

THE STRENGTH, WEAKNESS, OPPORTUNITY AND THREAT OF INFORMATION RESOURCES IN THE FACE OF TERRORIST ATTACKS IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN THE NORTH – EASTERN NIGERIA

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Abstract: The paper highlights the felt need of the tertiary institutions in the states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe, north-eastern Nigeria where a state of emergency was declared due to the prevalence of terrorist attacks on institutions, where lives and properties were lost. Eliciting information from these tertiary institutions relied on structured (close-ended questionnaire) so to harvest the varied opinions that was anticipated to contribute to addressing the challenges of loss. Well sort solutions, way forward, prospects and benefits of environmental scanning formed part of the information asked, and what to do to save the institutions from monumental loss leveraging on different perspectives. Recommendations offered were based on SWOT analysis. The intent was to encourage the academic libraries to take note of the internal and external environments, because from the two platforms comes help of identifying the strength, weakness, opportunity and threats that a well categorized scan avails as well as suggesting appropriate and implementable measures.

Keywords: terrorist attacks, emergency, tertiary institutions, implementable measures.

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic libraries are libraries found operating in educational institutions of higher learning such as universities, colleges, polytechnics and monotechnics. Academic libraries support the curriculum (teaching and learning) and research (Curzon & Quinonez-Skinner, 2009). The concern on information carrying (volume of resources) of academic library according to Ogunmodede and Mafelu (2012) is the guarantee the library possession contribute to development of human resources and meet the information needs of past and current trends. Note that these collections have direct impact on library services and patronage, materials for class and further reading and access to print and electronic resources.

Academic libraries holdings reflect the focus of the institutions curriculum and pattern of the library collection development, relationship between the library and faculty members and funding of the library. Academic library capacity reflect the niche collection – value information (original papers, artwork, artifacts and other specific works) which identify the needs of faculty and student, mission of the institutes and its academic programmes. The priority of library is to protect the resources and ensure access. Activities such as reprographic and other forms of generating information resources surrogates have encouraged academic libraries to offer privilege services virtually and when physically present

in the libraries (McCabe & Person, 1995). The transformation of academic libraries is unprecedented as a result of the introduction of electronic resources and effective service delivery platforms. Academic libraries can refocus beyond physical collections (prints) to electronic, harvesting, storage and contributing resources digitized, and provide corresponding services. According to Watters (2011) most academic libraries are turning into learning commons, that is, academic libraries encourage sharing information using technologies, operate services remotely, educate online, collaborate, socialise, study and create content. Academic libraries are encouraged to adopt/adapt appropriate and domesticate these technologies without necessarily reinventing. They should be innovative to disperse information resources so that it becomes permanently parts of the academic learning common.

The types of information resources in academic libraries vary and depend on the collection development policies of the library. Generally, valued information resources in academic libraries is not limited to websites, databases, books, monographs, periodicals, government publications, encyclopaedias, magazines, radio, television, newspapers and electronic resources. The value attached to each of the resources or the supporting gadgets depend on the audience, facilitation, type of information need and services to be rendered. A very important and value information sources are people because they evaluate using standards such as consistency, variety and reliability of the information acquired by the academic libraries. For instance, encyclopaedias provide good introductory notes of wide range of subjects. The institutional websites which has become rampant and a gatekeeper contain and provide relevant, current, accurate, purposeful and authoritative information concerning the institutions and its organs. For in-depth information, books are acquired particularly those authored by authorities in the subject and published by reputable presses. Books acquired by academic libraries follow a deliberate and consistent process.

Other valued information resources are articles; a general term used for journals, magazines, newspaper and acquired periodicals. These categories of valued information resources are very specific in terms of topics and frequency. Articles are written by professionals and are reviewed before being published. Monographs are valued information resources in academic libraries because of their characteristics to be able to stand on its own – takes forms of essays, books and not a part of a series. The internet is a controversial but highly valued information resource of the academic libraries. It is a platform that sources all kinds of information free of charge or for fee. The internet supports online books, databases, journals, videos, images, sound and reference resources. Academic libraries value indexes and abstracts which serves as pointers, surrogates and support for research and bibliographic descriptions. Academic libraries are compelled to acquire databases connected to the internet and/or function off-line. The off-line databases acquire come in storage media such as external disk drive, flash drivers, CD-ROMs and tapes. Not left out are electronic versions of books, articles, monographs, images and sounds that can be read, download, printed and stored using electronic driven devices. The premium placed on valued information resources comprises the divergence and opportunity that the library can exploit. They are encouraged to be part of academic libraries network and thereafter contribute indigenous information sources with informative local contents. The measure can reshape the contextualization of the people and institution the library represent. For prognosis, academic libraries in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe States do not need to reinvent measures against terrorist attacks because they are not predictable and guarantee tremendous loss (Adedayo, 2014). Therefore, academic libraries in these states are encouraged to innovate leveraging on the different platforms that can support sharing of valued information resources that the institutions have rights on.

Statement of Problem

The manifolds of disasters that terrorism has caused are devastating. The attacks on schools and heritage repositories cannot be allowed because it can plunge the present and future generations into confusion and deplete it of documented human knowledge, lead to loss of cultural identity, education, social and humane values. The concerns reported of effect of terrorists in Nigeria, showed three states to be the most affected in the north-eastern geo-political zone. The states comprise of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe States (Akande, 2013; Okupe, 2015). These states have tertiary institutions that are prone to terrorists' attacks. It suffices to investigate and proffer appropriate resolutions against the estranged happenings because of the negative consequences it will have on the objectives that established the academic libraries.

Objectives

1. To find out the academic libraries valued information strength, weakness, opportunity and threats in the face of terrorist attacks.
2. To Find out the measures adopted by the academic libraries against loss of valued information resources as a result of attack on its facilities

2. METHODOLOGY

Quantitative research method will be adopted to draw statistical data from affected institutions in the three states most affected by terrorism in north-eastern Nigeria. A structured questionnaire was administered to the tertiary institutional libraries owned by the states and federal government to elicit information of both internal and external strategies adopted to curb loss of acquired information resources (Appendix attached). The population is made up of all tertiary institutions in the three states that federal government declared state of emergency in 2014. The sample size comprised a federal university, a state own university and federal polytechnic from each of the states, respectively. The heads of the respective libraries served as respondents because they manage both the human and information resources of their respective libraries. Data collection lasted for one month to ensure that questionnaires are duly filled and returned for analysis. Frequency counts and tabular presentations of response were used to present the results.

3. FINDINGS

The findings of the study were based on the following: demographic information of selected academic libraries in three states of north-eastern Nigeria, types of valued information resources in the custody of academic libraries in three states of north-eastern Nigeria, institutional roles for curbing loss of valued information resources due to terrorism in academic libraries in three states of north-eastern Nigeria, means exploited to harness how best to reposition academic libraries against loss as a result of terrorist attack on academic libraries facilities in three states of north-eastern Nigeria, and Academic libraries and valued information resources: Strength, weakness, opportunity and threats.

Table 1: Demographic information of selected academic libraries in three states of north-eastern Nigeria

Name of institution	Name of library	Year of establishment	Library holding capacity (print and electronic resources)
Adamawa State University, Mubi	Abdurrahman Ghaji Library	2002	11,230
Federal Polytechnic, Mubi	Professor Jibril Aminu Library	1979	530
Federal University Gashua	University library	2013	9,000
Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola	Ibrahim Babangida Library	1981	56,351
Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri	Ramat Polytechnic Library	1978	-*
University of Maiduguri	Ramat Library	1975	301,968

Source: Field survey, 2019

*Data not given

Ramat Library in UMM (301,968) has the largest volume of collections (print and non-print) acquired by a single institution in the region, following is Ibrahim Babangida Library in MAY (56,351). However, a total of 379,079 valued information resources are scattered among the six (6) institutions selected for the study. Looking at the year of establishment and the peculiarity of the academic libraries, it is suable that the libraries through a period less than fifty years have enriched their institutions with adequate information resources that adequately aided retrospection and prognosis, contribute to the information value chain, scholarship spaces, political, social and cultural wellbeing of the region and its people. The institutions were established at different times and seems to follow a deliberate gap filling pattern of educational need at the tertiary levels.

Technology-based institutions dominated the region in the 1970s and early 1980s, during the periods two polytechnics (Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri, and Federal Polytechnic, Mubi) were established and a University of Maiduguri. It was in 1981 that a University of Technology was established (Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola). Though, the first tertiary institution was the University of Maiduguri in 1975. Adamawa State University, Mubi and Federal University Gashua were added in 2002 and 2013 respectively perhaps to alleviate the pressure already mounting on the earlier institutions. There are other institutions that comprise private, state and federally owned in these three states. The three fell within the scope of the study specifically to reflect the challenge that must be nib by the states and federal governments.

Table 2: Measures exploited by academic libraries to harness how best to reposition library against loss of valued information resources in the event of terrorist attack

Measures explored by academic libraries	UMM	MAY	RPM	FUG	ASU	FPM
Internal environmental scanning		√		√		
External environmental scanning						
Using both internal and external environmental scanning	√		√			√

Source: Field survey, 2019

Key: UMM – Ramat Library, University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri; MAY – Ibrahim Babangida Library, Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola; RPM – Ramat Polytechnic Library, Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri; FUG – University Library, Federal University, Gashua; ASU – Abdurrahman Ghaji Library, Adamawa State University, Mubi; FPM – Professor Jibril Aminu Library, Federal Polytechnic, Mubi

Ibrahim Babangida Library in MAY and University Library in FUG used the internal environmental scanning principles, whereas Ramat Library in UMM, Ramat Poly Library in RPM and Professor Jibril Aminu Library in FPM leveraged on both internal and external environmental scanning principles. Abdurrahman Ghaji Library in ASU is yet to exploit any of the measure to harness the best ways to position the library.

Table 3: Measures adopted by academic libraries to curb destruction of physical infrastructure as a result of terrorist attacks

Measures adopted against destruction of physical structure	UMM	MAY	RPM	FUG	ASU	FPM
Using modern storage facilities/platform (cloud computing, drop box)	√		√	√	√	√
Digitization of traditional information resources					√	
Decentralization of archived document centres						
Collaborating with other institutions outside the state					√	
Duplicating copies of original information carrying resources they have the copy right					√	

Source: Field survey, 2019

Key: UMM – Ramat Library, University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri; MAY – Ibrahim Babangida Library, Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola; RPM – Ramat Polytechnic Library, Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri; FUG – University Library, Federal University, Gashua; ASU – Abdurrahman Ghaji Library, Adamawa State University, Mubi; FPM – Professor Jibril Aminu Library, Federal Polytechnic, Mubi

The measures adopted by academic libraries in the three states of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe to curb loss that terrorist attacks can inflict on them are given in Table 5. All the academic libraries vouched that using modern storage facilities/platforms (cloud computing, drop box, etc) is adoptable and one of the best measure. However, only Abdurrahman Ghaji Library in ASU digitize traditional information resources, collaborate with other institutions outside the state and duplicate copies of original information carrying valued resources they have copy rights over. None have any form of decentralized archival document centre that can serve as alternative source of valued information resources in case of any type of inflicted damage.

Table 4: SWOT analysis of academic libraries thrust to curb loss of valued information resources that terrorism can inflict

SWOT of academic libraries	UMM	MAY	RPM	FUG	ASU	FPM
Strength of library that can help it curb loss of valued information resources						
Library has requisite expertise/technology				√		
Library has embarked on digitisation					√	
Library is guided by policy for information resources appraisal		√	√		√	
Library has policy on harvesting of valuable information resources and sources					√	√

Library operates virtually		√		√		
Library utilise web-based storage facilities	√	√	√			
Weaknesses of the library						
The library is yet to begin digitisation						
The library lack basic equipment/technologies (scanners, camera)				√		√
Library lack internet connectivity	√	√	√		√	
There is no policy on information resource appraisal				√		
Library depends on students, faculty members and donations		√			√	
Library still traditional						
Opportunities the library avails						
Possesses rich collections of value		√			√	
Library has a robust engaging platforms that makes visible valued Information			√			
Adequately funded to subscribe information resources, appropriate technologies, cooperate and consort with other institutions	√			√		√
Staff are trained to facilitate access and use of acquired information resources and services		√			√	
Library facilities and use are not discriminating		√			√	
Provide teaching platform that can help patrons leapfrog into using modern technologies		√			√	
Threats to the library						
The library is susceptible target to attack		√			√	
Safety to human/information resources cannot be guaranteed						
Some resources of value have already been destroyed						
The use of library is no longer a priority due to the insurgency	√	√	√		√	√
Cost of equipment, available of experts and installation is far over what is obtainable in other parts of the country	√					
There is frequent interference and interruption with the internet services	√	√		√	√	

Source: Field survey, 2019

Key: UMM – Ramat Library, University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri; MAY – Ibrahim Babangida Library, Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola; RPM – Ramat Polytechnic Library, Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri; FUG – University Library, Federal University, Gashua; ASU – Abdurrahman Ghaji Library, Adamawa State University, Mubi; FPM – Professor Jibril Aminu Library, Federal Polytechnic, Mubi.

The SWOT analysis results in Table 4 provided a balance score card of the academic libraries in the three states plagued by terrorist attacks in north-eastern Nigeria. True picture of the deliberate actions and/or instituted measures in terms of readiness, personnel competence and infrastructure (technologies) that helped the academic libraries curb any form of loss can be deduced easily. To a greater extent what constitute best practice to curb loss due to terrorist attack on academic library is assured. For instance, the weaknesses and threats components can be contextualised to arrive at categorized resolutions against loss. Arguably, also the results showed that academic libraries in the region have strength which opens them to opportunities that can facilitate the implementation of measures that are peculiar to each library and incorporate suggestions that may be alien, but adequate against loss of valued information resources.

The academic libraries are at different levels of employing technologies in the course of averting loss, though the quickest of the technological techniques against loss and could be used for the preservation and conservation, as well as for virtual storage and transmission of local contents. There is a risk that must be addressed such as issues of obsolescence of technology and equipment, popularity of platform and response of help desk (real-time). Without prejudice, the Polytechnic libraries are lagging behind in terms of instituting a proactive mechanism against valued information resources loss that is strategically coordinated to oversee the tactical and operational levels in their respective academic libraries. Nevertheless, so much is still desired if these institutions are determined to conserve, preserve, and make visible and accessible their respective intellectual and valued information resources. It must also be deliberate to protect against loss and destruction in the event of terrorist attack.

Best Practices

The SWOT analysis suggests the following as best practice:

- Academic libraries in the study area are encouraged to be guided by policy for information resources appraisal and utilize web-based storage platforms.
- Academic libraries should work out modalities that keep them connected to the internet.
- Adequate funding that enable academic library subscribe appropriate technologies, put them on a pedestal to cooperate and consort with other institutional libraries should be encouraged.
- Academic libraries ensures the use of the library is attractive and sustainable, frequent interference and interruption of library services and access to information resources is reduced to minimum.

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