

Constraints facing African academic libraries in applying electronic security systems to protect library materials

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This article reviews published literature to identify factors that impede the application of electronic security systems (ESSs) in protecting library materials in African academic libraries. The information for the study was gathered through a review of online literature from databases, namely ProQuest, EBSCO, Emerald, Library Literature, Research Gate Information, and Google search engine. The scope of the literature covered the time when African academic libraries began to use ESSs to protect their collections to the present. It covered only literature that addresses the challenges that hinder African academic libraries from utilizing ESSs to protect library materials. Information was collected by reading the abstracts and conclusion of the online documents. In the beginning, a total of 91 articles were collected as a population of the study. However, only fifty-four (54) articles were found to be relevant to the area of the study. Basic keywords and advanced searching, namely truncations, headings, Boolean operators, electronic security systems, academic libraries, security, African Libraries, theft and mutilation were also used to get relevant literature on the topic from peer-reviewed and scholarly resources. Based on the findings of the reviewed literatures it is concluded that African academic libraries undergo nearly the same challenges where most of which can be addressed because they are generated by the managements, library staff and the environment in which the libraries operate rather than the ESSs. The researcher recommends that African academic library managements should cope with the technological changes so as to compete with the market demand. With that regard, the reported ESSs challenges facing African academic libraries should be aggressively addressed in order to make the application of ESSs effective. Equally, another study should be carried out to inform about the ramifications of not addressing electronic security systems.

Electronic security system, materials, academic libraries, security, African libraries, theft and mutilation.