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Disaster Control and Planning in a University Library

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Abstract

University library is a type of academic library. They have long been repositories of knowledge and safe house for undisturbed study. While they are considered safe and quiet places to conduct scholarly research, they are susceptible to hazards like any other organisation. Treasures in libraries may be destroyed by unforeseen hazards which may be either man-made or natural disasters such as acts of war and terrorism, fire and smoke, water damage from leaks or floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tornadoes, ice and snow, thunderstorms and power outages, etc. Disasters are unpredictable in their nature, occurrence, and severity. Disaster planning is a basic security for library staff and collections. While library disasters cannot be prevented, their impact on library services might be minimized with a formal written plan which will enhance prompt response to the emergency. This study established that while disaster is an inevitable element in the library however, its impact on library holdings might be minimized through advance planning and preparedness. These are the keys to preventing or at least reducing the impacts of these potential hazards. As a result of the valuable resources in the libraries, it is essential to minimize disasters by planning against its occurrence. The study examines the types and causes of disaster in academic libraries, and presents guidelines for disaster planning. It was recommended that university libraries should renew their commitment to protecting the valuable collections in their custody through a functional disaster plan.

Keywords: *Academic libraries, disasters, disaster control, disaster planning.*

Introduction

The incidence and management of disasters in academic libraries is of concern to librarians worldwide. The valuable collections in the libraries are facing many threats arising from either man-made or natural catastrophes. Library collections often disappear through natural, man-made or technical disasters (UNESCO, 1996). It also observes that it would take a very long time to compile a list of all the libraries and archives destroyed or seriously

damaged by disasters, as well as those holdings already lost or endangered. Disaster planning might not seem a pressing concern, until disaster strikes. Dhunna (2009) defines disaster as a wide spread destruction of life and property. Disaster refers to any incident that poses a threat to human safety and damage to library premises, stock or equipment. According to M25, a library disaster is an event or series of events such as fire, flood, theft, etc. which can significantly disrupt a library's ability to support institutional teaching and research. Disaster is a severe, relatively sudden and unexpected disruption of normal structural arrangements within a social system over which the system has no firm control.

Lorica (2010) opines that disasters are unpredictable in their nature, occurrence, and severity. Library disaster is an unexpected event which puts collections at risk. While disasters cannot be prevented, their impact on library resources might be minimized with a comprehensive disaster plan. According to Wong and Green (2006), disaster preparedness in library means that libraries are adequately prepared to prevent severe library damage from potential disasters. Thus, libraries have the responsibility to develop disaster plans based on the disasters most likely expected. Disaster planning involves planning, prevention, response, recovery, preparedness, and training.

Academic libraries are attached to tertiary institutions. These include universities, polytechnics and colleges of education. Libraries from ages have been indispensable agents of information gathering, organizing, storing, retrieval and dissemination. University Libraries all over the world support the functions of their parent institutions by making available information for teaching, learning and research. University libraries are central to all academic efforts. Both staff and students need information that is pertinent to them. University scholars and even outside users depend on universities libraries for acquisition of knowledge (Fabunmi, 2004). University library is the most important organ in the institution, because the academic, health, intellectual vitality and effectiveness of any university depend largely upon the state of the health and excellence of its library.

According to Akussah and Fosu (2001), libraries have the responsibility to acquire, organize and preserve information materials which are meant to be a source of knowledge, pleasure and assistance for the coming generations. Academic library provides an environment in which creativity is fostered and it is a centre for creation and recreation of academic activities, thus making it to be

the heart of an academic institution. While library promotes the dissemination of research and enables networking among researchers; preserves valuable information resources and renders services to the public in general through its inestimable resources, disasters have been disrupting libraries ability to render effective and efficient services to their patrons. Library building, collections, equipment, as well as human beings are subject to disasters contributing to loss of precious materials and human lives.

Academic libraries have long been repositories of knowledge and sanctuaries for quiet study. While they are considered safe, quiet places to conduct scholarly research, libraries are still susceptible to the hazards facing any business (Topper, 2008). Potential natural hazards include fire and smoke, tornadoes, ice and snow, thunderstorms and power outages, water damage from leaks or floods, and earthquakes. Ngulube and Magazi (2006) are of the view that librarians often overlook disaster preparedness which is the key to preservation management and protection of collections. Disaster planning techniques go a long way in determining the likelihood of hazards and lessening the consequences of risks to library holdings. According to Lengfellner (2011), advance planning and preparedness are the keys to preventing or at least reducing the impacts of these potential hazards.

Even though disasters in libraries are real and have been occurring since ancient times, however, some librarians do believe that it is impossible for disasters to happen in the libraries. Disasters are among the most unique and urgent situations that human beings are called upon to manage, while library disasters cannot be prevented, their impact on library services can be minimized with a proper planning for disaster. Planning ahead is essential so as not to be caught unawares and be able to swing into action in order to minimize the loss of life and properties when the disasters eventually occur. Hlabaangani and Mnjama (2008) report that information centres were not adequately prepared for disaster and most libraries do not take necessary precaution and diligence that disaster control deserves to prevent the destruction of lives and loss of collections. The implication of this analogy is that there is a need for greater investment in disaster planning in libraries in order to prevent disasters, minimize the loss if it eventually strikes, and thus disaster control. Disasters can happen to any library, knowing what to do and what not to do before, during and after a disaster will prevent

panic, lessen the severity of damage, and enable the library to implement an organized recovery operation after the dust settles, the smoke dissipates or the water subsides.

Academic libraries must find ways to keep their patrons, personnel and collections safe. According to Robertson (2005), completely eliminating all threats to libraries and other information resources is no longer achievable now than it was in ancient Alexandria when its great library was destroyed. However, the most important thing to do is to identify the risks and mitigate them before they become active threats in order to lessen their effects.

It is essential to alert the librarians of the urgent need to safeguard the valuable holdings in their custody. It is against this background that this paper presents preventive measures that might be used to lessen the impacts of natural and man-made disasters that could affect libraries in developing countries. This article therefore provides guidelines for the disaster planning process. Disaster planning is a written document that outlines preventive and preparatory measures intended to reduce potential risks, thus controlling disaster in the library through planning.

Historical Account of Library Disasters

Disasters in libraries are real and have happened since ancient times. Examples are bound in the literature. Table 1 gives an account of libraries that were affected by disasters.

Table 1: Examples of Library Disasters

Year of Occurrence	Place	Library	Nature of Disaster
1904	Italy	Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria di Torino	The library was gutted by fire which damaged its Manuscripts Department, where renowned treasures like Ciceronian palimpsests, the Codex Theodosianus and the Duke the Berry's 'Libro d'ore' were damaged.
1914	Belgium	Library of the Catholic University of Louvain	The library was burnt by the invading German soldiers during First World War. Over 300,000 volumes, about 1,000 incunabula, hundreds of manuscripts and the university's recent archives were all reduced to ashes.
1923	Japan	The Imperial	An earthquake and the resulting

		University Library, Tokyo	fires did heavy damage to libraries and archives. About 700,000 volumes were lost.
1931	Nicaragua	Biblioteca Nacional	An earthquake caused considerable damage to the library. A second earthquake in 1972 reduced most of its stock.
1932	Spain	University of Valencia Library	A disastrous fire severely damaged the library during the Spanish Civil War.
1933, 1935	Germany	Several libraries	After the Nazi seizure of power, prohibited books were destroyed.
1937-1945	China	National University of Tsing Hua, Peking, University Nan-k'ai, T'ien-chin, Institute of Technology of He-pei, etc.	Lost 200,000 out of a collection of 350,000 volumes during the Sino-Japanese War. There was destruction of libraries as a result of bombing in July 1937 in which about 224,000 volumes were lost.
1937	United States	Several US libraries	Hundreds of libraries in Ohio, West Virginia, Indiana, Illinois and Mississippi were destroyed by floods
1938-1945	Czechoslovakia	Several libraries	Czechoslovakia was robbed of a great section of territory after the Munich Conference of 1938. Czech books in libraries in this territory dealing with geography, biography and history were confiscated, together with the works of many Czech writers. Many books were burned, collections were totally destroyed or sent to Germany.
1939-1945	Poland	Several libraries	After the German occupation of Poland, the Germans embarked upon a policy of ruthless destruction of Polish libraries, archives and museums. In October 1944, the National Library in Warsaw was completely destroyed, with the loss of about 700,000 volumes.
1939-1945	Poland	Jewish Libraries	Germans invaded Poland and destroy Jewish synagogues and books. Thus the Great Talmudic Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary in Lublin was burned, and shipped several books to Germany with other Jewish books from private or public collections.
1939-1945	Germany	The Library of	Millions of books were lost during

		the Technical University	the Second World War in Germany libraries.
1940-1944	France	Many libraries	The Library of the National Assembly lost 40,000 volumes during the liberation of Paris in 1944 when German soldiers set fire to the Palais-Bourbon.
1940	Belgium	Several libraries	After the disaster of 1914, the Library of the Catholic University of Louvain was hit once again in 1940. In May, the stocks were completely burned down, as a result of German artillery fire. About 900,000 volumes, 800 manuscripts, all incunabula, and 200 prints of old masters were lost.
1940	The Netherlands	Middelburg	The Provincial Library of Zeeland was destroyed in May after German bombs hit the town; a valuable scholarly collection of about 160,000 volumes was completely destroyed, while the remainder was seriously damaged by water or fire.
1940-1944	Italy	Several libraries	Italian libraries suffered damage as a result of allied and German air raids. More than 20 Municipal libraries were destroyed and many public libraries suffered the same fate. It has been estimated that almost 2 million printed works and 39,000 manuscripts were destroyed.
1940-1941	United Kingdom	Several libraries	The University Library of Bristol was damaged by air raids, which destroyed the Library of the Department of Anatomy, with further damage to books by water and broken glass. Coventry The Central (Public) Library was completely destroyed by German bombs; more than 100,000 volumes were lost. Liverpool The Central Lending Library was destroyed.
1941	Serbia	Several libraries	National Library in Belgrade was completely destroyed as a result of German bombs. About 1,300 Cyrillic Manuscripts from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries were burned as well as important

			manuscript collections of Serbian authors and scholars. Incunabula and old printed works were also destroyed, as were Serbian books printed between 1832 and 1941.
1941-1944	Soviet Union	Several libraries	As a result of the German invasion, heavy damage was done to Russian libraries. It has been estimated that more than 100 million books have been destroyed, mainly from public libraries.
1942-1945	Japan		Air raids did heavy damage to libraries and collections, including the Cabinet Library in Tokyo.
1943	Peru	Biblioteca Nacional in Lima	There was fire disaster which completely destroyed the National Library and a loss of 100,000 volumes as well as 40,000 manuscripts (documents concerning the Spanish Conquest, the wars of independence etc.) was incurred.
1943	Austria	University Library of Graz	About 100 manuscripts and 4,500 volumes of academic publications, which had been stored for safe keeping in Steiermark, were lost as a result of plunder.
1944-1945	Hungary	Several libraries	Nearly all small libraries (public, special) were destroyed and many of the larger libraries suffered serious damage during the siege of Budapest. The libraries of Parliament and of the Academy of Sciences were among the libraries most severely hit; the library of the Polytechnic Institute was completely destroyed.
1944-1945	Romania	Several libraries	About 300,000 volumes from public libraries were destroyed. The Library of the Polytechnic Institute in Jassy lost 150,000 books and 4,000 volumes of periodicals, mostly on mathematical subjects.
1946	Germany	Several libraries	A collection of about 270,000 (out of 400,000) volumes was confiscated by the Russian authorities and removed to the Soviet Union, including manuscripts and incunabula.
1947	Pakistan	Lahore	As a result of communal riots, two of the largest libraries of the Indian subcontinent were damaged.
1949-1957	China	Several libraries	Following the communist takeover,

			libraries all over the country were purged of 'reactionary, obscene and absurd' publications.
1951	United States	Michigan State Library	In February a man accidentally caused a fire in the State Office Building. The Library, housed in the basement and the first floor, was seriously damaged by the water pumped into the building to extinguish the fire. As a result, 22,400 books and 7,200 pamphlets had to be discarded, while thousands of others had to be treated.
1966	United States	Jewish Theological Seminary Library, New York	When fire broke out, about 70,000 rare books were burned to ashes, while the remaining 150,000 were damaged by the water used in extinguishing the fire.
1966	Italy	Florence	The Arno flood of November filled the basement of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale with water and mud. About 1,200,000 volumes and pamphlets were flooded, including 100,000 rare volumes of the Magliabecchi collection, 50,000 folios of the Palatina, a newspaper collection of 400,000 volumes. The card catalogue was damaged as well.
1963	Yugoslavia	National and University Library of Macedonia	An earthquake caused serious damage to the town of Skopje and to the library.
1966	Tibet	Several libraries	Tibet had been occupied by Communist China since 1950. In 1966, the Cultural Revolution wrought havoc in this country too. Red Guards invaded the leading monastery in Tibet and destroyed frescoes and irreplaceable historic manuscripts. Elsewhere in the country, heavy damage was inflicted as well, including the burning of religious and historic manuscripts.

1968	Greenland	Central Library, Godthab	The library was totally destroyed by fire, with the loss of the majority of the 30,000 volume book stock, including the irreplaceable Groenlandica collection.
1968	United States	Holyoke Community College, Massachusetts	The entire college was ruined by fire, with the loss of 16,000 volumes as well as the catalogues.
1969	United States	Indiana University Library	There was an outbreak of fire which destroyed 40,000 volumes and damaged 27,000 others, especially in the field of German literature.
1972	United States	Corning Museum of Glass, New York	In June, the collection of the Corning Museum of Glass was submerged by flood waters, the after-effects of a hurricane. A limited number of objects in the glass collection sustained damage, but the rare book and manuscript collection collapsed into the slime.
1976-1979	Cambodia	Several libraries	Following their rise to power, the Khmer Rouge systematically began to destroy all vestiges of 'corrupt' culture. In the National Library in Phnom Penh, the Khmer Rouge threw out and burned most of the books and all bibliographical records; less than 20 per cent of the collection survived. Irreparable harm has been done to the country's national heritage. The remaining material is seriously threatened by bad storage conditions, especially in the case of palm leaf manuscripts.
1978	United States	Stanford University Library	Water main break caused major damage to 40,000 books plus 3,000 valuable items including miniature books.
1979	United Kingdom	Taylor Institution Library	A water main burst at the Taylor Institution Library of Oxford University, allowing a considerable quantity of water to enter the building. About 2,000 books were damaged, including rare volumes from a unique collection of Slavonic literature, some dating back to the sixteenth century.
1984	The Netherlands	Library of the Dutch-South Africa Society	In January, left-wing activists destroyed the uniquely important library of the Nederlands-

			Zuidafrikaanse Vereniging in Amsterdam by throwing the books in the canals.
1986	United States	Los Angeles Central Library	In April, a deliberately-set fire destroyed the nation's third largest public library. In the worst library fire in American history, nearly 400,000 volumes out of a total of 2.1 million were completely destroyed. Another 700,000 volumes were water-soaked or dampened, while all remaining books suffered smoke damage. Among the losses were the largest and oldest collection of patents and inventions in the American West and one of America's largest collections of cook books.
1987	The Netherlands	Library of the University of Amsterdam	In November, part of the collection that had been stored elsewhere was destroyed in a fire.
1988	Soviet Union, USSR	Academy of Sciences Library, Leningrad	In February, there was an outbreak of fire which is referred to as 'the biggest single library disaster in this century': about 3.6 million books were seriously damaged and 400,000 newspapers and scientific periodicals destroyed.
1989	Romania	Bucharest University Library	During the fighting which ended the Ceaucescu regime, 500,000 books were destroyed, many of them rare and valuable.
1990	Kuwait	Several libraries	Following the invasion by Iraqi troops, libraries and computer centres were destroyed and burned or (as in the case of the National Scientific and Technological Information Centre) removed to Baghdad. S. Salem, in Information Development
1992	Croatia	Croatian libraries	As a result of war violence in former Yugoslavia, many Croatian libraries suffered damage to buildings and/or collections.
1993	Bosnia	National Library, Sarajevo	About 90 % of the collection was destroyed as a result of the civil war, with the loss of unique materials for the study of Bosnian culture.
1994	Great Britain	Norwich Central Library	The library was gutted by fire and destroyed over 350,000 books as

				well as irreplaceable historical documents concerning the Norwich area.

Source: Adapted from UNESCO, 1996.

Types of Disaster

There are different types of disasters. According to Dhunna (2009), disasters can be grouped into three which are:

1. Natural disasters
2. Technological disasters
3. Social disasters.

1. Natural Disasters: These are disasters that occur naturally such as tornadoes and earthquakes, volcanic eruption, hurricane, storms, flood, fire, landslide, wildfire, insect infestation, etc.
2. Technological Disasters: These are those disasters associated with technological advances. For example biological contamination, chemical spill, gas leak, electronic computer failure, power outage, break down of computer networks, gas leaks, communication failure, etc.
3. Social Disasters: These are incidents involving social unrest such as theft, hijacking, riots, acts of war and terrorism, conflict, terrorism, demonstrations, crowd rushes and stampedes, bomb explosions, fire (arson), etc.

However, Hlabaangani and Mnjama (2008) opine that disasters can be categorised into two, namely: natural and man-made disasters. While natural disasters include floods, earthquakes etc. man-made disasters include armed conflicts, arson, fire, poor storage, etc. From the literature, it can be deduced that some disasters such as floods, storms and earthquakes, wind, etc. which are traditional cannot be prevented; however, the severity of their effects can be lessened by preparing for recovery from them. Also, some disasters can be prevented through conduction of routine inspections of facilities to see that conditions which invite disaster do not exist. In addition, libraries are faced with the challenges of preventing disasters that occur as a result of social disorder, such include bombings, war, arson, terrorism, etc.

Causes of Disasters

Disasters can arise from a variety of causes such as fire, water, earthquake, bombs, war, lightning, arson etc.

Fire: Fire-related disasters are common in the libraries. It damages collections in several ways. Fire can burn collections completely, or scorch, discolour or soil print materials by soot and smoke. Water used to put out fires can stain, discolour, or cause ink or colour bleeding. The fire may occur as a result of poor maintenance, electrical fault, lightning and earthquakes, arson, etc. In 1904 in Italy, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria di Torino Library was damaged by fire. In 1994, Norwich Central Library in Great Britain was equally destroyed by fire. Over 350,000 books as well as irreplaceable historical documents concerning the Norwich area were destroyed. Alegbeleye (1993) reports that fire gutted the Nigerian Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies Library in 1987 due to electrical failure.

Water: Water is the most frequent cause of damage to collections in general. Water damage can come from penetration due to the effects of burst pipes or heavy rain, leakage from roof leading to flooding, malfunctioning plumbing, sprinkler, and air-conditioning systems. Rain or flood water causes the paper in the books to expand, loosens book bindings, and dissolves inks, and other components of letters, prints, photographs and books. Dirty and contaminated flood waters deposit soil, mud and silt on books and other library collections. Further, residual dampness from rain or flooding leads to mold growth causing health problems and more harm to books and papers. Examples of such in literature include the water main break failure in Stanford University Library in the United States which happened in 1978 where 40,000 books and 3,000 valuable items were destroyed. Also in 1937, several United States libraries were destroyed by floods. Equally in the United Kingdom, in 1979, at Taylor Institution Library, there was water main burst damaging about 2,000 books. The Arno flood of November, 1966 filled the basement of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Italy with water and mud. This resulted in severe damage of about two million rare and irreplaceable volumes of collections, etc.

Arson: A deliberate fire was set to destroy the United States' third largest public library in 1986, destroying about 400,000 volumes. Students in Sierra Leone burnt down a record centre in 1988.

Earthquake, hurricanes: Disasters like earthquakes, hurricanes bring destruction to library in many ways such as destruction of lives, infrastructures, buildings and collections. Lorica (2010) observes that hurricanes damage library holdings in numerous ways. The destruction may be inform of the high winds, flying debris, continuous rain and rising waters break windows, scatter and crush or soil library collections. Bookshelves are hurled, collapsing buildings bury collections under furniture, beams, dirt and leave collections exposed to wind, rain, snow and other harsh conditions. According to UNESCO (1996), an earthquake destroyed the Imperial University Library, Tokyo in Japan in 1923, while the resulting fires did heavy damage to libraries and archives, losing about 700,000 volumes. Also in 1931 in Nicaragua, at the Biblioteca Nacional, an earthquake caused considerable damage to the library. The Haiti earthquake of 12th January, 2010 destroyed the oldest library in Port au Prince. The Bibliothèque Haïtienne des Pères du Saint Esprit at the Saint Martial College collapsed. The earthquake resulted to severe damage of the Library of Saint Louis de Gonzague. Both libraries contained very old collections dating from the 16th century including manuscripts brought to Haiti by the missionaries who came from Europe (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 2010).

War: It is one of the disasters that affect libraries all over the world. Examples of such include invasion of the library of the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium by German soldiers during the First World War in 1914 in which all the collections were reduced to ashes. The library of the National Assembly lost 40,000 volumes during the liberation of Paris in 1944 by German soldiers. Also, in 1932, University of Valencia Library in Spain was severely damaged during the Spanish civil war. In October 1944, the National Library in Warsaw was completely destroyed, with the loss of about 700,000 volumes by Germans who embarked on destruction of Polish libraries, archives and museums. Crotian libraries suffered damage to their buildings and collections as a result of war violence in former

Yugoslavia in 1992. In 1993, National Library Sarajevo in Bosnia lost 90% of its unique collection to civil war etc.

Control of Disaster

Disaster control starts with planning. Planning in advance is the key to survival of disasters. The work of the university librarian is to ensure that information is preserved and available to users when required and as such, be prepared for disasters with its emphasis on the speedy recovery and restoration of operations after the incidence of disaster in order to ensure that services are not disrupted. Planning is necessary so as to prevent catastrophic damage from occurring as well as ease the process of recovery. The process of disaster control starts with having a disaster control plan. This is a written documentation which states preventive and preparatory measures intended to reduce potential risks that damage libraries, and which also provide details of reaction and recovery procedures to be undertaken when the unexpected happens in order to minimize its effect.

A disaster control plan describes the counter measures that can be taken to minimise the effects of a disaster by providing simple and flexible guidelines for coping with a disaster that occurs in the library. Disaster control plan contains the detailed procedures of activities to be carried out before, during and after the disaster to ensure a swift and effective reaction. According to Bolger (2003), formulating a written plan is the most important step to take in preparing for disasters, as this will go a long way in alleviating panic and aiding the process of decision making.

According to Ngulube and Magazi (2006), without a disaster plan, time and effort are wasted when a disaster occurs. Time and effort spent to salvage the situation will even worsen the situation by doing more harm than good. In actual fact, it may actually damage library materials more than the disaster itself. In addition, wrong people will be notified, and incorrect salvage techniques will be employed. Disaster planning is the activity of identifying, specifying and selecting the steps to be taken for avoiding library disaster and minimizing the damage to library materials in the occurrence of disaster. Successful disaster plan for library should include the following guidelines:

1. **Form a disaster planning team**. For effective control of disaster, a disaster planning team comprising all stakeholders must be

constituted. The team should be drawn from various departments in the library such as special collections, collection development, building maintenance staff, engineers, security experts, etc. According to Muir and Shenton (2002), preparedness measures by the staff will give them a sense of ownership to the facility and the procedures. The team should have a team leader who is responsible for the designation of responsibility. Objectives of the team should be clearly formulated and stated which may include reduce the likelihood that the Libraries will experience disaster; prevention of potential disasters; alleviate the impact of any disasters that do occur; preparation of a disaster, etc.

2. **Assigning of Responsibilities**. The broad ranging nature of a disaster plan results in the involvement of many staff. The library management should identify staff members and other specialists who will be responsible for implementation of the identified tasks. Responsibility should be assigned to members of staff that are in charge of disaster management activities. Such tasks include updating the plan, regular inspection of library facilities, etc. These will go a long way in influencing the rapidness and appropriateness of disaster response as this will either mar or salvage the situation.

3. **Disaster training at all levels within the library**. Staff must receive adequate training and prepare to take appropriate role in disaster reaction response and recovery. Education and training are crucial for any personnel responsible for safety and first aid. Once trained, a team of employees can evaluate the current safety programme to verify that it covers the possible hazards in the library. Lindtveit (2011b) recommends that training and practicing along with continual re-evaluation of the procedures will enable personnel to find ways to improve response capabilities for their specific situations.

4. **Make preliminary investigation and observation of the disaster**. Members of the disaster team should review literature about disasters planning and recovery in libraries, as this will help in designing their own disaster plans. Also, the disaster team can visit other similar libraries to examine their disaster plans.

5. **Liaise with stakeholders**. Agencies that are in charge of management of disasters should be contacted in advance. These

agencies can inspect the library and see its layout and collections so as to help a library get a better idea of the potential hazards areas and guide against such. Also, they will be able to provide disaster assistance before and after a disaster occurs. A comprehensive phone list is essential, including the home phone numbers of staff, as well as contact information for local vendors of supplies and equipment, and service providers.

6. **Determine salvage priorities by conducting a collection survey**. Priorities for salvage help to maximize the possibility of salvaging irreplaceable holdings. High, medium and low risk collections should be identified in order to establish treatment priorities. Unique items should be given top priority. The unique items are those that are difficult or impossible to replace. The collection in this category must be maximally protected, and be ranked first in any recovery process after a disaster occurs. Difficult to replace or costly collections should be given second priority. These items should receive special protection within the limits of available personnel, time, and funds, once the first-priority items have been dealt with while those items that can easily be replaced or are cheap can be last-priority. They should receive attention only after objects in the first two groups have been appropriately treated.

7. **Conducting a risk analysis.** Risk assessments and regular inspections are necessary to manage and support an organization's disaster control plans. Library administrators should consider potential threats to their collections and people. It is essential to locate and assess potential hazards in the library. The purpose of the risk analysis is to identify those occurrences which pose the greatest threat to the organisation and its collections. The risk analysis carried out will make it possible for the management to take pre-emptive measure to protect the libraries from disasters, thus developing techniques to completely wipe out those risks or to reduce their impact to the barest minimum should they occur. Robertson (2005) is of the view that library must identify possible threats, analyze the risks, and work proactively to reduce the effects.

8. **Prepare a budget for disaster.** Consider financial implications. The team should have a certain amount earmarked for disaster control. Essential supplies for quick response to the kind of

disaster that is most likely to occur should be stockpiled in easily accessible locations in the library.

9. **Plan implementation**. The written disaster plan should be easy to implement during a crisis. Instructions must be concise, clear, and comprehensive. It should be flexible enough to allow for adjustments and improvisation. Disaster team members should have copies of the disaster plan.

10. **Test, review, and maintenance of disaster plans**. It is essential to make regular update of the plan. If a good plan is not up-to-date, it will not be effective when a disaster strikes.

Conclusion

This study has established that disaster planning is essential in a university library. It is a continuous learning and refining process that requires a structured framework to maintain the required state of prevention. Also, lack of control and planning are problems facing academic libraries in disaster preventive, preparedness, response and recovery. The actions taken by libraries against the problems of disaster will naturally reflect the seriousness with which these problems are viewed within the library service. An effective and efficient response to disaster can be achieved by a good disaster plan. Through this, potential disasters can be prevented or reduced to the barest minimum, as well as minimizing the effect of disaster when it eventually happens.

Disaster control plan is essential because arrangements can be made before any incident and they can be thought through to ensure a swift and effective reaction in order to minimise deterioration of items which can occur rapidly when disaster strikes. Above all, disaster control plan with detailed procedures will help reinforce the importance of the whole issue of disaster control planning to all members of staff.

While library disasters cannot be prevented, their impact on library services might be minimized with well organized planning. The battle against disaster incidence in the library will be half-won if library management can take disaster preparedness and control seriously. Destruction of library holdings can be reduced if libraries prepare for both natural and manmade disaster that can occur.

Recommendations

In view of the discussion thus far, the following recommendations are made with a view to minimizing disasters in university libraries through effective disaster planning and control.

- ➢ Library management should renew its commitment to the disaster control and planning process. It should renew its commitment to protecting the inestimable collections in their custody through disaster planning and vigilance. More resources should be committed to control of disaster.

- ➢ Staff must be trained so as to be actively aware, able to recognize, and ready to report any potential problem.

- ➢ Risk assessments and regular inspections should be carried out regularly in order to manage and support an organization's disaster control plans.

- ➢ Facilities must be maintained regularly. Routine inspections of a facility should be conducted to see that conditions which invite disaster do not exist.

- ➢ There is ample evidence to indicate that to be effective, a plan must be incorporated into the day-to-day management of an institution. A well thought out and presented plan is useless if it exists solely as a document on a shelf.

- ➢ Libraries must develop a disaster control plan, outlining the different phases from prevention to recovery, and providing guidance on risk assessment and management methods which should underpin disaster planning. Disaster plan should be updated regularly.

- ➢ Library should hold disaster drills and emergency evacuations regularly. This will enable a library to evaluate the procedures it has in place.

- ➢ Above all, it is important to remember that every disaster is unique; the occurrence and nature of actual disasters can rarely be predicted. Plans therefore must be flexible. With the implementation of a satisfactory plan, day-to-day disasters cease to be disasters: they become minor incidents.

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