

# Combating the Challenges of Intellectual Freedom: The Perspective of Librarians in Academic Libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Censorship of library materials denies people's right to access, use, retrieve, and store materials of their desire. Intellectual freedom is critical to eliminating the constraint of censorship. Issues such as illiteracy, societal standards, and selection policy had been identified as challenges to intellectual freedom. The existing body of literature revealed that library materials are subjected to censorship and this denies readers' rights to access desirable information at any point in time. **Aim:** This research examined the perception of librarians on combating the challenges of intellectual freedom. **Methodology:** The target population for this study included professional librarians working in eight (8) selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select 60 respondents from the 8 academic libraries involved in the study. A questionnaire of 6 research questions was developed for the collection of data. **Findings:** The results indicated: the majority of the respondents agree that there are equal opportunities for library users to access library materials, obscene and controversial materials are subjected to censorship, library selection policy restricts library users' access to desired materials. Lifting restriction of access to library materials was identified as the way to combat the challenges of intellectual freedom. **Recommendations:** The authors recommend that government should ensure that the Freedom of Information Bill (FOI) is passed to enable library patrons' have access to all information materials and that library stakeholders should create awareness, publicity, or enlightenment on intellectual freedom to inform the users of their rights to hold, use, and access information materials of their choice.

## Keywords:

Intellectual freedom, censorship, librarians perspective, academic libraries, challenges.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of information to individuals such as students, lecturers, professionals, and organizations in the 21st century cannot be overemphasized. This is because the concept of life is



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vague without information (Panda, 2017). In support of this statement, Hussain and Kumar (2013) postulated that information is a critical resource, ranking just after air, water, food, and shelter that helps individuals in pursuit of general goals and objectives of institutions of higher learning.

According to University of Minnesota Library Glossary (2014), information is a thing that is very vital to every human being, when demanded; and it is usually expected to be put into use to solve a particular need. Popoola (2006) described information from the holistic point of view as facts, ideas, messages, opinions, truth, symbols, signals, images, databases, sounds, and process data that can improve the knowledge state of a user on a random phenomenon or events. Therefore, information can be presented in different formats such as print and non-print, and is acquired, processed, and disseminated through the information centers namely: libraries, archives, museums, and Internet among others where users and information managers interact for the transmission of information to knowledge.

Over the years, information users have been facing the problem of restriction in using information resources termed as “censorship”. Famous (2011), defined censorship as the process through which artistic, literary, or educational materials that are morally or otherwise objectionable in the light of censors standards are removed, suppressed, or restricted from circulation. Intner (2004) defined censorship as the systematic and deliberate exclusion of materials that would be considered protected. The American Library Association described censorship as the suppression of ideas and information that certain individuals, groups, or government officials find objectionable or dangerous (American Library Association, 2016). Censorship had been practiced and is being practiced in the world today, in both developed and developing countries alike: the United States of America, Australia, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, China, South Africa, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Nigeria.

In Nigeria, the purpose of censorship varies across academic institutions with some censored material considered to be controversial, indecent, heretical or blasphemous, profane/seditious, or treasonous. The idea of censorship had been suppressed under the pretext of protecting the three basic social institutions namely: family, church, and Nigerian governments. Censorship of information materials has always been a topic of concern in libraries. Censorship occurs when a librarian deliberately avoids selecting materials that might be controversial in the community, or materials they disagree with. This is done when they are writing a collection development policy intending to balance the views that can help the librarian to make decisions without self-censoring (Yaya et al., 2013). The researchers explained further that in the case of self-censorship, the librarians do not make information available to the community based on their judgment of the materials. Therefore, librarians being information providers are not expected to censor any information, whether such information is against their personal belief or interest. In the same vein, they must acquire and process all the information resources equally. In light of this, librarians have to treat and serve all the library patrons with equal rights knowing that different people visit the library for different information needs and they must not be denied.

Since information is vital to both teaching and learning, librarians play a critical role in providing students with quality educational experiences through the facilitation of independent learning and support of the formal curriculum. However, librarians in tertiary institutions often find themselves in the center of controversy when parents, administrators, school boards, and others attempt to remove or restrict students’ access to books and other library resources (Mclaughlin & Hendricks, 2017). This controversy often results in contentious debate and litigation regarding the right to read materials of choice. To tackle the issue of censorship, the American Library Association proposed for ‘intellectual freedom’ to oppose censorship that places restrictive controls on the dissemination of ideas, information, or images which are transmitted through any communication medium (American Library Association’s World Encyclopedia of Library and Information Services, 1993).

Conceptually, the term intellectual freedom involves protecting the rights of all individuals to pursue the types of information they desire and to have access to anything that interests them (Yaya et al., 2013). Byrne (2000) described intellectual freedom as one’s thoughts and ideas, which are formulated with a view of expressing them freely. Therefore, attempts by a member of the community to restrict access or to remove materials from library collections maybe the most common challenges to intellectual freedom faced by libraries.

Even though there is away forward in combating the challenges of intellectual freedom, it is unfortunate that librarians still have different perceptions in combating the challenges of intellectual freedom. Although there are some studies such as Vrabel (1997); Byrne (2000); Yaya et al. (2013); and Knox (2014) that focused on how to combat the challenges of intellectual freedom, unfortunately

there seem to be limited empirical evidence-based studies on librarians perspectives towards the issue. Furthermore, it was observed that previous studies that focus precisely on the perception of librarians in combating challenges of intellectual freedom in Nigeria, and most especially in academic libraries in Kwara State are limited or not available. It is in light of this, that, this study examined the perceptions of librarians in selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria on combating challenges of intellectual freedom.

This study is significant: firstly, because the results will be beneficial to other librarians in other regions of Nigeria and countries in Africa to have an understanding of the strategies that can be adopted to combat challenges of intellectual freedom. Secondly, the study will potentially reveal the need to formulate and design an academic-library new policy that will help the library to combat challenges of intellectual freedom. Thirdly, it will add to the existing body of knowledge on intellectual freedom.

### **1.1. Objectives**

The broad objective of the study was to examine the perception of librarians in selected academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria on combating the challenges of intellectual freedom. In particular:

- Investigate the perception of librarians in Kwara State academic libraries on intellectual freedom in Nigeria.
- Identify the intellectual freedom rights enjoyed by users in academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria.
- Identify information materials that are subjected to censorship in selected academic libraries in Kwara State.
- Identify the challenges associated with the intellectual freedom right of the users in academic libraries in Kwara State.
- Examine the effects of the challenges of intellectual freedom right on users patronage of academic libraries in Kwara State
- Identify strategies that can be adopted in combating the challenges of intellectual freedom in academic libraries.

### **1.2 THE HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY**

The study tested three null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. They are:

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom in Nigeria based on gender.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom based on school ownership (Public and Private).

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom in Nigeria based on qualifications.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Intellectual freedom and academic libraries**

Libraries play a crucial role in ensuring the Intellectual Freedom of its users and society at large. Libraries are information hubs for their communities. They are also natural centers for learning and talking about information issues including privacy. The American Library Association (ALA) (2016) submits that libraries play a critical role in bridging information access gaps for individuals. They ensure that the public can find the content of interest and learn the necessary skills to use information successfully. According to Rubel (2014), libraries have long been providing an increasing amount of resources in electronic formats, including Internet access generally, electronic databases, electronic journals, and electronic books. Sutton (2001) and Mugwisi et al. (2018) maintained that all libraries, public or private, have the professional obligation to support the right of their respective public to access information. Since the library is first and foremost a place to access information, the principle of intellectual freedom becomes essential.

Jones (2012) noted the role of librarians as guardians of information; hence, they are tasked with ensuring the benefits of intellectual freedom. Librarians play a major role in how intellectual freedom is interpreted and implemented, and therefore they need to be objective and must be aware of policies or actions that impede its values (McCleer, 2019). Librarians have to defend that freedom every day. Librarians and other information professionals have been selected as the gatekeepers of intellectual freedom; they are equipped with the tools and belief that patrons should be safeguarded

from censorship, privacy violations, and more. Building collections and preventing censorship in all forms is the responsibility of the librarians who have vowed to uphold the concept of intellectual freedom (McCleer, 2019).

## 2.2 Related studies

This section features a review of related empirical studies on the objectives of the study:

### Intellectual freedom and censorship in academic librarians

Fiske (1959) was perhaps the most influential researcher on intellectual freedom in US libraries (Hopkins, 1989). Fiske interviewed 156 school and public librarians and 48 school administrators. The study found that libraries that followed the existing selection policy when under attack were more likely to retain the materials. Another study by Bracy (1982) showed a definite relationship between the retention of the challenged materials and the existence of an endorsed selection and challenge policy.

Downey (2018) discussed a brief overview of how to handle censorship, community challenges, and other intellectual freedom basics – topics seldom taught in Library and Information Science (LIS) programs. The authors concluded that being a new librarian has its difficulties, but with the support of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, and the guidelines put forth by the ALA, dealing with censorship is not as hard as it might appear. When in doubt, reach out.

Mbofung and Popoola (2014) studied the legal and ethical issues of information service delivery and library information science professionals in the Nigerian university libraries. The authors used a questionnaire for data collection from 429 practicing professionals in 24 federal universities in Nigeria. The instrument was prepared using excerpts from the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions or Freedom of Access to information and Freedom of Expression (IFLA/FAIFE) Intellectual Freedom Statements. Their findings showed that most of the respondents were aware of the ethical principles that relate to enforcement of restriction permitted by law, selection of library materials representing all points of view, individual taste and void of interest, restriction of access or censorship involving the use of filtering software, confidentiality, privacy, and response to queries. Others include exclusion of materials because of race, nationality, political, social, moral, or religious views or partisan or doctrinal approval or pressure, adherence to institutional policies, and professional development.

### Perception of intellectual freedom and censorship

Anyaegebu (2016) identified intellectual freedom and censorship based on Nigerian law. The study reported this right includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to see, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers. The study also revealed that intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold receive and disseminate ideas while considering censorship as the suppression of ideas and information that individuals, groups, or government officials and objectionable or dangerous. The study emphasized that censors usually achieve through state powers through public institutions like schools, libraries, information centers, and others. Through the instrumentality of the law, such public institutions are forbidden from making censored materials easily accessible to the public or the target audience. The study provided a recommendation to enhance the easy flow of information to all information seekers in Nigeria.

Igwulebo and Atanda (2017) discussed censorship: various methods of censorship, intellectual freedom, the Freedom of Information Act of Nigeria, collection development, selection of materials, censorship challenges, and solutions concerning the Nigerian society. The study reported that intellectual freedom guarantees everyone the right to freedom of opinion and expression. The study identified intellectual freedom as the right to include the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. Thus, intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive, and disseminate ideas. The study defined censorship as the suppression of ideas and information that individuals, groups, or government officials find objectionable or dangerous. Censors usually achieve this through state powers via public institutions such as schools, libraries, information centers among others.

Mann (2017) emphasized that intellectual freedom and academic freedom are related but distinct concepts. As a nerve center of the university, the academic library represents a critical, if not the critical, point of intersection between these two freedoms. On that note, the author explored the intersection and considered how issues of intellectual and academic freedom affect the academic librarian and

the university as a whole. The author suggested based on the findings that a basic understanding of the similarities and differences between intellectual freedom and academic freedom is important for academic librarians as they strive to uphold the mission of the library and the mission of the academy.

It has been argued that support for intellectual freedom has been a part of librarianship since the 1930s; and three primary phenomena form the foundation of this support: codification, institutionalization, and investigation. Codification occurred primarily through the ratification of the Codes of Ethics and the Library Bill of Rights by ALA. Institutionalization refers to the establishment of committees dedicated to upholding intellectual freedom by ALA. On that note, Knox (2014) conducted an investigation that included both scholarly and non-scholarly research into intellectual freedom and censorship within the library and information science. Using Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital, the study argued that the article argues that these three areas are the foundation of practical philosophy for librarianship that encourages librarians to eschew censorship in their institutions.

### **Intellectual freedom and challenges in academic libraries**

Oltmann (2017) surveyed the deans and directors of academic libraries on their perception of intellectual freedom. The study found that most respondents rarely think about intellectual freedom as something "somewhat" or "very" important in their libraries. Most of them did not have formal intellectual freedom policies; they often relied on statements from the American Library Association or other library organizations. Copyright/intellectual property, privacy, plagiarism, and academic freedom were the most important concerns related to intellectual freedom. Despite shedding some light on intellectual freedom in academic libraries, further research was recommended to be conducted to continue from where the author stopped.

Dawkins (2017) researched the decisions made by school librarians when choosing or not choosing materials for addition to the collection. The study featured the following research questions: How do school librarians describe their selection process? To what extent do school librarians engage in self-censorship as part of the collection development process? When school librarians engage in self-censorship, what are the ways they do it, and the factors that influence their decision making? The study adopted a mixed-methods design composed of two phases: an initial survey distributed to school librarians in North and South Carolina and follow-up interviews with school librarians who volunteered to be interviewed. Four hundred seventy-one responses were collected as part of the initial survey. The findings suggest that school librarians are influenced by multiple factors when making selection decisions and better preparation for dealing with controversial materials may assist them in avoiding self-censoring or censoring behaviors.

Steele (2017) applied Kurt Lewin's gate keeping theory to investigate the decision-makers and the different pressures and problems that are associated with challenges and censorship attempts in public libraries. A case study approach of two federal court cases dealing with challenges and censorship attempts that occurred in public libraries was conducted. The study identified the gatekeeping structures within public libraries particularly those that contribute to conditions that encourage librarians to censor. A qualitative content analysis of court documents and newspaper articles covering the court cases following a series of interviews with individuals involved in the cases was conducted. Central to the study is the phenomenon of librarians themselves engaging in acts of censorship. Factors such as power and authority can lead librarians to engage in censorship activities as a reaction to instructions from their governing bodies. Without a clear understanding of the function of gates and gatekeepers in the decision-making process, libraries may allow unintended censorship of ideas and information to persist. The implication of the study was to inform librarians and information professionals to become better equipped to support the fight against censorship.

Matacio (2003) surveyed Library Directors in Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) colleges and universities around the world to learn how Seventh-day Adventist librarians viewed and defined intellectual freedom, whether SDA libraries were having censorship challenges to library materials, and what policies and procedures were used to resolve the challenges. The study found that the majority of libraries surveyed had materials challenged, most often because of differences in religious/theological beliefs or strong language. A comparison between this study and Hippenhammer's (1993) survey of Christian college libraries was made and showed significant differences in the following areas: written selection policy, reasons for materials challenges, and group submitting challenges.

From the literature review, it can be concluded that not much has been done on librarians' perception of combating the challenges of intellectual freedom. Most of the related studies were conducted out of Nigeria and even Africa. Therefore, this study is necessary as it will make data

available on combating challenges of intellectual freedom from the population of librarians from Nigeria. Based on this, other countries in Africa can borrow ideas.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research design**

The study adopted a survey research design. This was considered suitable for this study as it allows the use of the questionnaire as a data collection instrument. Similarly, a survey was chosen to enable data collection from a representative sample to allow generalization of the findings to the entire population of the study.

#### **3.2 The population of the study**

The target population consisted of librarians working in selected 8 higher-institution libraries in Kwara State: the University of Ilorin Library, Landmark University Library, Crown Hill University Library, Kwara State University Library, Al-Hikmah University Library, Summit University Library, Federal Polytechnic Library-Offa, and Kwara State Polytechnic Library.

#### **3.3 Sample size and sampling techniques**

Given that the population of librarians working in academic libraries in Kwara State in Nigeria was limited, and to be able to get a sizable sample to generalize to the entire population of libraries and librarians in Kwara, the researchers embarked on a purposive sampling of 60 librarians.

#### **3.4 Instrumentation**

The instruments used for data collection in the study were a researchers' designed questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into six sections A–F. Section A requested the bio-data information of the respondents including sex, position, qualification, institution. Section B contained items on perceptions of librarians on intellectual freedom. Section C contained items on rights enjoyed by users. Section D contained items on materials that are being subjected to censorship. Section E contains items on challenges associated with intellectual freedom. Section F contained items on the effects of the challenges on the user's patronage. A four-point Likert-type scale with responses ranges from strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree were used in all sections. The questionnaire contained 30 items in all.

#### **3.5 Validation of research instrument**

To ensure content and construct validity mechanism, the instrument was given to two researchers who scrutinized the questionnaire with the view of checking the appropriateness of language and relevance of items to enable it to measure what was supposed to measure before administration. The questionnaire was modified based on the experts' suggestions and comments.

#### **3.6 Procedure for data collection**

The researchers initially sought appropriate permission from the related quarters before proceeding to each of the selected libraries to administer the research instrument face to face. The researcher explained the purpose of the research then interacted with the librarians and administered the questionnaire. The copies of the questionnaire were filled in when the schools were in session because that was the most convenient time to get across to librarians in the selected libraries. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the librarians. The instructions guiding the answering of the questionnaire were equally explained to the respondents. A total of 60 copies of the questionnaire were administered in the selected libraries. The researcher patiently waited to retrieve copies of the questionnaire from the respondents. With the cooperation of the library directors, all the 60 copies administered were retrieved representing a 100% return rate.

#### **3.7 Data analysis techniques**

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics of percentage and frequency counts were used to answer the research questions while inferential statistics of chi-square test were used to test the research hypotheses.

## 4. RESULTS

This section presents detailed results of the analyses conducted on the study. The results are presented in Tables 1–10 as follows:

### 4.1 Distribution of the respondents to the questionnaire items

This section provides information on the details of the distribution of the questionnaire used for data collection in the study. The result is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents to the Questionnaire Items**

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Institutions</b>		
Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin	5	7.5
Crown Hill University, Ilorin	2	3.8
Federal Polytechnic, Offa	9	15.1
Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin	3	5.7
Kwara State University, Malete	9	15.1
Landmark University, Omu-Aran	7	11.3
Summit University, Offa	2	3.8
University of Ilorin, Ilorin	23	37.7
<b>Position</b>		
Acquisition Librarian	1	1.9
Assistant Librarian	14	24.6
Collection development Librarian	1	1.9
E-Librarian	1	1.9
Higher Library Officer	2	3.8
Librarian	19	30.2
Librarian 1	1	1.9
Librarian II	3	5.7
Principal Librarian	5	7.5
Reference Librarian	1	1.9
Resource Officer 1	2	3.8
Senior Library Officer	9	13.2
Technical Service Librarian	1	1.9
<b>School Type</b>		
Private	16	26.4
Public	44	73.6
<b>Academic Qualification</b>		
B.Sc.	27	45.3
M.Sc.	31	50.9
Ph. D	2	3.8
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	46	77.4
Female	14	22.6

From Table 1, it is observed that the University of Ilorin had the highest percentage (37.7) of the respondents to the questionnaire while Crown Hill University and Summit University, Offa had the

lowest percentage (3.8). In terms of the respondents job positions, it can be deduced that most of the respondents held a librarian position (30.2). Based on the school type, the majority of the respondent to the questionnaire were from public institutions (73.6). Also, 45.3% of the respondents had B.Sc., 50.9% of the respondents had M.Sc. and 3.8% of the respondents possess Ph.D. Similarly, the majority of the respondents were male (77.4).

#### 4.2 Perception of librarian on intellectual freedom

This section provides results to research question one on the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom in Nigeria. The analysis adopted percentage and frequency count. The results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Perception of Librarians in academic libraries on intellectual freedom**

Items	%SA	%A	%D	%SD
Library materials are provided to serve the interest of the user	71.7	28.3	0	0
Equal opportunity provided to users of library materials	56.6	41.5	1.9	0
The use of library materials does not violate users rights	37.7	58.5	3.8	0
The inclusion of intellectual freedom is significant to users of library materials	34.0	62.3	3.7	0
The inclusion of intellectual freedom is relevant to users of library materials	49.1	45.3	5.6	0

The perceptions of librarians in academic libraries on intellectual freedom were revealed in Table 2. The reports showed that 28.3% of the respondents agreed that library materials are provided to serve the users interest, while 71.7% of the respondents disagreed on this. 98.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that equal opportunities are provided to users of library materials, while 1.9% of the respondents strongly disagreed that equal opportunities are afforded users of library materials. 96.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that the use of library materials does violate users' rights, while 3.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the use of the library does not violate users' rights. 96.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that the inclusion of intellectual freedom is significant to users of library materials, while 3.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the inclusion of intellectual freedom is significant to library users. 94.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that the inclusion of intellectual freedom is relevant to users of library material, while 5.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the inclusion of intellectual freedom is relevant to users of library materials. The results here indicate that library materials are provided to serve the interest of the user; the equal opportunity is accorded to users of library materials; the use of library materials does not violate users' rights; the inclusion of intellectual freedom is significant to users, and the inclusion of intellectual freedom is relevant to users of library materials.

#### 4.3 Intellectual freedom rights and users of academic libraries in Nigeria

In relation to research question two of the study, this section details the results of the analysis on the librarians' perception of intellectual freedom rights enjoyed by users in academic libraries in Kwara State Nigeria. The results of the analysis using percentage and frequency count are presented in Table 3.



**Table 3: Intellectual freedom rights enjoyed by users of academic libraries as perceived by academic librarians**

ITEMS	%SA	%A	%D	%SD
<b>Library users are granted freedom to access library materials</b>	1. 75.5	2. 24.5	3. 0	4. 0
<b>Library users are afforded the opportunity to retrieve library materials</b>	5. 49.1	6. 45.2	7. 5.7	8. 0
<b>Library users are allow to use library materials of their choice</b>	9. 41.5	10. 58.5	11. 0	12. 0
<b>Library users are given the opportunity to store library materials they desire</b>	13. 18.9	14. 28.3	15. 34.0	16. 18.9
<b>Library users privacy in the use of library materials is protected</b>	17. 24.5	18. 71.7	19. 3.8	20. 0

Intellectual freedom rights enjoyed by users of academic libraries as perceived by Academic librarians are shown in Table 3. The results revealed that 100% of the respondents strongly agreed that library users are granted freedom to access library materials, while 0% of the respondents strongly disagreed that library users are granted freedom to access library materials. 94.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that library users are allowed to retrieve library materials, while 5.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed that library users are allowed to store library materials. The results also showed that 100% of the respondents strongly agreed that library users are allowed to use library materials of their choice, while 0% of the respondents strongly disagreed that library users are allowed to use library materials of their choice. 47.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that library users are allowed to store the library materials they desire, while 52.9% of the respondents strongly disagreed that library users are allowed to store the library materials they desired. 96.2% of the respondents strongly agree that library users' privacy in the use of library materials is protected, while 3.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed that library users' privacy in the use of library materials is protected.

#### 4.4 Information materials subjected to censorship in academic libraries

For question three "What information materials are being subjected to censorship in selected academic libraries in Kwara State from the perspective of academic librarians," this section presents the related results. The results using percentage and frequency count are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Information materials subjected to censorship in academic libraries**

ITEMS	%SA	%A	%D	%SD
Materials that are obscene	47.2	45.3	1.9	5.6
Materials that are profane/corrupt	39.6	47.2	9.4	3.8
Material that are chaotic	39.6	45.3	11.3	3.8
Material that are pornographic	43.5	45.3	7.5	3.7
Material that are controversial	45.3	47.2	3.8	3.7

The findings in Table 4 show the five items that are used in measuring the materials that were subjected to censorship. The results indicate that 92.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that obscene materials are subjected to censorship, while 7.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed that obscene materials are subjected to censorship. 86.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that profane or corrupt materials are subjected to censorship, while 13.2 of the respondents strongly disagreed that profane or corrupt materials are subjected to censorship. 84.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that chaotic materials are subjected to censorship, while 15.1 of the respondents strongly disagreed that chaotic materials are subjected to censorship. 88.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that pornographic materials are subjected to censorship, while 11.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed that pornographic materials are subjected to censorship. 92.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that controversial materials are subjected to censorship, while 7.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed that controversial materials are subjected to censorship.

#### 4.5 Challenges associated with intellectual freedom right of users in academic libraries

This section is related to question four of the study and presents information on the analysis of challenges associated with the intellectual freedom right of the users in academic libraries in Kwara State. The results analyzed using percentage and frequency count are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Challenges associated with intellectual freedom rights of users of academic libraries**

Items	%SA	%A	%D	%SD
Illiteracy is a barrier to intellectual freedom	56.6	35.8	5.7	1.9
Library selection policy affect intellectual freedom	39.7	35.8	24.5	0
Religion is a barrier to intellectual freedom	22.6	49.1	22.6	5.7
Ethnicity is a barrier to intellectual freedom	11.3	34.0	41.5	13.2
The societal standard is a challenge associated with intellectual freedom	32.1	45.3	15.1	7.5

The findings in Table 5 show the five items used in measuring the challenges associated with intellectual freedom. The results indicate that 92.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that illiteracy is a barrier to intellectual freedom, while 7.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed that illiteracy is a barrier to intellectual freedom. 75.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that library selection policy affects intellectual freedom, while 24.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed that library selection policy affects intellectual freedom. 71.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that religion is a barrier to intellectual freedom, while 28.3% of the respondents strongly disagreed that religion is a barrier to intellectual freedom. 45.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that ethnicity is a barrier to intellectual freedom, while 54.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed that ethnicity is a barrier to intellectual freedom. 77.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that societal standard is a challenge associated with intellectual freedom, while 22.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed that societal standard is a challenge associated with intellectual freedom.

#### 4.6 Effects of intellectual freedom challenges users' patronage of academic libraries

This section presents the results for the study question five on the effects of intellectual freedom challenges on users' patronage of academic libraries in Kwara State Nigeria. The results are presented using percentage and frequency.

**Table 6: Effects of challenges of intellectual freedom on user's patronage**

Items	%SA	%A	%D	%SD
Illiteracy reduces patronage of library by users	39.6	37.7	20.8	1.9
Library selection policy restrict library users access to desired material	62.3	22.6	15.1	0
Religion deny library users the opportunity to seek for certain materials	17.0	47.2	28.3	7.5
Ethnicity restricts the materials that are available for users in the library	9.4	43.5	37.7	9.4
Societal standard limits the quality of materials available in the library	34.0	34.0	24.5	7.5

The findings in Table 6 show the five items used in measuring the effects of challenges of intellectual freedom rights on the user's patronage. Results indicated that 77.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that illiteracy reduces patronage of the library by users, while 22.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed that illiteracy reduces patronage of the library by users. 84.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that library selection policy restricts library user access to desired materials, while 15.1% of the respondents strongly disagreed that selection policy restricts library user access to desired materials. 64.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that religion denies library users the opportunity for certain materials, while 35.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed that religion denies library users the opportunity for certain materials. 52.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that ethnicity restricts the

materials that are available for users of the library, while 47.1% of the respondents strongly disagreed that ethnicity restricts the materials that are available for users of the library. Sixty Eight (68%) of the respondents strongly agreed that societal standards limit the quality of materials available in the library, while 32% of the respondents strongly disagreed that societal standards limit the quality of materials available in the library.

#### 4.7 Strategies of combating challenges of intellectual freedom

As for the sixth question of the study on the strategies adopted in combating the challenges of intellectual freedom in Nigeria. Percentage and frequency count were used for the analysis of data. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7: Strategies for combating the challenges of intellectual freedom**

Items	Freq.	Percentage
Stabilizing power	58.3	
Establishment of database	5 8.3	
Community members involvement in library selection policy	6	10.0
Adequate allocation of fund	7	11.6
Implementation of Freedom of Information Bill	7	11.6
Creating awareness/enlightenment/publicity about information literacy	12	20.0
Lifting restriction of access to library materials	18	30.0
	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The findings in Table 7 show the seven items used in identifying the strategies for combating the challenges of intellectual freedom. The result revealed that 5 (8.3%) respondents opine that stabilizing power is a strategy to combat the challenges of intellectual freedom. 5 (8.3%) respondents opine that the establishment database is a strategy to combat the challenges of intellectual freedom. 6 (10%) of the respondents opined that community members' involvement in library selection policy is a strategy to combat the challenges of intellectual freedom. 7 (11.6%) of the respondents opined that adequate allocation of funds is a strategy to combat the challenges of intellectual freedom. 7 (11.6%) of the respondents opine that Implementation of the Freedom of Information Bill is a strategy to combat the challenges of intellectual freedom. 12 (20%) of the respondents opine that Creating Awareness/enlightenment/publicity about information literacy is a strategy to combat the challenge of intellectual freedom. 18 (30%) of the respondents opine that Lifting restriction of access to library materials is a strategy to combat the challenges of intellectual freedom.

#### 4.8 Demographics differences in the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom

These three sections comprising Tables 8–10 present results on the difference between each of the demographic variables based on librarians' perception. The section features differences based on gender, school types, and qualifications. A chi-square analysis was conducted. The results are presented in Tables 8–10.

#### 4.9 Research Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant difference in the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom in Nigeria based on gender.

The Pearson chi-square value .433 with a degree of freedom one (1) computed at the level of significance 0.05. Since the calculated significant (.506) is greater than the table sig. (0.05), Table 8, we do not reject the null hypothesis. It is therefore concluded that there is no significant difference in the perception of Librarians on intellectual freedom in Kwara State, Nigeria based on gender.

**Table 8: Chi-Square showing the difference in the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom in Nigeria based on gender**

		Perception of Librarians on Intellectual Freedom		Total
		Agree	Strongly Agree	
Gender	Male	9	11	20
	Female	13	27	40
Total		15	38	60

Chi-Square Table

	Value	Df	Significant
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	.443a	1	.506

P&lt;0.05

H02: There is no significant difference in the perception of intellectual freedom rights of librarians in publicly owned schools and those in privately owned schools in Kwara State, Nigeria.

As per Table 9, the Pearson chi-square value 2.126 with a degree of freedom two (2) computed at the level of significance 0.05. Since the calculated significant (.345) is greater than table sig. (0.05). Since the calculated value is greater than the p-value, we do not reject the null hypothesis. We, therefore, concluded that there is no significant difference in the perception of Librarians on intellectual freedom in Kwara State, Nigeria based on school type.

**Table 9: Chi-Square showing the difference in the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom based on school type.**

		Perception of Librarians on Intellectual freedom			Total
		Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Type of Institution	Private	1	8	7	16
	Public	1	25	18	44
Total		2	33	25	60

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	2.126a	2	.345

H03: There is no significant difference in the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom in Nigeria based on qualifications.

As Table 9 indicates, the Pearson chi-square value 1.611 with a degree of freedom four (4) computed at the level of significance 0.05. Since the calculated significance (.807) is greater than 0.05, we do not reject the null hypothesis. We, therefore, concluded that there is no significant difference in the perception of Librarians on intellectual freedom is based on qualification.

**Table 10: Chi-Square showing differences in the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom based on qualification.**

		Perception of Librarians on Intellectual Freedom			Total
		Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Qualification	B.Sc	3	15	12	30
	M.Sc	2	16	10	28
	Ph. D	0	2	0	2
Total		5	33	22	60

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig.(2-sided)
<b>Pearson Chi-Square</b>	1.611a	4	.807

## 5. DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Perception of academic librarians on intellectual freedom

The findings on the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom show that the majority of academic librarians strongly agreed that library materials are provided to serve the interest of users; the equal opportunity is accorded to users of library materials; the use of library materials does not violate users' rights; the inclusion of intellectual freedom is significant to users, and the inclusion of intellectual freedom is relevant to users of library materials. This finding thus contradicts the second law of Raganathan that states that every reader has his/her book. In general, one can conclude that the perception of academic librarians of intellectual freedom is good. The results gathered on the perception of academic librarians on intellectual freedom emphasizes more on the library promoting intellectual freedom of its users, this corroborates the findings of Oltmann (2017) and Jones (2012) and Anyaegbu (2016) who reported that intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold receive and disseminate ideas while considering censorship as the suppression of ideas and information that individuals, groups or government officials and objectionable or dangerous.

### 5.2 Intellectual freedom rights enjoyed by users of academic libraries as perceived by academic librarians

Based on the analyzed result, it was gathered from the perception of academic librarians that users' rights include: access to library materials, opportunity to retrieve library materials, utilization of library materials of their choice, the opportunity to store library materials they desire, and privacy in the use of library materials is protected. This implies that intellectual freedom principle is being implemented in the selected library at least to a considerable measure. It could be inferred at this point that academic libraries in Kwara State, Nigeria, promote the intellectual freedom of their users, and academic library users are enjoying the basic intellectual freedom rights. This affirms with ALA (2016) *that intellectual freedom is the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without being restricted.*

### 5.3 Information materials subjected to censorship in academic libraries

Censorship is not expected to be a barrier to intellectual freedom opined by Yaya (2013). The results gathered on information materials subjected to censorship in academic libraries reveal that although the selected academic libraries embrace intellectual freedom, certain materials are often censored from the library materials. Some of the information subjected to censorship in academic libraries include: obscene materials, profane/corrupt, chaotic, pornographic, and controversial material. This agrees with Curry (2001) that 11 content types are likely to be challenged: profanity, sexuality, religion/witchcraft, violence/horror, rebellion, racism/sexism, substance use/abuse, suicide/death, crime, crude behavior, and depressing/negative tone. Sexuality and profanity were the two content types most noted in challenges. Other studies resulted in similar findings

From 2001 to 2009, ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom (ALA 2010) reported several content types: sexually explicit material, offensive language, unsuited to age group, violence, homosexuality, anti-family, and religious viewpoints incurring the most challenges. Similarly, Pottorff and Olthof (1993) found that profane materials and materials with offensive contents were censored. By implementing censorship of controversial and obscene materials, it would instigate sanity and reduce immorality within the society.

### 5.4 Challenges associated with intellectual freedom rights of users of academic libraries

The analyzed results in Table 5 shows that several factors are challenging the intellectual freedom rights of academic library users. One of the challenges identified by 92.4% of the librarian is illiteracy, this could imply that those academic libraries are either not effective in the aspect of user education relating to intellectual freedom. The most important factor recognized as a challenge to intellectual freedom rights of users in this study is censorship as gathered from the level of agreement of the respondents. However, this censorship of library material is not direct but subtle. It covers angles such as religion, societal standard, ethnicity, and library selection policy. This agrees with the findings of Arko-Cobbah (2011) who maintained that one aspect of censorship, which is quite disturbing at African-universities libraries, is the censorship based on religion. It also agrees with the findings of scholars (Yaya et al., 2013; Uduak & Umoh., 2017) who concluded that presently censorship is practiced in many ways both obviously and cunningly.

### **5.5 Effects of challenges of intellectual freedom on User's patronage**

There are a lot of challenges affecting the intellectual freedom right of users of selected academic libraries. These challenges are posing a great threat to users' patronage of the respective libraries. It was gathered that the side effect of these challenges is that it affects both the library and the users. While illiteracy will, to a great extent, reduce the patronage of the library by users, religion often affects some users from consulting certain information material which could have been beneficial to them. The same goes for ethnicity, societal standards, and ethnicity.

### **5.6 Strategies for combating the challenges of intellectual freedom**

The study went further to suggest ways through which the challenges of intellectual freedom can be combated and overcome. Several ways were identified by the respondents. The high point of it is that the library should lift every form of access restriction of access to library materials. Followed by the creation of awareness/enlightenment/publicity about information literacy, implementation of Freedom of Information Bill, adequate allocation of the fund, community members' involvement in library selection policy, as reasonable as it seems to involve community members in library selection policy, the information literacy level of such members must be known. Other ways include stabilizing power and the establishment of databases.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

This study has revealed the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom, the intellectual freedom rights enjoyed by users, the information materials subjected to censorship, the challenges associated with intellectual freedom, the effects of the challenges of intellectual freedom rights on users' patronage, and the strategies to combat the challenges of intellectual freedom rights. Taking into consideration, the outcome of this study may go a long way in promoting intellectual freedom in academic libraries.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of this study, the following are recommended:

- The government should ensure that the Freedom of Information Bill (FOI) is passed to enable access to all information materials. This Bill supports the intellectual freedom rights of every individual to have access to Government and non-government information.
- Tertiary institutions should ensure that continuous access is provided to all forms of library materials for the users. This will encourage and help boost library patronage by library users.
- Stakeholders should create awareness, publicity, or enlightenment on intellectual freedom. This will inform the users of their rights to hold, use, and access information materials of their choice. Information will help users in decision making as well as to fill their information gap.
- Governments should allocate funds to tertiary institutions for the acquisition of library materials that will be useful to library users. A library is referred to as a repository of information materials, therefore, different forms of information materials should be acquired for the benefits of library users.
- Librarians should review library selection policies to allow access to library materials.

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