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INFORMATION RESOURCES MOST VULNERABLE TO SECURITY THREATS AND PROBLEMS OF LIBRARY SECURITY IN THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES OF SOUTH EAST OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study assessed Information resources most vulnerable to security threats and problems of library security in University Libraries. The Survey method was adopted for the research design, questionnaire with rating, unstructured interviews and observation technique were used for data collection. The study was carried out in eleven university libraries in Southeast of Nigeria. A census population involving 248 respondents drawn from population of 345 librarians were used. Data were analyzed using the mean, standard deviation and a sample T-test. Results revealed reading texts on high demand, journals, theses and dissertations, flash drives and C.D. plates as the Information resources most vulnerable to security threats, while the least in number among the information resources vulnerable to security threats include; photocopying machines, scanners and computers. Results revealed, epileptic nature of power supply, lack of written security policy and inadequate funding as the most serious problems, while embezzlement or misappropriation of library funds and negligence of duty by library security staff are the least. The researcher made some recommendations which include; the installation of modern electronic security devices in the library reading rooms, adequate funding of the university libraries, the installation of solar energy system for constant light to the library and proper functioning of the modern security devices, regular training of librarians and their security personnel on library security issues, adoption of a written security policy and constant patrolling of librarians in the various library reading rooms to ensure proper check on user activities.

Keywords: *Information Resources, Vulnerability to Security Threats, Problems of Library Security, University Libraries.*

Introduction

University libraries are mainly established to support the educational mission of their parent institutions by assisting in teaching, learning and research. Okorie [2023] states that, university libraries gives their support to the university education by providing necessary resources and services to satisfy library users in this era. The author went further to stress that the effectiveness of a library as an instrument of education is determined by the success with which it is able to provide the user with the information he or she seeks. Onah and Dushu [2023] re-emphasized the university libraries role of fulfilling the educational and research objectives by playing a dual role of supporting the university curricula, syllabus and research scholars. They also pointed out that, the university library assists the user community in accessing learning materials as prescribed in the syllabus that are needed for class work and the faculty for their study, teaching and research.

Information resources are the commodities the university libraries provide and prepare for accessibility to users in their academic environment. These information resources

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are classified into prints, non-prints, electronic and digital resources. According to Moustapha [2022], printed information resources include: books, serials, encyclopedias, dictionaries, brochures, calendars and guides. While non-print information resources include: compressed disc, audio-visual tapes, slides, micro film, micro-fiche etc. Tammaro in Mustapha [2022] notes that, electronic resources includes; websites, online databases, electronic journals, e-books, CD's, audio-videos, multi-media services, online public access catalog for libraries, web portals and the internet. In a similar way, Omosekejimi, Ijiekhuamhen and Ojeme(2015) also agrees that the information resources in university libraries are prints and non-print information materials. The authors gave examples of print resources as books, periodicals, technical reports, conference papers of learned societies and professional associations. They also gave examples of non-print resources as, audiovisuals, personal experiences, magnetic tapes, blogs, internet, websites and generations of requisite equipment for accessing or listening to data stored on them. The authors emphasized further that the university libraries have long ago stored these information materials that enable the transmission of ideas, knowledge and experiences from generation to generation.

Information resources most vulnerable to security threats refer to the resources in the library that are often targeted by criminals or mostly affected by natural disasters. Oni in Njoku [2015] stated that reference sources are most stolen from university libraries. The author insists that nearly all types of library materials are affected by the criminal practices, but books in different subject areas and reference sources like encyclopedias are grossly affected. Art books with plates, medical or sex books, pages of illustrations, formulae and statistical data are also materials most targeted in the library. Ifidon and Ifidon [2007], also affirmed that limited copies of reference materials in the library are more often stolen. Some of them include: dictionaries, encyclopedias, handbooks, manuals, directories, yearbooks, gazetteers and government publications. Ajala and Oyeboade (2008) agreed that, reference materials and periodicals such as; journals, newspapers and magazines are mostly affected. Fabumni (2010) reiterates that, compact discs, flash drives, computers and their accessories are not left out, they are all targets.

Problems of library security; A good number of problems affect the library security, these problems make it practically impossible for the library resources to be properly secured. Njoku(2015), stipulates that, some of these problems emanate from the security departments, effects of power outage, technological advancement, negligence of duty on the part of library staff and even the security staff of the library, lack of security policy, non-implementation of security sanctions and more importantly finance.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the University libraries, Information resources are processed, organized and kept safe for quality service delivery and easy access to users. Over the years, continuous threat to library resources in university libraries have posed tremendous challenge to the library profession in general. Some safety and security strategies are usually mounted to guide the entire information resources in the university libraries. It is sad to note that despite all the efforts put in place to keep these library resources intact by ensuring their safety in order to avail users the opportunity to have access to them when needed, yet the university libraries continues to experience significant loss of its stock. Most of these library resources still remain vulnerable to security threats, as they are either targeted by criminals or are affected by natural disasters. Worst still, a good number of problems affect the library security and make it practically impossible for the library resources to be properly guided.

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Is it that the security strategies put in place are porous, ineffective or could it be that there are no stern security measures at all? Based on all these, the researcher decided to carry out an empirical study to find out possible ways to ameliorate the situation and keep information resources safe from further security threats in the university libraries of south east of Nigeria.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to have an overview of the Information resources most vulnerable to security threats and problems of library security in the university libraries of south east of Nigeria. In line with this, the specific objectives are as follows:

1. To identify the types of Information resources most vulnerable to security threats in the university libraries in southeast of Nigeria.
2. To ascertain the problems of library security in the university libraries in southeast of Nigeria.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested using a significant level of ($p<0.05$)

Ho 1: The mean rating scores of the types of Information resources most vulnerable to security threats in the university libraries studied do not differ significantly($p<0.05$}.

Ho 2: The mean rating scores of the problems that constitute security threats in the university libraries in south east of Nigeria do not differ significantly ($p< 0.05$).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Information resources make up the library collection that encourage teaching, learning and research. Akanwa, Okorie and Nwogu (2023) define information resources as the information bearing materials which enable the library to fulfill its goal of satisfying the information needs of its users. These Information resources include: books and non-book library materials, which are categorized into prints, non-prints, digital and electronic resources. They constitute the library holdings without which the library has no meaning, cannot function effectively and efficiently. Solomon-Uwakwe and Njoku (2024) opines that Information resources assist the users to learn, find out needed information, and how to use different kinds of information materials. The authors maintained that Information resources play a vital role in supporting the educational curriculum by increasing the number and variety of learning resources, availing lecturers, students and researchers the opportunity to access them. Information resources in the library are designed to meet the different information needs of its patrons. They are widely spread out and cut across various academic disciplines (Enyi&Tsegba, 2021).

Information resources are continuously stored in the library for onward transmission of knowledge, ideas and experiences for posterity. Information is basically obtained from information resources with which user's information needs are satisfied. Information resources remain the channel through which thoughts, opinions and feelings are stored or presented. The library's information resources include a variety of library materials which have many educational uses. They are into different categories; prints, non-prints, electronic and digital information resources (Moustapha,2022).

Information resources most vulnerable to security threats: Many related literatures examined some of the major concepts of the study, thus, Oni in Njoku(2023) stated that reference materials are most stolen from the university libraries. The author insists that nearly

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all types of Information resources are affected. as books in different subject areas and reference sources like encyclopedias are grossly affected. Enyi and Tsegba in Akanwa. Okorie and Nwogu (2023) in a similar work also discovered that. print resources are more vulnerable to security threats. which have negative effect on the resources in general. In another related study by Enyi and Tsegba (2021). findings revealed that text books, reference collections and serials collections are more vulnerable to security threats in the university libraries studied. Anunobi and Okoye in Moustapha (2022) noted that, book theft is a major security issue in libraries, with private collections being the most targeted items.

In a study carried out by Abubakar, Abdullahi.Dewa and Barkindo (2020). findings revealed that print resources, such as text books. reference sources are more vulnerable to security threats in the academic libraries studied. Urhiewhu. Emojorho and Jormah (2018), made a similar observation in a study which showed that print resources are more vulnerable to security threats in the academic libraries studied. Furthermore, Akanwa. Okorie and Nwogu (2023) in their own study, found out that, textbooks, projects/thesis and dissertations are to a very high extent prone to security threats more than the other information resources. Their study also revealed that the main users of these resources are students. who use them for their class assignments, project/theses writing. These students therefore resort to stealing ormutilate these materials in order to use them at their own time and place rather than frequenting the library to consult them.

Problems of library security: According to Njoku (2015), a good number of problems affect the security of Information resources in the University. These problems make it practically impossible for the library materials to be properly secured. Findings from the study also revealed that, some of these problems emanate from the security departments. effects of power outage, technological advancement, negligence of duty, lack of security policy, non-implementation of security sanctions and more importantly inadequate finance. Ifidon and Ifidon (2007) lamented on the epileptic nature of electric power generation which does not encourage the effective use of modern electronic security devices. The authors further stated that. due to technological advancement that the anti-theft detection device have proved ineffective as they create false sense of security alarm at the slightest presence of a metal object in a user's brief case.

Nwalo in Edewor and Ojowoh (2010) in a study. made a remark at the poor security situation that makes it difficult for the librarian to control security issues relating to the library. In a similar study by Nwalo in Fabunmi (2010), it was also revealed that. security problems have continued to escalate due to the absence of stern security sanctions against the existing unruly behavi0us towards the library resources. Aguolu and Aguolu in Fabunmi (2010) reiterates that recently instances of book theft and mutilation are so rampant that librarians are sometimes accused of being negligent of their duties.

Inadequate finance has continued to be one of the crucial problems university libraries are facing in the security of their resources. Idris, Hassan and Abdul Qadir (2013) in their own study. reiterates that security of library resources assume greater importance in developing countries because they find it difficult to replace materials that are lost due to inadequate finance.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey method was adopted for this study. in order to gather and document information on the current condition, opinions and understanding of the respondents on the variables under investigation. A census population involving 248 respondents drawn from a

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population of 345 librarians from the various university libraries under study were also used. This is comprised of the university librarians, heads of unit, professionals and library officers. Table 1:

The mean response scores on Information resources most vulnerable to security threats

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mn	STd.D	Decision
1	Reading text on high demand	158	82	5	3	248	3.59	0.596	Strongly agree
2	Books containing pictures, drawings and sketches for students assignment	115	107	22	4	248	3.34	0.708	Agree
3	Computers in the e-library	68	90	77	13	248	2.86	0.882	Agree
4	Storage devices	69	85	84	10	248	2.86	0.873	Agree
5	Scanners	62	81	79	26	248	2.72	0.956	Agree
6	Printers	51	76	91	30	248	2.6	0.947	Agree
7	Photocopying machines	43	58	100	47	248	2.39	0.984	Disagree
8	Printing and photocopying papers	56	80	91	21	248	2.69	0.916	Agree
9	Reference materials	80	136	30	2	248	3.19	0.666	Agree
10	Journals/ periodicals	79	152	15	2	248	3.24	0.595	Agree
11	Projects/thesis	119	117	11	1	248	3.43	0.599	Agree
12	Dissertations	114	122	9	3	248	3.4	0.622	Agree
						Pooled	2.99	0.7752	Agree

Clue: SA- Strongly Agree, A - Agree, D- Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree.

Table 1 presents the types of Information resources most vulnerable to security threats in the university libraries. All the items except item 7 have mean responses above the criterion mean of 2.5. This indicates that the respondents agree that the above items are the most vulnerable to security threats in university libraries. The most serious among them are reading texts on high demand, projects/ thesis and dissertations, while the least is the photocopying machine. In order to make a decision on whether the respondents mean rating scores on the types of Information resources most vulnerable to security threats in the university libraries do not differ significantly ($p<0.005$), hypothesis 2 was tested.

Hypothesis 1:

H01: the respondents mean rating scores on the types of Information resources most

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vulnerable to security threats in the university libraries do not differ significantly (P<0.05).

Table 2:

Sample t-test result on mean rating scores on the types of Information resources most vulnerable to security threats in university libraries.

variable	T	df	p-value	Mean Difference	Decision
Information resources most vulnerable to security threats	69.457	247	0.000	3.04	Reject null hypothesis

Table 2 shows t-test report on mean rating scores on the types of Information resources most vulnerable to security threats in the university libraries of southeast of Nigeria. The result discloses t cal of 69.457 with a p-value of 0.000 which is less than 0.5 significance level. therefore rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternative. We conclude that respondents mean rating scores on the types of Information resources most vulnerable to security threats in the university libraries of Southeast of Nigeria do differ significantly (P< 0.05). This result therefore reports an existence of a statistically significant mean difference in the respondents rating scores on the types of Information resources most vulnerable to security threats in the university libraries of Southeast of Nigeria.

Table 3:

Respondents opinion on the problems of library security

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1.	Lack of written and documented security policies	143	88	11	6	248	3.48	0.697	Agree
2.	Unsteady nature of power supply that makes anti-theft electronic devices to be least effective.	156	76	6	10	248	3.52	0.736	Strongly Agree
3.	Inadequate funding of the university libraries.	134	97	15		248	3.46	0.648	Agree
4.	Literacy level of the library security staff as they have no formal training in library security related issues.	125	97	23		248	3.39	0.705	Agree
5.	Non implementation of security sanctions to deter user deviants	124	99	24	1	248	3.4	0.677	Agree
6.	Negligence of duty on the part of library staff/security staff of the library.	118	105	21	4	248	3.36	0.706	Agree
7.	Misappropriation of library funds	96	111	35	6	248	3.2	0.767	Agree
8.	Embezzlement of library fund	88	100	43	17	248	3.04	0.896	Agree

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Table 3 presents the problems of library security in the university libraries studied. All the above stated items have mean responses above the criterion mean of 2.5. This shows that all the respondents agree that those items exist as problems of library security in the university libraries. The most serious problems include unsteady/epileptic nature of power supply, lack of written and documented security policy of the library and inadequate funding of university libraries, while the least include embezzlement, misappropriation of library funds and negligence of duty by library staff and security staff of the library. In order to make a decision on whether the respondents mean rating scores of the problems of library security in university libraries in south east of Nigeria do not differ significantly (P<0.05) hypothesis 3 was tested.

Hypothesis 2:
H03: The respondents' mean rating scores on problems of library security in the university libraries studied do not differ significantly (P<0.05).

Table 4 presents the sample t -test report on the respondents mean rating scor es on the problems of library security in the university libraries in the southeast of Nigeria.

variable	T	Df	p-value	mean difference	decision
Problems of library security	77.666	247	0.000	3.37	Rejected null hypothesis

Table 4 represents the sample T-test report on the respondents mean rating scores on the problems of library security in the university libraries in the southeast of Nigeria. The result reports T. cal of 77.666 with a p-value of 0.000 which is less than0.05 significance level, therefore, rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternative. We conclude that the respondents mean rating scores on the problems of library security in the university libraries studied do differ significantly (P<0.05). This result therefore reports that there is an existence of a statistically significant mean difference in the respondents mean rating scores on the problems of library security in the university libraries in south east of Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Information resources most vulnerable to security threats in university libraries in southeast of Nigeria. Table 1 of this study presented the Information resources most vulnerable to security threats in the university libraries studied.

As presented in table 2 of this study, virtually all the listed items are vulnerable to security threats in the university libraries but the most prevalent among them are reading texts on high demand, projects/ thesis dissertations and books containing pictures, drawings and sketches. While the least among all is the photocopying machine, with a mean score that is below average. Statistical report shows a significant mean difference in the respondents mean rating scores on the Information resources most vulnerable to security threats in the university libraries studied, and also the rejection of the null hypothesis, thereby accepting the alternative. Finding of the study support the result of the hypothesis because the rating scores from respondents statistically showed a significant mean difference (P<0.05). Findings from the study is not surprising because these Information resources are highly demanded by users to enable them solve their academic problems. They scramble for them, steal them, tear out

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needed pages in order to use them in their hostels or at home. some even hide them in different shelves in the libraries to ensure that they use the materials all alone and whenever they need them.

The findings of this study relates with similar findings of Edewor and Ojohwoh (2010) where it was revealed that both print and electronic materials were targets of crime. The findings of Uga (2007) is also similar to the findings of this study where it was revealed that attractive and easily sold items such as books, journals, magazines, are targets for crime in academic libraries.

Problems of library security

Findings from the study also revealed the problems of library security in the university libraries studied. All the items in the table were identified as problems facing security of information resources. The most serious ones are; lack of written security policy, unsteady power supply and inadequate funding, while the least among them are; embezzlement of library fund and misappropriation of library fund. Statistical report shows a significant mean difference in the respondents rating scores {p< 0 .05}. The findings were as a result of respondents mean rating scores and the rejection of the null hypothesis, thereby accepting the alternative. It is not surprising that findings support the study, because the identified problems of library security are almost the same issue the entire Nigerian society is having as a developing country. The ugly situation has seriously affected the university libraries in terms of providing the needed library resources to help the universities actualize their aim of teaching, learning and research. The findings of this study are similar to the findings of Ugoanochie (2009), where funding was identified as a major problem that hinders the development of effective security system in university libraries.

CONCLUSION

Information resources most vulnerable to security threats and the problems of library security constitute major challenges facing university libraries over the years. From this study, findings have shown that virtually all the information resources in the university libraries studied are vulnerable to security threats, but the most prevalent among them are; reading texts on high demand, projects, thesis, dissertations and books containing pictures, drawings and sketches. The study also reveals that a good number of problems are facing the university library security system and identified the most serious ones among them as; lack of written security policy, unsteady power supply and inadequate funding. It therefore becomes necessary for these university libraries to beef up and strengthen their security strategies in order to keep their information resources safe to avoid further security threats.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The university management of the various university libraries studied should as a matter of necessity provide adequate fund to the university libraries to enable them procure required information resources to satisfy the user community. This will to a great extent curtail the rate of security threats to the information resources.
2. There should be a well written and documented security policy in the various university libraries studied for the benefit and consumption of library users and library staff. This will go a long way to create awareness to would be culprits in the user community.
3. The management of the university libraries studied, should install solar light that will not only provide steady light, but also power modern electronic security devices in the

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library.

4. The library management should encourage a regular training and re-training of library staff and their security staff in library security related matters.
5. Photocopying machines should be made available at affordable prices at the university libraries. This will help to discourage users from removing pages of books and other information resources.
6. The management of the university libraries studied should install functional ICT facilities. such as close circuit television {CCTV},Electronic security system {ESS}and biometric technology as this will help to deter thieves. 7. The management of the university libraries studied should also endeavor to automate the libraries for quality service delivery and to meet up with the trend of events in the library profession globally. By implementing these recommendations, information resources in university libraries will be adequately secured and the rate of security threats will be drastically curtailed.

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