# Electronic Security System in Libraries

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**Abstract**

*This Paper discusses the implementation of security system in libraries. It also discusses various methods of security system & policy & procedure weakness in Libraries.*

**Introduction**

Libraries are institutions set up to cater to the educational, cultural, research, recreational and information needs of their users. Libraries have the main objective of entrusted with selection, acquisition, organization, storage and dissemination of information to their patrons.

Theft of and malicious damage against books are difficult to combat because the risk of getting caught is very low, while the likelihood of success is high. Criminal activities in academic libraries are not limited to library information material alone but theft of properties such as handbags, purses, keys and notebooks are equal common. The extent, nature and rate at which crimes occur vary from one academic library to another.

**Implementation of Security System in Libraries**

The important aspect that a library should plan ahead before to initiating and implementing, an appropriate electronic system.

- The total library collection

- The procedure for stock verification and whether through stock verification is undertaken or sample verification is done.

- To look into the appropriate loss of books by theft.

- To see whether the loss is due to misplacement of books to some extent.

- To keenly observe the extended library hours during which time the loss could be more

- Whether the library is following the open access / closed access system.

- Security system adopted by the library.

- The staffing pattern for circulation / security area in the library.

- Whether the housekeeping operations of the library is automated.

- The library materials are bar-coded are not.

**Various Methods used in Libraries**

- Closed Access, i.e. having stock behind the counter or locked in cabinet.

- The librarian should determine the type of personal property allowed to bring inside the library and the person entering the library with understanding that all the property in their possession can be inspected by the library security personal upon entry and exit. At the exit, all individual should pass through theft detection device, which sound an alarm if a targeted collection item is carried through it.

- In special security library environment, all individuals should present for inspection any property in their possession at the exit.

- Maintenance of property counter in order to restrict users to bring their personal print material into the library.

- Electromagnetic Detection and Radio Frequency Identification are the two major methods being used.

- External Alarm System (EAS) – the buildings themselves be alarmed to deter "break ins".

- Video surveillance and closed circuit Television Sets (CCTV) - Cameras which monitor and record activities in (or outside) the library.

- Barcode and security labels / Strips-use of three types of permanently – sensitized labels strips for security against theft, tracking of materials throughout processing and circulation.

**Policy and Procedure Weakness**

Many of the weakness in the library's security are not attributed to physical conditions, but to policies and procedures which aid the culprit or which annoy patrons and staff and lead to anti-library attitudes.

Among the policies and procedure that weakens a library are:

1. Restrictive Access conditions. Libraries with very limited hours discourage frequent trips to the library and thus encourage theft. The situation may be aggravated by lack of parking and public transportation.

2. Keys: Keys to the library are given out freely to users and staff and no regular inventory of key holders is maintained. The keys are frequently of the type that can be easily duplicated. Locks are seldom changed.

3. Unauthorized Possession / Occupancy: Many libraries lack written policies and procedures to guide the action to be taken upon the discovery of a person in the possession of library materials which have not been properly charged out.

4. Security Manual: Every library should have a security manual setting forth what to do to maintain security and how to deal with emergencies.

It should include at least the following:

- Each Staff member responsibilities for maintaing security and in emergencies.

- Appropriate phone numbers for fire, police, library administration etc.

- Location of power switches

**Conclusion:**

It is suggested that all libraries as part of their security procedures should plan for only one entry and exit.

It is foremost duty of the Librarian's to ensure paper vigilance and security by providing constructive programs and methods for controlling theft, thereby there is a need of electronic security system for safe guarding the reading materials from theft as every year there is a cut in budget and new acquisition of books is being problematic .

Thus automatic controlling of theft by electronic means enables human beings to concentrate on the quality of rather than guarding the books.

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