or policy against library crime and corresponding punishments
9. The university security personnel that are posted to the library are able-bodied men
10. Staff that collude with library criminals are punished
11. The porters are supervised by a librarian or library officer Staff walks round the reading hall continuously to monitor readers and ensure that there are no foul practices going on in various reading carrels. Users caught stealing or destroying library materials are barred from using the library for a period of time
12. The entrance and exit routes are very fortified with iron that may not be easily broken forcefully at night
13. The university security unit posts their staff to the library for every day supervision
14. Bill boards, leaflet, orientations, etc. are used to remind library users of the punishments for stealing or destroying a library material
15. There is restriction of access to most collections
16. Staff examine each reading material users consulted
17. The readers always hold a minimum of ten copies of every reading material that is daily sought by users
18. Staff check users' ID cards and record their data before they are allowed to use the library
19. There is a-24hr security patrol in the library block

Meanwhile, in Kenneth Dike Library and Federal University of Technology Owerri Library(FUTO),security measures are adopted to safeguard the information resources of the library. So far, it is clear that out of an exhaustive list of twenty various (20) security measures fielded to respondents of each library to indicate the ones practiced in their libraries. It is also observed that within the period of 5 months (assumed gap in Uzuegbu's (2011) dissertation and period of this research) security practices have remained the same in the library where the use of CCTV cable was introduced. Note that while some good security measures like the use of electronic devices such as CCTV, alarm door system, turnstile systems, amongst others are not practiced. Although none of the libraries engage men and women above forty (40) years as porters, there has not been corresponding increase in porters for adequate policing as the population of each of the university is growing, neither are there trainings for the available porters. Other security practices generally not adopted by the libraries include users signing in and out on each visit, establishment of users club, making staff submit their bag for search before going for the day, and keeping detailed records of all criminal activities and incidents in the libraries, amongst others.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The study recommended adequate and effective security through recruitment, training, and retraining of security personnel; purchase of multiple copies of materials in high demand; provision of photocopying services; adequate training and education for library staff and users on the effects of crime on library services; and tough punishment for perpetrators of library crimes.

The need for staff and user awareness is very important for collection security. Staff and users should have adequate knowledge of the importance of securing library collections. The lack of awareness may result in a purposeful or unintentional breach of collection security. Ives (1996) believes that library staff and patrons remain the greatest potential threat to collection security.

The need for increased security measures on the library premises through supervision, patrolling, and surveillance is evident. Libraries must to be designed in such a way that collection security is taken into account. Collection security issues should not be left to an individual staff member's judgment. Policies and procedures should be established and implemented. Such policies should be written and communicated to both staff and users. This is in line with recommendations of many researchers who stressed the importance of policies in ensuring effective library services.

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