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## Innovatively securing the library materials

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### **Abstract**

Library security is one of the most important aspects of library management. Materials in a library need to be kept safe in order to ensure continual services of patrons. InfoSec as it is called is the prevention of unauthorized use and the practice of defending information and information bearing materials from unauthorized access, disclosure, disruption, modification, perusal, inspection, recording or destruction of information. From this study it was found out that security issues can only be resolved in the library if that book and information industry is taken seriously. Students and patrons and all who use the library should be barred from entering the library with their mobile phones, laptops, pamphlet exercise books, any other valuable assets etc. which they risk losing if they should send them into the library. Notices should be placed at every corner of the library including the entrance of the library to warn patrons from entering the library with their valuables.

**Keywords:** important, disclosure, disruption, modification, perusal, inspection

### **1. Introduction**

Library security is one of the most important aspects of library management. Materials in a library need to be kept safe in order to ensure continual services of patrons.

Infosec as it is called is the prevention of unauthorized use and the practice of defending information and information bearing materials from unauthorized access, disclosure, disruption, modification, perusal, inspection, recording or destruction of information. Materials that need to be secured in the library includes; hardware and software computers, CDs, television, projects works, pdf books, soft copy of books in the library database, furniture, bags and its contents in the baggage room, laptops brought over by patrons, etc.

According to Parker (2002) [5], the security of library materials (book and non-book materials) are of utmost importance to the librarian and information specialist for the purpose of reducing or avoiding unauthorized access to information bearing materials available in the library. To avoid unauthorized access to library resources, library management and information professionals must devise strategies which will enable them to provide adequate security that can protect the information resources available in the library. Library resources are the information bearing materials which enable the library to fulfill its goal of meeting the information needs of its users (Adomi, 2008) [1].

There are a few gadgets that are very useful when it comes to securing the library. Some of these things are, 3M book detection systems, creating burglar proof in the computer rooms and browsing areas to protect hardware computers, antivirus to protect soft books and software, wire mesh to be placed at the counter of the baggage room just between patrons and staff at the baggage room, radio frequency detection. Library resources are very valuable and useful in the running of a good resourced library. A library stands to save a lot of money and resources when it is secured.

### **1.2 Statement of Problem**

A lot of librarians ignore the essence of securing the library and focus on other matter. This goes a long way to destroy the reputation of the library and also drug the names of the librarian in question in the mud. Also principal officers that are in control of institutional libraries do not take the needs of the library in question. This makes the librarians in such institutions handicap, thereby reducing the overall security control in the library.

In the scheduling of the day to day activities of the library staff, they are junior staff responsible to man the security control in the library. These staff is often two in number. The problem is that they are mostly not present in their duty post or there is only one person manning the security control.

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Gross insubordination has been part of the junior library staff especially in the civil service and basic instruction is ignored deliberately.

There are other library staff that attend to patrons at the enquiry desk. Part of their duty is to move within the study desk and monitor students or patrons activities.

Patrons sometimes mutilate books, they also write on the desk and tables, they also steal relevant and rare books away if they find out staff are not monitoring them. Some patrons go to the extent of using library materials as jotter where they jot down they study points.

### 1.3 Objectives

The main aim of this research is to preserve the library resources, keep the library stable and tidy, maintain the overall reputation of the library, and reduce the financial loss of the library. Bringing on board high tech security gadgets into the library and information management industry in order to beef up security and make it more effective and efficient.

Another aim is to prevent loss of computers and its accessories in the library. Some libraries have other facilities such as conference rooms; meeting rooms etc. these facilities generate extra income to the library. These facilities house computers, speakers, projectors, microphones, expensive chairs, and other important stuffs that make the place hospitable. These gadgets need to be protected in order to sustain the library's extra income. This extra income can be used to maintain or refurbish the library resources.

### 1.4 Scope

This project is mainly for all public and private library institutions. It is also for libraries that have valuable resources and Information for their patrons.

The project also look at the physical security of libraries such as gates, windows, doors to the various offices and rooms of the library, money safes and cabinets where files are kept, cupboards in the various offices, security of wash rooms in the library, security of janitorial equipment, also books are borrowed since the establishment of libraries and which ones have not been returned etc.

### 1.5 Limitations

Most libraries especially those in the developing countries such as those in sub-Saharan Africa do not have the necessary facilities at will enable the researcher to get enough practical information on security issues concerning the library. More often, funding from institutions and the government to the library do not come to the library. This is because there is limited or no importance given to the library. They don't take into serious account any advice or request from the librarians they put into office.

More often than not, staff of the library especially supporting staff do not follow basic regulations in the library such as leaving the library during closing time.

Not all patrons of the library are eligible to use the place. This comes about when identity cards of patrons are not checked.

## Chapter two

### Literature Review

#### 2.1 Introduction

A lot of library expert have written articles, books and

publication treating this topic some of them topics look at library security solutions, library and information resources' security: traditional and electronic security measures, library materials security etc.

### 2.3 Critique of the existing literature relevant to the study

In the literature review, some study looked at a survey of universities that use high technology gadgets as their form of checking on security. According to the survey RFID, security cameras, 3M book detectors were used in various libraries to check on theft issues.

Other study also focused on ways and means of protecting software of the library i.e. soft information security.

## Chapter Three

### Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design

For this experiment, I gathered data from junior library assistant and other support staff of cape coast technical university. I also learnt some information from articles, books, and other publications.

#### 3.2 main survey

From the information I gathered it was obvious that most of the supporting staff who are at the grassroots of the library work or the labour force come into contact with security threats every day. There are instances where a patron or student will complain of a missing laptop, missing mobile phone. Also it was found out that though some few notices has been placed at various vantage points at the cape coast technical university library hall warning staff about the use of digital materials in the library, there were still cases where students brought in their valuables and had security problems with them.

## Chapter four

### Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 4.1 Results

From this study it was found out that security issues can only be resolved in the library if that book and information industry is taken seriously.

#### 4.2 Recommendations

Students and patrons and all who use the library should be barred from entering the library with their mobile phones, laptops, pamphlet exercise books, any other valuable assets etc. which they risk losing if they should send them into the library.

Notices should be placed at every corner of the library including the entrance of the library to warn patrons from entering the library with their valuables.

Library building architecture should be security sensitive. Architects should design the buildings in such a way that, it will make it difficult for external perpetrators to have access to the contents of the place in case nobody is available in there. Libraries should learn from each other as far as security issues are concerned. Most western libraries are far advanced with regards to security. This should be a yard stick for other libraries in Africa and other developing worlds. Government, vice chancellors, rectors, finance officers, pro-vice chancellors, deputy finance officers of various library and institutional libraries should see the essence of the information industry and invest a chunk of

their budget in library and the information sector in order to see the progress everybody is looking forward to.

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