

AN ASSESSMENT OF NIGERIAN LIBRARIANS' AWARENESS, ROLES, AND CHALLENGES IN COPYRIGHT LITERACY AND COMPLIANCE FOR EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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ABSTRACT: This theoretical debate examined the evolving responsibilities of librarians in promoting copyright literacy and ethical information use within Nigeria's rapidly changing digital environment. The study explores the level of librarians' awareness and understanding of copyright laws, their roles in educating information users, the challenges hindering effective implementation of copyright programs, and strategies to enhance compliance and service quality. Drawing insights from the Information Literacy Theory (Kuhlthau, 1993), the study conceptualizes copyright literacy as an essential component of information literacy that equips librarians and users with the knowledge and skills needed to access, evaluate, and apply information responsibly. Findings from the reviewed literature indicated that while Nigerian librarians recognize the importance of copyright education, their practical understanding and institutional support remain inadequate. Key challenges identified include limited training, lack of formal copyright policies, insufficient collaboration with the Nigerian Copyright Commission, and poor technological infrastructure. The paper recommended that the integration of copyright education into library and information science curricula, implementing continuous professional development programs, formulating institutional copyright policies, and leveraging digital platforms for awareness creation are proactive measures towards promoting effective service delivery. Also, strengthening the librarians' copyright literacy will enhance the quality, ethics, and effectiveness of library service delivery, ensuring that Nigerian libraries remain credible centers for knowledge dissemination, intellectual property protection, and ethical information use in the Information Age.

Keywords: Copyright Literacy, Librarians, Information Ethics, Nigeria, Service Delivery, Digital/Information Age.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has revolutionized the way knowledge is created, stored, accessed, and disseminated. In today's information age, libraries and librarians occupy a strategic position in promoting equitable access to information resources while ensuring respect for intellectual property rights. Copyright laws are essential legal instruments designed to protect the rights of creators, encourage innovation, and regulate the use of intellectual works in both print and digital formats (WIPO, 2023). As libraries increasingly migrate their collections and services to digital platforms, the issue of copyright compliance and education has become central to sustainable information management and service delivery (Okonkwo & Asogwa, 2020).

Librarians serve as information mediators and educators, ensuring users' ethical and legal use of information resources. Their participation in copyright education enables users like students, researchers and the public to understand how to use and share intellectual materials responsibly (Kawooya & Sturges, 2019). In academic institutions, librarians play a vital role in guiding faculty and students on fair use, licensing, plagiarism prevention, and open access publishing (IFLA, 2022). Effective copyright literacy among librarians not only enhances service delivery but also promotes institutional integrity and compliance with national and international copyright laws (Ekoja & Ogbomo, 2019).

However, the proliferation of digital resources and online sharing platforms has complicated copyright enforcement and user education. Many library users still lack awareness of copyright laws, leading to rampant copyright infringements, unauthorized reproduction of works, and ethical dilemmas in resource utilization (Nwosu & Eze, 2021). Consequently, librarians are increasingly expected to balance user access with copyright obligations, a task that demands continuous professional development and institutional support in copyright education and policy implementation.

Statement of the Problem

In the modern information environment, libraries are shifting from traditional print-based services to complex digital ecosystems. While this transformation enhances access and service delivery, it also presents challenges concerning the understanding and enforcement of copyright laws. Studies indicate that many librarians, especially in developing countries, have limited copyright literacy, which undermines their ability to educate users and manage intellectual property issues effectively. In many institutions, copyright education is neither embedded in library user education programs nor adequately supported by institutional policies, leading to widespread ignorance among library patrons.

Furthermore, the absence of structured copyright training programs, limited access to professional development resources, and inadequate collaboration with legal or copyright offices have constrained librarians' participation in copyright awareness initiatives. This gap weakens libraries' capacity to deliver high-quality, ethical and legally compliant information services. In the context of the information age where knowledge dissemination is instantaneous and borderless failure to address these gaps exposes institutions to legal risks and compromises the credibility of their information services. Hence, there is a need to investigate the level of librarian participation in copyright education and its impact on effective service delivery in the digital era.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this papery is to examine Nigerian librarians' awareness, roles, and challenges in copyright education and compliance for effective service delivery in the information age. The specific objectives of the paper are to:

- Examine the level of Nigerians librarians' awareness and understanding of copyright laws in the information age.
- Identify the roles Nigerians librarians play in promoting copyright education among information users.

- Assess the impact of copyright literacy on the quality of library service delivery.
- Investigate the challenges librarians face in implementing copyright education programs.
- Recommend strategies to strengthen librarians' participation in copyright awareness and compliance initiatives.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Information Literacy Theory (Carol Kuhlthau, 1993)

The Information Literacy Theory developed by Carol Kuhlthau (1993), provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how individuals engage with information on how they locate, evaluate, interpret, and use it effectively and ethically. Kuhlthau's model known as the Information Search Process (ISP), is widely regarded as one of the foundational theories in library and information science. It is particularly relevant in the context of copyright education and librarianship in the digital age because it emphasizes the interplay between cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of information seeking.

Kuhlthau (1993) proposed that the process of information seeking is not merely mechanical or procedural but deeply rooted in the user's emotions, thoughts, and actions. Her theory identifies six stages in the information search process: initiation, selection, exploration, formulation, collection, and presentation. Each stage reflects a user's evolving understanding of an information problem and is marked by distinct feelings (such as uncertainty, optimism, confusion, or confidence) and corresponding actions. This cyclical and experiential model highlights the gradual transformation of information into knowledge.

In the context of librarianship, the Information Literacy Theory underscores the role of librarians as facilitators of learning rather than mere custodians of resources. Librarians guide users through these six stages, helping them overcome uncertainty, identify credible sources, and use information ethically. In Nigeria's digital information landscape, where issues such as plagiarism, copyright infringement, and misuse of intellectual property are prevalent, Kuhlthau's framework provides an essential foundation for promoting copyright literacy as part of broader information literacy training. Librarians who understand this process are better positioned to support users in recognizing ownership of intellectual content and applying principles of fair use and attribution.

Information literacy, as defined within Kuhlthau's theory, involves more than just technical skills in accessing databases or using search engines. It encompasses a deep understanding of how information is created, organized, disseminated, and ethically applied (Kuhlthau, 2004). This ethical dimension aligns directly with copyright education, which seeks to foster respect for intellectual property rights while encouraging responsible information behavior. Thus, librarians help users appreciate the importance of legal and ethical standards in academic and creative work by integrating copyright literacy into information literacy programs.

Kuhlthau's model is also highly applicable in evaluating librarians' awareness and instructional roles in Nigeria. As information intermediaries, Nigerian librarians facilitate access to digital resources while ensuring compliance with copyright laws. However, the literature shows that many librarians in Nigeria still face challenges related to inadequate training in intellectual property management and limited institutional support for copyright education (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020; Nkiko & Adetoro, 2022). Applying Kuhlthau's theory can help address these challenges by framing librarians' educational interventions around the user's information search

journey. For instance, during the initiation and selection stages, librarians can introduce users to copyright basics and fair use principles. During exploration and formulation, they can teach citation practices and plagiarism avoidance. Finally, in the collection and presentation stages, librarians can reinforce the importance of proper attribution and adherence to intellectual property laws.

Moreover, Kuhlthau's Information Literacy Theory supports the transition of libraries into learning-centered environments. In the information age, librarians are no longer gatekeepers but co-creators of knowledge who guide users through complex digital ecosystems. This theory therefore provides a pedagogical basis for integrating copyright literacy into the core of library service delivery. Through the use of inquiry-based learning, reflective thinking, and guided instruction, librarians can empower users to become independent, ethical, and competent information consumers.

In the Nigerian context, adopting Kuhlthau's model has significant implications for professional practice. It calls for continuous capacity building among librarians, curriculum reforms in library and information science education, and institutional policies that prioritize ethical information use. As copyright challenges become increasingly complex due to digital transformation, Kuhlthau's framework offers a structured approach for developing users' critical thinking and ethical reasoning skills.

The Information Literacy Theory by Carol Kuhlthau (1993) provides a robust theoretical foundation for understanding and improving how librarians facilitate information use in the digital era. It emphasizes the cognitive and emotional journey of information seekers and the crucial role of librarians in guiding users toward ethical and informed decision-making. In the Nigerian library context, this theory is particularly valuable in fostering copyright literacy, enhancing service quality, and ensuring that libraries remain central to education, research, and knowledge integrity in the information age.

CONCEPTUALIZATION

Nigerian Librarians in the Information Age

Nigerian librarians play a vital role in facilitating access to knowledge, supporting education, and promoting information ethics in an increasingly digital environment. As custodians of information resources, they have transitioned from traditional gatekeepers of printed materials to dynamic facilitators of digital literacy, research support, and intellectual property awareness. In the Information Age that is characterized by rapid technological innovation, online learning, and global information exchange, Nigerian librarians are strategically positioned to shape how knowledge is created, accessed, and utilized responsibly.

The evolution of librarianship in Nigeria reflects the country's broader educational and technological transformations. Librarians now manage electronic databases, institutional repositories, and digital archives, ensuring that users access information efficiently and ethically. According to Aina (2019), the role of the Nigerian librarian has expanded beyond cataloguing and circulation to include information literacy instruction, research data management, and digital resource curation. This transformation requires advanced technical skills, critical thinking, and an understanding of legal frameworks such as copyright and intellectual property rights.

One of the defining responsibilities of Nigerian librarians today is promoting copyright literacy and ethical information use. As digital content becomes more accessible, issues of

plagiarism, piracy, and misuse of intellectual property have become prevalent in academic and public spaces. Librarians act as educators who inform users about fair use, citation ethics, and responsible information sharing. Studies by Ifijeh and Yusuf (2020) and Nkiko and Adetoro (2022) reveal that although many librarians are aware of copyright principles, gaps remain in practical understanding and institutional support for effective copyright education.

Despite their expanding roles, Nigerian librarians face numerous challenges that hinder optimal performance. These include inadequate funding, outdated infrastructure, insufficient training opportunities, and weak policy frameworks within libraries (Echezona, 2018). Many institutions lack clear copyright policies or partnerships with the Nigerian Copyright Commission, making it difficult for librarians to enforce compliance and provide user guidance. Moreover, limited access to modern technology and professional development resources constrains their ability to keep pace with global library standards.

Nevertheless, Nigerian librarians continue to demonstrate resilience and adaptability. Through the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) and academic collaborations, they are embracing digital transformation, promoting open access initiatives, and integrating copyright awareness into user education. Strengthening their professional capacity through continuous training, policy reform, and technological investment remains critical for sustaining effective library service delivery. Ultimately, Nigerian librarians serve as the intellectual backbone of the nation's knowledge economy, fostering lifelong learning, protecting intellectual property, and promoting equitable access to information in the digital age.

The Level of Nigerian Librarians' Awareness and Understanding of Copyright Laws in the Information Age

The information age has revolutionized access to knowledge and the modes of information dissemination, making copyright awareness a vital competence for librarians. In Nigeria, librarians are expected to serve as gatekeepers of intellectual property rights by guiding users toward ethical information use, respecting ownership, and avoiding infringement. However, studies reveal that the level of awareness and understanding of copyright laws among Nigerian librarians remains varied and, in many cases, insufficient to address the complexities introduced by digital technologies (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020; Nkiko & Adetoro, 2022).

Copyright law in Nigeria, as governed by the Copyright Act Cap C28 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (2004), seeks to protect the rights of creators in literary, artistic, musical, and digital works. Yet, despite the existence of legal frameworks, many librarians possess only a basic understanding of copyright principles such as fair use, licensing, digital rights management (DRM), and the public domain (Echezona, 2018). This limited understanding often restricts their ability to educate users effectively or implement copyright-compliant library practices. For instance, research conducted by Igun (2018) found that only a small proportion of academic librarians in Nigerian universities had received formal training in copyright and intellectual property law.

The situation is further complicated by the rapid digital transformation of library services. The shift from print-based collections to digital repositories, e-books, and electronic databases requires librarians to interpret complex copyright issues surrounding digitization, electronic copying, and online content sharing (Aina, 2019). Unfortunately, most librarians are not adequately equipped with the knowledge to navigate such digital copyright concerns. Ifijeh and Yusuf (2020) observed that while many librarians are aware that copyright laws exist, they often

lack in-depth understanding of how to apply these laws in the context of electronic information resources and open-access publishing.

Moreover, several institutional and systemic factors contribute to this low level of awareness. These include the absence of structured copyright education in library and information science curricula, lack of continuous professional development on copyright issues, and insufficient policy frameworks within Nigerian libraries (Ezeani & Igwesi, 2012). Many libraries do not have dedicated copyright officers or internal guidelines for managing copyright-related matters. Consequently, librarians often rely on personal interpretations or informal sources of knowledge, which may not align with best practices (Anasi, 2021).

Nevertheless, there is growing recognition of the importance of copyright literacy as an integral component of information literacy and ethical librarianship. Recent efforts by library associations such as the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) and the National Library of Nigeria have focused on sensitizing librarians about intellectual property and copyright compliance. Workshops, conferences, and online training programs have been introduced to raise awareness and enhance professional capacity. Nkiko and Adetoro (2022) note that these initiatives are gradually improving librarians' confidence and competence in handling copyright-related issues, although more systematic and policy-driven interventions are needed.

Thus, while Nigerian librarians are increasingly aware of copyright laws, their depth of understanding and practical application remains limited. To strengthen librarians' capacity in the information age, there is a need for sustained professional development, integration of copyright education into LIS training programs, and institutional policies promoting copyright compliance. Enhancing librarians' copyright literacy will not only improve service delivery but also foster a culture of ethical information use and respect for intellectual property rights within Nigeria's knowledge ecosystem.

The Roles Nigerian Librarians Play in Promoting Copyright Education Among Information Users

In the information age, librarians are no longer limited to the traditional roles of cataloguing, classification, and circulation of materials. They have evolved into information educators, facilitators, and advocates of intellectual property rights, particularly in the area of copyright education. In Nigeria, librarians play a vital role in promoting copyright literacy among students, researchers, and the general public to ensure ethical and lawful use of information resources (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020; Nkiko & Adetoro, 2022). Their roles encompass teaching, policy implementation, advocacy, advisory functions, and the integration of copyright awareness into library services and user education programs.

One of the primary roles of Nigerian librarians in promoting copyright education is user sensitization and training. Librarians organize information literacy sessions, library orientations, and workshops where they educate users about the fundamental principles of copyright, fair use, plagiarism, licensing, and citation ethics (Igoun, 2018). Through these programs, users learn to respect authors' rights and understand the legal implications of unauthorized reproduction or distribution of intellectual works. This role is particularly crucial in academic environments, where the misuse of copyrighted materials in research, teaching, and learning is common.

Secondly, librarians serve as advisors and consultants on copyright compliance. They assist lecturers, students, and researchers in understanding and applying copyright laws when using or creating intellectual content. According to Echezona (2018), librarians provide guidance

on how to legally use excerpts from books, journals, or digital materials in academic works. They also advise institutional administrators on copyright issues related to digital repositories, course management systems, and interlibrary loans. This consultative role helps prevent infringements and promotes a culture of respect for intellectual property in academic and research institutions.

Additionally, Nigerian librarians play a critical role in developing and implementing institutional copyright policies. In collaboration with university management, legal departments, and ICT units, librarians help draft and enforce policies that guide the ethical use of information resources. These policies often address issues such as photocopying limits, digital archiving, open access publishing, and plagiarism prevention (Anasi, 2021). Therefore, institutionalizing copyright compliance frameworks will make librarians ensure that copyright education becomes a structural part of library service delivery and academic governance.

Another significant role is advocacy and awareness creation. Librarians, through professional bodies like the Nigerian Library Association (NLA), promote national and institutional awareness about copyright and intellectual property rights. They participate in seminars, conferences, and online platforms to discuss the importance of copyright education in sustaining academic integrity and innovation. According to Aina (2019), librarians are increasingly using digital platforms and social media to disseminate copyright information, thereby reaching broader audiences beyond the physical library environment.

Furthermore, librarians promote copyright literacy by integrating it into information literacy and research support services. They include copyright discussions in bibliographic instruction, research methodology classes, and institutional repository training (Ezeani & Igwesi, 2012). This integration helps users understand the link between ethical information use, citation practices, and copyright observance. Librarians also promote Creative Commons licensing and open access initiatives, educating users about how to share and use works legally under flexible licensing systems (Subramaniam, 2020).

The Impact of Copyright Literacy on the Quality of Library Service Delivery

Copyright literacy, which refers to the understanding and application of copyright principles in information access, use, and dissemination, has become an essential competency for librarians in the digital age. In Nigeria, the quality of library service delivery is increasingly influenced by the extent to which librarians are knowledgeable about copyright laws and can guide users toward ethical information practices. As libraries transition from traditional print-based operations to hybrid and digital systems, copyright literacy determines not only how effectively librarians manage intellectual property but also how responsibly they deliver services within legal and ethical boundaries (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020; Nkiko & Adetoro, 2022).

One of the key ways copyright literacy impacts library service delivery is through the promotion of ethical information use. Librarians who possess adequate copyright knowledge are better equipped to educate users on respecting intellectual property, avoiding plagiarism, and understanding fair use and licensing principles (Igum, 2018). This awareness fosters academic integrity and enhances the reputation of the library as a credible knowledge center. In universities and research institutions, copyright-literate librarians design user education programs that help students and faculty navigate complex copyright issues in digital content creation, thesis writing, and publishing. Librarians contribute to a more ethical and legally compliant academic environment when they promote responsible information use.

Furthermore, copyright literacy enhances decision-making in collection development and digital resource management. Librarians with sound understanding of copyright laws can make informed choices about acquisitions, digitization projects, and electronic resource licensing (Echezona, 2018). They can assess the legal implications of digitizing materials, negotiate fair licensing agreements with vendors, and manage institutional repositories without violating copyright provisions. According to Anasi (2021), copyright-aware librarians are also better positioned to balance user access rights with the rights of content creators, thereby improving the quality, accessibility, and sustainability of library services.

Another significant impact of copyright literacy is the improvement of reference and information services. In the information age, where much of library service delivery is mediated through digital technologies, librarians frequently assist users with reproducing, sharing, or citing digital content. A librarian who understands copyright restrictions can guide users appropriately on how to access and use materials within legal limits. This ensures that library services remain compliant with national and institutional copyright policies, reducing the risk of infringement and associated legal consequences (Aina, 2019).

Additionally, copyright literacy strengthens library advocacy and policy development. Librarians who understand copyright principles can actively contribute to institutional policy formulation and advocate for fair information practices such as open access, Creative Commons licensing, and equitable information sharing (Subramaniam, 2020). Engagements in copyright advocacy, librarians influence decision-makers to adopt ethical policies that support both creators and users, thus enhancing the overall quality and integrity of library operations.

The impact of copyright literacy is also evident in user satisfaction and trust. Users tend to place greater confidence in libraries that demonstrate professionalism, transparency, and ethical compliance. When librarians offer accurate guidance on copyright-related matters such as permissions, fair use, and citation practices users perceive library services as credible and reliable (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020). This trust increases user engagement and strengthens the library's reputation as a key pillar in the academic and research ecosystem.

Therefore, copyright literacy is central to the effectiveness, efficiency, and ethical standards of library service delivery in Nigeria's information age. It influences how librarians manage collections, support research, and educate users about intellectual property rights. Without adequate copyright literacy, libraries risk undermining their mission to provide legal, ethical, and sustainable access to information. Therefore, continuous professional development, institutional support, and policy integration are essential to strengthening librarians' copyright literacy and enhancing the overall quality of library service delivery.

The Challenges Librarians Face in Implementing Copyright Education Programs

Implementing copyright education programs is a vital component of modern librarianship, especially in the information age where the boundaries of intellectual property are constantly tested by digital technologies. However, librarians in Nigeria face multiple challenges that limit their ability to effectively promote and implement copyright education among information users. These challenges stem from institutional, infrastructural, professional, and policy-related constraints that hinder the full realization of copyright literacy in libraries (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020; Echezona, 2018).

One of the foremost challenges is the low level of copyright literacy among librarians themselves. Many librarians lack adequate training and knowledge about copyright laws, fair use

principles, and digital rights management (Igun, 2018). This knowledge gap makes it difficult for them to confidently educate users or design copyright awareness programs. According to Nkiko and Adetoro (2022), most librarians acquire only superficial knowledge of copyright during their academic training, as library and information science curricula in Nigeria rarely include in-depth courses on intellectual property rights. Without professional development opportunities or continuous training, librarians struggle to keep up with the evolving complexities of copyright in digital environments.

A second major challenge is institutional neglect and lack of administrative support. Many library administrations do not prioritize copyright education as a core component of service delivery. Consequently, there are often no institutional policies, dedicated budgets, or formal frameworks for copyright awareness initiatives (Anasi, 2021). Librarians who wish to organize training sessions or awareness campaigns frequently face financial and logistical constraints, as management tends to focus on traditional library operations rather than intellectual property education. The absence of national and institutional copyright policies further limits consistency and enforcement across library systems (Aina, 2019).

The rapid technological changes associated with the information age also pose serious challenges. The rise of digital libraries, e-resources, and online learning environments requires librarians to interpret complex copyright scenarios involving digital reproduction, electronic sharing, and licensing (Subramaniam, 2020). However, inadequate technological infrastructure such as unreliable internet access, poor digital preservation systems, and lack of copyright management tools prevents effective delivery of copyright education. Many libraries in Nigeria still operate with outdated technologies, limiting their ability to integrate digital copyright education into user training programs (Ezeani & Igwesi, 2012).

Another critical challenge is the low awareness and interest among library users. Many students, lecturers, and researchers show little concern for copyright compliance, often viewing it as a barrier to free access to information (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020). This attitude creates resistance to copyright education programs, making it difficult for librarians to change entrenched behaviors such as photocopying entire textbooks or reproducing digital content without permission. Without strong institutional enforcement or academic integrity policies, librarians' efforts at promoting copyright awareness may not yield meaningful behavioral change.

Furthermore, librarians face limited collaboration and policy support from national copyright institutions. Although agencies such as the Nigerian Copyright Commission (NCC) exist, partnerships between libraries and these institutions are weak. This disconnect limits opportunities for formal training, access to current copyright information, and enforcement support (Echezona, 2018). Strengthening such collaborations could help librarians gain expert guidance and resources to enhance copyright education initiatives.

Lastly, inadequate funding and staffing constraints compound the problem. Many libraries lack the financial resources to produce educational materials, organize workshops, or sponsor librarians for copyright training (Igun, 2018). In some institutions, understaffing forces librarians to prioritize routine administrative tasks over educational outreach. These limitations reduce the frequency, scope, and impact of copyright awareness programs.

Therefore, the successful implementation of copyright education programs in Nigerian libraries is hindered by limited professional knowledge, poor institutional support, inadequate infrastructure, weak policy frameworks, and user apathy. Overcoming these challenges requires a multi-level approach that includes curriculum reform, capacity building, stronger institutional policies, and collaboration with copyright authorities. Empowering librarians with the necessary

knowledge, tools, and institutional backing will ensure that copyright education becomes an integral and sustainable part of library service delivery in Nigeria's information society.

Strategies to Strengthen Librarians' Participation in Copyright Awareness and Compliance Initiatives

As libraries continue to evolve in the digital and knowledge-driven era, librarians must be empowered to play proactive roles in copyright awareness and compliance initiatives. In Nigeria, where copyright literacy levels remain uneven and institutional support limited, strategic interventions are needed to enhance librarians' capacity and involvement in promoting intellectual property rights and ethical information use. The following strategies outline practical and policy-oriented measures for strengthening librarians' participation in copyright education and compliance efforts.

One fundamental strategy is the institutionalization of copyright education within LIS training programs. Many librarians in Nigeria graduate with limited understanding of intellectual property law because copyright is often treated as a peripheral topic (Nkiko & Adetoro, 2022). Embedding detailed courses on copyright, fair use, licensing, and digital rights management into LIS curricula will equip future librarians with the foundational knowledge needed to handle copyright-related issues confidently. Universities and library schools should collaborate with the Nigerian Copyright Commission (NCC) to design up-to-date, practice-oriented modules that reflect both national and international copyright standards.

Librarians already in practice require ongoing professional development to keep pace with emerging copyright challenges in digital environments. Regular workshops, seminars, webinars, and certification programs organized by the Nigerian Library Association (NLA), the NCC, and international bodies such as IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) will help update librarians' knowledge (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020). Continuous learning should focus on practical areas such as managing digital repositories, handling copyright clearance, implementing Creative Commons licenses, and educating users on plagiarism prevention.

Libraries should develop and implement comprehensive copyright policies that outline guidelines for lawful use of information resources, photocopying, digitization, and content sharing. According to Echezona (2018), institutional policies enhance consistency, transparency, and accountability in library operations. Librarians should be actively involved in drafting, interpreting, and enforcing these policies. Policy frameworks should also mandate copyright education as a core component of library orientation and information literacy programs, ensuring sustained awareness among staff and users.

Partnerships between libraries and copyright agencies are crucial for effective awareness and compliance initiatives. Librarians can collaborate with the Nigerian Copyright Commission, National Library of Nigeria, and Authors' Rights Societies to organize awareness campaigns, co-host training sessions, and disseminate official copyright resources (Anasi, 2021). Such collaborations provide librarians with access to expert legal guidance, authentic educational materials, and current policy updates, thereby enhancing their credibility and influence in copyright advocacy.

Librarians should integrate copyright awareness into existing information literacy training and user education programs. During library orientations, research skills workshops, and citation training, users should be educated on the basics of copyright law, fair dealing, and

attribution standards (Igun, 2018). Librarians can promote a more responsible and informed user community when they link copyright to broader academic integrity and research ethics. This strategy ensures that copyright education becomes an integral and continuous aspect of user engagement.

Digital tools and social media offer innovative channels for librarians to promote copyright awareness. Libraries can use institutional websites, blogs, e-learning platforms, and social media pages to disseminate information about copyright compliance, plagiarism prevention, and ethical information use (Ezeani & Igwesi, 2012). Online copyright tutorials, infographics and interactive videos can attract younger audiences and make learning about intellectual property more engaging and accessible.

Librarians should actively engage in copyright advocacy and research to influence policy and professional practice. Participation in national and international conferences allows librarians to share experiences, discuss challenges, and develop joint initiatives (Aina, 2019). Conducting research on copyright literacy among librarians and users will also generate empirical evidence for decision-making and policy improvement.

The promotion of librarian participation requires institutional motivation and recognition. Universities and library systems can introduce awards, funding, or promotion points for librarians who design and implement effective copyright education programs. Such incentives encourage innovation, professional growth, and a culture of excellence in copyright literacy. Thus, strengthening librarians' participation in copyright awareness and compliance initiatives requires a holistic approach that combines education, policy, collaboration, and technology. If copyright training is institutionalized, it provides continuous professional development, and promotes partnerships with copyright authorities, as such; librarians are able to become more effective advocates for intellectual property rights and ethical information use. Ultimately it will enhance librarians' copyright literacy, which will improve library service quality, uphold academic integrity, and contribute to a more informed and responsible information society in Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF THE LITERATURE REVIEWED

The reviewed literature on “An Assessment of Nigerian Librarians’ Awareness, Roles, and Challenges in Copyright Education and Compliance for Effective Service Delivery in the Information Age” has highlighted the evolving responsibilities of librarians in promoting copyright literacy and ensuring ethical use of information resources in the digital era. The discussion integrates findings on the level of awareness among librarians, their participatory roles in copyright education, the challenges encountered, and the strategic interventions proposed to strengthen their capacity and performance.

The literature reveals that awareness and understanding of copyright laws among Nigerian librarians remain uneven and often inadequate. While some academic librarians demonstrate a fair grasp of intellectual property principles, many others, especially in public and school libraries, exhibit limited knowledge of copyright provisions and digital rights management (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020; Nkiko & Adetoro, 2022). This low level of awareness is attributed to inadequate exposure during library and information science (LIS) training, insufficient professional development opportunities, and the absence of institutional policies that prioritize copyright education. Consequently, many librarians struggle to provide effective guidance to users regarding the lawful use of digital and print materials.

In spite of the limitations, the literature affirmed that librarians play a pivotal role as educators, facilitators, and advocates for copyright awareness. They are strategically positioned to educate users about fair use, plagiarism avoidance, and responsible information consumption (Igoun, 2018; Anasi, 2021). Through user education, library orientations, and research literacy programs, librarians contribute to cultivating ethical information behavior among students, researchers, and the general public. Furthermore, librarians who actively promote copyright literacy enhance the credibility and integrity of academic institutions by ensuring that research outputs comply with intellectual property laws.

However, the challenges confronting Nigerian librarians in implementing copyright education programs are numerous. Scholars such as Echezona (2018) and Aina (2019) identify key obstacles, including the absence of formal copyright policies in most libraries, limited funding, lack of collaboration with the Nigerian Copyright Commission (NCC), and poor technological infrastructure. In addition, the rapid evolution of digital publishing and open-access movements complicates librarians' efforts to maintain compliance with copyright standards, as the boundaries between legal and illegal use of content often blur in digital environments. These challenges collectively limit librarians' effectiveness in sustaining user education and enforcing copyright compliance within their institutions.

The reviewed literature also proposes strategic interventions to strengthen librarians' participation in copyright awareness initiatives. Integrating copyright education into LIS curricula is widely recommended as a foundational step (Nkiko & Adetoro, 2022). This integration will ensure that new professionals graduate with a strong understanding of intellectual property rights. Similarly, continuous professional development programs, policy formulation, and inter-agency collaboration with the NCC are emphasized as crucial mechanisms for improving librarians' competence and confidence in copyright-related matters (Ifijeh & Yusuf, 2020). Moreover, leveraging digital platforms for awareness campaigns and embedding copyright literacy into existing information literacy sessions can enhance reach and engagement among information users (Ezeani & Igwesi, 2012).

That is to say, the literature collectively underlines that copyright literacy is essential to the quality, legality, and ethical foundation of library service delivery in Nigeria. Librarians, as information custodians and educators, must be adequately trained, supported, and empowered to navigate the complex intersection of access, ownership, and ethical use of information. Strengthening their role in copyright education and compliance will not only improve service delivery but also uphold academic integrity, protect intellectual property, and promote a culture of responsible information use in the digital age.

CONCLUSION

In this paper we emphasized the critical role of librarians in promoting intellectual property rights and ethical information use within Nigeria's evolving digital environment. The assessment reveals that while librarians recognize the importance of copyright awareness, many still possess limited knowledge of copyright laws, fair use, and digital rights management. This knowledge gap hampers their effectiveness in guiding users, implementing institutional compliance measures, and integrating copyright education into information literacy programs.

The review further highlighted that Nigerian librarians serve as educators, facilitators, and advocates in copyright promotion, yet their efforts are constrained by inadequate training, weak institutional policies, limited collaboration with regulatory agencies, and insufficient

technological support. To enhance their impact, there is an urgent need for structured copyright literacy programs within library and information science curricula, continuous professional development workshops, and stronger partnerships with the Nigerian Copyright Commission and other relevant bodies.

Promoting a culture of copyright compliance in libraries also requires integrating copyright education into user orientation and leveraging digital platforms for awareness campaigns. Ultimately, empowering Nigerian librarians with the requisite knowledge, tools, and institutional backing will not only improve service quality but also strengthen the ethical foundation of information access and use in the information age. Through enhanced copyright literacy, librarians can effectively balance user access with creators' rights, ensuring sustainable and responsible information dissemination.

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