AMBROSE ALLI UNIVERSITY
EKPOMA, NIGERIA.
ISSN: 1115-26664
VOLUME 23, NUMBER 2, DECEMBER, 2021

COMMUNICATE:
JOURNAL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

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Security Challenges of Library Collections in Academic Libraries: A Case Of University Of Ilori Library, Ilorin, Kwara State

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Abstract
The study investigated security challenges of library collections in University of Ilorin library. The research was guided by four research questions. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The target population consisted of the 97 library staff working in the University of Ilorin, library. Stratified random sampling was used to categorise library staff into professionals, para-professionals and library assistants. Purposive sampling was then applied to select staff directly working with human and material resources in the library and those acquainted with library crime and abuse of library resources. This brought the sample size to forty-one. Forty-one copies of the questionnaire were administered and forty-one copies were retrieved and found usable representing 100% return rate. The findings from the study showed that materials most vulnerable to security challenge are the textbooks in the library and the causes of security challenges in the library are overindulgence of staff, non-availability of CCTV inside the library, ineffective security policy and unstable power supply. The study recommended that the library management should make provisions for the installation of security cameras inside the library in order to monitor the activities of users in the library amongst others.

Keywords: Security, Collections, Academic Libraries, Universities, Students

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Introduction

Academic libraries have been saddled with the responsibility to provide services, facilities and materials that cater for the informational needs of staff and students in institutions of higher learning such as universities, colleges of education, colleges of technologies and polytechnics (Solarin & Opeola, 2012). Academic libraries play important roles in every tertiary institution as they support teaching, learning and research. According to Maidabino and Zainab (2011) the purpose of an academic library is to provide access to information resources in both print and non-print formats.

Oyedum, Sanni and Udoakang (2014) defined a library as a treasure house of knowledge. A well-stocked library is an asset to the school, college, university and the environment where it is located. A library is a place where not only books are kept but also magazines, journals, newspapers, atlases, encyclopedias, audiovisuals, and other important documents are kept systematically and classified according to their subjects, the labeling of books helps the users to get a particular book without any difficulty.

Libraries of all sizes all over the world are confronted with security and crime challenges that have negatively affected their operations and service delivery. According to Gupta and Madhusudhan (2019), Library security is the arrangement provided for safe and secure facilities of library staff, library resources, equipment, and library users. The situation is pathetic in African libraries where valuable information resources are lost to these vices. Abioye and Rasaki (2013) stated that crime and security challenges commonly reported in libraries include theft and mutilation of library materials, defacement of books, verbal and physical assault of library staff, arson, personal theft (from staff and users), and vandalism of library building, equipment, and collections. Antiwi (2009) states that book theft was already a great challenge to the library. Book theft started when the Persians went to Egypt and one withdrew papyrus from the Library of Ramses II without stopping for any formalities at the charging desk. Thus, this began the illegal practice which has continued to torment libraries ever since. The widespread poverty and high cost of living in Nigeria could also pose as cause of security challenge in the library. According to Hogan-Bassey (2000), most books in Nigeria are unaffordable by a majority of the students while the cost of living has gone up so high as to make living standard difficult for the low income group.Certain books are in short supply, even the few available ones are so expensive that it is only the middle and upper economic classes that can afford to buy them. The people of the lower class are mostly affected by poverty, and they have lesser access to opportunities that can improve their living conditions. The result of this is that those who could not afford certain materials they considered imperative, use whatsoever means and opportunities at their disposal to steal or mutilate them by ripping off pages from these materials. Kotey in Afachao (2019) contends that some library staff disregard the library rules and regulations and therefore are unable to insist on users to obey the rules set to curtail unacceptable behaviour in the library.

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The negative attitude of some library staff to ensure that the right practices are followed in the library could be attributed to inadequate training of library staff, especially on the consequences of breaching the rules. Some library staff sometimes go to the extent of disobeying the rules that guide the library in the presence of other users of the library. When this happens, the staff lose the moral right to correct or apply the rules and regulations when others also disregard the laid down rules and regulations. Inefficiency on the part of security personnel in the library may result in unacceptable behaviour by users of the resources in the library.

Academic libraries in Africa are prone to security challenges owing to factors like poor funding of libraries, which has incapacitated libraries from buying multiple copies of books; increased student enrollments, placing greater pressure on collections; and weak local publishing institutions: this makes African libraries depend on foreign publications with high costs due to unfavorable exchange rates of local–to-foreign currencies. The economic recession of the 1980s and 1990s and the present economic meltdown had also taken their tolls on the purchasing power of students and their parents. Abuse and library crime cut across every strata of the society from staff and students to lecturers and from clerics to the downtrodden.

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Statement of the Problem

Uzuegbu (2011) observed that security crime against library collections, otherwise known as information resources, is on the increase in a number of Nigeria university libraries. University libraries are traditionally built to meet the information needs of students, lectures and university communities through the provision of qualitative and adequate information resources and services. Information collections of a library are supposed to be in a place where they can be easily accessed by users in order to satisfy their information needs. The University of Ilorin library collections is faced with security challenges, as some information materials are not accessible to users due to security breaches such as; theft, vandalism, incomplete pages of books among others. This scenario impedes the library's obligation to provide information to the user at the right time. In lieu of this, it has become pertinent to investigate the security challenges on the library collection of University of Ilorin library.

Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine the security challenges of the University of Ilorin library collections. Specifically, the study:

1. examined the types of collections that are more vulnerable to security challenges in the University of Ilorin
2. investigated the causes of the security challenges of the University of Ilorin library collections
3. identified the security challenges on library collections in the University of Ilorin
4. examined the effects of security challenges on the library collections in the University of Ilorin
5. identified measures that should be taken to improve the security of the University of Ilorin library collections.

Research Questions

1. What are the types of collections that are most vulnerable to security challenges in University of Ilorin?
2. What are the causes of security challenges to library collections in the University of Ilorin?
3. What are the security challenges on library collections in the University of Ilorin?
4. What are the effects of security challenges on the library collections in the University of Ilorin
5. What are the measures that should be taken to improve the security
collections?

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Literature Review

According to Ajegbomogun (2004), 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. Adewuyi and Adekanye (2011) listed the following methods that could be adopted in stealing information resources from the library they are: hiding items in their clothes, throwing stolen item(s) through the window and door when people are not observing, putting library item(s) in handbag or briefcase, collaborating with library staff to steal library collection, selling of library books by library staff to supplement poor monthly salary and making friends with porters before carrying out their illegitimate plans.

Also, according to Idowu (2001), over the years, several ways and manners have been discovered on how users steal library books from the university of Ilorin library, they are concealment of item in the body or folder, throwing of items through the window, feigning forget-fullness to drop library books when leaving the library, exploiting porters' laxity to take out items without concealing(for instance when a porter is dozing off at work), removing stamps, date due slips and other security marks (for instance painting the spine of a book to conceal security stamps), removing pages of books or journals systematically until complete removal is achieved leaving only the cover behind in the library and charging out of books legally but refusing to return when due and claiming innocence of having returned the book to the desk without destroying the borrowing slip.

A study carried out by Jato in Oyedum , Sanni and Udokang (2014) showed that 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 fine 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 serious drought of information materials in the library.

Aguolu in Philip (2013) also ascertained that the high rate of book theft and mutilation gradually reduces information resources and reduces librarians' effectiveness. In the definition of Maidabino (2010), mutilation is the act of destroying or removal of an essential part of library materials as to render it useless. This could be as a result of bending of corner of paper inserting pencil or biro into pages, folding of books back to back and tearing of relevant pages. Even though resources such as periodical collections, reference collections and reserved collections in academic libraries in Nigeria are vulnerable to security breaches, users mostly engage in noise-making and book mutilation (Oyedum, Sanni & Udoakang, 2014).

Mansfield (2009) reported how a student stole books from the University Library and sold them on the online market place, eBay, having bypassed the security systems. Most of the stolen books were latest editions and high demand texts. Fasae and Adedokun (2016) asserted that the removal of chapters or parts of some informational resources has been identified as one of the major obstacles against discharging effective library services especially in academic libraries. Also, Abioye And Rasaki (2013)indicated that textbooks were the most highly susceptible to abuse followed by serial publications, reference materials, and special collections.

Nancy (2016) wrote extensively on the use of electronic security to combat book theft and the experiences involved in their installation in the United States. Nancy (2016) stressed that, adoption of video surveillance and Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) systems for managing security challenges arising from theft and vandalism, video surveillance and Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) systems serve as a way to monitor vandal in the library. The system can also be used to monitor and record evidence on clientele and employee misconduct. Urhiewhu, Emojorho and Omah (2018) conducted a study in some selected academic libraries in Nigeria and found out the type of security adopted by academic libraries in the 21st century. Out of the ten (10) academic libraries studied, only the Federal University of Science and Technology Library, Akure adopted CCTV method. The remaining nine (9) libraries still relied on traditional methods such as stamping of specific pages of books and the use of security personnel to check in and check out users at the entrance of the libraries.

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Maidabino (2012) examined a number of published literature on security of library resources and asserted that implementation of library security plan is a viable way of protection against unacceptable behaviours in academic libraries. According to him, security policy should include policy formulation and implementation, user awareness campaign, education and training of staff on the protection of resources. The nonexistence of library security policy in most academic libraries in developing countries including Nigeria encourages users to indulge in unacceptable behaviour (Afachao, 2019).

Studies have also shown that not only users steal and mutilate library materials; some library staff could also pose as thieves in the library These include Adewuyi and Adekanye (2011) who observed that some academic library staff sell stolen library resources to supplement poor monthly salary. This according to Momodu (2014) may be as a result of in-effective disciplinary measure for staff and users who engage in unacceptable behaviours. Some university management staff abuse their authority by taking out books and other library resources without the library taking proper record of those resources (Fasae & Adedokun, 2016). Various writers have expressed their view on what contributes to the cause of different forms of abuse in the library. However, many researchers based their arguments on economic depression and insecurity as the main cause of abuse of library materials.

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Methodology

Descriptive research design was adopted for the study because it accurately describes a population, situation or phenomenon. Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The population of the study include 25 professional staff, 20 paraprofessional staff and 46 library assistants,, which makes a total of 91 staff all together across all the departments of the University of Ilorin library. Stratified random sampling was used to categorise library staff into professionals, para-professionals and library assistants. Purpose sampling was then applied to select staff directly working with human and material resources in the library and those acquainted with library crime and abuse of library resources. Forty-one copies of questionnaire were administered among the staff and 41 copies of questionnaire were found usable representing 100% response rate. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data collected.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	17	41.5
Female	24	58.5
Total	41	100

The Table above shows that 17 (41.5%) of the respondents are males, while 24 (58.5%) are females. This is to say that female members of library staff are more than male members of library staff in the study setting. It also shows that majority of the respondents were females.

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Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
PhD	2	4.7
M.Sc	10	24.6
B.Sc/HND	18	43.9
Others	11	26.8
Total	41	100

Table 2 shows that 2 respondents are P.hD degree holders (4.7%), while 10 (24.6%) have M.Sc degrees, 18 (43.9%) of the respondents have B.Sc/HND degrees, while 11 (26.8%) of the respondents have other educational qualifications. From this analysis, it can be inferred that the majority of the respondents are B.Sc/HND degree holders.

Table 3: Category of Staff Based in the Library

Category of staff	Frequency	Percentage
Professional	5	12.2
Para-professional	17	41.5
Library assistant	19	46.3
	41	100

Table 3 shows that 5 (12.2%) of the respondents are professional staff, 17 (41.5%) of the respondents are paraprofessional staff and 19 (46.3%) of the respondents are library assistants. Based on this analysis, library assistants were the most represented population in this study.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Years of Professional Work Experience

Years of Professional Work Experience	Frequency	Percentage
Below Five years	18	43.9
6-10 years	17	41.5
11-15 years	2	4.9
Above 15 years	4	9.8
Total	41	100

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Table 4 shows that 18 (43.9%) of the respondents have professional work experience that is below five years, 17 (41.5%) have 6-10 years professional work experience. Also, 2 (4.9%) have 11-15 years professional work experience, while 4 (9.8%) of the respondents have years of professional work experience that is above 15 years. Based on this analysis, respondents within range of below five years professional work experience are the majority.

Research Question 1: What are the types of collections that are most vulnerable to security challenges?

Table 6: Types of collections that are vulnerable to security challenges

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1.	Textbooks	27 66%	10 24%	4 10%	0 0%	3.56
2.	Reference books	21 51%	13 32%	7 17%	0 0%	3.34
3.	Theses	0 0%	6 15%	21 51%	14 34%	1.80
4.	Newspaper clippings	1 2%	4 10%	14 34%	22 54%	1.61
5.	Audio visuals	1 2%	6 15%	26 63%	8 20%	2
6.	Dissertations	1 2%	3 7%	28 68%	9 22%	1.9
7.	Conference Proceedings	4 10%	9 22%	24 59%	4 10%	2.32
8.	Annual reports	3 7%	11 27%	23 56%	4 10%	2.32
9.	Journals	5 12%	18 44%	17 42%	1 2%	2.67

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Table 6 shows that the first item (textbook) has a mean of 3.56, the second item (reference books) has a mean value of 3.34, the third item (theses) has a mean value of 1.80, the fourth item (Newspaper clippings) has a mean value of 1.61, the fifth item (audio visuals) has a mean value of 2, the sixth item (dissertation) has a mean value of 1.9, the sixth item (conference proceedings) has a mean value of 2.32, the seventh item (annual reports) has a mean value of 2.32, the last item (journal) has a mean value of 2.67. It is therefore evident that the material most vulnerable to security challenge are the Textbooks, this is because it has the highest mean value of 3.56.

Research Question 2: What are the causes of security challenges of University of Ilorin library collections?

Table 7: Causes of Security challenges of University of Ilorin library collections

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1.	Overindulgence of library staff	6 15%	24 59%	9 22%	2 5%	2.83
2.	Ineffective security policy	10 24%	22 54%	8 20%	1 2%	3.00
3.	Unstable power supply	7 17%	26 63%	6 15%	2 5%	2.93
4.	Non availability of burglary protection of library collections in reserved areas	6 15%	19 46%	12 29%	4 10%	2.66
5.	Non availability of closed circuit T.V inside the library	14 34%	19 46%	5 12%	3 8%	3.07

Table 8 shows that the item (overindulgence of library staff) has a mean of 2.83, the mean value of the second item (ineffective security policy) has a mean value of 3.00, the third item (unstable power supply) has a mean value of 2.93, the fourth item (non-availability of burglary protection of collection in reserved areas) has a mean value of 2.66, the last item (non-availability of CCTV) has a mean value of 3.07. This shows that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that the greatest cause of security challenge of library collection is the non-availability of closed circuit T.V (CCTV). This is because the non-availability of CCTV has the highest mean value of 3.07.

Research Question 3: What are the security challenges on library collections in the University of Ilorin?

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Table 8: Security challenges on collections

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1.	Theft of library materials	19 46%	17 42%	2 5%	3 7%	3.27
2.	Tearing out of book pages by users	20 49%	18 44%	1 2%	2 5%	3.37
3.	Use of markers and pens to deface the library books	12 29%	22 54%	4 10%	3 7%	3.05
4.	Theft of library materials by staff	1 2%	15 37%	18 44%	7 17%	2.24
5.	Refusal of borrowers to return library books	5 12%	25 61%	9 22%	2 5%	2.81

The table above shows respondents' responses on the security challenges of the University of Ilorin main library. It is observable from the table that the first item (theft of library materials) has the mean of 3.27, the second item (tearing out of book pages by users) has a mean of 3.37, the third item (using o markers to deface the library books) has a mean of 3.05, the fourth item (theft of materials by library staff) has a mean of 2.24, and the last item (refusal of borrowers to return library books) has a mean of 2.81. The greatest security challenge of the library therefore is the tearing out of pages by the students. This is because the tearing out of pages has the highest mean values of 3.37.

Research Question 4: What are the effects of security challenges on library collections in the University of Ilorin?

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Table 9: Effect of Security challenges on the library collections

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1.	It reduces information collections of the library	30 73%	10 24%	1 2.4%	0 0%	3.71
2.	It reduces the information value of library collections	19 46%	17 42%	5 12%	0 0%	3.34
3.	It gives room for criminal activities in the library	13 32%	24 59%	2 5%	2 5%	3.17
4.	It can lead to dissatisfaction of user information needs	15 37%	22 54%	2 5%	2 5%	3.21
5.	It can lead to low patronage of the Library	17 42%	19 46%	4 10%	1 2%	3.29

From the above table, it is observed that the most prominent effect of security challenge on the library collection is that it reduces the information collections of the library. This is because it has the mean value of 3.71.

Research Question 5: What are the measures to be taken to improve security of library collections in the University of Ilorin?

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Table 10: Measures to be taken to improve the security of library materials

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
30	There should be formulation of a sound security policy	24 59%	13 32%	2 5%	2 5%	3.44
31	Library staff should be more vigilant	28 68%	12 29%	1 2%	0 0%	3.66
32	Everywhere should be well lit	26 63%	14 34%	1 2%	0 0%	3.61
33	Use of burglary to secure the reserved collections	27 66%	13 32%	1 2%	0 0%	3.63
34	There should be security cameras hidden inside the library	29 71%	11 27%	1 2%	0 0%	3.68
35	Users should be searched before they leave the library	29 71%	11 27%	1 2%	0 0%	3.68

From the above table, it can be observed that the most effective measure to curb the security challenges of University of Ilorin library is to hide security cameras inside the library and to search the users before they leave the library. This is because both have the same mean value of 3.68.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of this study shows that the University of Ilorin library is faced with various security challenges which include; theft of library materials, tearing out of book pages by users, refusal of borrowers to return books, and use of markers to deface library books. This finding supports the findings of Jato in Oyedum , Sanni and Udokang (2014) which showed that scandalous behaviours such as theft and mutilation, hiding library materials, refusal to return overdue borrowed materials, drinking and eating in the library, vandalism and defacement of library collections, arson, negligence to library policies etc. are part of security challenges of academic libraries. Other scholars such as Adewuyi and Adekanye (2011), and Momodu (2014) also affirmed that academic libraries face staff. According to this study, the most common form of security challenge faced by University of Ilorin library is tearing out of book pages by users.

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This result is in tandem with Fasae and Adedokun (2016) who asserted that the removal of chapters or parts of some informational resources has been identified as one of the major obstacles against discharging effective library services especially in academic libraries.

The causes of security challenges in the library based on the findings of this study are overindulgence of staff, non-availability of CCTV inside the library, ineffective security policy and unstable power supply. These findings are in support of the findings of Urhiewhu, Emojorho and Omah (2018) who discovered that out of the ten (10) academic libraries studied, only the Federal University of Science and Technology Library, Akure adopted CCTV method. The remaining nine (9) libraries still relied on traditional methods such as stamping of specific pages of books and the use of security personnel to check in and check out users at the entrance of the libraries. Also, Momodu (2014) attributed overindulgence of staff to in-effective disciplinary measure for staff and users who engage in unacceptable behaviours.

The findings of this study also showed that the materials most vulnerable to security challenge are the textbooks in the library. This finding corresponds to the findings of Abioye and Rasaki (2013) who indicated that textbooks were the most highly susceptible to abuse followed by serial publications, reference materials, and special collections. Mansfield (2009) also reported how a student stole books from the University Library and sold them on the online market place, eBay, having bypassed the security systems. Most of the stolenbooks were latest editions and high demand texts.

The study revealed that security challenges of library materials cause reduction of library collections; it leads to low patronage of the library, dissatisfaction of users, etc. These findings are in line with the findings of Oyedum, Sanni and Udoakang, (2014) and Agolu in Philip (2013), who found out that theft and mutilation of library materials can reduce library collections and also, tarnish the image of the library.

Conclusion

Security challenges have been identified as a major deterrent to the provision of information to library patrons at the right time. This observation motivated this study to investigate the causes and the various security challenges on library collections in the University of Ilorin. The study showed that the university of Ilorin library collections is faced with threats such as mutilation and thefts of library materials which is caused by non-availability of closed circuit television inside the library, as well as ineffective security policy and overindulgence of library staff. The information material most vulnerable to security challenges are the textbooks in the library. This challenge affects the library materials in that, it reduces the information collections of the library due to and also reduces the information value of the textbooks in the library due to mutilation. With the spate of the various security risks that academic libraries are proned to, librarians are urged to keep abreast of the different means by which this menace can be curtailed.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of this study:

- The library management should make provisions for installing security cameras inside the library in order to be able to monitor the activities of users in the library.
- The security personnel at the exit of the library should ensure that users leaving the library are searched in order to see if they have any of the library collections without following due process.
- Library management should organize meetings with members of staff in the library in order to encourage them to be more vigilant when they go around the library so as to notice any erring user and call such person to order.
- The library management should also make a sound and effective security policy for the library.

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