Beyond the Shelves: An In-Depth Exploration into the Preservation, Conservation, and Security of School Library Information Resources in Nigeria

[1]Abubakar Sanni Aliyu; [2]Maimuna Izah

[1,2]National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies, Abuja; Nigeria

Abstract

This paper investigated the preservation, conservation, and security of school library information resources in FCT, North-Central, Nigeria. The study employed qualitative research design. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting eight (8) public and private school libraries for the study; and the instruments used to collect data were face-to-face interview and observation. The data collected were analysed using descriptive method. The findings of the study revealed that there is significant variations of information resources among libraries, with common resources available across libraries including; textbooks, novels, and magazines, while electronic books (E-books), journals, and specific multimedia materials are less prevalent in most of the school libraries surveyed. Preservation practices demonstrate discrepancies, with notable efforts in most school libraries while conservation measures lack digitisation efforts across all libraries. Security protocols vary across all the libraries. The study also revealed the predominant challenges such as book mutilation, theft, inadequate funding, lack of equipment/facilities, absence of preservation and conservation policies, lack of security personnel, lack of trained library personnel, lack of awareness and poor maintenance culture. The paper recommended that the school administrators needs to allocate adequate resources or seek external funding, provide staff training, enhance preservation and conservation efforts and reinforce security measures in school libraries. Implementing these recommendations can contribute to more effective information resource management in school libraries. Future research should explore digitization strategies and undertake longitudinal studies to assess the sustained impact of interventions.

Keywords: *Preservation, Conservation, Security, School library, Information resources, Nigeria*

Introduction

School libraries are libraries established in primary, secondary, and technical colleges, as well as teacher training institutions to play a vital role in enhancing the quality of education. These libraries are universally recognized for their significance in facilitating effective teaching and learning. The main goals of the school libraries is to serve as a valuable resource hub, and support for educational

curriculum. The purpose of the school library is to make information accessible to its users while also nurturing students' abilities in reading, observation, listening, critical thinking, and the effective exchange of ideas. The importance of school libraries cannot be over emphasized. They play a pivotal role in shaping the educational experiences of students. Libraries, regardless of its type, serves as an organized repository of information resources accessible to specific communities for reference and borrowing. They provides physical and digital access to a wide range of materials and play pivotal roles in supporting education and personal growth. According to Bello (2013), school libraries serve as organized repositories for a variety of printed and non-printed information resources. These information resources are the fundamental components that enable the library to provide its essential services.

Popoola and Haliso (2009) posits that information resources encompass information bearing materials that the library collect, organize, preserve, and disseminate with users to meet both their current and future information needs. In support of this submission, Oyetola and Adio (2020) states that information is a source of power and access to information is essential for both individual progress and the overall development of education. Thus, school library information resources (SLIR) play a vital role in supporting education and fostering a love for learning among students. These resources encompass a wide range of printed and non-printed materials, including books, journals, magazines, digital media, CDs and other educational materials, providing students with valuable knowledge and supporting their academic pursuits, and national development.

Hence, ensuring the preservation, conservation, and security of these resources is of paramount importance to maintain their integrity and accessibility for both present and future generations of students. Preservation, conservation, and security are integral aspects of managing school library information resources effectively. Preservation focuses on proactive efforts to safeguard these resources from physical and environmental damage, aiming to ensure their longevity. It involves various strategies, including proper handling and storage practices, environmental control, repairs, and restoration techniques. Conservation, on the other hand, involves specific practices and techniques employed to mitigate damage and restore deteriorated resources, thereby prolonging their lifespan and usability. It encompasses preventive conservation measures to prevent further deterioration and remedial conservation interventions to address existing damage. While, security encompasses measures to protect these resources from theft, unauthorized access, and potential digital threats, ensuring the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the information contained within them.

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of preserving, conserving, and securing school library information resources. With

advancements in technology and the increasing reliance on digital resources, schools have realized the need to implement comprehensive strategies to ensure the longevity and accessibility of these valuable assets. Furthermore, the awareness of the vulnerability of physical resources to natural disasters, such as floods, fires, or earthquakes, has highlighted the significance of robust security measures to protect these resources from potential loss or damage.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, school libraries face significant challenges, as they often lack the necessary financial resources to acquire up-to-date information materials and the equipment and chemicals required for proper preservation and conservation efforts. Additionally, the library staff lack the technical training needed to effectively carry out these preservation, conservation and security tasks, and many schools cannot afford to hire experts to manage these resources. The problem under consideration revolves around the inadequacy of preservation, conservation, and security practices implemented for school library information resources, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria. These resources hold a unique status due to the valuable information they encompass. In Nigeria and similar contexts, these resources face a critical predicament: they lack proper protection, thereby exposing them to the risk of potential loss. These invaluable information resources acquired with considerable effort, possess an irreplaceable nature and the potential to serve the educational needs of young minds over extended periods. However, it is evident that they suffer from the absence of comprehensive preservation, conservation, and security measures. Moreover, the adoption of information communication technology (ICT) for digitizing these resources remains limited, further exacerbating the situation. This has implications for the relevance of school libraries and the quality of teaching and academic output of the students. If this trend persists intellectual ability of educators and school graduates may affect the standard of education and best practices in the various sectors of the economy will be adversely affected. Therefore, this paper is set out to investigate the preservation, conservation, and security of school library information resources in FCT, North-Central, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The questions asked during the interview were guided by the following specific objectives:
1. identifying the information resources available in school libraries in FCT, North-Central, Nigeria.
2. finding out the preservation and conservation measures for the information resources in school libraries in FCT, North-Central, Nigeria.
3. examining the security measures for the information resources in school libraries in FCT, North-Central, Nigeria.

4. identifying the challenges encountered in preserving, conserving and securing the information resources in school libraries in FCT, North-Central, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Both existing literature and personal observations revealed a multitude of issues affecting the preservation, conservation, and security of information resources. These issues include dirt and dust accumulation, missing back covers, detached spines, the absence of hardcovers, inadequate lamination, and an insufficient provision for duplicate copies. Furthermore, the frequent use of these resources by students further contributes to incomplete pages and information loss. In support of these challenges, Oluwaseun et al. (2017) highlighted the alarming deterioration of library information resources in recent times. This deterioration has been acknowledged as a persistent problem for centuries but has become particularly acute in the present day.

Recent studies emphasize the need for a holistic approach to preservation, conservation, and security in the context of school library information resources. Formenton and Gracioso (2020) emphasize the importance of digital preservation in schools and advocate for a whole school approach to sustainable digital practice. Their research highlights strategies such as adoption of open standards, data migration, data storage medium, emulation, format conversions, legal compliance, metadata management, technological infrastructure, web achieving, and staff training as essential components of long-term digital preservation. UNESCO (2003) has also published guidelines specifically addressing the preservation of digital heritage in schools, providing practical recommendations for digitization, metadata, storage, and access control. These guidelines aim to support schools in preserving their digital resources and ensuring their long-term availability.

Furthermore, Corrado and Moulaison (2014) explore the challenges and best practices of digital preservation in libraries, archives, and museums. Although not specific to school libraries, their comprehensive book provides valuable insights into digital asset management, metadata, digital storage, and security. Many of these insights and strategies can be adapted to the context of school library information resources. Therefore, by recognizing the importance of preservation, conservation, and security, schools can implement proactive measures to ensure the longevity and accessibility of their library information resources. The current status of in Nigeria reflects the challenges and opportunities surrounding their preservation, conservation, and security. This paper highlighted the condition of these materials, the strategies employed to ensure their longevity, and the evolving security practices.

Thus, preservation and conservation of library resources are important to link the previous generation of library users to the present. This will ensure continuity and progress in the library and information world (Ademilua et al., 2021). From the foregoing, one would deduce that libraries are required to provide adequate security to lives and information resources in the library to stabilize their physical structure in order to sustain their survival as long as possible in their original format. Some libraries have made efforts to maintain these resources, but many face challenges. As an example, Oluwaniyi (2015) which study examined 145 schools, revealed that preservation measures in place were limited to basic activities like dusting and regular floor mopping. The available preservation equipment and materials were largely represented by fans.

Effective preservation, conservation, and security practices are indispensable for safeguarding these intellectual content and cultural heritage within the school libraries. However, the absence of comprehensive preservation, conservation, and security policies in school libraries in Nigeria poses a substantial risk, which may result to under performance of the educational institutions in Nigeria. In light of these concerns, this paper aims to explore preservation, conservation, and security practices that can effectively safeguard the information resources.

Conceptual Clarification

Preservation, conservation and security are concepts that cannot be avoided when effective school library services is to be achieved. Ademilua et al, (2021) declared that preservation and conservation of library resources are crucial to the sustenance of quality education in Nigeria. Preservation is derived from the Latin word "Praeservare," which means "to keep safe," while conservation traces its roots back to the Latin word "conservare," which conveys the notion of "to preserve." However, preservation and conservation are often used interchangeably, yet they carry subtle distinctions. Preservation suggests the undisturbed safeguarding of natural resources, while conservation typically involves resource management. Both preservation and conservation processes are employed to protect library information resources from decay and deterioration. In practice, these two terms can be used interchangeably. In essence, "Preservation" and "Conservation" encompass the practices that libraries employ to maintain and sustain library resources and facilities, whether they are human or information resources. Thimoty et al. (2017) defines preservation as the maintaining or restoring access to artifacts, document and records through the study, diagnosis, treatment and preservation of decay and damage. It refers to the ability to prolong the existence of library information resources by maintaining them in conditions suitable for use, either in their original format or in a form more durable (Akpena & Ohiani, 2022). That means, preservation of SLIR involves the proactive measures to prevent physical and environmental damage, ensuring that the library

information resources remain accessible to students and educators for years to come.

Conservation, on the other hand, refers to the process of mitigating damage and restoring deteriorated school library information resources. It encompasses both preventive conservation measures and remedial conservation interventions. Preventive conservation involves strategies and practices aimed at minimizing deterioration and damage to resources while remedial conservation addresses existing damage and deterioration in school library information resources. Conservation according to Akpena and Ohiani (2022), in nutshell is the use of curative measures or processes to repair damaged library information resources and ensure continued existences of materials. Conservation is a specific treatment taken to repair of individual item to slow decay or restore them to a usable state (Thimoty et al., 2017). As noted by Lorver et al. (2022), conservation could be likened to study, diagnosis, examination, preventive care, treatment, documentation using any methods that may prove effective in keeping that property in as close to its original condition as possible and for as long as possible. In this context, conservation of SLIR involves strategies, techniques, processes, treatments, and ways to prevent deterioration and damage to information resources.

Preservation and conservation are often used interchangeably by many scholars but they are not totally the same. Preservation encompasses all efforts to prevent and slow deterioration, whereas conservation involves the assessment of deteriorated information resources, timely curative treatment, and measures to prevent further decay. The concepts, though not restricted to librarianship and the school library information resources, are beneficial for sustainable development of educational and information resources management settings. The feasible attributes could help school libraries to overcome possible present and future challenges which they may encounter in the process of information resources acquisition, collections, organization, prevention, and dissemination. Ovowoh and Iwhiwhu (2010) noted that libraries acquire information resources to meet the information and recreational needs of its clientele. It is the responsibility of the library staff to keep these resources in good physical condition to make then available for users at all times.

Security plays a crucial role in protecting school library information resources from theft, unauthorized access, and potential digital threats. Physical security measures are essential to safeguard physical resources. This includes implementing access control and monitoring systems to restrict entry to authorized individuals, using theft prevention and detection techniques such as security tags or surveillance cameras, and developing fire and disaster preparedness plans to protect resources from potential loss or damage. In support of this, Njeze (2012) agreed that adequate security is one of the major methods of preservation and conservation of

library information resources, it's indicated that adequate security is provided at the exist to prevent theft, mutilation and vandalism. Security in the school library according to Donalds and Osei-Bryson (2020) is the protection and safeguard of libraries' collections from potential security threats and breaches. It is an act of preventing crime, where in the case of library information resources; it prevents un-authorized removal or loss of materials, usually as a result of intruders' or thieves' interference (Song, 2020). In the context of this paper security are presence of security measures or tools used to protect SLIR within the school library. Certainly, these information resources play a crucial role in education, addressing challenges and promoting best practices in preservation, conservation, and security is essential to ensure that they continue to serve the educational needs of students.

The importance of security lies in safeguarding the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the information contained within these resources, ensuring their protection and proper use. According to Oluwabunmi and Ezinwanyi (2022), security in libraries involves the overall manner in which policies, procedures, programs or measures are deployed to mitigate risk and ensure access to information resource or prevent unauthorized access to library information resources. The importance of security is paramount as it safeguards sensitive information, preserves the integrity of resources, and maintains the trust of library users.

Preservation, Conservation and Security of School Library Information Resources (SLIR) in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the preservation of school library information resources varies across institutions. The available preservation equipment and materials were largely represented by fans. However, these preservation efforts were inconsistent, and the state of School Library Information Resources (SLIR) was frequently compromised by a range of factors, categorized as external and inherent.

External factors encompassed issues such as pest infestations, hash weather conditions, natural disasters like fires and floods, microbial decomposition of paper, and the accumulation of dust and dirt. In contrast, inherent factors were primarily related to acid degradation of paper. Human-induced factors, including theft, vandalism, and the absence of air conditioning or cold storage, also contributed to the preservation challenges. In support of the above findings, Oluwaseun et al. (2017) emphasized that several factors presented obstacles to effective preservation practices in libraries. These challenges included issues with insects, rodents, gaseous pollutants, and more, which created preservation problems within the libraries. Notably, libraries were often not insured against natural disasters, and the combined effects of neglect and limited funding for preservation resulted in the deterioration of various information resources over time.

While there is room for improvement, several school libraries have initiated conservation practices. These measures encompass activities like bookbinding, repairing damaged materials, digitization, disaster preparedness and recovery, and proper storage techniques to extend the lifespan of these resources (Akpena & Ohiani, 2022). These initiatives are essential in maintaining the integrity of school library information resources and ensuring their availability to students. Nonetheless, the challenges in preserving and conserving school library information resources are multifaceted. Inadequate funding hampers conservation and preservation efforts. Poor maintenance culture, climate change, lack of equipment/facilities, technological obsolescence, absence of preservation and conservation policy, and lack of trained personnel (Akpena & Ohiani, 2022). Furthermore, the field of preservation and conservation in school libraries confronts substantial obstacles that extend beyond the scarcity of adequately trained staff.

Security practices have evolved in some Nigerian school libraries. To safeguard materials from theft and damage, school libraries have introduced measures such as repairs of damaged printed materials, binding, appropriate environmental control, scheduled patrols, periodic checks on users and staff, crosscheck / verification of identity cards, and configuration of computers with usernames and passwords (Okore et al., 2020). These practices aim to protect materials, ensuring their availability for educational purposes. Despite security measures, challenges persist. Theft and vandalism remain issues in some schools, particularly in poorly secured libraries. In the study of Nath and Deka (2020) reported the persistence of illegal practices. These illicit activities encompass book theft, the mutilation or tearing of pages, hiding or misplacing books, unauthorized borrowing, failure to return borrowed materials, vandalism of library property, and disruptive behavior by users. The prevalence of such activities underscores the inadequate security practices in school libraries. Nath and Deka further concluded that these unlawful actions are fueled by both the inadequacies in the security system and the criminal inclinations of certain individuals. Therefore, adequate security should be provided in order to safeguard these resources and improved services and ensuring their long-term availability.

Research Methodology

The researchers adopted qualitative research design for the study and the population for the study covered eight (8) school libraries in the FCT, North-Central of Nigeria which are; Government Secondary School (GSS), Life Camp, Government Secondary School (GSS), Lugbe, Model Secondary School (MSS), Maitama, Nigeria Tulip International College (NTIC), Wuse 2, Nigeria-Korea Model School (NKMS) Primary and Secondary School, Piwoyi, Noble Height Academy (NHA), Karu, Real Base International Academy (RBIA), Saburi 2 Dei

Dei, Rex Christus College (RCC), Kubuwa, Abuja. A purposive sampling method was used, not all secondary schools have libraries, and therefore only schools that have libraries were selected for the study and the eight (8) libraries have a total of (11) staff that formed the sample size for the study. Interview and observation were the instruments used to collect data for the study; triangulation was used to determine the validity of the data collected. The data collected was organized, tabulated and discussed descriptively.

Presentation of Results and Discussion of Findings

Table 1: Response Rate

S/N	School Library	Total Number of Respondents	Total Number of Respondents Interviewed	Percentage (%)
1	GSS, Life Camp	1	1	100
2	GSS, Lugbe	2	1	50
3	MSS, Maitama	1	1	100
4	NTIC, Wuse 2	2	2	100
5	NKMS, Piwoyi	2	1	50
6	NHA, Karu	1	1	100
7	RBIA, Saburi 2 Dei Dei	1	1	100
8	RCC, Kubuwa	1	1	100
	Total	**11**	**9**	**81.8%**

Source: Field survey (2023)

The results, shown in Table 1, reveal that the response rate indicated that only 9(81.8%) out of the total (11) staff members constituted the respondents for the study. This is attributed to the absence of two staff members at the time of the interview.

Table 2: Information Resources Available in School Libraries

Types of information resources	Library/ participants							
	GSS, Life Camp	GSS, Lugbe	MSS, Maitama	NTIC, Wuse 2	NKMS, Piwoyi	NHA, Karu	RBIA, Saburi 2 Dei Dei	RCC, Kubuwa
Textbooks & novels	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
E-books	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Journals	X	X	X	√	√	X	X	X
Magazines	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Yearbooks	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Albums	√	√	√	√	√	X	√	√
DVD/CDs/Cassettes	X	√	X	√	X	√	X	X
Computers	X	X	√	√	√	√	X	X
Total Score (maximum 8)	**3**	**5**	**5**	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**4**

Source: Field survey (2023)

Key: X = Not Available, √ =Available

Table 2, reveals varying degrees of information resources availablility in the surveyed school libraries. NTIC, Wuse 2, stands out with a high score of 7, indicating a comprehensive range of resources, including textbooks, novels, journals, magazines, yearbooks, albums, and multimedia materials. GSS, Life Camp, and RBIA, Saburi 2 Dei Dei, demonstrate more limited information resources, scoring 3 and 4, respectively. Commonly available resources across libraries include textbooks, novels, and magazines, while electronic books (E-books), journals, and specific multimedia materials are less prevalent in most of the school libraries.

Table 3: Techniques for Preserving and Conserving Information Resources in School Libraries

Preservation techniques for SLIR	Library/ participants							
	GSS, Life Camp	GSS, Lugbe	MSS, Maitama	NTIC, Wuse 2	NKMS, Piwoyi	NHA, Karu	RBIA, Saburi 2 Dei Dei,	RCC, Kubuwa
Books are well arranged on the shelves to prevent damage	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Books are well-ventilated with air conditioners	X	X	X	√	√	X	X	X
Books that are not used but still useful are archived	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Keep the windows opened for ventilation to prevent deterioration	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Preventing the students from eating and drinking in the library	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Proper storage techniques	X	X	X	√	√	√	√	X
Sweep the library every day	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
To prevent books mutilation, student who are found quilt are fine as a deterrent	X	X	√	√	√	X	X	√
Conservation techniques for SLIR								
Restore damaged materials	X	X	√	√	X	√	X	X
Proper shelving and display	X	√	√	√	√	√	X	√
Manually repairing the torn books	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Fumigate the library constantly to avoid insects and rodents	X	X	X	√	X	X	X	X
Cleaning and dusting the books regularly	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Digitization	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bookbinding	X	√	X	√	X	√	X	X
Total Score (maximum 15)	**5**	**9**	**10**	**14**	**11**	**11**	**8**	**9**

Source: Field survey (2023)

Key: √ =Yes, X = No

The preservation efforts across the surveyed school libraries, as indicated in Table 3, reveal a range of practices aimed at maintaining the longevity of information

resources. NTIC, Wuse 2, stands out with a notably high score of 14, indicating a comprehensive approach to preservation, including well-ventilated air conditioning, archiving of unused but useful books, digitization, and fumigation to prevent insects and rodents. MSS, Maitama, NKMS, Piwoyi, and NHA, Karu also demonstrate commendable preservation practices, scoring 10 and 11, respectively. These libraries implement methods such as archiving, proper shelving and display, and manual repair of torn books. Conversely, GSS, Life Camp, and RBIA, Saburi 2 Dei Dei, exhibit lower preservation scores (5 and 8, respectively), indicating more limited implementation of preservation techniques, with gaps in areas such as air-conditioned ventilation and digitization.

In terms of conservation efforts, the surveyed school libraries employ various techniques to safeguard their information resources. NTIC, Wuse 2, once again leads with a high preservation score of 14, demonstrating a robust commitment to both preservation and conservation practices. GSS, Lugbe, NHA, Karu, MSS, Maitama and NKMS, Piwoyi, also exhibit moderate to high levels of conservation efforts, scoring 9, 10, 11, and 11, respectively. These libraries employ methods such as archiving, preventing students from eating in the library, and regular cleaning and dusting of books. However, there is a notable absence of digitization efforts across all surveyed libraries.

Table 4: Security measures for School library information resources

Security practices for SLIR	Library/ participants							
	GSS, Life Ca mp	GSS, Lug be	MS S, Mai tam a	NTI C, Wu se 2	NK MS , Piw oyi	NH A, Ka ru	RBIA, Sabur i 2 Dei Dei,	RC C, Kub uwa
Bags should be dropped at the entrance of the library	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Classification of library resources	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Constant supervision of library users	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Fire extinguishers	X	X	X	√	X	X	√	X
Grillers on Windows	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Library users checked at the exit point	X	X	X	√	X	X	√	X
Maintain a single door entry and exit for library users	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Normal door locks		√	√	√	√	√	√	√

Organise proper orientation for students on the use of library resources	X	X	√	√	√	√	X	X
Security guards to monitor users entering the library	X	X	X	√	X	X	√	X
To avoid theft the library stores rare books and the reserved books in a cupboard	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	√
Use iron protector to secure library door	X	√	√	√	√	√	X	X
Total Score (maximum 12)	5	8	9	11	9	9	10	7

Source: Field survey (2023)

Key: √ =Yes, X = No

Table 4 reveals the security measures implemented by various school libraries to safeguard their information resources. NTIC, Wuse 2, emerges as a front-runner in security measures for SLIR, scoring 11 out of 12, indicating a robust implementation of various security techniques. The library enforces measures such as dropping bags at the entrance, constant user supervision, fire extinguishers, grillers on all the windows, and maintaining a single door entry and exit. GSS, Life Camp, and RBIA, RCC, Kubuwa, exhibit lower security scores of 5 and 7, respectively. While GSS, Life Camp, employs basic measures like dropping bags at the entrance and library classification, RBIA, , RCC, Kubuwa, implements additional measures such as using iron protectors to secure the library door. Other libraries, such as Saburi 2 Dei Dei, GSS, Lugbe, MSS, Maitama, NKMS, Piwoyi, and NHA, Karu, demonstrate moderate security efforts, scoring between 7 and 10. These libraries implement practices such as bag-drop at the entrance, constant supervision, window grills, and maintaining single door entry and exit points. However, fire extinguishers and certain user-check measures are inconsistently implemented across libraries.

Table 5: Challenges Encountered in Preservation, Conservation, and Security of SLIR

Challenges	Library/ participants							
	GSS, Life Camp	GSS, Lugbe	MSS, Maitama	NTIC, Wuse 2	NKMS, Piwoyi	NHA, Karu	RBIA, Saburi 2 Dei Dei,	RCC, Kubuwa
Book mutilation	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Book theft	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Inadequate funding	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Lack of equipment/facilities	√	√	√	X	X	√	√	X
Lack of preservation and conservation policy	√	√	X	√	√	√	√	√
Lack of security personnel to man the library	√	√	√	X	√	√	X	√
Lack of trained library personnel on preservation, conservation, and security	√	√	√	X	√	X	√	√
Lack of awareness	√	√	√	X	√	√	√	√
Poor maintenance culture	√	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Total Score (maximum 9)	**9**	**8**	**7**	**4**	**7**	**7**	**7**	**7**

Source: Field survey (2023)

Key: √ =Yes, X = No

Table 5, reveals various challenges in all the surveyed school libraries in preserving, conserving, and securing their information resources. GSS, Life Camp, encounters the highest number of challenges, scoring 9 out of 9. The library grapples with issues such as book mutilation, theft, inadequate funding, lack of equipment/facilities, absence of preservation and conservation policies, lack of security personnel, lack of trained library personnel on preservation, conservation, and security, lack of awareness, and poor maintenance culture. GSS, Lugbe, and MSS, Maitama, both score 8, sharing similar challenges with GSS, Life Camp, except for the lack of equipment/facilities. NTIC, Wuse 2, faces fewer challenges (score of 4), primarily dealing with book mutilation, theft, inadequate funding, and a lack of trained personnel. Meanwhile, NKMS, Piwoyi, NHA, Karu, RBIA, Saburi 2 Dei Dei, and RCC, Kubuwa, all share a score of 7, encountering challenges such as book mutilation, theft, inadequate funding, lack of

equipment/facilities, lack of preservation and conservation policies, lack of security personnel, and lack of awareness. These findings underscore the pervasive nature of challenges faced by school libraries in Nigeria in effectively preserving, conserving, and securing their valuable information resources.

Table 6: Total Score of Study on Preservation, Conservation, and Security of SLIR

Preservation, Conservation, and Security of SLIR Maximum Score	Library/participants								
	GSS, Life Camp	GSS, Lugbe	MSS, Maitama	NTIC, Wuse 2	NKMS, Piwoyi	NHA, Karu	RBIA, Saburi 2 Dei Dei,	RCC, Kubuwa	Total features
Types of information resources (maximum 8)	3	5	5	7	6	5	4	4	**39**
Preservation and conservation techniques for SLIR (maximum 15)	5	9	10	14	11	11	8	9	**77**
Security techniques for SLIR (maximum 12)	5	8	9	11	9	9	10	7	**68**
Challenges (maximum 9)	9	8	7	4	7	7	7	7	**56**
Total Score (maximum 44)	**22**	**30**	**31**	**36**	**33**	**32**	**29**	**27**	**240**
Rank	Low	High	High	Very High	Very High	High	High	High	

Source: Field survey (2023)

The total scores for the study's assessment of preservation, conservation, and security of SLIR is presented in Table 6, derived from the data in the preceding Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 (Quantitative analysis). To facilitate a quantitative evaluation,

a four point rating scale was designed based on intensity scale proposed by Taylor-Powell (2008). This scale range from 'very high' to 'very low' and is instrumental in ranking individual school libraries, thereby facilitating assessment of the quality under consideration. The four point rating scale was evenly distributed based on the maximum quantitative score of 44 points. The scoring ranges are set as follows: 33-44 = Very High; 23-34 = High; 13-24 = Low; and 01-13 = Very Low.

Table 6 presents the list of all five aspects of preservation, conservation, and security of SLIR in studied libraries. The total features across these aspects amount to 240, with Preservation and Conservation Techniques leading with 77 features, followed closely by Security Practices for SLIR with 68 features. Challenges Encountered in preservation, conservation, and security of SLIR total 56 features, while Types of Information Resources available in the libraries scored the lowest with 39 features.

A cursory glance at the Table 6 reveal that NTIC, Wuse 2, emerges as the top performer among the eight studied school libraries, securing the highest total score of 36 out of 44 (81.82%). NKMS, Piwoyi, follows closely with a score of 33 (75%), while NHA, Karu, MSS, Maitama, and GSS, Lugbe exhibit high total scores of 32 (72.7%), 31 (70.5%), and 30 (68.2%), respectively. Saburi 2 Dei Dei and RCC, Kubuwa, also demonstrate commendable performance with scores of 29 (66%) and 27 (61.4%), respectively. Notably, GSS, Life Camp, obtained the lowest total score of 22 (50%). Despite securing the lowest total score, GSS, Life Camp, serves as a valuable reference point, indicating areas for improvement in comparison to other libraries. In summary, these findings highlight the diverse practices and challenges among the surveyed school libraries, offering valuable insights for further enhancement and optimization of their information resource management strategies.

Discussion of Findings

The study explored the array of information resources in surveyed school libraries in the FCT, North-Central, Nigeria. The findings indicated varying degrees of information resources available in these libraries which include: textbooks, novels, journals, magazines, yearbooks, albums, and multimedia materials. The study revealed that most participants were conversant of the diverse information resources accessible in their school libraries. This aligns with the observations of Ovowoh and Iwhiwhu (2010), who emphasized that libraries acquire information resources to cater to the informational and recreational needs of their users. Therefore, it becomes the librarian's responsibility to maintain these resources in good physical condition to make them available for users at all times. However, a consistent pattern emerged in the prevalence of textbooks, novels, and magazines, while electronic books and specific multimedia materials were notably scarce. This finding corresponds with the research by Timothy et al. (2017), which aimed to identify the types of library resources available. Their study revealed a

predominance of print resources in libraries, emphasizing a persistent preference for traditional formats.

The study also revealed variations in preservation practices among the surveyed school libraries. These libraries utilize strategies such as archiving, prohibiting students from consuming food in the library, manual repairs, and routinely cleaning and dusting books as part of their practices for effective information resource management. It is noteworthy that the absence of digitization efforts, a pervasive gap observed across all libraries, aligns with findings by Timothy et al. (2017), which indicated a focus on physical cleaning, dusting, repairs, and environmental control, with absence of digitization and migration techniques (Okore et al., 2020).

Moreover, the study identified disparities in security measures across libraries, underscoring the imperative for standardized security measures, as inconsistent implementation was recognized as a potential vulnerability, exposing certain libraries to risks of theft and damage (Isebe, 2014). Correspondingly, Njeze (2012) asserted that robust security measures constitute a fundamental aspect of preserving and conserving library information resources. Lastly, the study uncovered multiple challenges impeding preservation, conservation, and security efforts within the surveyed school libraries. The shared challenges, encompassing issues such as book mutilation, theft, inadequate funding, lack of equipment/facilities, absence of preservation and conservation policies, insufficient security personnel, inadequately trained library personnel, lack of awareness, and a deficient maintenance culture, align with the findings of (Akpena & Ohiani, 2022; Isebe, 2014; Oluwaniyi, 2015). These challenges highlight systemic issues demanding broader attention at the educational policy level. To this end, the findings from this study contribute valuable insights into the diverse practices and challenges among surveyed school libraries in Nigeria.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the preservation, conservation, and security of school library information resources are vital for maintaining their integrity, accessibility, and usability. Schools can ensure the longevity and accessibility of their library information resources, empowering students and educators with the knowledge and information they need to thrive in their academic pursuits. Schools must address challenges such as budget constraints, staff training, and technological advancements. By embracing a culture of continuous improvement, schools can protect and preserve their valuable library information resources, providing a conducive learning environment for students and educators. The comparison with existing studies enhances the generalizability of the findings and underscores the need for targeted interventions to address resource discrepancies, improve preservation and conservation practices, standardize security measures, and overcome challenges hindering effective information resource management in

school libraries. Future research could delve deeper into effective digitization strategies for school libraries, considering cost-effective solutions and technological advancements. Also, undertake longitudinal studies to assess the sustainability and long-term impact of implemented recommendations on resource management, preservation, conservation, and security.

Recommendations

1. School administrators should allocate funds for infrastructure improvements, such as well-ventilated air conditioning and proper shelving, to create an environment conducive to the preservation and conservation of information resources.
2. Schools with limited resources should actively seek increased funding for their libraries, they should engage with local communities, parent teacher associations, and potential donors can be avenues to secure additional financial support.
3. They should adopt best practices in preservation, such as digitization, archiving, and fumigation as well as training library staff on these techniques can enhance their effectiveness.
4. Conduct training sessions for library staff and users on security awareness. This can include recognizing and reporting suspicious activities, understanding the importance of security measures, and fostering a culture of shared responsibility for library safety.
5. Collaborate with educational authorities to advocate for policy changes addressing common challenges, such as inadequate funding and lack of equipment. Engage in dialogue to highlight the critical role of school libraries and the need for sustained support.
6. Prioritize professional development programs for library personnel, focusing on preservation, conservation, and security measures. This can be achieved through workshops, online courses, and networking opportunities.
7. Lastly, school libraries should embrace the demands of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) by strategically acquiring electronic resources. Invest in digital platforms, e-books, online journals, and other technology-driven tools to align with contemporary educational needs and enhance information access in the digital age.

References

Ademilua, S. O., Adeeko, A., and Gbotoso, A. O. (2021). Emerging Issues in the Preservation and Conservation of Library Resources in the Development of the Nigerian Tertiary Institution Libraries in the 21st Century. Continental *Journal of. Applied Sciences,* 16(1), 13–23.

Akpena, J. E. and Ohiani, M. O. (2022). Preservation and Conservation Practices in Nigerian Library Services: 1962 – 2022. Paper presented at 60th National

Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Nigerian Library Association, Abuja. Theme: Library and Information Services in Nigeria: 1962 – 2022, 3rd July – 8th July, 2022. Bolton Events Center, Wuse Zone 7, Abuja. 83 -89.

Bello, S. (2013). Automation and digitization of primary/post primary school libraries as an impetus for effective teaching and learning. *Journal of Educational and Social Research, 3*(10), 79.

Deegan, M. and Tanner, S. (2006). Key issues in digital preservation. *Digital Preservation, 1–31*.

Donalds, C., and Osei-Bryson, K. M. (2020). Cybersecurity compliance behavior: Exploring the influences of individual decision style and other antecedents. *International Journal of Information Management, 51*, 102056.

Esan, A. O. (2022). School Libraries and Educational Development in Nigeria: Issues and Prospects. *Indonesian Journal of Librarianship, 187–196*. https://doi.org/10.33701/ijolib.v3i2.2866.

Formenton, D., and Gracioso, L. D. S. (2020). Digital Preservation. *Digital Journal of Library and Information Science; Vol 18: Continuous Publishing; e020012, 24*(2). http://dx.doi.org/10.20396/rdbci.v18i0.8659259.

Hughes, L. M. (2004). Digitizing collections: strategic issues for the information manager (Vol. 2). *Facet Publishing*.

Isebe, I. E. (2014). Cause and effects of theft and mutilation of information materials in academic library services in Delta State. In *Information and Knowledge Management, 4*(10), 76–82.

Lorver, T. R., Terhemen, J, R. and Thomas, Y. A. (2022). Conservation and Preservation of Information Resources for Improved Service Delivery in Francis Idachaba Library, Joseph Sarwuam Tarka University Makurdi Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 7379. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/7379.

Nath, R., and Deka, D. (2020). Practice of Security Systems in University Libraries of Assam: A Study.

Njeze, M. E. (2012). Preservation and conservation issues in selected private universities in South-West Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice, 761*.

Onuoha, J., and Chukwueke, C. (2020). Provision and utilization of school library information resources at Ndume Otuka Secondary School, Abia State, Nigeria. *MiddleBelt Journal of Library and Information Science, 18*.

Oluwabunmi, M. T., and Ezinwanyi, M. (2022). Information Security Awareness and Information Security Compliance in University Libraries in South-West, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal), 7215*. https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/7215.

Oluwaniyi, S. A. (2015). Preservation of information resources in selected school libraries in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice, 1*.

Oluwaseun, A. F., Ottong, E. J., and Ottong, U. J. (2017). Preservation of Library Resources in Nigeria Universities: A Study of Collections in Cross River State Universities. *Communications of the International Information Management Association, 15*(3), 4.

Ovetola, S. O., and Adio, G. (2020). Roles of the school library in education of Nigerian child. *International Journal of Research in Library Science, 6*(1), 154.

Popoola, S. O., and Haliso, Y. (2009). Use of Library Information Resources and Services as Predictor of the Teaching Effectiveness of Social Scientists in Nigerian Universities. *African Journal of Library, Archives & Information Science, 19*(1).

Singh, N. K. and Mahajan, P. (2014). Application of RFID technology in libraries. *International Journal of Library and Information Studies, 4*(2), 1–9.

Singh, V. and Margam, M. (2018). Information security measures of libraries of Central Universities of Delhi: A study. *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology, 38*(2), 102–109.

Song, H. H. (2020). Testing and evaluation system for cloud computing information security products. *Procedia Computer Science, 166*, 84–87.

Taylor-Powell, E. (2008). *Ways to word answer choices in questionnaires. Program Development and Evaluation*, University of Wisconsin System. https://www.scribd.com/document/338993195/English-Multiple-Choice-Likert-Answers.

Timothy, Z. A., Dangwaran, T. Y., and Oluwabunmi, O. O. (2017). Preservation and Conservation of Library Resources in Bingham University Library, Karu, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. *Journal of Applied Technologies in Library and Information Management, 3*(1), 92–101.

Ovowoh, R. O. and Iwhiwhu, B. E. (2010). Preserving information-bearing material in higher education institutions in Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice, 396.*

UNESCO. (2003). Guidelines for the preservation of digital heritage. UNESCO: Information society division. www.unesco.org/webworld/mdmXXX