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**Abstract**

**Purpose/ Objectives:** *The purpose of this study is to assess the security management and attendant challenges in three public Polytechnic Libraries in Osun State, Nigeria, namely: Federal Polytechnic Ede Library, Osun State Polytechnic Iree Library and Osun State College of Technology Esa-Oke Library.*

**Methodology:** *The study adopted a descriptive survey method. Questionnaire was adopted as the primary instrument for collecting data for the study; this was complemented by personal observation. Using a proportional random sampling technique, 50% of library staff were selected as sample across the three libraries. Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS software, while qualitative data were described accordingly.*

**Major Findings:** *The study discovered that lack of users monitoring, theft and mutilation are major security challenges facing the library. Also Osun State Polytechnic Iree, and Osun State College of Technology Esa-Oke Libraries respectively are understaffed, especially with porters and securities, and there was no clear identification of budgetary allocation to security management across the three libraries.*

**Recommendations:** *The study recommends among others that all library staff should be trained on library security management, the need for the parent institutions in OSPOLY Iree and OSCOTECH Esa-Oke to employ young and vibrant youths to serve as securities or porters at the libraries. Also, the use of ICTs (CCTV, alarm door, RFID) for securing library assets should be encouraged among the three libraries.*

**Keywords:** *Library security, Theft and mutilation, Security Management, Library Resources and preservation*

**Paper type:** *Empirical study*

## Introduction

Libraries are established to cater for information needs of a particular community of users. Efforts are always in place to safeguard library resources and facilities to enable the users have access to whatever resources needed. Securing library assets is a major task that is as old as the history of library itself. According to Wikispaces (2017), the early libraries collections of durable clay tablets were preserved against theft and military invasion, rather than being preserved against deterioration. The Assurbanipal library at Nineveh (around 700 B.C.) shows that clay tablets were kept in earthen jars, baskets and wooden chests with severe warnings for those who may have been tempted to steal or destroy the tablets by threatening deadly retaliation from the king or the wrath of one of the vengeful gods. Also in the ancient period, the Egyptian and Hebrew papyruses were also preserved against deteriorating elements by putting them in

tombs or funerary chambers of important personalities or put in jars and tucked away in secured locations.

Monastic libraries of the medieval period also took security and preservation of parchments (and later paper) very seriously. Copied texts were locked up in closets known as armoire to protect them from cold and damp conditions. The copied texts would later be chained to a metal rod above a lectern to provide a maximum level of security for the precious materials. Apart from chaining, rules preventing the carrying of lanterns to the scriptoria were very common, to ward off fire outbreak. According to Wetson (2013), records show that the practice of chaining books to the shelves or locking them to the reading rooms dated back to the Middle Ages and continued till around 18th Century. This is to safe-guard the library's valuable collections from potential thieves or other physical threats. Security of library assets is still

very much available, with several approaches undertaken to secure valuable library resources and facilities. Security is a multifarious concept. It can be grouped into preventive, detective and responsive aspects. However, library security extends beyond preventing books or other information resources to being stolen out of the library. It includes efforts and policies put in place to secure the information resources, staff members, users, facilities/ equipment and the library building itself against any threat, harm, danger, disaster (natural or man-made), deterioration, mutilation and pests, so that the library can actualize its main objective of providing access to information.

With the incursion of new and emerging technologies for information management which has resulted into acquisition of electronic information resources like CD, DVD, e-database, e-books, e-journals and using the internet as a tool for information provision, library also need to think of securing their cyber space and e-resources, just as they are doing to physical resources.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Library has various human and material resources which are considered assets. Efforts are put in place to secure and safeguard these resources to enable the library to meet the information needs of its users and also actualize the objectives of establishing the library. Securing library assets is a major task, yet one of the least researched areas in Nigeria, evident by dearth of literatures on the subject area from Nigeria. Library staff, users, information resources (print and electronic), and facilities are assets that are significant and essential to the realization of library objectives, hence, the need to secure them.

However, it has been discovered by some studies (Bello, 1998; Akor, 2013 and Oyedum, Sanni, and Udoakang, 2014) that many libraries in Africa are facing a lot of security challenges, especially those that relate to theft and damaging (mutilation) of valuable and reference collections. Similarly, library users device new means of totally or partially removing collections from the library building, thereby frustrating the efforts of the library in providing information services to the users, and also force the library to expend scarce financial resources to replace stolen or damaged materials. Apart from losing collections to theft and vandalism,

Northeast Document Conservation Center (2016) equally points out that many libraries failed to recognize that collections can also be threatened by disasters (e.g. fire and flood) and damage from careless handling or poor environmental conditions.

Also, the advent of ICT, culminated into libraries acquiring electronic resources, which has also opened another phase of securing library resources, as cyber-attack or virus infiltration as frequently as possible. Meanwhile, on the library part, many do not take records of the security or criminal events to plan for averting similar re-occurrence in the future, or strategize on how to tackle it. Many libraries do not have written security policy, no functional security gadget, no or low security-related training for library staff and sadly, many of them believe that library security is strictly porters job. To this end, this study therefore is intended to identify issues relating to security management and attendant challenges in three polytechnic libraries in Osun State namely. These are Federal Polytechnic, Ede Library, Osun State Polytechnic Iree, Library and Osun State College of Technology, Esa-Oke Library.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The major objective of the study is to assess the security management and challenges in three polytechnic libraries in Osun State, namely: Federal Polytechnic, Ede Library, Osun State Polytechnic Iree, Library and Osun State College of Technology, Esa-oke Library. The specific objectives are:

1. To find out the perceptions of library staff in the three selected libraries about library security.
2. To find out if the three selected Polytechnic Libraries have written/ documented security policies.
3. To identify the major security challenges facing the three libraries.
4. To find out the security measures and facilities that are presently available in the three selected libraries?
5. To ascertain if the three libraries keep records of security issues that they experience / to find out if there are incident forms to record crime or security breaches in the three libraries.
6. To find out the percentage of annual budget that each of the three libraries earmarked for security management

## Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of library staff in the three selected libraries about library security?
2. Do the three selected Polytechnic Libraries have written/ documented security policies?
3. What are the major challenges on security facing the three libraries?
4. What security measures and facilities are presently available in the three selected libraries?
5. Do the libraries keep records of security issues they experience /are there incident forms to record crime or security breaches in the three libraries?
6. What percentage of annual budget do each of the three libraries earmarked for security management?

## Literature Review

Security is a multifarious concept and has been defined by various scholars and security experts. Wikipedia (2017) defines security as “the degree of resistance to, or protection from, harm. It applies to any vulnerable and/or valuable asset, such as a person, dwelling, community, item, nation, or organization. According to Rouse (2017), Security in information technology (IT) “is the defense of digital information and IT assets against internal and external, malicious and accidental threats. This defense includes detection, prevention and response to threats through the use of security policies, software tools and IT services”. From the fore-goings, security can be described as the process of protecting an individual, organization or community assets (lives, buildings, property etc) form threats, damage or dangers. It is creating a gap between the asset and threats. However, what constitutes as assets may vary considerably from person to person or from organization to organization.

Library security is the procedure and processes put together to safeguard library assets (both material and human resources) against threats, damages and theft resulting from human, biological or environmental factors. It involves “the use of various means, devices and sometimes also human force to protect individuals and property from various hazards such as fire, crime and loss. According to Cruz (2013), security can have a variety of

connotations in the library world. Internet security and security of library materials are both important aspects of library service, but more important is the safety of patrons and staff. Libraries have plans and procedures for all kinds of situations, including weather/environmental disaster, building fires, electrical outages, etc. Having plans in place for security incidents is integral for the daily running of a library. She stated further that it is imperative for any library, big or small, to know how to handle safety-related situations in a consistent way Similarly, Library Architecture (2017) stressed that library security systems protect staff members, patrons, materials, equipment, and the building. Also, the site and design of the library building impact the security needs. In addition, the budget and balance between accessibility and security must be considered. As security technology rapidly evolves, libraries face countless options in securing their space. An automated library security system deters crime with its presence, detects intrusions, and notifies the staff appropriately.

## Methodology

A descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. The descriptive survey method was adopted in order to extensively study the three libraries in term of their security management and associated challenges. Questionnaire was adopted as the primary instrument for collecting data for the study. This was complemented by personal observation. Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS software, while qualitative data were described accordingly.

## Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The population of the study consisted all the staff in the three libraries, which is 73 (See Table 1). This included all cadres of staff, professional, para-professional and support staff. Proportional random sampling technique was adopted to draw sample for the study with the aim of given equal chance of representation to all, depending to the size of the staff in each library. 50% of staff from each Institution’s Library were randomly selected as sample (See Table 1).

## Data analysis and Discussion of Findings

Data collected for the study are presented and discussed below:

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents According to Libraries and Gender**

SN	Libraries	Total No. of Staff	No. and % Sampled	No. of questionnaires returned and valid	Sex	
					M	F
1	FEDPOLY Ede	48	24 (50%)	20	12	8
2	OSPOLY Iree	10	5 (50%)	5	2	3
3	OSCOTECH Esa-Oke	15	8 (50%)	8	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>73</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>33 (89.19%)</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>

Table 1 shows the number of questionnaires administered and response rate across the three libraries. 50% of the staff were sampled from each of the three libraries, with their years of working experience in their respective libraries ranging from 8 months to 24 years. Out of the 37 questionnaires administered, 33 questionnaires (representing 89.19%) were duly completed,

returned and valid for analysis. The respondents include librarians, library officers, Security/Porters, administrative Staff and a serving National Youth Service Corp member in OSCOTECH Library, Esa-Oke.

**Research Objective 1:** To find out the perceptions of library staff in the three selected libraries about library security.

**Table 2: Perceptions of library staff in the three selected libraries about library security**

S/No	Perceptions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Response	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
1	Library should have a written/ documented security policy	18	15	0	0	0	3.67
2	Library should keep daily records of security issues	19	14	0	0	0	3.67
3	All library staff should receive training on library security	16	12	2	2	1	2.2
4	Special fund should be budgeted for library Security	14	14	4	0	1	2.54
5	Security/ Maintenance Department should be created within the Library	13	17	3	0	0	2.75
6	Library security is only about preventing theft of library books	8	8	1	13	3	2.2
7	Library security is solely the porters' responsibilities	5	4	1	11	12	2.2
<b>Grand Mean</b>							<b>2.75</b>

n= 33

Table 2 shows the mean scores about the perceptions of respondents in the three libraries about library security. A mean score of 3.67 shows that majority of the respondents were of the perspective that library should have a written/ documented library security policy; and that library should keep daily records of security issues. Also means scores of 2.2 shows that many of the respondents are of the opinion that library security goes beyond just preventing theft of library books, and also that library security is not solely the responsibilities of library's porters, respectively.

**Research Objective 2:** To find out if the three selected Polytechnic Libraries have written/ documented security policies.

The three libraries claimed to have library security policies, which are well documented in the Library Handbooks of the three libraries. However, none of the three libraries have a separate documented library security policy.

**Research Objective 3:** To identify the major security challenges in the three libraries

**Table 3: Major security challenges/ threats facing the three libraries**

Rank	FEDPOLY Ede	Rank	OSPOLY Iree	Rank	OSCOTECH Esa-Oke
1.	Theft and mutilation/ defacement	1.	Inadequate porters to check/ monitor users	1.	Theft/ mutilation
2.	Unstable Power Supply			2.	Hiding of books on the shelves
3.	Rodents/ pests infestation			3.	Bringing in of food/ drinks to the reading rooms
4.	Leaking roof	2.	Visiting unapproved websites on the Library’s network (pornography, cyber-betting, cyber-crime)	4.	Excessive use of library materials
5.	Bringing in of food/ drinks to the reading rooms				
6.	Non-return of borrowed books by the users	3.	No security facilities like: CCTV, Alarm door, Smoke detector		
7.	Hiding of books on the shelves				

From Table 3, the highest ranked major security challenge facing FEDPOLY Ede and OSCOTECH Libraries were theft and mutilation of books, while the highest ranked security challenge facing OSPLOLY Iree was inadequate porters to check or monitor users. While unstable power supply ranked as the second challenge mostly experienced by the Federal Polytechnic Ede Library, it is visiting unapproved websites for Osun State Polytechnic Iree Library, and Hiding of books on the shelves for OSCOTECH Library. The least security challenge facing FEDPOLY Ede Library was hiding of books on the shelves, while it is excessive use of library materials in OSCOTECH Library, Esa-Oke.

**Objective 4:** To find out the security measures and facilities presently available in the three selected libraries

Table 4 shows the security measures that the respondents claimed to be presently available in their respective library. Majority of the respondents across the three libraries (85% from FEDPOLY Ede, 80% from OSPOLY Iree and 87.5% from OSCOTECH Esa-Oke) claimed to have a functioning controlled entrance and exits; and installation of nets on windows to prevent throwing of books outside. Majority of 70% of respondents from FEDPOLY Ede and 20% from OSPOLY Iree claimed to have a CCTV system installed, respectively while OSCOTECH Esa-Oke do not have. Also, majority of respondents from FEDPOLY Ede, OSPOLY Iree (80% each) and OSCOTECH Esa-Oke (87.5%) indicated routine check on library users in the reading room as part of security measures in place. However, personal observations by the researchers provide more information in Table 6.

**Table 4: Security measures available in the library**

SN	Security measures presently available in the libraries	FEDPOLY Ede	OSPOLY Iree (%)	OSCOTECH Esa-Oke (%)
1	Fumigation against pest and rodents	13 (65%)	4 (80%)	4 (50%)
2	Controlled entrance and exit	17 (85%)	4 (80%)	7 (87.5%)
3	Installation of nets on windows to prevent throwing of books outside	17 (85%)	4 (80%)	6 (75%)
4	Installation of anti-virus/ firewalls to protect e-resources	15 (75%)	4 (80%)	3 (37.5%)
5	Installation of CCTV system	14 (70%)	1 (20%)	0
5	Routine physical check of electrical installation	15 (75%)	1 (20%)	5 (62.5%)
6	Routine check of the Library building	15 (75%)	4 (80%)	6 (75%)
7	Routine check on library users in the reading room	16 (80%)	4 (80%)	7 (87.5%)
8	Warning posters and captions on library walls	14 (70%)	3 (60%)	7 (87.5%)
9	Frequent orientation of library users	15 (75%)	4 (80%)	7 (87.5%)
10	Provision of Library Manual that states penalties for delinquent behaviours	16 (80%)	4 (80%)	5 (62.5%)
11	Insurance of Library building and facilities	4 (20%)	2 (40%)	4 (50%)

FEDPOLY Ede: n=20, OSPOLY Iree: n=5, OSCOTECH Esa-Oke: n= 8

Table 5 shows, from researchers’ observations, that checking of users in and out of the library was available and very effective in FEDPOLY Ede Library, while it is not fully effective in

OSCOTECH Library Esa-Oke, and was not operational in OSPOLY Library Iree due to paucity of personnel. It was only in FEDPOLY Ede Library that physical security/staff

monitoring of users in reading rooms was available. Also, it was observed that none of the three libraries has maintenance department/section or committee in the library, but rely on the Institutions Works/ Maintenance Department for any major repair. It should be noted,

however, that all the three libraries have functioning bindery units for mending of damaged books. It was also observed that there are many damaged, over-used books available in the shelves across the three libraries.

**Table 5: Results of Observation on security measures put in place in the three libraries**

SN	Variables	FEDPOLY	Decision	OSPOLY	Decision	OSCOTECH	Decision
1	Checking of users in and out of the library	Available	Functioning	Not available		Available	Partially operational
2	Physical security/staff monitoring users in reading rooms	Available	Functioning	Not available		Not available	
3	Availability of maintenance department/section or committee in the library	Not available		Not available		Not available	
5	Any vandalized, damaged, over-used or worn out books sighted on the shelves?	Available		Available		Available	
6	Availability of bindery units for mending of damaged books	Available	Functioning	Available	Functioning	Available	Functioning

Key: (F) = Functioning

**Table 6: Security facilities presently available in the three libraries**

SN	Security facilities presently available in the libraries	FEDPOLY Ede	OSPOLY Iree	OSCOTECH Esa-Oke
1	CCTV	16 (80%)	0	0
2	Burglar Proof	16 (80%)	4 (80%)	8 (100%)
3	Window Net	17 (85%)	5 (100%)	8 (100%)
4	Alarm Door	2 (10%)	0	0
5	Fire Extinguisher	18 (90%)	4 (80%)	7 (87.5%)
5	Fire Alarm	3 (15%)	1 (20%)	0
6	Smoke Detector	2 (10%)	0	0
7	Sand bucket	3 (15%)	1 (20%)	4 (50%)
8	Anti-Virus (for e-resources)	12 (60%)	4 (80%)	2 (25%)
9	Lightening arrester	7 (35%)	2(40%)	0

FEDPOLY Ede: n=20, OSPOLY Iree: n=5, OSCOTECH Esa-Oke: n= 8

Table 6 shows the available security facilities across the three libraries as indicated by the respondents. Majority of respondents across the three libraries indicated that burglar proof and window nets were installed, while 80% from

FEDPOLY Ede indicated that CCTV cameras were installed for proper monitoring. However, observations from researcher are reported in Table 8.

**Table 7: Results of Observation of security facilities/ threats in the three libraries**

SN	Variables	FEDPOLY	OSPOLY	OSCOTECH
1	Controlled entrance/ Exits	Available (F)	Not available (NF)	Available
2	CCTV	Available (NF)	Available (NF)	Not available
3	3M Alarm Door	Not available	Not available	Not available
4	RFID	Not Available	Not available	Not available
5	Fire extinguisher	Available (F)	Available (NF)	Available (NF)
6	Sand bucket	Not Available	Not available	Not Available
7	Fire alarms/ Smoke Detectors	Not Available	Not available	Not Available
8	Warning Captions/ Posters	Available (F)	Available (NF)	Available (F)
9	Water leakages from roof, toilets, Air conditioners etc	Not Available	Available (Windows)	Not available
10	Burglar proof/ window nets	Available (F)	Available (F)	Available (F)

Key: (F) = Functioning, (NF) = Not Functioning

Table 7 shows various security facilities available across the three libraries. It was observed that FEDPOLY Ede Library and OSPOLY Iree Library have CCTV, but were not functioning, while OSCOTECH Esa-Oke did not have. Also, only FEDPOLY Ede Library has functional fire extinguishers. Also water leakages through windows were observed at OSPOLY Iree Library. It was also observed that all the three libraries have burglar proof/ window nets installed on their windows at the reading rooms to prevent throwing out of books by the users.

**Objective 5:** To ascertain if the three libraries keep records of security issues that they

experience / to find out if there are incident forms to record crime or security breaches in the three libraries.

Observation shows that there are no incidents forms across the three libraries to keep track of security issues or threats that were experienced on daily basis. However, it was discovered that only FEDPOLY Ede Library has record of mutilated materials withdrawn from the shelves for re-binding or mending, while the remaining two libraries do not have, as shown in Table 8.

**Objective 6:** To find out the percentage of annual budget that each of the three libraries earmarked for security management.

**Table 8: Availability of incident forms to record crime or security breaches in the three libraries.**

Availability of incident forms	Yes	No	Results from Observation
FEDPOLY Ede	10	10	Available
OSPOLY Iree	2	3	Not available
OSCOTEC Esa-Oke	1	7	Not available

**Table 9: Percentage of annual library budget earmarked for security management.**

Libraries	% budgeted for Library Security
FEDPOLY Ede	5%, 85%, 95%
OSPOLY Iree	No response
OSCOTEC Esa-Oke	No response

From Table 9, while all respondents from OSPOLY and OSCOTECH Libraries did not respond to the questions, the three respondents from FEDPOLY Ede that responded gave inconsistent responses which clearly indicate that they are not familiar with the issue. Observation shows that there was no specific percentage earmarked for security across the three libraries from their annual budget.

**Discussion of Findings**

Perception about library security common to all the respondents is that library should have a written security policy, and that library security

is not only porters' responsibilities. However, almost half of the respondents across the three libraries believed that library security is about preventing library books from being stolen. This shows the need for re-orientation. Major security challenges across the three libraries are theft and mutilation of library books, caused by poor monitoring of users and epileptic power supply to make photocopy of needed materials. This contradicts Akor (2013) findings from a similar study on Benue State University Library where he discovered that theft and mutilation of materials in that library are mostly caused by inadequate library materials, financial constraint and selfishness on the part of library users.

However, all the three libraries studied have functional bindery units to mend mutilated or worn out books.

On the use of ICT for library security, both FEDPOLY Ede and OSPOLY Iree Libraries have CCTV installed, but are not functioning. Also, none of the three libraries have alarm doors. This shows that the use of ICT for securing library assets is not yet operational in the three libraries. Only FEDPOLY Ede Library has incident forms to report security threats, and staff that engaged in physical monitoring of users in the reading room, whereas the remaining two libraries complained of being under-staffed which prevent physical monitoring in the two libraries.

On the issue of allocating certain percentage of library budget to security management, it could be said that majority of the staff across the three libraries do not know if such exist or the particular amount being allocated. This may not be their duties to prepare library budget, but clearly shows that they have not been involved in security management in the library.

### **Conclusion**

The study has revealed that theft and mutilation are major problems facing the three libraries, and are caused mostly by lack of monitoring through CCTV, alarm door and physical staff in the reading rooms. Also, shortages of staff are major security challenges facing OSPOLY Iree and OSCOTECH Esa-Oke libraries, and there is no clear budgeting allocation for security management across the three libraries.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the followings are therefore recommended:

1. There is need for re-orientation of staff of the three libraries to identify that library security is wider than protecting books from being stolen. Also, all library staff should be trained on library security management. Such training could be organized with partnership from the local Fire Service station and Police Departments.
2. There is need for the parent institutions in OSPOLY Iree and OSCOTECH Esa-Oke to employ more staff, especially, young and vibrant youths to serve as securities or porters at the libraries.
3. The three libraries should formulate and implement documented library security

policy which will be a guide on managing security related issues in the library.

4. Periodic documentation of security incidences in the Library should be taken and prompt actions should be taken on it. This is necessary for planning and recovery in case disaster strikes.
5. The use of ICT for securing library assets should be encouraged among the three libraries. Non- functioning CCTV's should be repaired and proper monitor should be put in place to deter potential delinquent from vandalizing or stealing library resources.

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