

The Perspective of Librarians on Intellectual Freedom Policy Relating to the Internet in University Libraries in Kwara and Lagos State, Nigeria

AGBOOLA Oluwatobi Victor

thobilourbar.90@gmail.com

**Department of Library and Information Science,
University of Ilorin**

Kosoko-Oyedeko, G.A.

gaa_oyedeko@yahoo.com

*Michael Otedola College of Primary Education (Mocped), School of Arts and social sciences,
Noforija, Epe, Lagos State, Nigeria*

Salawu, Khadija Yetunde

kubsimail@yahoo.com

**Department of Library and Information Science,
Federal Polytechnic Offa**

&

Tella, Adeyinka

tellayinkaedu@yahoo.com

**Department of Library and Information Science,
University of Ilorin**

Abstract

This study investigated the perspective of academic librarians in selected university libraries in Kwara state on intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet. Fives objectives were formulated to guide the study. The population comprised librarians working in the six university libraries that took part in the study out of which 51 librarians were selected through a total enumeration method to represent the sample for the study. A questionnaire developed by the researcher was used for the collection of data. The findings demonstrate that librarians perceived the intellectual freedom relating to the internet as using the internet as a privilege and not as a right; and that it is for the users to be free to find, consume and create information onthe internet as opposed to being hindrances to intellectual freedom. Policies are available in the libraries covered in the study on intellectual freedom on the internet. Librarians in the study are aware of intellectual freedom relating to the internet through, seminars and policy document in their library. Librarians demonstrated a good perception of intellectual freedom policy on Open Access concerning intellectual freedom on the internet. The major challenges associated with intellectual freedom regarding the use of internet materials are the growth of information

resources of lesser quality, piracy, and limited access to information due to restrictions. It was recommended that academic librarians should not only be aware of the policy but also ensure its application.

Keywords: *Intellectual freedom, Intellectual freedom policy, Open Access, Internet*

Introduction

In an informed society, everyone has some set of roles to play without restrictions. One may not be financially buoyant enough to contribute his/her quota to the society in respect to infrastructural development but one may contribute his/her quota from the intellectual wealth. An average member of a society can contribute his know-how to the information infrastructure over the Internet and as well receive or seek new information for more knowledge. Therefore, every citizen can confidently say that he/she is entitled to receive or send information without restriction. Freedom of access to information is one of the centre points of Fundamental Human Rights.

Discourse about the right to receive or send information has so many constructs which may include freedom of information, freedom of expression and press, and Intellectual Freedom which happens to be the focus of this study. Intellectual Freedom is a concept that finds expression across every stratum of society, among politicians, academics, students, businessmen and even foreign experts. American Library Association (ALA) defined Intellectual Freedom as the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction (ALA, 2016). ALA (2016) further explains that Intellectual Freedom provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any side of a question, cause or movement may be explored.

The role of libraries in ensuring the intellectual freedom of their users and their society at large cannot be overemphasised. Correspondingly, IFLA (The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) supports guards and promotes intellectual freedom as defined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. IFLA states that human beings have a basic right to express knowledge, creative thought and intellectual activity as well to express their views publicly. IFLA opined that the right to know and freedom of expression are two aspects of the same principle. The right to know is a requirement for freedom of thought and conscience; freedom of thought and freedom of expression are necessary conditions for freedom of access to information. The American Library Association (ALA) has been interested in intellectual freedom for a long time, with the first Library Bill of Rights written in 1939 and the origins of intellectual freedom which can be traced back to Socrates – the famous philosopher, who believed in the value and benefits of free discussion (Yaya, 2013). The study by Oltmann (2017) measured librarians' perception of Intellectual Freedom. More than half of the respondents (58%) stated that Intellectual Freedom is very important. Another 26.99 percent indicated that intellectual freedom was somewhat important. A 2.66 percent stated that it is

somewhat or very unimportant. This seems to indicate that the concept of *Intellectual Freedom* is important in a generalized sense.

There have been concerns on whether or not libraries and library and information professionals should allow receiving or sending an obscene type of information; whether the library can even be subscribed to just any database or journal based on the request of her patrons. On that note, censorship was agitated. Censorship can be referred to as the control of information and ideas circulated within a society. Famous (2011) emphasised that censorship is the process of removing, suppressing, or restricting the circulation of literary, artistic, or educational materials because they are morally or otherwise objectionable according to criteria used by the censor. This means that libraries in some selected Kwara State university libraries may not give intellectual freedom rights to their library users because of the need for moral censorship, political censorship, and religious censorship, among others. Censorship is not expected to be a barrier to intellectual freedom but it may serve as a means of “controlling” and not “denying” access to information, especially over the Internet. Perhaps this was why Yaya (2013) opined that a librarian’s job is not to push censorship but to push for the unhindered freedom to receive and explore ideas.

According to the State Library of Queensland (2019), libraries have a responsibility to guarantee and facilitate access to expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity. With this, libraries are expected to acquire, preserve and make available the widest variety of materials that can reflect the plurality and diversity of society. State Library of Queensland (2019) further explains that libraries need to provide full access to the Internet for their users. This is to say that if any library will encourage intellectual freedom, users’ access to the Internet is crucial and of great importance because the Internet is a great platform to have unrestricted and unlimited access to seek or receive or disseminate information. Not surprisingly, many university libraries in Kwara State now give free Internet access to library users, staff, and members of the university community. Concerning the internet, James, Marissa, and Randy (2013) noted that over the past forty years the Internet has evolved from a wide-range network of users, focused on as a primary means of communication, to a vast world wide web for transferring, storing and, above all sharing huge quantity and variety of information. The Internet and web have become mediums for social connection, networking and communication, also a daily opportunity for cultural expression via the online activities in which individuals engage. Jonathan (2005) opined that Internet has reduced the hurdles to publishing, by providing immediate worldwide electronic dissemination of information at a lower cost and as result there has been a drastic increase in the number of journals being published across many diverse specialties hence, leading to greater potential subscription costs in a time of shrinking library budgets.

Buchanan (2004) is of the view that the internet has come a long way starting from the inception and usage of the internet by the American military to the billions of users scattered across the globe that make use of it daily. The Internet has both the promise of access to information and a means of limiting intellectual freedom. Through the Internet, library patrons can potentially

access all the information that the Internet offers. However, each of the libraries that offer internet access is confronted with a new “professional dilemma” which is whether to provide open access to the Internet thereby fully supporting intellectual freedom principles and first amendment rights as described in the ALA Library Bill of Rights or to limit access to the Internet by filtering and effectually censoring objectionable information.

Tapfuma (2016) noted that Open Access Initiatives (OAI) have had a history that is linked with the advent of the Internet, owing to its endless possibilities for information handling, including processing and distribution. In other words, libraries that provide Internet for their users have indirectly provided a platform for accessing Open Access Information material and this may have a multiplier effect on intellectual freedom. The authors further explain that the Internet has come to liberalise the publishing environment, by providing the tools to free scholars and authors from the unwanted and unwarranted access restrictions to information imposed by publishers before time. The ultimate goal of the OA initiatives is the creation of an open knowledge society, where knowledge is seen as a common human heritage, which should be of benefit to all by being freely accessible and available.

Wren (2005) noted that prevalent access to the internet has reformed the pattern of scientific publishing and research. According to the author, publishers now see the internet as not just a substitute to the traditional print medium but one which is superior that enables an expansive range of contents such as animations, searchable databases to be made available. The author further stated that the lower cost of electronic publication and dissemination coupled with an increase in total or potential subscription costs gave rise to a debate about how “open access” is moving from a publishing system where authors pay for their publications rather than readers pay for access. The heart of the open-access debate chiefly argues that “costs” will prevent certain people from accessing published scientific research.

Jones (2005) pointed out that unfettered access to information regardless of national borders has become a key issue for academic libraries since the rise of the internet. Similarly, ACRL’s “Intellectual freedom Principles” further stated that “Open and unfiltered access to the internet should be conveniently available to the university community. Jones (2005) emphasised further that the issue of censorship which results in the use of content filtering and content-based restrictions are a contradiction of the academic library mission to further fundamental violation of intellectual freedom in academic libraries.” On this note, it is important to find out what intellectual freedom policies are in place relating to the use of the internet in academic libraries.

Statement of Problem

The American Library Association’s Code of Ethics as well as the Library Bill of Rights and its Interpretations explicitly state the central principles of librarianship. These principles guide librarians on issues of intellectual freedom that arise when the library provides access to digital

information, services, and networks. One of the most imperative intellectual freedom policies relating to the Internet is “Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks,” Nowonder many university libraries in Kwara State now give free Internet access to library users which may include students (undergraduates and postgraduates), staff and members of the university community. However, does unlimited access to the internet by the users mean there is no boundary to its use? It is observed that no written policy governs the regulation of intellectual freedom concerning the internet in most academic libraries in Kwara State. It is also observed that several libraries make use of internet filters as a tool for curtailing the usage of the internet. The rhetorical question is how do librarians, who happen to be “knowledge gatekeepers”, perceive the intellectual freedom policies relating to the internet? Meanwhile, it is highly worrisome that some library users make use of the internet to perpetrate illegal and immoral vices ranging from pornography to CyberCrime, fraud and Cyberbullying. As Evan (2016) rightly observed, it can be reasonably assumed that damage to a library user’s privacy may impact his intellectual freedom if for no other reason than a patron feels uncomfortable procuring information in the library setting and therefore chooses to not return. It should also be noted that, the way librarians perceive the concept of intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet will go a long way in resuscitating or improving users’ patronage of the library as the case may be. In the light of this, this study sought to assess the perspective of academic librarians in some selected university libraries in Kwara State on intellectual freedom policy concerning the Internet.

Purpose of the Study

The broad objective of the study was to examine the perception of academic librarians in selected university libraries in Kwara State on intellectual freedom policy relating to the Internet. To achieve the objective, four (4) specific objectives were developed. These were to:

- i. determine the perception of librarians in selected Kwara State’s University libraries on the concept of intellectual freedom concerning the Internet,
- ii. investigate the available intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet in the selected libraries,
- iii. find out the librarians' awareness of intellectual freedom policy relating to the Internet,
- iv. establish the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom policy covering “Open Access” in relation to the intellectual freedom on the internet, and;
- v. identify the challenges of intellectual freedom associated with the use of internet materials based on the perception of librarians in selected university libraries in Kwara State.

Literature Review

Intellectual freedom and Intellectual freedom policy

Intellectual Freedom is a concept that cuts across every sphere of society, among politicians, academics, students, businessmen and even foreign experts. Intellectual freedom is defined in

many ways, but within the scope of this study, it can be seen as a person's right to hold a belief on any topic, and freedom to express one's thoughts in any way one would like. The origin of intellectual freedom can be traced back to Socrates, who believed in the value and benefits of free discussion. American Library Association (ALA) described Intellectual Freedom as the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction (ALA, 2016). ALA (2016) further explains that Intellectual Freedom provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any side of a question, cause or movement may be explored. This is in line with Ugwulebo & Luqman (n.d.) who opined that Intellectual freedom offers everyone the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes 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 concept of intellectual freedom, according to (Udua et.al, 2017), involves safeguarding the rights of all individuals to seek the types of information they want and to read anything they find interesting. Intellectual freedom is the basis for a democratic system, where everyone is expected to be a self-governor.

Intellectual freedom in Libraries

The role of Libraries in ensuring the Intellectual Freedom of their users and their society at large cannot be overemphasised. ALA, (2016) submits that libraries play a critical role in bridging information access gaps for these individuals. Libraries also ensure that the public can find the content of interest and learn the necessary skills to use information successfully. Libraries have long been providing an increasing proportion of resources in electronic formats, including Internet access generally, electronic databases, electronic journals, and electronic books (Rubel, 2014). Sutton (2001) maintained that all libraries, public or private, have the professional responsibility to uphold the right of their respective publics to access information. The researcher further stated that to a library, intellectual freedom takes the form of the right to receive ideas, that is, access to information. Since a library is first and foremost a place to access information, the principle of intellectual freedom becomes essential to the operation of the library. Society today has become part of an Information Age, creating and attempting to fill increasing demands for information resources. The primary purpose of an academic library is to select, acquire, and maintain, or provide timely access to, those information resources necessary to support the instructional, research, and developmental programs of the University.

Intellectual Freedom and the Internet

The Internet provides expanding opportunities for everyone to participate in the information society, but too many individuals face serious barriers to access (ALA, 2016). Bastian (2012) explained that through the professional aid of ALA and its Bill of Rights, libraries have usually been successful in affirming their right to provide unrestricted access to information. Over the years, since its inception in 1939 several versions, of the ALA Bill of Rights have emerged and still maintain its professional and moral support for libraries to engage in its struggle towards

providing unrestricted access to information. However, the battleground has moved from books to the Internet (Bastian, 2012). Jeanette (2012) noted that while the intellectual freedom issues relating to books are decreasing, the indefinite and unstructured nature of the Internet presents a more difficult challenge to those that would defend the principle of intellectual freedom. While there has been a veritable flood of information on social networking, user-generated content, web 2.0, and eBooks, very little of the conversation has addressed the intellectual freedom issues associated with these new technologies (Intellectual Freedom Committee Fundamentals of Intellectual Freedom Revised, 2014). This is why Jones, (2005) submitted that unconstrained access to information, regardless of national borders, has become a key issue for academic libraries since the rise of the Internet

The Intellectual freedom statements of ALA, (2005), on internet policy in the library indicate that those libraries that make content available on the Internet can continue to do so with the same constitutional protections that apply to the books on libraries. The vast democratic opportunities of the Internet merit full constitutional protection will also serve to protect libraries that provide their patrons with access to the Internet. The vast majority of Internet sites are informative and useful. Blocking/filtering software often blocks access to materials it is not designed to block. Filters are intended to respond to the preferences of parents making decisions for their children. Libraries are responsible for serving a broad and diverse community with different preferences and views. Blocking Internet sites is antithetical to library missions because it requires the library to limit information access.

Related Studies

Some available related studies have addressed something similar to the current study. For instance, Tella et al. (2021) examined the perception of librarians on combating the challenges of intellectual freedom. The target population for the 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 was developed for the collection of data. The results indicated that 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. The authors recommended that government should ensure that the Freedom of Information Bill (FOI) is passed to enable library patrons to 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.

Usman and Fakandu (2018) discussed the provision of electronic resources and free access to intellectual works which is widely recognised as one of the priorities in academic libraries. This paper adopted an exploratory method with an extensive literature review. The article critically explained the role and importance of academic libraries in providing electronic resources using

information and communication technology (ICT) facilities. Equally, it discussed the intellectual freedom and library bills of right for access to information resources and its interpretations. The study revealed that the emergence of ICT has repositioned the frontiers of academic libraries' resources, operations, and services as well as expectations of user access. The interpretation of intellectual freedom as a practiced principle in libraries, however, is not quite clear-cut. The free access to information via the internet and other information technologies today make it possible to maintain the status of intellectual freedom globally and also that academic libraries play a great role in achieving such goals.

Noh (2017) identified through literature analysis the extent of the relationship of the past research to the protection of personal information and privacy of library users. This study was conducted in 3 stages of literature analysis suggested by other researchers, including Powell (2005). First, it was found that collected literature was related to personal information and library user privacy. Second, the collected literature identified detailed subjects and core concepts. Third, the core subjects, main discussion points, and related examples shown in those papers are divided into 7 subgroups. The author concluded that the results would be useful for establishing library privacy policies and developing guidelines for librarians.

Oltman (2017) surveyed deans and directors of academic libraries about intellectual freedom. The survey found that most respondents said they rarely think about intellectual freedom because it was "somewhat" or "very" important in their libraries. Most did not have formal intellectual freedom policies; they often relied on statements from the American Library Association or other library organisations. Copyright/intellectual property, privacy, plagiarism, and academic freedom were the most important concerns related to intellectual freedom. Although this study shed some light on intellectual freedom in academic libraries, further works were expected to be done.

McNicols (2016) investigated the most significant censorship issues faced by UK school librarians and determined the factors that influence attitudes towards the issues. A questionnaire was designed and distributed online. The findings demonstrated that, overall, respondents were more likely to express support for intellectual freedom in theory than in practice. Statements that prompted the strongest pro-censorship responses related to access issues are labelling and filtering. Several librarians place significant emphasis on their ability, or right, to determine whether or not resources are included in the collection. There was evidence of a difference in practical application depending on whether librarians worked with pre-school children or were members of professional associations.

Zimmer (2014) reported findings from a new survey measuring librarians' views on privacy rights and protecting library users' privacy. The study built on a 2008 American Library Association survey assessing librarians' attitudes about privacy, provides important data that will help privacy advocates evaluate the state of privacy in the United States and libraries' role in protecting library users' privacy. Overall, the results indicate a high level of concern among respondents over information privacy and a desire to control access and use of personal information, but they also reflect some shifts in privacy

attitudes compared to the 2008 study. Implications are discussed for future advocacy and outreach by the American Library Association and related advocacy and educational groups.

Adeyemi and Eghe-ohenmwun (2011) in a review looked at internet filtering in the public library. It explored the rationale behind filtering, problems with the use of blocking or filtering software in libraries; and what libraries can do to promote access to the Internet and the steps the library can undertake to mitigate the risk of exposure to inappropriate information to its customers and itself.

From the review of available related studies, it was established that there are policies relating to information freedom, especially in some libraries and information centers. Literature review shows that the Intellectual Freedom Policy relating to the Internet exists but its application in Nigeria and specifically among academic libraries in Kwara State seems not to be practicable.

Methodology

Research Design

Due to the nature of the variables, research objectives/questions, as well as the type of data collected, the study adopts the descriptive approach of a social survey. According to Abdusalam (2016), the descriptive method describes, investigates and interprets events and ideas the way they are without any external manipulation. A survey was chosen for this study because it enables the researcher to collect large amounts of information about the opinion, practice and activities in the area of study.

Research Population

A population can simply be described as the entire number of the entity in a study area. Creswell and Poth (2018) explained that a population is a group of individuals with one characteristic or other in similitude to the work of the researcher. The population of this study comprises all universities in Kwara State. Based on the research focus, only “qualified” librarian as defined by the Librarian Registration Council was studied. The estimated number of professional librarians in Kwara State University is around sixteen (11), University of Ilorin twenty-six (24), Crown-hill University (2), Landmark University (7), Al-hikmah University (5) while the number of professional librarians in Summit is (2), Hence, the population of the study is fifty-one (51).

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Sample means a process of taking a particular quota from the general population (Salaria, 2012). Sample sizes are the actual number chosen to represent the population. A sample is a crucial issue in any quantitative research like this. A total enumeration method was used to involve all the 51 librarians in the six libraries that participated in the study.

Instrumentation

A researcher-designed questionnaire was used for the collection of data. The questionnaire was designed to reflect the objectives of the study. The choice of a questionnaire for the collection of data in this study was based on the fact that most quantitative study makes use of questionnaire for data collection. The questionnaire comprises of two sections (A and B). Section A contained the respondents' demographics such as gender, Faculty, age bracket, Academic level, religion, among others. Section B featured items based on the purpose of the study. A four-point Likert scale format was used for some of the items in the Questionnaire. This range from Strongly Agree (SA) [4], Agree (A) [3], Disagree (D) [2];, Strongly Disagree (SD) [1].

Validation of Instrument

Two (2) experts from the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Ilorin validated the research instrument to ensure it is standard enough for the collection of data in the study. The advice and suggestions given by the experts lead to the modification of the items in the questionnaire. All the items in the instrument were adjudged to be relevant to what was being measured thereby ensuring both the content and face validity of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire used for data collection, a test-retest method of two weeks intervals was embarked upon. Correlation between the test and the retest was done using Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and the correlation coefficient returned $r = 0.70$.

Procedure for Data Collection

The data was collected using self-administered copies of the questionnaire. On aggregate, it took the researchers two (2) weeks before the data collection process was completed. Permission was sought from the appropriate quarters in each of the libraries that took part in the study. The researchers moved around each of the libraries to get the instrument administered. The respondents were properly guided on how to respond to the items in the instrument. A 100 percent return rate was achieved as there was no record of any lost item.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data collected was analysed using frequency count, percentage.

Results

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Variables	Freq.	Percent
UNILORIN	24	47.1%
KWASU	11	21.6%
Landmark	7	13.7%

Name of University	Al-hikmah University	5	9.8%
	Summit University	2	3.9%
	Crown-hill University	2	3.9%
	Total	51	100.0%
Gender	Male	33	64.7%
	Female	18	35.3%
	TOTAL	51	100.0%
Highest Qualification	Bachelor Degree (BSc/BLIS/BLIT)	31	60.8%
	Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)	0	0.0%
	Masters Degree (MSc.)	19	37.3%
	Masters of Philosophy (M.Phil)	0	0.0%
	Doctor of Philosophy (Phd)	1	2.0%
Department in the Library	TOTAL	51	100.0%
	Circulation	8	15.7%
	Reference	9	17.6%
	Thesis & Dissertation	4	7.8%
	Documents	1	2.0%
	e-library	6	11.8%
	Serials	4	7.8%
	Cataloguing and Classification	8	15.7%
	Acquisition	5	9.8%
	Technical services	2	3.9%
	Chief Librarian	2	3.9%
	Reader's Service	2	3.9%
Age Bracket	TOTAL	51	100.0%
	< 30years	6	11.8%
	31-35years	8	15.7%
	36-40years	14	27.5%
	40-45years	14	27.5%
	46-50years	3	5.9%
	>50years	6	11.8%

As shown in Table 1, respondent cuts across six university libraries in Kwara state, Unilorin constitutes the bulk of the respondents with 24 (47.1%), KWASU 11 (21.6%), Landmark 7 (13.7%), Al-hikmah University 5 (9.8%), Summit University 2 (3.9%), Crown-hill University 2

(3.9%). On gender, the male has a frequency count of 64.7%) while the female has 18 (35.3%). On qualification, librarians with Bachelor's degree constituted the bulk of the respondents with 31 (60.8%); Master's degree 19 (37.3%); and Doctor of Philosophy 1 (2%). None of the respondents holds PGDE or M.Phil. The distribution of respondents by department in the library, reveal that circulation unit has 8 (15.7%), reference 9 (17.6%), thesis & dissertation 4 (7.8%), documents 1 (2%), e-library 6 (11.8%), serials 4 (7.8%), cataloguing and classification 8 (15.7%), acquisition 5 (9.8%), technical services 2 (3.9%), and reader's service 2 (3.9%). In terms of age, those less than the age of 30 years have a frequency count of 6 (11.8%); those between 31-35years are 8 (15.7%); 14 (27.5%) are between the age range of 36-40years, 14 (27.5%) fall within the age range of 40-45years; and 6 (11.8%) are above 50years.

Table 2: Librarians' Perception about the Concept of Intellectual Freedom Relating To the Internet

ITEMS	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
Access to electronic information services and networks	1 2.0%	3 5.9%	20 39.2%	27 52.9%	3.43	.700
Promote internet use by facilitating user access to the websites that meets user's interests	0 0.0%	1 2.0%	21 41.2%	29 56.9%	3.55	.541
Protect libraries that provide their patron access to the internet	0 0.0%	3 5.9%	17 33.3%	31 60.8%	3.55	.610
Using the internet as a privilege and not a right	0 0.0%	1 2.0%	17 33.3%	33 64.7%	3.63	.528
A move toward being free to find, consume and create information on the internet as oppose to being free from hindrances to intellectual freedom	0 0.0%	3 5.9%	15 29.4%	33 64.7%	3.59	.606

Key: SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree
(Source: Fieldwork, 2019)

It was gathered that many librarians perceived intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet as access to electronic information services and networks. This was indicated by 3.43 Mean values and 0.700 standard deviations. The results also revealed that the intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet is meant to promote internet use to facilitate user access to the websites that meet users' interests (\bar{x} =3.55, SD=0.541). Librarians also perceived that the intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet is to protect libraries that provide patrons'

access to the internet (\bar{x} =3.55, SD=0.610). The results also show that librarians perceived the intellectual freedom relating to the internet as using the internet as a privilege and not a right (\bar{x} =3.63, SD=0.528); and that it is for the users to be free to find, consume and create information on the internet as opposed to being hindrances to intellectual freedom (\bar{x} =3.59, SD=0.606). The results here imply that librarians perceived the intellectual freedom relating to the internet as using the internet as a privilege and not a right; and that it is for the users to be free to find, consume and create information on the internet as opposed to being hindrances to intellectual freedom.

Table 3: Availability of Intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet in selected libraries

ITEMS	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
Some policies govern the use of internet resources in my library	2 3.9%	3 5.9%	33 64.7%	13 25.5%	3.12	.683
There are policies in other Libraries that restrict users' access to certain internet resources	0 0.0%	5 9.8%	29 56.9%	17 33.3%	3.24	.619

The results in table 3 revealed that there are policies governing intellectual freedom on the internet in all the participating libraries. This was shown with the number of a librarian who agreed and strongly agreed to the two statements greater than the number that strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively. This result implies that policies are available in the libraries covered in the study on intellectual freedom on the internet.

Table 4: Librarians on the awareness of intellectual freedom policy relating to the Internet

Items	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	Std
I am aware of the intellectual freedom policy relating to the Internet	3 5.9%	2 3.9%	27 52.9%	19 37.3%	3.22	.783
We have a document in our library that detailed intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet.	1 2.0%	4 7.8%	33 64.7%	13 25.5%	3.14	.633
My library has sometimes organise a workshop where intellectual freedom on the internet was fully discussed.	0 0.0%	6 11.8%	25 49.0%	20 39.2%	3.27	.666
Over all, I am fully aware of the intellectual freedom relating to the internet.	0 0.0%	11 21.6%	30 58.8%	10 19.6%	2.98	.648

Key: *SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree*
(Source: Fieldwork, 2019)

The results in table 4 make it clear that librarians are aware of the intellectual freedom relating to the internet. This was shown with the percentage of strongly agreed and agreed to the statements higher the percentage of disagreed and strongly disagreed. This implies that librarians in the study are aware of intellectual freedom relating to the internet through, seminars and policy document in their library.

Table 5: Perception of librarian on intellectual freedom and “Open Access” in relation to the intellectual freedom on the internet

ITEMS					N=51	
	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
There is the freedom to seek and retrieve open-access information from the internet	0 0.0%	3 5.9%	33 64.7%	15 29.4%	3.24	.551
Open access can help open up access to intellectual freedom	2 3.9%	6 11.8%	34 66.7%	9 17.6%	2.98	.678
Intellectual freedom and access to information and open access are similar as both advocate for increased access to information	2 3.9%	3 5.9%	34 66.7%	12 23.5%	3.10	.671
Institutional repositories is a way of making intellectual content of an institution open access	1 2.0%	8 15.7%	30 58.8%	12 23.5%	3.04	.692
Open access allows users to gain access to the materials that they need to engage in true intellectual freedom	0 0.0%	3 5.9%	33 64.7%	15 29.4%	3.24	.551
Open access is a major way of ensuring intellectual freedom via the internet	0 0.0%	5 9.8%	36 70.6%	10 19.6%	3.10	.539

Key: SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree
(Source: Fieldwork, 2019)

As shown in Table 4, a considerable number of librarians indicated that there is freedom of being able to seek and receive all points of view without restriction with 3.24 Mean values and 0.551 standard deviations. Quite a number of the respondents indicated that open access can help open up access to intellectual freedom (\bar{x} =2.98, SD=0.678). Almost all of the respondents perceived that intellectual freedom and open access are similar because both advocates for increased access to information with 3.10 mean values and 0.671 standard deviations. Also, many of the respondents agreed that an institutional repository is a way of making intellectual contents of an institution open access. Nearly all the respondents noted that open access allows users to gain access to the materials that they need to engage in intellectual freedom (\bar{x} =3.24, SD=0.551). Lastly, a considerable number of respondents indicated that open access is a major way of ensuring intellectual freedom via the internet (\bar{x} =3.10, SD=0.539). The results imply that

librarians in this study have a good perception of intellectual freedom policy on Open Access in relation to intellectual freedom on the internet.

Table 6: Challenges of Intellectual Freedom Associated With The Use Of Internet Materials Base On The Perception Of Librarians

ITEMS	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
Privacy is a great challenge to intellectual freedom on the internet.	0 0.0%	7 13.7%	34 66.7%	10 19.6%	3.06	.580
Instigation of the growth of less-quality information resources online	0 0.0%	8 15.7%	31 60.8%	12 23.5%	3.08	.627
Increase in the number of Hungry authors because everybody wants to write	3 5.9%	14 27.5%	26 51.0%	8 15.7%	2.76	.790
Existence and growth of Closed Access information.	1 2.0%	6 11.8%	34 66.7%	10 19.6%	3.04	.631
Censorship of Internet Resources	0 0.0%	11 21.6%	30 58.8%	10 19.6%	2.98	.648
Prevalence of predatory journals and publishing	0 0.0%	5 9.8%	34 66.7%	12 23.5%	3.14	.566

Key: SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree
(Source: Fieldwork, 2019)

Table 5 shows the various challenges associated with intellectual freedom regarding the use of internet materials as perceived by librarians. Almost all items in this category were agreed to be the challenges associated with the use of internet materials. The challenges include Privacy (\bar{x} =3.06, SD=0.580); Growth of information resources of lesser quality online (\bar{x} =3.08, SD=0.627); Growth of restricted access to information (\bar{x} =3.04, SD=0.631). However, a limited number of respondents agreed that censorship of internet resources and an increase in the number of hungry authors were a challenge (\bar{x} =2.98, SD=0.648) and (\bar{x} =2.76, SD=0.790) respectively. This implies that the major challenges associated with intellectual freedom regarding the use of internet materials are the growth of information resources of lesser quality, piracy and limited access to information due to restrictions.

Discussion of Findings

Perception of Librarians on the concept of Intellectual Freedom in relation to the Internet

The findings show that the majority of academic librarians in Kwara State perceived intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet as access to electronic information services and networks. This agrees with the statement of ALA, (2016) that the Internet provides expanding opportunities for everyone to participate in the information society, thus promoting intellectual freedom. The result gathered on the perception of librarians on the most important intellectual freedom policy

in relation to the internet stretches that the policies must encompass users' access, protect the libraries, and educate the users on the use of the internet.

Available intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet in the selected libraries

The result shows some policies govern the use of internet resources in the selected libraries. This means that policies are available in the libraries covered in the study on intellectual freedom on the internet. The availability of policy also is in line with the position of ALA (2016) that library users must be aware of the right they have toward using the materials on the internet. The availability of the policy and the awareness of its existence is a reflection that librarians in this study are offering the right services to their users.

Perception of Librarians on the awareness of intellectual freedom policy relating to the Internet

The survey reveals that academic librarians in Kwara state have a good perception of the awareness of intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet. This finding agrees with the statement of Shannon Mills (2012) that all libraries have the mandate to support intellectual freedom. Also Giuseppe, Pescapé (2015) indication that censorship is not expected to be a barrier to Intellectual Freedom but should serve as a means of "controlling" and not "denying" access to information buttress the rationale for the demonstration of awareness by the respondents in this study. Perhaps this was why Yaya (2013) posited that a librarian's job is not to push censorship but to push for the unhindered freedom to receive and explore ideas. In other words, the demonstration of awareness of intellectual freedom relating to the internet is a reflection that libraries in this study housed the necessary and relevant materials that protect the right of the users.

Perception of librarian on intellectual freedom covering "Open Access" in relation to the intellectual freedom on the internet

The result gathered on the perception of librarians on intellectual freedom covering open access in relation to intellectual freedom on the internet shows that there is a close tie between intellectual freedom and open access. Intellectual freedom by default should entail the freedom to seek and receive all points of view without restriction (ALA, 2016). From the perception of the librarians, open access if well implemented is a tool to achieving the goal of intellectual freedom. It entails the removal of all obstacles that surround achieving intellectual freedom. This affirms the statements and findings of several scholars such as Tennant, Waldner, Jacques, Masuzzo, Collister and Hartgerink (2017). It also agrees with Anuradha, Gopakumar, and Baradol (2011) who indicated library should ensure access to open access resources.

Challenges of Intellectual Freedom associated with the use of internet materials based on the perception of librarians in selected university libraries in Kwara State

Growth in information resources of lesser quality, piracy and limited access to information due to restrictions are reported as challenges associated with intellectual freedom in relation to these of internet material. This corroborates the statements made by Qayyum, Riaz, Rehman, Ahmed, Tahir, Kazi, (2013) when they noted that there are access limitations to the traditional subscription of the journal. Access to some databases online often attracts charges. Another issue is the privacy of the user, similar to the findings of Alan (2014). The findings by Qayyum, Riaz, Rehman, Ahmed, Tahir, Kazi, (2013) noted that most critique on open access publications has been the sub-standard quality of the manuscripts being published, censorship of internet resources also support the findings of the current study. Also, Mills (2012) reports that the use of internet filters to limit websites, search engines, and collaborative tools to restrict students' access to the internet corroborates the current finding in this study.

Conclusion

Promoting Intellectual freedom is a crucial role of the library. In light of this, the study concluded that librarians perceived the intellectual freedom relating to the internet as using the internet as a privilege and not a right; and that it is for the users to be free to find, consume and create information on the internet as opposed to being hindrances to intellectual freedom. Policies are available in the libraries covered in the study on intellectual freedom on the internet. Librarians in the study are aware of intellectual freedom relating to the internet through, seminars and policy document in their library. Librarians demonstrated a good perception of intellectual freedom policy on Open Access in relation to intellectual freedom on the internet. The major challenges associated with intellectual freedom regarding the use of internet materials are the growth of information resources of lesser quality, piracy and limited access to information due to restrictions.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Various universities should disburse more funds to their libraries to subscribe to more sophisticated databases where librarians can get more information on intellectual freedom over the internet.
- ii. Orientation of all library staff by the library management on the essence and importance of intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet should always be conducted.
- iii. The intellectual freedom policy relating to the internet should be well spelled out for users to know their boundaries in the use of internet resources.

Suggestions for Further Studies

For further studies, the researcher suggests that other researchers embarking on research relating to Intellectual freedom policy on the internet should extend the study to cover other universities beyond Kwara State. Similarly, future research is called upon to go beyond using a self-reported scale for the collection of data to enable triangulation and generalisation of findings of the study to a larger population.

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