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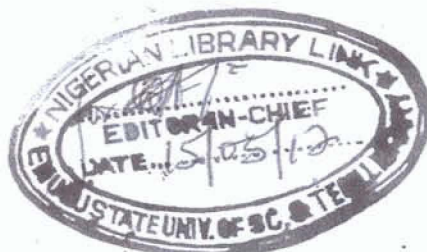
EVALUATION OF SECURITY ISSUES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES: THE CASE OF KENNETH DIKE LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

which you presented for assessment has been accepted for publication. The paper will be published in Vol. 10

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**AN EVALUATION OF SECURITY ISSUES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES: THE CASE
OF KENNETH DIKE LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN**

By

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Abstract

This study examined the security issues in academic libraries with particular reference to Kenneth Dike Library. The sample for this study includes 50 respondents comprising 15 professional librarians, 15 Para-professionals and 20 non professional staff of the library. The study developed and utilized a 38 item questionnaire titled "Library Security Questionnaire (LSQ)" to elicit information from the respondents. Descriptive statistics was adopted using frequency counts and simple percentages in analyzing the data. The findings showed that theft and mutilation of library materials constitute a great security issue to the library system, training of staff on security issue is not adequate and that library staff in Kenneth Dike Library have a positive attitude toward the use and adoption of security systems to reduce theft and mutilation of library materials. Based on the findings it is recommended that proper stock taking exercise be carried out on monthly basis, porters as well as library assistants be trained regularly on security issues and that reprographic policies be reviewed as well as improved funding to install security systems to prevent theft and mutilation of library materials.

Key words: Security issues, Academic libraries, Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan.

Introduction

Security of library materials has bothered librarians from the time immemorial and even to the present time, it is still an issue. Security issues in academic libraries include theft of library materials, mutilation or vandalism of library materials, fire outbreak, dealing with disruptive and deviant patrons. These are daily challenges of librarians in academic libraries. The focal point of this study is on the issues of theft and mutilation of materials in academic libraries using Kenneth Dike Library as a case study.

Considering the increasing levels of accountability in library and information services (LIS), the ever-tightening purse strings, the growth of non-book material and the general rise in crime - the issue of security in academic libraries is of growing importance. Generally the lack of resources and the drive towards 'best value' have resulted in the need to make stock work more for its money, and hence if that stock is being stolen or mutilated on a regular basis, then it has a grave effect on the library. This is reflected in financial terms, for example in replacement costs, loss of income (from rental charges on some materials), administrative costs, and the price of installing and maintaining security systems. In non-pecuniary aspects, it is reflected in a reduction of services (e.g. when users cannot find the item they want), dissatisfied customers, the impact on staff (e.g. their morale, issues of personal safety, extra workload due to theft), and damage to the library's image e.g. in terms of it being considered a 'safe' environment (Switzer 1999).

With the growing need to generate income, academic libraries are increasingly turning to 'renting out' such items as digital video discs (DVDs), play station games, videos, compact discs (CDs), and CD ROMs, (DTI 2000). At the same time, the advent of information and communication technology within the academic library sector, such as the drive to close the digital divide seem to signal a significant rise in the number of computers and related equipment

in academic libraries. As the price of books has risen, and the library has diversified into other expensive 'non-book' material, while also being encouraged to fill any space it has left with the latest technology, the need to consider the security of stock has (or should have) grown in importance. In light of the increasing levels of accountability in library and information services (LIS), the ever-tightening purse strings, the growth of non-book material and the general rise in crime - the issue of theft in academic libraries is of growing concern, (Quinsee and Macdonald, 1991). Generally the lack of resources and the drive towards 'best value' have resulted in the need to make stock work more for its money, and hence if that stock is being stolen on a regular basis, then it is 'costing' the library. This is reflected in financial terms, for example in replacement costs, loss of income (from rental charges on some materials), administration costs, and the price of installing and maintaining security systems. In non-pecuniary aspects, it is reflected in a reduction of services (e.g. when users cannot find the item they want), dissatisfied customers, the impact on staff (e.g. their morale, issues of personal safety, extra workload due to theft), and damage to the library's image e.g. in terms of it being considered a 'safe' environment. The study investigates the level of securities in academic libraries in Nigeria and tries to assess the impact that it has had upon the service and staff.

Objectives of the Study

The overall objective is to investigate various security issues in academic libraries with particular reference to Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan and to ascertain the level of the problems and its impact. The specific objectives are:

- To determine levels of theft in academic libraries.

- To determine the attitudes of library management towards library theft, mutilation, vandalism and other library crimes.
- To assess the effectiveness of current measures to prevent theft and mutilation in academic libraries.
- To determine the effective way of reducing incidences of theft and mutilation in academic libraries

Literature Review

Security matters influence all aspects of library operations. The American Library Association's (ALA) *Library Security Guidelines (2009)* assign the physical protection of both library patrons and library employees to the library director. Additionally, the director is responsible for "ensuring that library employees are informed of and instructed in their obligations in safety and security matters" ("American Library Association, Library Leadership & Management Association [ALA LLAMA], (2009)". In order to fulfill these duties, library administrators need to address safety and security planning and training. Managers must also recognize that the responsibility for effective security is collaborative, and not exclusive to any particular individual or group (Macdonald, 1992). Many potentially damaging situations can be avoided by effective planning and good management policies.

According to Ugah (2007), library security breaches are described as formidable obstacles to information access and use. Such acts are serious problems that can result in user dissatisfaction. He therefore identifies major security issues in libraries as: theft and mutilation; vandalism; damages and disaster; over borrowing or delinquent borrowers; and purposefully displacing arrangement of materials.

Library directors must take into account the unique characteristics of academic libraries when it comes to safety and security planning and training. Academic libraries tend to be open for long hours and are traditionally understaffed in the evenings and on weekends. It is a rare day when all library employees are in the building at the same time; therefore, training sessions that are convenient for everyone is nearly impossible. Smaller academic libraries tend to not have a dedicated security staff and must rely solely on campus police. In addition, they typically cannot staff the entrance or exit to regulate who is coming in and going out of the building. For some universities, the library security plan may be influenced or impacted by campus wide policies and procedures. Regardless of these elements, it is still necessary for the administrator to create, evaluate, and disseminate a well-developed plan that is readily accessible not only for all library employees but student – assistants, volunteers, and guests as well. The library director must also oversee the training of his or her staff to prepare them for all types of emergencies or security incidents.

Book theft is a major security issue in libraries, particularly in academic libraries, with special collections being the most targeted materials, (Olorunsola, 1987; Bello, 1998). A study conducted by Olorunsola (1987) on academic library security showed a relationship between high rates of security problems and the growth of the university. Not all thefts are committed by patrons. Some library staff takes materials from the library without checking them out. This kind of theft, according to Lorenzen (1996), is one of the most difficult to prevent, since library employees know how to defeat the security system. Ewing (1994) describes theft as only one type of collection security breach. Others include non-return of items by borrowers, vandalism, and stock destruction.

Bello (1998) conducted a study of theft and mutilation in technologically university libraries in Nigeria, and revealed that there is lack of security in university libraries. Users resorted to delinquent behaviors because demand outstripped the supply of library material. This resulted in competition for resources, which invariably tempts users to steal, mutilate, or engage in illegal borrowing.

Mutilation is the defacement or damage of library materials. Mutilation of academic library collections has been reported by many researchers (Lorenzen 1996; Bello 1998; Ajegbomogun 2003). Mutilation or vandalism occurs when users knowingly tear, mark, or otherwise damage or destroy materials. Lorenzen (1996), observes that book mutilation takes many forms, ranging from underlining and highlighting text, tearing and or removing pages, and tampering with the content. Lorenzen identifies several causes for mutilation, including:

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

Stock count and inventory practices are often sadly deficient' and the type of count or check used varies between authorities and libraries (Burrows & Cooper, 1992). The absence of full physical inventories and counts in many libraries was the basis of the concern expressed by Burrows and Cooper (1992); who concluded that the situation has unfortunately not improved. These authors provided the first comprehensive study of the financial loss 'caused by' theft, and the measures being used to combat the problem. They found that book loss alone could account for annual losses in Britain in excess of £150 million. This figure may be compared to the £100

million estimate made by Jackson two years earlier (Jackson, 1990) and the estimate reported by the Library Association Record (1993) under the headline "Thefts Cost £200m A Year". Regardless of the actual amount, if indeed an accurate total can be calculated, the financial implications of theft from libraries are clear.

The 'social' impact, i.e. the effect that theft has on the service and its users, has received in comparison, seemingly scant attention in the past, with previous research concentrating on establishing quantitative data. Burns as cited by in Burrows and Cooper (1992) noted that the problem of theft and mutilation of books and other materials was a matter of 'growing concern' for those responsible for library service provision. One can argue that this concern might, and should be extended to include those using library services. Two of the public library's 'foundation stones' are the provision of materials which people are encouraged to borrow, and free access to those materials and other resources. Both of these make the management of theft from libraries a far from straightforward issue and indeed highlight the somewhat paradoxical nature of the debate surrounding the security of stock and equipment (Burrows and Cooper, 1992), an issue that this study will address.

Library staff desire clear guidelines and procedures on how to handle theft or mutilation of library materials, disruptive behavior from patrons, evacuations, because of fire or weather, medical emergencies and other types of security incidents. These need to be clear and concise so that they can be interpreted with confidence in the midst of a crisis. Before any policy making can begin, the library administration should perform a security audit, an evaluation of all areas impacting security, and assess the levels of potential risk to the library (Arndt Jr., 2001). The purpose is to identify weaknesses and to take a proactive approach in determining simple, inexpensive, and easy to implement remedies. The risk assessment provides a natural opportunity

for collaboration between campus police and the library's administration. Seeking guidance from the experts is an intelligent managerial decision; nevertheless, no policy manual will be able to anticipate or cover every emergency with step-by-step instructions (Shuman, 1999).

The literature on library security shows that security breaches often happen when the library premises are left unsecured. Oder (2004) maintains that security measures such as supervision, patrolling, and surveillance are lacking in libraries and keys are kept unsecured, if not in plain sight of the users. Non-return of library materials is a threat to the effective use of resources. Udoumoh and Okoro (2007) suggest that libraries create policies to ensure library resources are used effectively.

The very openness of libraries creates their vulnerability for crisis. Libraries have faced security problems since their earliest beginnings, and they probably always will. For much of the users, libraries are places to visit to take refuge from the world outside and majority of users do not associate libraries with danger. Libraries are often considered to be safe, quiet places; however, libraries are not immune to security incidents or safety violations. Every library needs a security plan adequate for their situation.

Research Questions

Four research questions were raised for this study.

Research Question 1: what is the level of book and material theft and mutilation in academic libraries?

Research Question 2: what are the measures adopted by academic libraries to reduce the incidents of theft and mutilation of library materials?

Research question 3: what is the attitude of the library management towards security of materials in academic libraries?

Research question 4: what are the possible ways of ensuring security of materials in academic libraries?

Methodology

The design employed for this study is a descriptive survey. The instrument used for data collection is a questionnaire designed by the author based on the study objectives and a review of the related literature, as outlined above. The population for the study is 107 out of which 50 respondents were sampled comprising 15 academic librarians, 15 Para-professional librarians, 20 non-professional staff of Kenneth dike library randomly selected. A 38 item questionnaire titled "library security questionnaire (LSQ)" on the nature of security of library materials as well as prospects of eliminating theft, mutilation and other security issues. Different categories of library staff (as stated above) in Kenneth Dike Library were represented in the data collections. The 38 items on LSQ consist of two parts; the first part contained the respondent's socio-demographic data while part two consisted of structured questions aimed at eliciting information on security issues in Kenneth Dike Library with particular emphases on theft and mutilation. These were rated by the respondents as simple yes or no. They were personally administered at each of the sections in the library and were collected back on the spots. Hence, 100% of the questionnaire were duly completed and returned for data analysis.

Data collected were edited, coded and transferred into computer readable format and the statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 11.0 was used to edit the data and to run the analysis with descriptive statistics using simple percentage and frequency counts.

Results

The results of the findings of this study are presented as follows

Table 1: Population size

Category of Staff	Number of Staff	No sampled	%
Professional Librarians	27	15	55.6
Para-professional	32	15	46.9
Non-professional	48	20	41.7
Total	107	50	46.7

Profile of stakeholders interviewed

A total of 50 people were interviewed for this study, as is shown in Table 1. The range of personnel interviewed reflects the general library and information service management hierarchy, e.g. there are more library assistants than senior librarians. The actual job descriptions for each 'title' are relatively unimportant; the point is that the various staffing levels within the library organization were covered.

Research Question 1: what is the level of book and material theft and mutilation in academic libraries?

Table 2 summarizes the responses of the respondents regarding incidences of theft and mutilation in Kenneth Dike Library

Table 2: Cases of Theft and Mutilation

Question	Yes	No
Do you have cases of book theft?	32 (64%)	18(36%)
Do you have reported cases of book mutilation?	39(78%)	11(22%)
Do you know of any recently missing book in your library?	12(24%)	38(76%)
Do you gauge the costs incurred due to theft?	2(4%)	48(96%)
Does theft or mutilation constitute threat to library service?	34(68%)	16(32%)

Table 2 showed that sixty four percent of the respondents indicated positive responses to the first question by accepting that there are cases of book theft in Kenneth Dike library while about thirty six believed that book theft in the library is not often reported. In the same vein, seventy eight percent of the respondents were positively disposed to the fact book mutilation exists in Kenneth dike library while only twenty two seem not to accept that there are cases of book mutilation. Sixty eight percent believe that book mutilation or theft constitute a threat to library services while thirty two percent of the respondents do not see it that way. However, ninety six of the respondents indicated that the costs incurred due to book theft were not gauged while only four percent responded in the affirmative. It could be inferred from the overall responses that cases of theft and book mutilation is imminent in academic libraries as represented by Kenneth Dike Library.

Research Question 2: what are the measures adopted by academic libraries to reduce the incidents of theft and mutilation of library materials?

Table 3: Strategies for curbing incidence of theft and mutilation in libraries

Question	Yes	No
Does your library carry out annual stock taking?	12(24%)	38(76%)
Does your library train staff on dealing with cases of suspected theft?	4(8%)	46(92%)
Do you keep any data on levels of theft?	1(2%)	49(98%)
Do you have sufficient man power to curb users' excesses?	11(22%)	39(78%)
Do you have a specific budget for security measures	5 (10%)	45(90%)

Table 3 indicated that the efforts geared at curbing theft and mutilations in Kenneth Dike library are not encouraging. For instance ninety eight percent of the respondents indicated that data on levels of theft are not kept. Also ninety six of the respondents showed that there is no training on security measures in dealing with theft and mutilation of library materials. The inference from this is that even though it was acknowledged that there were incidences of theft and mutilation but the strategies aimed at curbing this was not sufficient to nail the scourge in the bud.

Research question 3: what is the attitude of the library management towards security of materials in academic libraries?

Table 4: Attitude of Library Management towards Security Issues

Question	Yes	No
Does the library management carry out annual stock taking?	12 (24%)	38 (76%)
Does the library train staff on dealing with cases of	4 (08%)	46 (92%)

suspected theft?		
Do you keep any data on levels of theft?	1 (02%)	49 (98%)
Do you consider theft to be a problem?	11(22%)	39 (78%)
Do you have a specific budget for security measures	5 (10%)	45 (90%)

Table 4 revealed the line of respondents showing that most of their responses were in the negative to the questions posed. This means that the attitude of library management towards security issues is not encouraging. This may be due to the fact that there is no proper information and records of material theft and mutilation in academic libraries.

Research question 4: what are the possible ways of ensuring security of materials in academic libraries?

Table 5: Security Measures

S/N	Items	Yes (%)	No (%)
1.	Use of CCTV	12(24%)	38(76%)
2.	Security surveillance	46(92%)	4(8%)
3.	Patrol measures around the reading area	49(98%)	1(2%)
4.	Regular stock taking exercise	39(78%)	11(22%)
5.	Engaging more hands at check points	45(90%)	5 (10%)

Table 5 indicated that respondents were favorably disposed to the use of security surveillance, patrol measures as well as regular stock taking exercise as major ways of improving library

security and reducing crimes in academic libraries. This according to the respondents would reduce theft and mutilation of materials and other security threats.

Discussion of Findings

The findings showed that although there are cases of theft and mutilations of books in Kenneth Dike Library but there is no adequate records keeping ascertaining the level of book theft in the library. This is due to the fact that there is no specific policy regarding the punishments for the culprit or delinquent users of the library. A safety or security policy according to Arndt Jr. (2001) should begin with a statement of purpose or mission statement, followed by a behavior policy including what actions will be taken when violations occur. Furthermore, this study revealed that measures adopted by Kenneth Dike library in curbing library theft are adequate but there is no sufficient manpower to carry out the plans. For instance the result showed that the staff was not sufficient to check the excesses of library users. As a result, criminally minded library users are at liberty to perpetuate any heinous acts.

There is the need for increased security on the library premises through supervision, patrolling, and surveillance as revealed in this study. Security issue in academic libraries should not be left to an individual staff member's judgment. Policies and procedures should be established and implemented. Such policies should be written and communicated to both staff and users. This is in line with recommendations of many researchers who stressed the importance of policies in ensuring effective library services. The findings of this study are in line with many studies on collection security breaches (Ajegbomogun 2003; Bello 1998; Holt; 2007; Lorenzen 1996).

Managers need to emphasize the need to protect and preserve library resources. It is a fine line; libraries must navigate when it comes to securing library materials. It is difficult to provide strict security when majority of the collection is readily accessible to the public. Librarians feel the conflict between their role as custodians of information and making it as accessible as possible (St. Lifer, 1994). Majority of libraries have security gates located at all exits that alarm library staff of any attempted thefts of library materials. This method is highly effective, but most academic libraries really do not know what their losses are or when they occurred, because they lack the means to conduct effective inventories or shelf readings (Powell, 1994, p. 206). While the safekeeping of a library's collection is indeed the problem to which it pays the most attention on a day-to-day basis, it is not the only security concern (St. Lifer, 1994, p. 35). Administrators need to emphasize to the staff the importance of being conscious of who is in the building and how they are behaving. Libraries must have established rules and regulations for library use. These should be posted in prominent areas of the library so users are well-informed of appropriate use. The policies and procedures on how to deal with violators should be included in the safety and security plan because every library everywhere has dealt with the notorious problems of some patrons. Library staff expects to be free from verbal harassment and threats at service desks, but on rare occasions a patron may become so overwhelmed from frustration that a situation escalates to verbal abuse. Ideally there should never be just one person staffing the building and working with the public. Staff involved in stressful situations must rely on a mix of instinct, established guidelines, and a healthy dose of common sense. The library's security policies should be designed to make deviant behavior so difficult that it occurs infrequently or not at all (Shuman, 1999).

Users have their own expectations regarding safety and security, and they expect that library staff have the means to meet those expectations. Users want to be able to freely leave their personal property on a table while they step away for a moment without worrying that it will not be there when they return. Users expect a clean, well-lit facility where their reading and research needs are met comfortably and safely. Users want to be able to browse the open stacks without distractions from noisy patrons or uninvited harassment from another patron. Some academic libraries utilize patrols by security personnel. Security personnel could be general student assistants assigned to walk each floor of the library, dedicated uniformed library security staff or even campus police who stop in periodically to monitor patron behaviors. A visible security presence by campus police or library security personnel on a regular basis deters potential violations of library policies (Shuman, 1999, p. 140).

Staff should be diligent in responding to alarms and should approach patrons with confidence. Management should also establish policies that hold patrons accountable for deliberate damage to collections. Both types of policies should be consistently enforced and serious infractions should result in the suspension of library privileges or even arrest. These security measures ensure the availability of all library resources and maintain the integrity of the library's collections for all future patrons.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATION

Based on the outcomes of the findings above, the following recommendations are made. Library administrators must take into account the unique characteristics of academic libraries when it comes to safety and security planning and training. Academic libraries tend to be opened long hours and are traditionally understaffed in the evenings and on weekends. It is a rare day

when all library employees are in the building at the same time; therefore, training sessions that are convenient for everyone is nearly impossible. Smaller academic libraries more often than not, do not have a dedicated security staff and must rely solely on campus police. For some universities, the library security plan may be influenced or impacted by campus wide policies and procedures. Regardless of these elements, it is still necessary for the administrator to create, evaluate, and disseminate a well-developed plan that is readily accessible not only for all library employees but student assistants, volunteers, and guests as well. The library administrators must also oversee the training of his or her staff to prepare them for all types of emergencies or security incidents.

There is also the need for staff to take collective responsibility for effective security, and it is recommended that each level of library staff would ideally be involved in the development and implementation of any theft prevention program.

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