



Library and Information Services and Security Challenges in Two Selected Academic Libraries in Southeast Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper investigated library and information services and security challenges in two selected academic libraries in South East, Nigeria. The study was guided by four research questions. The descriptive survey design was used and the population consisted of fifty-four (54) library staff in Federal Polytechnic Library, Oko, Anambra State, and forty-nine (49) library staff in Federal Polytechnic Library, Nekede, Imo State, summing up to the total number of one hundred and three (103) library staff from both tertiary institutions of study. All one hundred and three (103) copies of questionnaires distributed were returned. The researchers adopted the entire population because the number is small and manageable as a sample size. The rating scale was the instrument used for data collection. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentages and mean scores of 2.50 midpoint based on the research questions and arranged in tables. The study revealed that library staff from both tertiary institutions study were aware of different types of security measures available and that both management should avail adequate safety measures for library resources. The study also found that the need for security measures is important to safeguard library materials, also the causes and challenges were found that better attention should be given to security in library and information services to avoid destruction of library resources. The study concluded that library staff was aware of different types of security measures available in both conventional and electronic systems, that library management has to make a positive move towards improving the security system to avoid damages or losses of library resources, and it was recommended that management of the two institutions studied should provide security systems to protect library resources from crime, installation of CCTV, RFID, video recording surveillance and other electronic measures to monitor the library space for unwanted activity or theft. Among other recommendations to ensure better safety of libraries is much needed for the two selected academic libraries, in SouthEast Nigeria.

Keywords: Library and Information Services, Security Challenge, and Academic Libraries.

Introduction

Library and information services are key actors in providing unhindered access to essential resources for economic and cultural advance (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), 2003). Library and information services play a fundamental role in the academic libraries that the resources and services they offer create opportunities for learning and teaching, support literacy and education, and research, also help to shape the new ideas and perspectives that are central to a creative and innovative society (White, 2012). In so doing, library and information services are a crucial factor in the national development that librarians, libraries

and information science contribute to safeguarding intellectual works from any threats of harm. That is to say, knowledge and information in the library must be safe from security threats and vulnerability. Security is a stable relatively predictable environment in which an individual or group may pursue its ends without disruption or harm, without fear of such disturbance or injury (Fischer and Green, 2004). Craighead (2003) posits that security may be the provision of private services in the protection of people, information and assets for individual safety or community wellness. Ismail and Zainab (2011) observed that library materials can be damaged by various factors such as environment, atmospheric hazards, natural calamities,

user and staff behaviour, and that valuable resources of the libraries need extra care in terms of security.

Library security is one of the big threats faced by library professionals and library staff to preserve and conserve information resources secured. Library security is a simple technique for effective methods of protecting information resources. Gupta and Madhusudham (2018) observed that library security is a broad term and can be defined as the arrangements provided for safe and secure facilities for library staff, library resources, equipment, and library users. Library security practices encompass both technical and non-technical issues to safeguard organizational assets from a variety of threats. Information systems (IS) in libraries support the delivery of images, services and collections to local and remote patrons and this availability over the internet inevitably exposes it to security threats (Westby and Allen 2007; Gupta and Sharman 2008; Scarfone, Souppaya, Cody, and Orebaugh 2008). The library security system provides a safe and secure environment not only for library employees but also for library resources and library patrons too as well (Nath and Deka, 2020). Protecting the library documents, employee users, reading rooms and workflow are the most important areas of the library security system (Kumar and Mamta 2019).

The security of library materials (book and non-book material) are of utmost importance to the librarians and information specialist to reduce or avoid unauthorized access to information-bearing materials available in the library (Omosekejimi, Ijiekhuamhen and Ojeme 2015 cited Parker 2002) Adomi (2008) observed that to avoid unauthorized access to library resources, library management and information professionals must devise strategies which will enable them to provide adequate security that can protect the information resources available in the library. Library resources are the information-bearing materials that enable the library to fulfill its goal of meeting the information needs of its users. Ajegbomogun (2014) posits that overall how policies, programmes, procedures, or measures are deployed to mitigate risk and ensure access to library resources is not encouraging; a security practice simply refers to the different types of actions and measures or practices adopted to stop a crime. This paper is poised to publish the security challenges in two selected academic libraries in southeast Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Security is an essential problem in libraries that loss of library materials is a recurring problem in libraries all over the world, but it seems to be more serious in academic libraries in Nigeria. There is inadequate security measures to control behaviours and the loss of books. There are various factors involved in the loss of documents like the behavioural problem of patron and staff, technical and administrative problems, habitual, and architectural, etc. the illegal practices in academic libraries are so common that they need strenuous efforts to control their spread. The illegal practices in academic libraries are treated as theft and mutilation of books, hiding of books and misplacement, unauthorized borrowing, non-return of books, vandalism of library property, and disruptive behaviour by the users etc. these are more prevalent in the academic libraries. It is also a common practice among students to steal or remove pages of library materials because of the high cost of books in Nigeria. Some students find it difficult to make ends meet and as such cannot afford recommended textbooks. The only way out for some students is to resort to tearing off pages of the textbooks or stealing a complete from the library's collection. Most academic libraries do not have photocopy facilities for users in case of any need, when available in some cases incessant changes in power do not give room for users to make copies of urgent materials needed. This among other factors tempts users to engage in the disruptive act. Academic libraries for both tertiary institutions study have to adopt and implement suitable security measures so that early detection and handling of illegal activities and disruptive behaviours can be possible.

Objective of the study

The objective of this study was to investigate library and information services and security challenges in two selected academic libraries in southeast, Nigeria. The objectives are; 1. To identify the types of security available in library and information services in two selected academic libraries in southeast, Nigeria.

2. To identify the need for security in library and information services in two selected academic libraries in southeast, Nigeria..

3. Find out the causes of security in library and information services in two selected academic libraries in southeast, Nigeria.

4. To identify the challenges of security in library and information services in two selected academic libraries in southeast, Nigeria.

Literature Review

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 (Cornell University Library, 2014). Ajegbomogun (2014), observed that collection security refers to a process designed to protect library collections against unauthorized removal or loss. This involves protecting resources against disasters as well as thieves or intruders. Adamu (2006), opined that security devices are designed to guard library materials against crime, accidents, disasters, fire and attacks. Library security should be planned when the building is constructed whenever possible, through architectural considerations which include the site design and building design (Rajendra, 2015). From the perspective of Maidabino (2010), library security management has to do with taking necessary measures to ensure that the materials available for use in the library are kept in good condition and prevented from being stolen. Security management in libraries can be conceptualized to mean the overall manner in which security policies, programs, procedures, or measures are adopted to mitigate the risk and ensure access. Ugah (2007), considers library security threats as formidable obstacles to information access and use. Such acts are serious problems that can result in user dissatisfaction. Further identified major security issues in libraries include; theft and mutilation; vandalism; damages and disaster; over-borrowing or delinquent borrowers; and purposefully displacing arrangement of materials.

Order (2004), is of the view that security personnel inefficiency is also a big avenue to library crime, especially in academic libraries, also non-return of library materials is a threat to the effective use of resources and to avoid this, libraries create policies to ensure library resources are used effectively. According to Aina (2004), library materials must be safe; hence security devices need to be provided by librarians to ensure that materials are not stolen or mutilated. Libraries have been providing some level of security measures, for example, making available security staff that are always at the entrance of a library to ensure that all library materials taken out of the library are checked. Maidabino (2010), observed a high rate of book theft, mutilation and misplacement of books in Nigerian academic libraries. Further suggested measures to reduce the problems which include tightening security at library entrance and exit, the expulsion of students involved in theft and

mutilation, provision of multiple copies of heavily used texts reducing the cost of photocopying, and periodic searching of students' hostels and staff. Aguolu (2000) opined that the best protection that a collection of books and non-book materials can have is a concrete building. Order (2004), maintained that security measures such as supervision, patrolling, and surveillance is lacking in libraries and keys are kept unsecured, if not in plain sight of the users.

Ifidon (2000), stated that mutilation and theft in libraries is a menace that has persisted, and it is indeed a global problem, the worsening state of libraries in Nigeria appears to have aggravated its intensity and the consequent detrimental impact. Theft is the act of stealing from the library's collection and it has been argued that the theft of archival materials has become a problem of great proportions to the library resources. According to Jato (2005) scandalous behaviours such as theft and mutilation, hiding library materials, refusal to return over-due borrowed materials, drinking and eating in the library, vandalism and defacement of library collections, arson, negligence to library policies as well as various disaster such as fire and flood caused by human factors, among others have become a common occurrence in academic libraries and if this is not checked, it would lead to the serious drought of information materials in the library. Most academic libraries in developing countries including Nigeria lack security measures that encourage users to perform such immoral acts. Abubakar, Abdullahi, Dewa, Barkindo and Zubairu (2020) opined that electronic security systems are technological devices that are used with the aid of electrical apparatus to secure library materials from theft and vandalism. Ismail and Zainah (2011) cited Ramamurthy (2001) observed that the electronic security equipment component typically provides alarm notification to the appropriate authority, entry control, and site surveillance. Furthermore identified the major elements of any electronic security access control and video surveillance. To control the problem, the implementations of electronic security measures are very much needed and important. Reitz (2005), observed that an electronic alarm system installed at the entrance and exit of a library facilitates detection and the unauthorized removal of library materials (theft). Most security systems use a swingarm or pair of uprights called a security gate activated by a magnetic strip affixed to each item, which must be desensitized by circulation staff at the time the item is checked out to avoid triggering the alarm. Some security systems include a counting device for gathering statistics on

traffic patterns.

Abubakar, Abdullahi, Dewa, Barkindo and Zubairu (2020) cited Nancy (2016) on the use of electronic security to combat book theft and the experiences involved in their installation in the United States. Nancy further stressed that the adoption of video surveillance and closed-circuit television (CCTV) systems serve as a way to monitor vandalism in the library. The system can also be used to monitor and record evidence on clientele and employee misconduct. The two basic elements of electronic surveillance, primarily, are the device or trigger that is fitted into each book-hardback, paperback or journal, cassettes, records or discs. This trigger is very discreet and when concealed within books is virtually undetectable. Secondly, the free-standing sensing installed at sites such as the metal detector door of the library also serves as means for curbing theft and mutilation. Book theft on the shelf or the reading tables is sensitized and remains so until a book to be borrowed by a patron is desensitized at the issue desk by the library staff and the patron then exits from the library. Except when the book is checked out, the trigger always rings an alarm that alerts the security personnel at the gate.

Randall and Newell (2014) identified three main ways the library views its use of the CCTV cameras firstly, the cameras are used to maintain the library's external perimeters so that the security can monitor access to the library site, particularly at night. The exterior cameras are motion activated at night, to assist security in identifying sectors where an intruder may be trying to scale the fence. Secondly, an element of the CCTV cameras is to monitor the public areas of the library and observe what is happening in the library. Cameras are installed in all areas of the library except public restrooms. The highest quality cameras are within the reading rooms and are constantly monitored. Thirdly, the library has several different types of reading rooms as the CCTV was inside, from low security to high security, as well as a specific room for scientific journals. In the high-security reading rooms, the camera density is much higher and the recordings are kept for longer as the library is trying to hold a record of "what happened at each desk on a particular day". The lower security reading rooms merely have area surveillance and the feeds aren't as high quality. All feeds from all cameras are kept for a minimum of 31 days and a maximum of 1 year. Data is stored on-site on secure servers, to which only the security team has access. Dean (2014) observed that access card technology has been used to safeguard

records also access cards can be used in conjunction with video surveillance to control and monitor large collections and equipment. Further, explain that access cards can be integrated as photo ID cards for library employees and can be used as temporary keys for library clientele to have access to restricted areas. The access system can also be used for monitoring employee time and attendance, security patrols of the property and can limit access to sensitive areas in the library. Electronic access control systems enhance safety and protect valuable library assets. Access control solutions range from simple authorized access systems to advanced closed-circuit monitoring and exception reports delivered through secure internet connections. The most popular types of cards are the magnetic stripe cards, which look like an accredit card and carry two or more tracks of information on the magnetic stripe, these can be used for access control and other services.

McComb (2004) stated that video surveillance and closed-circuit television (CCTV) systems serve as a way to monitor and record security, deter crime and ensure safety, further suggests that libraries can use CCTV to identify visitors and employees, monitor work areas, deter theft, and ensure the security of the premises and other facilities. The system can also be used to monitor and record evidence on clientele and employee misconduct. That video surveillance should only be employed to provide a safe and secure facility for library employees, library resources and equipment, and library patrons. Ramana (2010) contributed that closed-circuit television (CCTV) used in the libraries can enhance the ability to control the book theft and tearing off the pages from the books and magazines. In the same vein, Pattnaik and Pattnaik (2007) stated that trends of using electronic security systems like RFID, electromagnetic security, smart cards etc. are to happen only with the application of ICT. The libraries also get the most benefit from adopting such measures in controlling unauthorized access. Different components of RFID technology help streamline major library processes such as stock taking, circulation, access and book search thereby eliminating manual labour. Khurshid (2015) stated that electronic security systems for libraries cover access control, radio frequency identification system (RFID), and electronic alarm systems, smoke detectors, flame detectors, security sensors, burglary protection, video surveillance, CCTV, biometric identification and database management programs can be used to control vandalism in the library. The use of electromagnetic

security (EM) surveillance system for managing security challenges arising from theft and vandalism, electromagnetic security (EM) is another most used library security measure worldwide in the protection of books and other media from vandal activities (Adamu and Abdullahi 2018). Using a surveillance system along with 3M/RFID security gates could help to prevent theft and criminal activities within the library surveillance cameras installed throughout the library helps to protect the library from theft and vandalism.

Anunobi and Okoye (2008) stated that “academic libraries are faced with hybrid challenges of managing resources and are challenged to acquire the necessary skill”. One such challenge is the issue of collection security for print and non-print resources. Aina (2013) opined that the use of electronic resources management systems to safeguard resources is the advent of information and communication technology (ICT) now has made libraries preserve their information resources through electronic methods. Information in printed format can now be recorded on a computer using compact disk (CD) diskette, flash drives and through digitization of library information resources. Furthermore, internet services enable libraries not only to acquire but preserve the storage media and are accessed through browsing and downloading to protect the information resource from disaster.

Interpretation of Results

Table 1. Respondent’s Demographic Information

S/n	Variables	Professional Status	Frq.	Percentage	
1	Professional	Polythecnic Librarian	1	1.3%	
		Polytechnic Librarian	1	1.3%	
		Chief Librarian	4	5.2%	
		Principal Librarian	6	7.8%	
		Senior Librarian	5	6.5%	
		Librarian 1	4	5.2%	
		Librarian 11	4	5.2%	
		Para-Professional	PGD	5	6.5%
			HND	38	49.3%
ND	9		11.7%		
2	Name of Institutions	Fed. Poly Oko, Anambra State	54	70.1%	
		Fed. Poly Nekede, Imo State	23	29.9%	

Momodu (2002) observed that academic libraries have been faced with varying degrees of criminal behaviours in the use of their resources especially materials and to some extent manpower. The extent of this problem varies from one library to another.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The total population of this study was 103 library staff from the two selected academic libraries in southeast Nigeria. This is made up of fifty-four (54) library staff in Federal Polytechnic Library, Oko, Anambra State and forty-nine (49) library staff in Federal Polytechnic Library, Nekede, Imo State. A total number of one hundred and three (103) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the sample respondents in the two selected tertiary institutions study. All questionnaires were returned. Analysis was based on the number returned. The population was small and manageable therefore, the researchers adopted the census enumeration technique to study the entire population. It has five clusters, section A is demographic variables of the respondents, and other sections have clusters in line with the research questions. Instruments for data collection are rated as follows: SA (4), A (3), D (2), SD (1). The study adopted the use of tables, simple percentages and mean(x) scores, (using 2.50

S/n	Variables	Professional Status	Frq.	Percentage
3	Highest Qualifications	Ph.D	2	2.6%
		MLIS	12	15.6%
		BLIS	11	14.3%
		PGD	5	6.5%
		HND	36	46.7%
		ND	11	14.3%
4	Year of Work Experience	1- 10	40	51.9%
		11 – 20	20	26%
		21- 30	12	15.6%
		31 and above	5	6.5%

This shows the description demographic information of respondents from the two selected institutions studied. That 49.3% of the respondents were HND's. The highest qualification of academic libraries in both institutions was HND with 46.7%, and from 1-10 recorded the highest year of work experience.

Research Question 2. Types of security available in library and information services in two selected academic libraries

S/n	Question Items	Mean (x)	Decision
A	Conventional Security		
1	Fire Extinguisher and security equipment	3.43	Positive
2	ID Cards and Access Authorization	3.45	Positive
3	Locks and Key System, and burglary protection	3.58	Positive
4	Security Clearance Procedure	3.48	Positive
5	Security Guards Employed to Patrol	3.51	Positive
6	Signature of every User (Gate Registration)	3.57	Positive
B	Electronic Security		
7	3m Exit detection	2.19	Positive
8	Alarm System	2.62	Positive
9	Biometrics	3.84	Positive
10	Electromagnetic Security System	3.48	Positive
11	Closed–Circuit Television (CCTV)	3.65	Positive
12	Electronic Eye Detection	3.51	Positive
13	Electronic Video Recording Surveillance	3.49	Positive
14	Radio –Frequency Identification (RFID)	3.53	Positive
15	Smart Card	3.27	Positive

Table 2 shows that library staff were aware of all the types of security measures available in library and information services from the two selected institutions studied, as they have mean(x) scores above 2.50 midpoint. This implies that academic library staff should be security conscious of library resources.

Research question 3. Availability of security in library and information services in two selected academic libraries

S/n	Question items	Frq.	Percentage
1	Much available	4	5.2%
2	Greater available	6	7.8%
3	Less available	47	61%
4	Not available	20	26%

Table3 shows that 5.2% of respondents say much available, 7.8% is greater available, 61% recorded less available and 26% were not available at all. This implies that the management of the two institutions studied should engage more security systems in the library and implement policies for the better safety of library resources.

Research question 4. Needs for security in library and information services in two selected academic libraries

S/n	Question Items	Mean (x)	Decision
16	Taking precautions against theft	4.	Positive
17	Inventory control and vigilance	3.52	Positive
18	Marks of ownership	3.64	Positive
19	Accessibility and use	3.65	Positive
20	Guarding against mutilation and vandalism	3.47	Positive
21	Protecting materials in book drops	3.57	Positive
22	Protecting materials on exhibit	3.56	Positive
23	Controlling entrance and exits	3.49	Positive

Table 4 analysis shows that security is needed in academic libraries for both tertiary institutions were taking precautions against theft, inventory control and vigilance, marks of ownership, accessibility and use, guarding against mutilation and vandalism, protecting materials in book drops, protecting materials on exhibit, controlling entrance and exits, have mean(x) scores of 4, 3.52, 3.64, 3.65, 3.47, 3.57, 3.56, and 3.49 above 2.50 midpoint.

Research question 5. Causes of security in library and information services in two selected academic libraries in Anambra state

S/n	Question Items	Mean (x)	Decision
24	Poor orientation to library user	3.39	Positive
25	Lack of reprographic machines	3.27	Positive
26	Insufficient library resources	3.43	Positive
27	High cost of books	3.40	Positive
28	High demand for particular books	3.17	Positive
29	Inadequate security measures	3.61	Positive
30	Financial constraint	3.62	Positive
31	Library staff	3.17	Positive

Analysis in Table 5 shows that the causes of insecurity were many as they have mean(X) scores above 2.50 midpoint, which are positive, respectively.

Research question 6. Challenges of security encounter library and information services in two selected academic libraries in Anambra State

S/n	Question Items	Mean (x)	Decision
32	Book theft	3.62	Positive
33	Mutilation of books	3.61	Positive
34	Defacement and other mishandling behaviours	3.49	Positive
35	Hiding of books	3.57	Positive
36	Noise making	3.40	Positive
37	Assault	3.39	Positive
38	Reservation of seats	3.57	Positive
39	Eating in the library	3.56	Positive
40	Wrong borrowing	3.61	Positive
41	Vandalism	3.45	Positive
42	Stealing of personal belongings of staff and patrons	3.65	Positive

midpoint).

Table 6 shows that the following challenges of security encountered in both tertiary institutions studied were which include: book theft, mutilation of books, defacement and other mishandling behaviours, hiding of books, noise-making, assault, reservation of seats, eating in the library, wrong borrowing, vandalism, stealing of personal belongings of staff and patrons with mean(x) scores of 3.62, 3.61, 3.49, 3.57, 3.40, 3.39, 3.57, 3.56, 3.61, 3.45, 3.65, which were above 2.50 midpoint. This shows that academic library staff for the two selected institutions studied see them as the major challenges.

Discussion of Findings

Findings in Library and Information Services and Security Challenges in two selected Academic Libraries in southeast Nigeria

1. It was found that library staff were aware of different types of security measures available but, both management needs to make a positive move toward improving security measures.

2. That the availability of security measures in library and information services was also found that managements should avail better safety measures for library resources.

3. The study also revealed that the need for security measures is important to safeguard library resources.

4. The causes of security in library and information services were found that security caused ineffective service delivery.

5. That the challenges of security encounter in library and information services were also found that

adequate attention should be given to security to avoid destruction of library resources.

Conclusion

The study concluded that library staff from the two selected academic libraries in Anambra State were aware of different types of security systems available in libraries but, the library management needs to make a positive move toward improving security measures, as it is a known fact that libraries are not always safe and secure places, and they are facing a variety of social concerns which includes the theft, mutilation, and vandalism of library materials and other unethical loses. The study revealed the causes and challenges of insecurity in academic libraries, that electronic security systems are very useful for the libraries to ensure better safety and security to the valuable collections which consist of various formats of information resources and human resources as well. As libraries play vital roles in our society, the study also exposed the relevance and necessity of security measures that can be adopted in the library either conventional or electronic security systems, if necessary both can be served in libraries to alleviate or prevent crime.

Recommendation

1. Library management of the two tertiary institutions studied should implement different types of security measures to protect library resources from crime.

2. They should install electronic security systems like CCTV, video recording surveillance, RFID, and other electronic devices in various places and provide access to live video feeds at the library services desks

to allow library staff to monitor the library space for unwanted activity or theft.

3. By installing an electronic security system, they have to ensure the availability of power supply to maintain better safety and security in the library.

4. Proper safety devices ought to be put into effect to avoid loss and harm of library series and assets along with the body of workers and user security. Security is most vital to forestall the harm of understanding aid and spending the amount on it for users' benefits.

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