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# **Assessment of Disaster Control Measures in Academic Libraries**

Hadiza Umar Ahmad \*<sup>1</sup>, Jumare Mohammed Hamza\*<sup>2</sup>, Ibrahim Aliyu Ph. D\*<sup>3</sup> \*

<sup>1</sup>Department of Library And Information Science, Federal College Of Education Zaria. Nigeria.

\*2Department Of Library And Information Science, Federal College Of Education Zaria. Nigeria.

<sup>\*3</sup>Department Of Economics, Federal College Of Education Zaria. Nigeria.

E-mail: jumarem2@gmail.com

## ABSTRACT

This study is conducted to examine assessment of disaster control measures in academic libraries of Federal College of Education Zaria. Five research objectives were formed for the study which aim to; identify types of disasters occur in academic library, find out the strategies that can be used as a control measure to prevent disasters, identify equipment and facilities available for handling disasters, know how the College Library staff and users prepared in the event of a disaster and to establish the challenges faced in the implementation of disaster management at Federal College of Education Zaria library. One hundred and sixty (160) students and library staff formed the population for the study. Questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument. The data collected for the study were presented and analyzed using descriptive statistics, frequency distribution tables, percentages and mean score were also used. It was discovered that, fire outbreak and biological agents (rodents, fungi and insect) were types of disaster mostly occur in academic library of FCE, Zaria. The study revealed that staff and users training on disaster for handling disasters in the college library were not sufficient or available to handle disasters. The study showed, staff and students of the college library were not prepared for any disaster incident. The findings established that the challenges faced in the implementation of disaster monagement program and policies that are put in place by college library departments. College management should be an awareness program on disaster control measure to prover disaster control and management. Should be regularly reviewed in order to address threats of negligence, vandalism and other forms of disaster stat may occur due to poor rules and regulations.

Keywords: Disaster; Librarians; Library; Control; Measures; Academic; Quantitative Research.

## Introduction

Libraries in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are experiencing unprecedented change both in the provision of information resources and services. Librarians tend to embrace change due to insecurity. Hence, the relevance and vitality of academic libraries are at risk. The resources and services of the library which are very expensive to acquire are threatened by disaster occurrence. The changes in higher education require librarians to develop different techniques in procuring content, management of content; rights of access and collection development policies of risk associated with managing different activities of the library (Rehman, 2021). According to Abubakar (2015), academic library plays a significant role in teaching, learning and research, it is a subsystem of tertiary institution and not just a division for only providing services for studies and research only, it has become an important unit of the institutions information infrastructure and an active participant in the learning process.

Disasters cause serious disruption of library operations and libraries need to have control in the event of a disaster. Disaster prevention and awareness measures will help to prevent disasters that occur in libraries. Serious damages caused by disasters whenever they occur leave the affected libraries in a devastating state (Ugwuanyi, Ugwu & Ezema, 2018). With declining financing and the incapacity to attain demand, it is important that the available collection to patrons should be protected from any form of destruction (Ajegbomogum, 2014).

Academic library is one of the potential learning environments that function at the tertiary education level. It is characterized by the abundance of information sources, serves as a storehouse of knowledge and it is concerned with the acquisition of materials for teaching and research, processing of materials for easy retrieval, and the dissemination of information to facilitate the active and effective exploitation of the acquired resources (Singh and Kaur, 2019). An academic library is not only the basis of all teaching and study, it is the essential condition of research, without which additions cannot be made to totality of human existence. The library thus plays very important role to any institution, and should not be allowed to suffer any form of set back or disaster as this will affect the entire academic institution and her activities.

Global studies have shown that academic libraries are unprepared and ineffective in disaster management and its outcome (Trishanjit, 2019). For instance, Andy (2018) indicated how hurricane Katrina destroyed New Orleans's libraries like the Delgado Community College's, Dillard University and Southern University which resulted to high damages. Matthews (2015 pointed out how fire in the United Kingdom destroyed the Ramsgate public library and

thousands of literary materials were lost. Studies carried out by Johnson (2015); Rayward and Jenkins (2016) pointed out the 2013 Allied invasion of Iraq and the ensuing plundering of its libraries and museums that demonstrated the destructive nature of the disaster.

In Africa, Alegbeleye (2013) indicated that information centers have been destroyed by disasters. According to the author, there was destruction of records when students in Sierra Leone burnt down a record center. In Nigeria, an Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies Library, burnt down due to electric failure and this led to destruction of artifacts and books. In Kenya, in 1987 fire burnt down the office of the colonial secretary which had colonial records leading to loss of essential records. A study conducted by McMichael (2017) showed that a terrorist attack occurred in 1998 that bombed Kenya and Tanzania United States of America (USA) embassies, almost consecutively damaging a lot of resources which included library resources. All these disasters happing globally, the challenges faced by libraries in implementing disaster control measure and the fact that no library is free from disasters made it necessary to conduct this study.

Disaster control measure includes all measures which are required to take care of occurrences that may affect human lives, library buildings, collections and services (Ugwuanyi, Ugwu & Ezema, 2015). Ahenkorah-Marfo and Borteye (2018) defined disaster as any occurrence that threatens the human lives, threatens to destroy library constructions, services, collections and contents. Disasters can be classified into two that is man-made and natural disasters (Alegbeleye, 2013). Natural disasters are those disasters which man has no control over.

Natural disasters that may occur in a library and cause sudden great damage are earthquakes (Kumagai, 2016); hurricanes or typhoons (Skinner, 2017); tsunami (Amarasiri, 2015) and volcanic eruption (Cassell, 2014). Man-made disasters that are likely to occur in a library include water from leaking roofs and poor plumbing (Chaudron, 2016). Disaster control measure involves careful planning, preparing by putting in place the necessary measures to deal with sudden occurrences in libraries (Nwokedi, Panle & Samuel, 2017).

# **Statement of the Problem**

Academic libraries are the unquestionable seat of knowledge and the source of continuity of culture and distribution of knowledge (Ugwuanyi, Ugwu & Ezema, 2015). An academic library is the one attached to an institution of higher learning which has two complementary roles that is to support the institution's curriculum and research of students. (Curzon & Quinonez-Skinner, 2019). Information resources in academic libraries can be destroyed by disasters such as floods (Kaur, 2018); earthquakes (Shaheen, 2017); tsunamis (Warnasuriya, 2015); fires, wars and civil disorders (Johnson, 2015). Libraries also encounter smaller disasters like rain penetration (Gerlach, 2015). The risks related to disasters thus makes it vital for academic libraries to make sure they have control measures for disaster and its management become part of their core functions (Khalid & Dol, 2015).

Disaster control in a library is the way in which the library is organized to avoid any possible disaster from happening (Khalid & Dol, 2015). Control measure of disaster is the greatest defense. In addition to control measure, it is essential to ensure that institutions minimize the effect or eliminate it. In order to protect library collections, measures for preservation and physical control should be put in place (Ngulube & Stilwell, 2014). McEntire and Myers (2014) added that library management should address the issue of preparedness among the staff so that they are trained and can easily notice and report any maintenance problem which may occur.

A study by Ahenkorah-Marfo and Borteye (2016) on disaster control measure in Kwara Nkumah University of Technology Kumasi, Ghana showed that the library was not ready to manage disasters. More studies carried out by Akussah and Fosu (2011) and Ahenkorah Marfo and Borteye (2015) indicated that most governments have not been paying attention to allocation of money for disaster management in public libraries. A study conducted by Kostagiolas et al (2016) indicated that there was inadequate funding for disaster preparation in academic libraries in Greece by the Greek government due to budget cuts in public sector. Another study conducted by Khalid and Dol, (2015) showed that there were no fund allocation for disaster preparation for more than half of the academic libraries in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.

Trishanjit (2019) notes that disasters have made most libraries unable to deliver services to users in the past and their effects have been very bad because of the unprepared nature of libraries. Therefore, this study investigated assessment of disaster control measures in academic libraries using Federal College of Education Zaria as a case study.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following Objectives:

- 1. To identify types of disasters occur in academic library of Federal College of Education Zaria.
- 2. To find out the strategies that can be used as a control measure to prevent disasters at the College library.
- 3. To identify equipment and facilities available for handling disasters at the College library
- 4. To know how are the College Library staff and users prepared in the event of a disaster.
- 5. To establish the challenges faced in the implementation of disaster management at Federal College of Education Zaria library.

## **Research Method Adopted for the Study**

A survey research method was adopted for the study. Ali, (2016) stated that survey is a type of descriptive research which uses sample data to describe and explain what is existent or non-existent on the present status of a phenomenon being investigated. Statistics Canada, (2013) stated that survey is any activity that collects information in an organized and methodical manner about characteristics of interest from some or all units of a population using well-defined concepts, methods and procedures, and compiles such information into a useful summary form.

Aron, (2017) postulated that the purpose of a survey is to collect quantitative information, usually through the use of a structured and standardized questionnaire. Osuala, (2017) agreed that survey research uses both large and small populations by selecting and studying the relative incidence, distributions and interactions of social and psychological variables. The reason for the adoption of this method was that survey method enabled the researcher to collect data quantitatively in order to measure naturally occurring status of assessment of disaster control measures in academic library of Federal College of Education Zaria.

## **Population of the Study**

Ndagi, (2011) said that the population of a research is sometimes referred to as the universe; and it is defined as the entire group whose characteristics are to be estimated. The aggregation of elements that the researcher focuses sampling (Abdullahi, 2017). The population of this study consisted of students and library staff of Federal College of Education, Zaria. The table below showed the population of the study.

#### Table 1: Population of the Study

S/N	Respondents	Total
1	Students	130
2	Staff	30
	Total	160

Source: Field work, 2023

## Sampling and Sampling Techniques

Sampling producer refers to the method used in selecting your respondent from a given population. In the light of this, Adamu and Johnson, (2017) asserted that sampling is the part of the population observed for the purpose of making a scientific statement or talking a decision about the population. Since the population is not large and it is manageable, the researcher used the whole population for the study. Bernard (2012) also supported this by asserting that if a population of a study is less than two hundred (200) the entire population should be used for the study. The study will be restricted to students and library staff of Federal College of Education, Zaria.

## **Instrument for Data Collection**

Research instruments are measurement tools (for example, questionnaires or scales) designed to obtain data on a topic of interest from research subjects (Ali, 2006). The instrument used for collecting data in this research was questionnaire. The questionnaire represented a document containing questions and additional types of items designed to solicit information appropriate for the study. This questionnaire was designed to solicit relevant data from the respondents, which can help to understand assessment of disaster control measures in academic libraries. The questionnaire was made up of five sections (A – F). Each of the sections addressed a particular variable of the study. Section A was related to the bio-data required in the study, Section B addressed types of disasters occur in academic libraries while Section C was indicated strategies that can be used as a control measure to prevent disasters. Section D was concerned on equipment and facilities available for handling disasters Section E indicated how college library staff and students prepared in the event of a disaster and Section F required investigating challenges faced in the implementation of disaster management.

## Validity of the Research Instrument

According to Muhammad, (2015) "the instrument for data collection is said to be valid when it is able to produce correct responses from the subjects of the sample study". In order to ensure that the questionnaire is capable of eliciting the required data and information from the respondents, the instrument was subjected to face validation. The researcher presented a draft instrument to an expert, senior colleagues and supervisors for validation.

# **Reliability of the Research Instrument**

The reliability of the instrument was established by conducting a pilot study within one week at the College Library, FCE, Zaria. And the result of pilot study shows that the instrument was reliable. It was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 significant levels. The researcher

personally distributes the five (5) questionnaires to the students and library staff of Federal College of Education Zaria. This is in line with Adigu, (2011) who noted that the pilot testing is usually done on a much smaller scale than the main study but under the same or similar condition.

### **Procedure for Data Collection**

The copies of the questionnaire administered were distributed to the respondents by the researcher and a research assistant for a period of one week and the researcher ensured the questionnaire was filled and returned.

#### Procedure for Data Analysis

The statistical techniques used in the analysis and interpretation of data were descriptive statistical techniques like table of frequency counts and mean score were employed in the analysis.

#### **Response Rate**

Out of the 160 copies of the questionnaire administered to both college library staff and students of Federal College of Education, Zaria. 150 (93.75%) were retrieved. The researcher couldn't retrieve all copies because at the time of collection of the data, some of the NCE III students were on teaching practice while some students went for weekend. However, the number retrieved is adequate enough to be used for the analysis of study. The distributions of the respondents by their bio-data contained in table 2

## Table 2: Response Rate

Gender	No. of Questionnaire Distributed	No. of Questionnaire Returned	Percentage (%)
Male	67	63	42
Female	93	87	58
Total	160	150	100

#### Source: Fieldwork, 2023

The above table 2 shows the gender responses and variances in the number of questionnaires distributed to college library staff and students of Federal College of Education, Zaria whom was willing to fill the questionnaire as at the time of distribution.

From the table above, it shows that about 63 respondents represent (42.0%) were male while 87 respondents represent (58.0%) were female which shows that the female are higher in number than that of the male in the college library of F.C.E, Zaria.

#### Table 3: Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-30	106	70.7
31-40	28	18.7
41 - 50	12	8.0
50 and above	4	2.7
Total	150	100

## Source: Fieldwork, 2023

From the table 3 shows that, about 106 respondents represent (70.7%) were at range of 20-30, while 28 respondents represent (18.7%) were between the age of 31-40, however, 12 respondents represent (8.0%) within the age of 41-50 while, those between 50 and above were 4 in number which represent (2.7%).

That shows that, the respondents within the age of 20-30 are higher in number in college library of F.C.E, Zaria.

## Table 4.: Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital Status	rus Frequency Percentage	
Single	112	74.7
Married	38	25.3
Total	150	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 4 above shows that, 112 respondents represent (74.7%) were single while 38 respondents represent (25.3%) were married which shows that the single students and staff are higher in number than that of the married in college library of F.C.E, Zaria.

#### Analysis of answers to Research Questions

This research questions on assessment of disaster control measures in academic libraries using a case study of Federal College of Education Zaria. The respondents' answers to the five research questions were as presented in Tables 1 to 4. The analysis is as follows:

## Types of disasters occur in academic library

This research question on the types of disasters occurs was raised in order to identify the type of such disasters occurs in academic library, F.C.E. Zaria. In order to achieve this objective, a list of possible disasters was provided for the respondents to tick as many options as applicable.

Table 5:	Types	of	disasters	occur ii	n academic	library
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S/N	Types of disasters	Frequency	Percentage
1	Fire outbreak	115	76.7
2	Thunder Storms	76	50.7
3.	Flooding	88	58.7
4.	Lighting	62	41.3
5.	Biological Agents (rodents, fungi and insect)	106	70.7
6.	Earth quakes	42	28.0
7.	Theft of Library Materials	110	73.3
8.	Mutilation of Library Materials	98	65.3
9.	Computer vandalism and Hacking	102	68.0
10	Computer viruses	104	69.3

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 5 elucidates types of disasters occurs in academic library of FCE Zaria.. Also, the table shows that there is high response of Fire outbreak 115(76.7%) and followed by Biological Agents (rodents, fungi and insect) 106(70.7%) while 42(28.0%) and 62(41.3%) response for earthquakes and lighting respectively. From this table there is high response in fire outbreak and biological agents (rodents, fungi and insect) type of disasters occurs in academic library of FCE Zaria than others.

**Research Question two:** What strategies can be used as a control measure to prevent disasters at the College library? In order find out the strategies can be used as a control measure to prevent disasters, respondents were asked to indicate strategies can be used as a control measure their response is shown in Table 6.

S/N	Statements	SA	Α	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Development of disaster control plan	64	48	22	16	3.067	Agree
2	General vulnerability analysis and risk assessment of the library	56	42	38	14	2.933	Agree
3	Staff and user training on disaster management and mitigation	98	44	5	3	3.580	Agree
4	Good drainage and flood proof systems	86	58	4	2	3.520	Agree
5	Regular checks of library building regarding water leakages	82	56	8	4	3.440	Agree
6	Regular inspections of buildings regarding the wiring	94	42	5	9	3.473	Agree
7	Regular fumigation of the library and its environment against Insects and other biological agents	88	54	3	5	3.500	Agree
8	Keeping the library and its environment clean to prevent rodents attack	85	52	8	5	3.447	Agree
9	Regular surveillance to prevent theft and Mutilation of library books	96	40	12	2	3.533	Agree
10	Installation of a good antivirus, anti hacking/spyware software on the library systems	92	44	8	6	3.480	Agree
	Cumulative mean					3.397	

Table 6: Strategies can be used as a control measure to prevent disasters

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 6 explicates strategies can be used as a control measure to prevent disasters in college library, FCE Zaria. The highest mean response of 3.580 is that "staff and users training on disaster management and mitigation" which could be strategies can be used as a control measure to prevent disasters in the college library. Details of response on this opinion showed that 98 of the respondents strongly agreed, while 44 others agreed as against 5 that disagreed and the rest 3 of them strongly disagreed with this opinion. In the same vein, "regular fumigation of the library and its environment against insects and other biological agents" which could be could be strategies can be used as a control measure to prevent disasters in the college library. This opinion attracted the respondent's second highest mean response of 3.533 with details showing that 96 strongly agreed, 40 others agreed while 12 disagreed and the rest 2 strongly disagreed. Analysis of the data collected on strategies can be used as a control measure to prevent disasters shows the cumulative mean of 3.397 is greater than 2.50 index score for agree, this implies that both staff and students agreed with provided strategies as a control measure to prevent disasters in the college library of FCE, Zaria.

Research Question Three: What are the equipment and facilities available for handling disasters at the College library?

Table 7: Mean Score of Respondents on what are the equipment and facilities available	
ibrary?	

S/N Equipment and facilities SA D SD Mean Remark Α 1 Fire extinguishers 26 18 58 48 2.147 Disagree 2 70 Sand buckets and Dust Extractors 14 22 44 1.867 Disagree 3 9 5 Emergency exit doors 48 88 1.567 Disagree 4 Warning alarms 16 22 35 58 1.720 Disagree 5 Anti-virus software 18 15 32 85 1.773 Disagree 6 45 1.953 Thunder arrestors 14 28 63 Disagree 7 Insecticides 22 34 38 56 2.147 Disagree 8 Fumigation Chemical and Equipment 18 26 42 64 1.987 Disagree 9 67 Anti Hacking/Spyware Software 12 25 46 1.880 Disagree 10 26 14 72 38 2.187 Security Cameras Disagree **Cumulative mean** 1.923

## Source: Field Survey, 2023

**Decision mean =2.5** 

Analysis of table 7 reveals the equipment and facilities available for handling disasters at the College library. The highest mean response of 2.147 is that "fire extinguishers" could be equipment and facilities available for handling disasters in the college library. Details of response on this opinion showed that 26 of the respondents strongly agreed, while 18 others agreed as against 58 that disagreed and the rest 48 of them strongly disagreed with this opinion. In the same vein, "insecticides" could be equipment and facilities available for handling disasters in the college library. This opinion attracted the respondents second highest mean response of 2.135 with details showing that 22 strongly agreed, 34 others agreed while 38 disagreed and the rest 56 strongly disagreed. Analysis of the data collected on the equipment and facilities available for handling disasters in the college library reveals the cumulative mean of 1.923 is less than 2.50 index score for agree, this implies that the equipment and facilities for handling disasters in the college library.

**Research Question Four:** How are the College Library staff and users prepared in the event of a disaster?

Table 8: Mean Score of Respondents on college library staff and users Disaster preparedness

S/N	Statements	SA	Α	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Library collection is insured	18	26	32	74	1.920	Disagree
2	Staff are trained on measures to take in case of a disaster	12	24	48	66	1.880	Disagree
3	Emergency doors are always open in the event of a tragedy	28	16	42	64	2.053	Disagree
4	Employees are aware of assembly points in the event of a disaster	4	12	58	76	1.627	Disagree
5	Employees are trained on how to handle disaster fighting equipment and facilities in case of a disaster	28	16	32	74	1.987	Disagree
	Cumulative mean					1.893	

#### Source: Field Survey, 2023

Decision mean =2.5

Results in Table 8 above show college library staff and users preparedness in the event of a disaster. "Emergency doors are always open in the event of a tragedy", this opinion attracted the respondent's highest mean response of 2.053 as details showed that 28 strongly agreed, while 16 agreed while 42 disagreed and the rest 64 strongly disagreed. In the same vein, employees are trained on how to handle disaster fighting equipment and facilities

for handling disasters at the College

in case of a disaster. This opinion attracted the respondent's second highest mean response of 1.987 with details showing that 28 strongly agreed, 16 others agreed while 32 disagreed and the rest 74 strongly disagreed. Analysis of the data collected on staff and user's preparedness in the event of a disaster shows the cumulative mean of 1.893 is less than 2.50 index score for agree, this implies that the staff and students of the college library are not prepared for any disaster.

Research Question Five: What challenges has Federal College of Education Zaria Library faced in the implementation of disaster management?

Table 9: Mean Score of Respondents on challenges faced in the implementation of disaster managem	nent
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S/N	Statements	SA	Α	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Inadequate disaster facilities and equipment	95	42	10	3	3.527	Agree
2	Insufficient funding for a proper disaster management	98	44	6	2	3.587	Agree
3	Improper coordinating channels as regards disaster control measure	62	46	24	18	3.013	Agree
4	Inadequate implementation and enforcement of plans	54	48	36	12	2.960	Agree
5.	Inadequate comprehensive disaster information data	68	54	18	10	3.200	Agree
6.	Uncoordinated transportation and rescue plan	52	76	14	8	3.147	Agree
7	Irregular Assessment of Hazards and vulnerability	64	55	18	13	3.133	Agree
8	Inadequate awareness campaign on Disaster Mitigation	82	58	6	4	3.453	Agree
9	Inadequate skills and Training of Librarians and Users on Disaster Preparedness	102	40	3	5	3.593	Agree
10	Poor disaster control and mitigation strategies	54	48	36	12	2.960	Agree
						3.257	

#### Source: Field Survey, 2023

Decision mean =2.5

Table 9 above reveals challenges faced in the implementation of disaster management. The highest mean response of 3.593 is "inadequate skills and training of librarians and users on disaster preparedness" with their response showing that 102 strongly agreed, while 40 others were agreed as against 3 that disagreed while 5 strongly disagreed. Insufficient funding for a proper disaster management as the opinion attracted the second highest mean response of 3.587 with details showing that 98 strongly agreed while 44 agreed as against 6 that disagreed while the rest 2 strongly disagreed. Analysis of the data collected on challenges faced in the implementation of disaster management reveals the cumulative mean of 3.257 is greater than 2.50 index score for agree, this implies that the college library staff and students agreed with the challenges mentioned in the options.

## Conclusion

In Conclusion, it can be affirmed that college libraries are faced with a number of disasters which need to be properly managed by putting in place the necessary control measures. From the findings of the study, college libraries face disasters such as fire outbreak, flood, rodents, fungi, insect, theft of library materials, computer vandalism and hacking. However, for disasters to be properly managed, it is important that a disaster management policy should be put in place to govern its implementation. This disaster management policy must be endorsed by the top management of the college library for it to be binding for all stakeholders.

In addition to the disaster management policy, there should be a disaster management plan which outlines how specific disasters should be mitigated in the college library. In addition, there should be a disaster management team for the library which should comprise of the representatives of all library users, but headed by the college librarian given that he/she is the most knowledgeable library expert in the institution.

Again, in the development of the disaster management program, all library stakeholders should be involved for it to be all inclusive. This helps to prevent dangers of the program being resisted by some quota of the stakeholders. In addition, the program should be regularly reviewed and updated on an annual basis in order ensure it remains relevant. This is important as it helps to ensure that the disaster management program remain proactive and reactive.

#### 5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends a number of issues to be addressed in order to strengthen the college library disaster management program.

To begin with, the study recommends that there should be an awareness program on disaster management program and policies that are put in place by college library departments. The awareness program will help to make the staff and users aware of the program and also be conversant with the disaster management policy. This will assist in improving the effectiveness of the program.

Also, the college management should sufficiently provide resources required for disaster control measure. These resources are in form of the personnel, facilities, equipments and financial resources that will help in ensuring that disaster control measure activities are adequately provided for.

Furthermore, library rules and regulations should be regularly reviewed, revised and updated. This will help to address threats of negligence, vandalism and other forms of disasters that may occur due to poor rules and regulations. This will aid in fostering discipline among library users. There should be a disaster management plan, which will assist in planning for disaster in case it happens. The plan will document the procedures to follow in case of disaster. In addition, there should be a disaster management team put in place for the library which should comprise of the representatives of all library users, but headed by the college librarian given that he/she is the most knowledgeable library expert in the institution.

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