



Librarians' Utilization of Intellectual Property Protection Rights (IPPR) and its Challenges in Public Universities in Southern Nigeria

CHARLES EJESSEI ERUANGA

Benson Idahosa University, Benin City, Nigeria

JAMES ETINOSA OMWANGHE

University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria

Abstract. This study examined Librarians utilization of Intellectual Property Protection Rights (IPPR) in public universities in Southern Nigeria. The mixed method of research techniques was adopted for data collection. A population of 327 was used with complete enumeration. The results showed that there were perceived usefulness of IPPR to librarians ($x = 3.26$) and challenges of IPPR administration ($x = 2.99$). The study concluded that Librarian utilization of IPPR is necessary and there is need for proper administration of IPPR which will reduce the rate of piracy and plagiarism towards research activities, allocated time for research productivity in the public universities, sensitization of copyright laws, cooperation of the research teams, sustainability support, provision of research information and authorization for external research play a greater role in enhancing the librarian utilization of IPPR in public universities in Southern Nigeria.

1. Introduction

Intellectual Property Protection Rights (IPPR) is one of the institutions that are responsible for promoting the guidelines on creative scholarly writing and protecting it against any form of misuse by other researchers. Utilization of IPPR will create a smooth platform for librarians to have real enthusiasm for originality and creativity, they need to exhibit and improve their potentials in writing quality research. Librarians' quest for enhanced productivity could be destroyed if not properly investigated and controlled.

Intellectual is involving a person's ability to think and to understand ideas and information. An intellectual spends a lot of time studying and thinking about ideas

while property is something that belongs to someone and it is physically represented. Intellectual property, therefore, is one's idea that is given as a tangible substance or object. It is a legal right which comes as a result of the intellectual activity in industries, institutions and so on. It is an idea that is actionable. Mouritsen and Moerman (2006) saw intellectual property as an abstract object but WIPO defined intellectual property in this form:

“Intellectual property protects products of the human mind, such as invention, literary and artistic work, symbols, names, images and designs used in commerce. Intellectual property comprises the areas of patent, trademarks, industrial designs, and geographical indications of source and copyright, which include literary and artistic works. Rights related to copyrights include those of performing artist in their performance, producers of phonograms in their recordings and those broadcasters in their radio and television programmes (WIPO, 1996: p.21).”

There are two main reasons why intellectual property is protected. The first is to give statutory expression to the moral and economic rights of creators in their creations and the right of the public to access these creations. The second is to promote, deliberately the act of Government policy, creativity, dissemination and application of its results and to encourage fair trading which would contribute to economic and social development. Intellectual property law aims at safeguarding creators and other producers of intellectual goods and services by granting them certain time limit rights to control the use of these productions.

In July 1967 in Stockholm, the convention establishing the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) concluded that intellectual property shall include the following rights relating to: “Literary, artistic and scientific works, Performances of performing artists, phonograms and broadcasts, Inventions in all fields of human endeavour, Scientific discovering, Industrial designs, Trademarks, service marks and commercial names and designations, Protection against unfair competition and all other rights resulting from intellectual activity in the industrial scientific, literary or artistic field (WIPO, 2004:p.21).”

IPR are customarily divided into two main areas: copyright and its related rights as well as rights to industrial property. The copyright is the rights of authors of article/books as well as right of artistic works that may take in form of music composed, video, and computer software/programs developed among others. These rights are protected by copyright, for a minimum period of 50 years after the death of the author(s). The related rights to copyright which include rights of actors, singers and musicians as well as producers of phonograms-sound recordings and broadcasting organizations are also protected by copyright. One of the primary social objectives of protecting the copyright and its related rights is to encourage and reward creative works.

Former (2010) proposed that the difference between copyrights and all other major aspects of Intellectual property lies in the psychological finding on creativity. He went on to state that if the goal of copyrights and patent laws is to provide incentives to produce creative works, then it is worth looking to the psychological literature that illustrate the process by which scientists and artists actually create and by which individuals appreciate creative works.

The level of participation of Nigerian universities in the new global knowledge order is, in part, a function of their resourcefulness in innovation and, by extension, their strategic engagement with IPRs. Equally, the ability of universities to optimise the benefits of these technologies is largely dependent on their IP laws and overall knowledge governance strategy. Consequently, Nigerian universities have been put under pressure by developed nations to carry out a holistic enforcement of IP laws. This, they claim, will protect innovations in the research and publications that are produced by these institutions from illegal imitation and copying. However, the concern for the Nigerian universities is the social-economic implications of the implementation of such IP regimes in their respective universities and their

impact on development. Such ‘lucrative’ offers in exchange for IPRs in the Nigerian universities, according to some developing countries, are in view of the benefits to developed nations and their interests (Harris, 1996). In reality, the IPRs that the universities insist on may not be able to produce favourable conditions in the developing countries from their present states. In other words, the benefits reaped from certain IP systems implemented in the developed countries may not affect developing countries the same way. There is a need to first of all have an understanding of the fundamental justification of IPRs in general given that it is the justification that proper IPRs advancement. IPRs is seen as incentives for innovations and, since the academic community want to have more innovation, we should therefore encourage it to strive (Harris, 1996).

Majority of the librarians are faced with time constraints and this corroborates the study of (Ogbomo, 2010; Moahi, 2007). Poor scheduling of time to carry out research has been reported to be the most prominent challenge faced by librarians (Ogbomo, 2010). Poor data interpretation skill is another problem faced by librarians in the process of making publication, especially journal articles. This challenge was also noted in the study conducted by Moahi (2007) and Suwanwala (2011). Exorbitant fees for publishing (page charges) by journal outfits is another big challenge facing librarians in this study and this perhaps explains why some librarians spend months searching for journals to publish their articles without success. In spite of these constraints, publication productivity of librarians was reported high in terms of articles in learned journals. It is, of course, likely that untrue claims of autonomous inventions will increment in the event that autonomous inventions is permitted within patent laws. But this assertion does not imply the increment will cause a threat. Consider Vermont (2006) observations that worrying about ease of copying patent objects – or, as he puts it, with antecedent fraud effects is the reason independnt(autonomous)inventions is not allowed.

Indeed, three brief points will be added to Vermont's claims. First, having competitors does not fundamentally kill incentives, as, even if one cannot solely market a product, one can still be in the market. There are universities that flourish inspect of rampart copying in the market place. Second, though inventors have higher development costs than copiers (who don't invest time and effort into research and development), copiers have costs that first innovators don't. These costs include those cost associated with copying (or maybe re-engineering) to make their products look original as if they were not copied. This executing of

fraud can be costly in covering one's tracks, guaranteeing that one's mischief will not be taken note. Finally, innovators (trend-setters) can make copying difficult by taken appropriate steps. They can erect "technology fences" that will make it harder to copy their inventions or make their innovations difficult copy by others without leaving a sign. Working these details out would, of course, be important to ensure that any loss of incentives will be minimal (if indeed they are not minimal to begin with).

The mixed method of research techniques was adopted for data collection by this study. By this, it means that the qualitative and quantitative research techniques were used for data collection.

With the use of qualitative data, researchers can better explain an outcome emanating from a quantitative research, likewise quantitative data can be used to complement some shortcomings of qualitative data such as the issue of generalization (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2004).

2. Methodology

Institution	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
UI	11	3.4	3.4
UNN	12	3.7	7.0
OAU	23	7.0	14.1
UNILAG	22	6.7	20.8
UNIBEN	24	7.3	28.1
UNICAL	16	4.9	33.0
FUTO	19	5.8	38.8
FUTA	4	1.2	40.1
FUNAB	24	7.3	47.4
UNIUYO	17	5.2	52.6
MOUA	12	3.7	56.3
NAU	10	3.1	59.3
NOUN	6	1.8	61.2
FUPRE	4	1.2	62.4
FUOE	6	1.8	64.2
RSUST	5	1.5	65.7
AAU	5	1.5	67.3
ABSU	8	2.4	69.7
OOU	4	1.2	70.9
LASU	7	2.1	73.1
LAUTECH	6	1.8	74.9
DELSU	8	2.4	77.4
AAUA	5	1.5	78.9
COOU	9	2.8	81.7
EBSU	4	1.2	82.9
NDU	15	4.6	87.5
AKSUT	2	.6	88.1
CRUTECH	5	1.5	89.6
USTECH	8	2.4	92.0
TASUED	4	1.2	93.3
OSSU	5	1.5	94.8
OSUTECH	4	1.2	96.0
UNIPORT	8	2.4	98.5
FUO	5	1.5	100.0
Total	327	100.0	

Table1 shows that out of the 555 librarians in universities in Southern Nigeria, only 327(63.5%) completed and returned the copies of the questionnaire sent to them. The analysis of this study was based on the 327 copies of the questionnaire that were returned.

Distribution of respondents by qualifications and official status

Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
MLS/ M.Sc.	215	65.7	65.7
PhD	76	23.2	89.9
Any other	36	11.0	100.0
	327	100.0	
Official Status			

Graduate Assistant	34	10.4	10.4
Assistant Librarian	53	16.2	26.6
Librarian II	62	19.0	45.6
Librarian I	66	20.2	65.7
Senior Librarian	58	17.7	83.5
Principal Librarian	39	11.9	95.4
Deputy University Librarian	02	0.6	96.0
University Librarian	13	4.0	100.0
	327		

Table 2 reveals that out of the 327 respondents used for the study, 215(66.7%) have qualifications of M.Sc./ MLS, 76(23%) have PhD while 36(11%) have any other degree. It is also seen in table 4.2 that out of the 327 respondents, 34(10%) claimed to be graduate assistants, 53(16.2%) were assistant librarians, 62(19%) were librarian II and 66(20.2%) were librarian I. The table also reveals that 58(17.7%) were also made up of senior librarians, while 39(11.9%) were principal librarians, and only 2(.6%) were deputy university librarians and 13(4%) were university librarians.

Table 4.8: Perceived usefulness of IPPR regimes to librarians

S/N	Statements	SD (1)	D (2)	A (3)	SA (4)	X	SD
1	IPPR regimes will positively affect the standard of my publications.	1 (.3%)	13 (4.0%)	221 (67.6%)	92 (28.1%)	3.24	0.53
2	IPPR regimes will bring about institutional development.	2 (.6%)	13 (4.0%)	194 (59.3%)	118 (36.1%)	3.18	0.64
3	IPPR will bring incentive and means to finance projects	2 (.6%)	35 (10.7%)	193 (59.0%)	97 (29.7%)	3.28	0.57
4	IPPR regime will appropriately respect balance between the interest of stakeholders, individuals and libraries	2 (.6%)	8 (2.4%)	225 (68.8%)	92 (28.1%)	3.22	0.51
5	IPPR will bring about discipline and ethical standard in the research and publication industries	2 (.6%)	8 (2.4%)	186 (56.9%)	131 (40.1%)	3.37	0.57
N=327 criterion mean (x = 2.50)		weighted average (x = 3.26)					

The data in Table 3 shows that all the items used to measure the perceived usefulness of IPPR regimes went above the criterion mean (\bar{x} =2.50) with a weighted average mean of (\bar{x} =3.26). Librarians are of the opinion that IPPR will bring about discipline and ethical standard in the research and publication industries with the highest mean value (\bar{x} =3.37; SD=0.57). This was followed by IPPR will bring incentive and means to finance projects (\bar{x} =3.28; SD=0.57), IPPR regimes will positively affect the standard of my publications (\bar{x} =3.24; SD=0.53). IPPR regime will appropriately respect balance between the interest of stakeholders, individuals and libraries (\bar{x} =3.22; SD=0.51), and IPPR regimes will positively influence their research productivity (\bar{x} =3.18; SD=0.64). All the statements were above the criterion mean of (\bar{x} = 2.50). This implies that librarians perceived usefulness of IPPR regimes to research productivity in universities in Southern Nigeria.

Perception on intellectual property rights is an important issue for librarians and researchers. This is because research and publishing are two important factors in disseminating information in the society, so managing author understands and interpretation of intellectual property laws through copyrights is meant to reshape scholarly communication and protect original materials. Academic librarians are required to have good perception on intellectual property laws, in order to have improved research publications which turn out to be their intellectual property. Many of the participants interviewed in the in-depth said that copyrights protect original material, including original compilations of previously published materials from unlicensed copying. This was clearly reflected in the following statement by one of the academic librarian participants in in-depth interview (IDI) conducted said that:

The perceived usefulness of IPPR regimes to research productivity is to handle the protection right of authors. To me copyright it is an aspect of IPPR, while IPPR deals with patent or trademark, copyright deals with publication, record, videos etc. I think Writers should have free relationship with copyright agencies. As a researcher, I think the implications of plagiarizing somebody work other researcher will not want their work to be plagiarizing (IDI /Male/ Principal Librarian / University of Benin / 53 years, February, 2022).

Another interviewee explained that:

IPPR have improved the quality of research productivity in public universities in Nigeria. Also IPPR positively affects the standard of research publication in my university (IDI /Male/ Librarian I / LASU / 52 years, February, 2022).

It was observed that majority of the participants perceived the usefulness of IPPR with different perception. The implication of this is that IPPR bring about institution development, bring incentives and means to finance research and development activities.

A senior librarian shed more light on this during the course of investigation. Below is a transcript of these findings:

IPPR bring sanity, discipline and ethical standard in the research and publication institutions. And also appropriate respect to the individual and libraries (IDI /Male/ Senior Librarian / Nnamdi Azikwe University / 43 years, February, 2022).

Challenges of IPPR

s/n	Statements	SD	D	A	SA	X	Σ
1	High cost of publication	2 (6%)	24 (73%)	207 (66.4%)	84 (25.7%)	3.18	0.59
2	Lack of time	11 (3.4%)	37 (11.3%)	186 (56.8%)	93 (28.4%)	3.11	0.75
3	Ignorance of copyrights laws	19 (5.8%)	95 (29.1%)	139 (42.5%)	74 (22.6%)	2.80	0.89
4	Poor administration of IPPR	19 (5.8%)	75 (22.9%)	135 (41.2%)	98 (30%)	2.95	0.91
5	High rate of piracy and plagiarism	20 (6.1%)	68 (20.8%)	161 (49.2%)	78 (23.9%)	2.90	0.85
N=327 criterion mean (x = 2.50)		weighted average (x = 2.99)					

The information in Table show that all the items used to measure the challenges IPPR in public universities in Southern Nigeria had a weighted average mean ($\bar{x} = 2.99$) which is above the criterion mean ($\bar{x} = 2.99 > 2.50$). High cost of publication scored the highest ($\bar{x} = 3.18$; SD = 0.59) followed by lack of time ($\bar{x} = 3.11$; SD = 0.75). Librarians’ ignorance of copyrights laws scored the lowest ($\bar{x} = 2.80$; SD = 0.89), followed by High rate of piracy and plagiarism ($\bar{x} = 2.90$; SD = 0.85) and Poor administration of IPPR ($\bar{x} = 2.95$; SD = 0.91) Observations from the data in the table show that all the items in the instrument used for the study to measure the challenges are influential.

Intellectual property law has gain impressive global interest. While intellectual property (IP) has gained increased protection with advances in technology and international trade in institutions in developed countries, the developing countries’ institutions are still at the throes of uncertainty regarding the attainment of the elusive template of IP protection being flaunted for development.

Findings from the study showed that the Majority of the librarians are faced with time constraints had a strong bearing on their research productivity. Findings from public universities in Nigeria indicated that participants, who lacked Poor data interpretation skill is another problem faced by librarians in the process

of making publication, especially journal articles also explicated negative impact on them.

Majority of the participants also claimed to have poor scheduling of time to carry out research has been reported to be the most prominent challenge faced by librarians. The IDI respondent from University of Lagos confirmed the position as thus:

The Nigeria economy is affecting most of the publications that is the issue of finance. Most of foreign journals are expensive because the exchange rate is high. I pay more to publish on foreign journal and I also think the high rate of corruption in the country is not helping. Most local journals are interested in money you pay instead of the contents (IDI /Female/ Principal Librarian / University of Lagos / 49 years, February, 2022).

According to the findings from the qualitative data on challenges of librarians IPPR in universities in Southern Nigeria: A principal librarian said that: One the major challenges is lack of time, ignorance of copyright laws among academic librarian and poor administration of IPPR in university systems. (IDI /Male/ Librarian I / AAU/ 45 years, February, 2022).

From the above finding, it can be further stressed that majority of the respondents suggest that high cost of publication, lack of time, ignorance of copyright laws

and high rate of piracy and plagiarism are factor affecting the research productivity in Nigeria public universities.

3. Discussion of findings

The study showed that librarians have perceived usefulness of IPPR regime in public universities in Southern Nigeria. It was also indicated that IPPR will bring about discipline and ethical standard in the research and publication industries. This result affirms Maskus' (1999) study, where he found out that "the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has recommended adoption of guidelines on patents legislation which should help to develop criteria for granting patents continuously according to technological progress in favour of both the interests of the claiming party, as well as the interests of the public in regard to public order, morality and general aspects of state economy". The finding corroborates an earlier one by Famola (2013) whose finding on the impact of intellectual property protection rights (IPPR) on librarians revealed that academic librarians are encouraged to improve their research productivity when they know that they are entitled to intellectual property right.

Also, the finding agrees with that of Ogbomo (2010) who noted that intellectual property right leads to increase research productivity among librarians. According to Onyeka (2014) who opines that technological advancement in turn promotes export of new technologies and also satisfies local demand thereby resulting in overall economic development. More so, during this period there was steady improvement in the education system as there was steady rise in the level of protection of IPRs. Consequently, the level of change in the degree of IPRs protection goes together with the improvement in education. So one may suggest that there is a possibility that as the level of education improved individuals learn to accept, appreciate and respect intellectual property rights. And furthermore, the increase in the investment made in education and favorable changes in government policies could all contribute to not only to understanding the value of IPRs but also aid innovation. Ogunkule, (2013) whose found that intellectual property protection rights (IPPR) on librarians enhanced research productivity in universities and is an essential step in striving to attain national goals via higher education. The development of skilled manpower and advancement in science, technology and engineering that are associated with improvement in scholarly or research productivity would not only advance the national economy but also capable of putting the country in a strategic position to

compete favorably and benefit significantly in the competitive globalized economy of the radically changing Information Communication and Technology Age (Kpolovie and Lale, 2017).

High cost of publication, lack of time to publish, ignorance of copyrights law, poor administration of IPPR and high rate of piracy and plagiarism are some of the challenges encountered by librarians in the course of publishing their research work. This finding is in agreement with Moahi (2007) who noted that the reasons why librarians always publish in learned journals is as a result of the fact that journal articles are easy, less time-consuming and cheaper to publish compared to textbooks and monographs. The finding also agrees with Okenedo's (2015) findings that challenges to librarians' publications efforts, among others, are time constraints, poor interpretation skills, exorbitant publication fees by journal outfits and indiscriminate rejection of manuscripts by journals.

It was also revealed in the study that majority of the librarians have master's degree in Library Science as against PhD holders. The implication of this finding is that master's degree holders still continue to dominate the practice of librarianship in the southern universities for some time to come. This confirms Umar's (2016) study that revealed "academic librarians with PhD and M.Phil were ostensibly few" and also Salam and Onifade's (2009) postulation that most librarians are still MLS holders and incentives such as study leave, financial assistance and so on should be granted to librarians to enable them facilitate the acquisition of PhD. The assertion of Salam and Onifade on encouraging librarians to attain PhD may be right, because if librarians have academic status, just like their teaching counterparts, they need also to be encouraged to attain PhD degrees. This will boost their academic performance and improve their research productivity.

Agboola (2000) also agreed to the attainment of higher degrees by librarians. He observed in his study that "higher qualifications are vital to capacity building and skills development". The higher the qualification, the more the skills and exposure that one requires and when this is combined with interest, intellect and experience of the individual, the success could be high research productivity. It is also noteworthy that majority of the librarians are Librarian 1 cadre 66(20.2%) followed by Librarian 11 cadre 62(19%). This may be as a result of the fact that PhD is now made compulsory for the promotion of librarians to the senior positions.

The research is also in agreement with that of Suber (2003) and Goodman (2005) who connected open access with intellectual freedom issues such as privacy, copyright, censorship. Goodman (2005) further stressed that managing intellectual property rights through alternative publishing agreements is another issue that developing countries are confronted with. For instance, in 2008, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Nigeria developed an institutional repository, but the repository could not go public due to some copyright issues. Copyright in research works conducted by the researchers at the Institute was signed away to the commercial journal publishers for the publication. Curiously, the Institute lost the right to make public research works it has funded and now had to negotiate the right from the journal publishers (Christian, 2011).

4. Conclusion

The study established that librarians' utilisation intellectual property protection rights affected research productivity in public universities in Southern Nigeria. Librarians publish mainly for their promotion and other positive incentives. Their research productivity will improve and develop positively if adequate time and information on Intellectual Property Protection Rights are provided and properly utilised.

Finally, the study concluded that, in order to increase research productivity in public universities, proper administration of IPPR, reduced rate of piracy and plagiarism towards research activities, allocated time for research productivity in the public universities, sensitization of copyright laws, cooperation of the research teams, sustainability support and provision of research information and authorization for external research play a greater role in enhancing research productivity of librarians in public universities in Southern Nigeria. Once these factors are properly taken care of, the awareness and perception levels will change positively towards improving research productivity of librarians Nigeria.

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