

# Awareness and Compliance of Science-Based Researchers to Legal Deposit Obligations in Nigeria

**Ayobami Akinniyi Adeleke and Stephen Olakunle Alabi,**

*University Librarian, Tekena Tamuno Library, Redeemer's University, Ede, Nigeria*  
[erinfaith10@gmail.com](mailto:erinfaith10@gmail.com) and  
[adelekea@run.edu.ng](mailto:adelekea@run.edu.ng)  
[kunlelibrarian@gmail.com](mailto:kunlelibrarian@gmail.com) and  
[alabio@run.edu.ng](mailto:alabio@run.edu.ng)

## Abstract

*This paper investigated the awareness and compliance of science-based researchers to legal deposit obligations in Southwest Nigeria. Survey research was adopted. A purposive sampling technique was used for the study. Thirty-five scientists from eight research institutes and centres volunteered to participate in the study. Data were collected with the questionnaire. The collected data was analysed using descriptive statistics with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0. The findings showed that science-based researchers in research institutes in Nigeria had a low awareness of their legal deposit obligations. The findings also revealed that their compliance with the legal deposit obligations was equally low. The study recommended that public enlightenment and sensitisation campaigns, monetary incentives, designating specific personnel for legal deposit campaigns and collection in research institutes and an upward review of the penalty for non-compliance be put in place by the National Library of Nigeria as motivating factors for awareness and compliance.*

**Keywords:** Legal Deposits, Research Institutes, Science-Based Researchers, National Library of Nigeria

## Introduction

Science-based researchers contribute immensely to national development, especially in knowledge production and innovation. Scientists are essential in advising policymakers and other stakeholders about the best moves towards a human-centred society, thereby fomenting scientific knowledge and enhancing cross-cultural connections and joint research. This justifies the establishment of various research institutes to address diverse issues critical to a nation's socioeconomic advancement. Meanwhile, the products and findings of such research institutions must be preserved for future reference, extending knowledge frontiers and conserving national heritage for posterity.

As expected, researchers make their findings and innovations available to the public through various documentation means, including books, serials, performances, and displays. Such published materials, regardless of the means of transmission, must be preserved for future reference and to safeguard against the loss of national and cultural heritage.

Most countries rely on a legal instrument to ensure that they can preserve their cultural heritage and intellectual properties. The legal tool, referred to as legal deposit, "is a statutory obligation which requires that any organisation, commercial or public, and any individual producing any type of documentation in multiple copies, be obliged to deposit one or more copies with a recognised national institution" (Lariviere, 2000).

Although legal deposit laws differ in details from country to country (Rabina, 2009), the central provision requires publishers to send a specified number of copies of each publication they produce to a specified library or libraries. The publications, once received, are recorded either in a catalogue or national bibliography, with some copies stored for posterity and some made available to the public for use to ensure bibliographic control and access, as well as to serve as a collection of last resort to country's print culture.

The legal deposit law in Nigeria takes the form of an administrative instrument. The Nigerian Ordinance No. 13 of 1950 was "an ordinance to preserve copies of books printed in Nigeria" (Nweke, 1991). The legal framework provided that two copies of every publication be delivered to the Nigerian Secretariat, Lagos and two copies to the Library of the University College, Ibadan, within one month of publication at the publisher's expense. The ordinance was the only indigenous law establishing bibliographic control on all books, pamphlets and periodicals published in Nigeria since April 26, 1950. It was, however, reinforced by the Publications Law (1955), which provided for the preservation of copies of books printed in the Eastern Region of Nigeria, and the Western Publications Law (1956), which retained the depository rights of Ibadan (Nweke, 1991).

At the end of the 30-month-old civil war, triggered by regional political crises, the Federal Military Government of Nigeria promulgated the National Library Decree No. 29 (1970). The decree transferred the legal deposit responsibility to the National Library of Nigeria and retained the legal depository status of the Ibadan University Library (Ebi et al., 2020). The decree also mandated that 25 copies of every publication by the federal government and ten copies of every published material by state governments be deposited at the National Library of Nigeria. For individuals, three copies are expected to be deposited. (Ministry of Information, 1970).

Generally, the role of legal deposit is to ensure the development of a national collection of published materials in various formats. It also supports compiling and publishing a national bibliography to ensure bibliographic control over a comprehensive deposit collection. Effective legal deposit legislation guarantees access to the collection of a country's

intellectual and research outputs. However, the legislation must be enforceable and seen to be enforced to effectively and efficiently achieve its objectives.

Penzhorn et al. (2008) opined that legislation alone does not necessarily guarantee compliance with legal deposit obligations. Formidable systems and mechanisms should be implemented to efficiently manage and implement the provisions of a legal deposit law to achieve a significant level of compliance by publishers and other producers of publications in a country. Opara (2018) observed that adherence to the Nigerian legal deposit law is more of choice than a duty! He adduced reasons such as inadequate awareness of the legal deposit obligation and its accruable benefits to the publisher and the country as a contributory factor to the low compliance rate. As noted by Penzhorn et al. (2008) in their study of the implementation and management of legal deposits in South Africa, there is a general lack of policies and procedures for monitoring and enforcing compliance with legal deposit legislation worldwide.

Little quantitative research has been done regarding legal deposits (Rabina, 2009). Extant literature, such as Akidi and Omekwu (2019), Lariviere (2000), Nweke (1991) and Olanusi (2015), place much emphasis on historical reviews and analyses of legal deposit laws and legislations. A notable empirical work on the subject is that of Voorbij and Lemmen (2006), which measured compliance with a legal deposit plan at the National Library of the Netherlands. In Nigeria, Nwagwu and Fabunmi (2011) attempted to examine the awareness and pattern of compliance of authors and publishers with the Nigerian legal deposit law over 17 years (1990 – 2007). The study revealed a high understanding of the law but discovered that this did not translate to compliance.

According to the National Library of Nigeria (2018) as showed in the National Bibliography 2018 edition, only 15216 publications were deposited to the National Library of Nigeria between 2008 and 2018. The figure indicates an over 600% decline from the total legal deposits (105,770) recorded from 1990 to 2007, as reported by Nwagwu and Fabunmi (2011). Although there is no official statistics of the total annual publications for Nigeria, 15,216 is far from what is expected if one considers the number of

academicians, institutions, government ministries, departments and agencies, and individual and commercial publishers existing/working in the country. The abysmally low figure confirms a low level of compliance with the legal deposit law from authors and publishers.

A critical look at the 741 publications recorded in the National Bibliography (2018) as legal deposits from authors and publishers in 2018 shows that only 74 (10%) publications came from core science subjects. The question is: Are the science-oriented faculties in universities and scientific research institutions not producing publications? If they are, does it mean they are not aware of the provisions of the Legal Deposit Act? If they are aware of the requirements of the law, why are they not complying?

To answer the questions posed by the situation printed in the National Bibliography, this paper examines the commitment of science-based researchers in research institutes to preserve Nigeria's national heritage and intellectual properties through compliance with the provisions of the legal deposit law. The paper explicitly investigates the researchers' awareness of and disposition to comply with the legal deposit law. It also identifies factors influencing the researchers' understanding and compliance with the law.

The study is significant to science-based researchers, publishers and the National Library of Nigeria. Science researchers will be re-sensitised to the provisions of the Legal Deposit Act to help them take advantage of its benefits, enhance their visibility among national and international peers on the one hand, and preserve their contribution to knowledge and national heritage on the other. Publishers will benefit from the study because it will help them to identify the gaps in the publishing business, particularly regarding science-based publications. Through the outcome of this study, the National Library of Nigeria will be able to identify where it needs to direct its public enlightenment campaigns about compliance with legal deposit obligations. Ultimately, the public interest will be served as a complete record of works published in Nigeria will be conserved systematically and comprehensively made available for future generations.

## Literature Review

The National Library of Nigeria embraces efforts to preserve books and other intellectual works. Indeed, intellectual creation that is documented and preserved helps to keep the history of a nation. Long after the author is gone, the work remains even for the future generation to read. Raji-Oyelade (n.d) believed the book is vital for the human development index. It is the measure of a nation's intellectual development. The scholar clarified that where a book is absent, a country is committed to forgetfulness, or a civilisation without the evidence of a sacred text is soon condemned or diminished.

One of the primary purposes of legal deposit is to preserve works from authors and publishers. The submission of Raji-Oyelade (n.d) corroborates that the ultimate function of the legal depository is preservation.

According to Nmadu (2020), a quick survey of professors visiting other universities revealed that only one in every six professors who have authored a text in Nigeria knows about the legal deposit. Nwagwu and Fabunmi (2011) also discovered that publishers with many years of practice were more aware than others, even though their awareness did not translate to compliance. Similarly, Olanusi and Falade (2017), who investigated awareness and compliance with the legal deposit law of the National Library in Southwestern Nigeria, found that the majority of the respondents were aware of the legal deposit law but that an overwhelming number rarely complied with the law. The study further revealed that no defaulters were penalised for non-compliance with the legal depository obligation. In a related study, Rotimi (2020) also affirmed that publishers in Nigeria do not comply with legal deposit obligations because they regard it as unnecessary bureaucratic interference in their business. He added that the publishers view the obligation as an unjustified punitive measure to reduce their sales and profit. Likewise, Mmejim (2018), in a study on awareness and compliance with a legal deposit law, reported that publishers in River State are aware of the legal deposit law. Although the publishers were aware of legal deposit law, none was aware either directly through a letter from the National Library or through the booksellers. The methods of their awareness vary from colleagues, attending of workshops and

conferences to meetings with publishers' associations. The study also discovered that the State's publishers comply with the legal deposit law.

Akidi and Omekwu (2019) examined the legal depository practices of the National Library of Nigeria (NLN) and the compliance of publishers and authors with legal deposit obligations in a questionnaire survey. The study's findings revealed that the effectiveness of the National Library of Nigeria's legal depository practices is low, as only five of the fifteen items studied were rated highly effective. The paper recommended the need for the National Library to step up its game of enforcing compliance to improve legal deposit practices. Moreover, Ekere et al. (2021) found that the awareness levels of most authors were very high in a study on authors' awareness of international publishing standards and legal deposit obligations in Enugu State, Nigeria. The researchers also found that enlightenment programmes were the most significant source of understanding.

Literature reports a similar trend of non-compliance with legal deposit laws in other African countries. For instance, Mosweu and Mosweu (2009), in a study on legal deposit in the electronic age in Botswana, said that publishers of electronic materials did not comply with the obligation due to poor awareness. Chisita et al. (2018) also noted that enforcing legal deposit in Zimbabwe was a severe challenge as overwhelming numbers of published works emanated from individual publishers with no fixed accommodation. The researchers further opined that tracking such publishers is usually futile.

Egbokhare (2020) identified reasons for non-compliance with legal deposit obligations, including the insecurity of some writers about their work, which ended up with negative reviews and assessments. He added that the complex procedure for accessing ISBNs and making deposits, especially for authors/publishers in far-removed environments and rural communities, were other reasons for non-compliance. The scholar further submitted that self-published authors do not feel obligated to comply with the legal deposit obligations because of the perceived labour involved and due to the small number of people that they target with their works.

Actions have been taken, platforms have been put in place, and the National Library of Nigeria has used various means to make publishers become

aware of legal deposit, and help comply with the legal deposit obligation. Akidi (2012) identified means of collection and processing legal deposit materials by the National Library of Nigeria to include announcements and advertisements in National and local newspapers; direct delivery by publishers to any National Library offices nationwide; liaising with government departments and government printers; visiting publishing houses and collection of the materials during on-the-spot legal deposit drive, collecting materials during book launches and book fairs; and enlightening the authors and publishers at the point of collecting ISBN/ISSN among others.

Diamond (2019) reported a sensitisation workshop organised by the National Library of Nigeria at the University of Ibadan for key stakeholders in the publishing industry. The new ways the National Library adopted to improve her effort in getting publishers and authors to comply with the legal deposit obligations were clearly discussed in the said workshop. They did this by providing dedicated vehicles for state branches, which will continuously visit publishing outlets to collect publications.

It is apparent from the literature review that previous studies on awareness of and compliance with legal deposit provisions focused on publishers and producers of publications in general. There is a dearth of studies on the issue, specifically about scientists and researchers in research institutions in Nigeria. The current effort elicits and reports the legal deposit awareness and compliance by science-based researchers in research institutes to fill the gap in the literature.

## Methodology

This study adopted a survey design. The target population consists of core science researchers, including those specialising in biological sciences, chemical sciences, environmental sciences, earth sciences, medical sciences, agriculture, and engineering, working in research institutes in southwest Nigeria. There are 13 such research institutes in southwest Nigeria, as listed in Table 1. Due to the small population, all the academic and research staff members of the institutes were considered for participation in the study.

**Table 1: List of Research Centres in Southwest, Nigeria**

S/N	Research Centres	State
1. *	Engineering Materials Development Institute ( <b>EMDI</b> ), Akure	Ondo State
2. *	Federal Institute of Industrial Research ( <b>FIIR</b> ), Oshodi, Lagos	Lagos State
3. *	Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria ( <b>FRIN</b> ), Ibadan	Oyo State
4.	Centre for Energy Research and Development, Ile-Ife	Osun State
5. *	African Centre of Excellence for Genomics of Infectious Diseases ( <b>ACEGID</b> ), Redeemer’s University, Ede	Osun State
6. *	Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria ( <b>CRIN</b> ), Ibadan	Oyo State
7. *	Institute of Agricultural Research and Training ( <b>IART</b> ), Ibadan	Oyo State
8.	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture ( <b>IITA</b> ), Ibadan	Oyo State
9.	National Centre for Genetic Resource and Biotechnology ( <b>NACGRAB</b> ), Ibadan	Oyo State
10.	National Horticultural Research Institute ( <b>HIHORT</b> ), Ibadan	Oyo State
11.	National Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research, Lagos	Lagos State
12. *	National Veterinary Research Institute ( <b>NVRI</b> ) Vom, Plateau State ( <b>Lagos Office</b> )	Lagos Office
13. *	Nigerian Institute of Medical Research ( <b>NIMR</b> ), Yaba.	Lagos State

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023. (Responses were received from the asterisked research institutes)

Knowing the actual number of academic and research staff in the research institutes was challenging because of the bureaucracies around such information. The authors depended on contacts working in the establishments to share the link to the online questionnaire because there was no official staff registers available in the public domain to get their direct contact details. Therefore, only 35

responses were received after 12 weeks of administering the questionnaire, as shown in Table 2. Although the response rate was low, the data is reliable because McIlwraith (2006) asserted that people are more inclined to be truthful when responding to a machine than a human and that online survey removes respondent bias.

**Table 2: Responses to the Questionnaire According to Research Institutes**

S/N	Name of Research Centre	Responses Retrieved
1.	Engineering Materials Development Institute ( <b>EMDI</b> ), Akure	2
2.	Federal Institute of Industrial Research ( <b>FIIR</b> ), Oshodi, Lagos	2
3.	Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria ( <b>FRIN</b> ), Ibadan	9
4.	African Centre of Excellence for Genomics of Infectious Diseases ( <b>ACEGID</b> ), Redeemer’s University, Ede	6
5.	Cocoa Research Institute of Nigeria ( <b>CRIN</b> ), Ibadan	10
6.	Institute of Agricultural Research and Training ( <b>IART</b> ), Ibadan	1
7.	National Veterinary Research Institute ( <b>NVRI</b> ), Vom, <b>Lagos Branch</b>	4
8.	Nigerian Institute of Medical Research ( <b>NIMR</b> ), Yaba.	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>

The questionnaire items were developed from the information gleaned from previous related studies. It was structured into four sections, including personal information about the respondents, their level of awareness of legal deposit, their level of compliance with the legal deposit requirements and the factors responsible for the low level of compliance. The personal information section of the instrument elicited data about participants' places of work, areas of specialisation, age range, years of experience as a researcher, the number and types of publications they have produced in the course of their academic careers.

However, the instrument inadvertently did not include the status of the participants because it was assumed that their years of experience would compensate for it. Similarly, information about the

qualifications of the scientists was not elicited because the minimum is a master's degree, as the institutes do not award degrees.

## Results

This section presents the findings of the study. Table 3 shows the personal profile of the respondents in terms of frequency counts and percentages. Most respondents specialised in agriculture and food production research (13 or 37.1%). This is followed by the infectious diseases' scientists (11 or 31.4%). The pattern reflects the importance of the two subject areas to humanity. The respondents' age distribution indicated that many were still active and relatively young scientists. Similarly, their years of experience showed that most had worked as researchers for over 10 years.

**Table 3: Personal Information about the Participants**

S/N	Researcher's Subject Area	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Agriculture and Food Production	13	37.1%
2.	Infectious Diseases	11	31.4%
3.	Wildlife and Biodiversity	8	22.9%
4.	Nanotechnology	2	5.7%
5.	Plant taxonomy	1	2.9%
<b>Total</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Age</b>			
1.	46 – 55 years	14	40%
2.	36 – 45 years	13	37.1%
3.	56 – 65 years	4	11.4%
4.	25 – 35 years	3	8.6%
5.	Less than 25 years	1	2.9%
<b>Total</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Years of Experience</b>			
1.	5-10 years	11	31.4%
2.	more than 20 years	10	28.6%
3.	11- 20 years	9	25.7%
4.	Less than 5 years	5	14.3%
<b>Total</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>

Furthermore, publication of books by scientists was not popular, as (16 or 46%) had published at least one book in their careers. Most of the respondents (19 or 54%) had published no book. However, 9 or 26% published only one book, 11 or 4% published two books, while a negligible number of the respondents (1 or 3%) published three books and 2 or 6% published four books. This pattern could be because scientists prefer to report their research findings in journals and present them at conferences.

### Respondents' Awareness of the Legal Deposit Obligations of the National Library

Regarding awareness, 65.7% said they knew about their state branches of the National Library of Nigeria (NLN). Still, less than 50% knew about the law establishing the NLN as the legal deposit institution and its legal deposit functions. This implies that the NLN needs to do more to promote its activities and tasks among stakeholders in the

education and research ecosystem. Moreover, many respondents (71.4%) were conversant with the role of the NLN as the national agency for the administration and management of international standard numbers for different types of publications. Hence, they understood the importance of publications having such numbers and sought to know how they were issued. However, about 43% knew that the NLN is mandated to protect publishers' interests by responding to subpoenas regarding litigations.

The survey requested the respondents to indicate if they were aware of their legal deposit obligations. Less than half of the respondents knew about the NLN Act (1970) provision that publishers and other publication producers should deposit a specific number of publications to the National Library. Only about 25% knew there were penalties for non-compliance with the legal deposit obligations. Table 4 shows the pattern of responses to the survey items on awareness.

**Table 4: Awareness of Legal Deposit Obligations**

Legal Deposit Obligations	Responses (N=35)	
	Frequency	%
I am aware that NLN serves as the National Agency for the administration and management of International Standards Numbers for Monographs, Serials and Musical works	25	71.4
I know there is a branch of National Library of Nigeria in my State	23	65.7
I know there is a branch of the National Library in my State	22	62.9
I am aware that NLN collect legal deposit materials from private/commercial publishers, Federal and State Government Ministries/Parastatals/Agencies	21	60
The NLN's functions include collecting legal deposit materials and certifying documents at the state level.	17	48.6
I know that the Act stipulates that authors/publishers should deposit a specific number of their publications to the National Library as a matter of obligation.	16	45.7
I am aware that NLN protects the interest of Publishers/Clients by responding to subpoenas in respect of litigations	15	42.9
I am aware of the National Library Act of 1970.	15	42.9
I know that there are penalties for non-compliance to the legal deposit obligations.	9	25.7

### Respondents' Level of Compliance with the Legal Deposit Law

In finding out their compliance with legal deposit provisions, the respondents were asked if they ever authored any books and had ever deposited any publications to the National Library of Nigeria. About 46% had written books, but 77% had never deposited any publication with the National Library of Nigeria, and they never knew any colleague to have ever done otherwise. This indicates that science-based researchers demonstrated low compliance with the legal deposit law.

Table 5 presents some of the factors indicated by the respondents as factors militating against compliance with the legal deposit law in order of magnitude. Lack of awareness is the primary factor 91% of the respondents considered responsible for non-compliance or low compliance with legal deposit by science-based researchers in Nigeria. Similarly, 74% indicated a lack of clarity of the law as another factor, implying that they might not be clear with the provisions of the law.

**Table 5: Factors Responsible for the Low Level of Compliance with Legal Deposit by Science-based Researchers in Nigeria**

Factors	Responses (N = 35)	
	Frequency	%
Lack of awareness of legal deposit law and practice	32	91.4
Lack of clarity of the law	26	74.3
Inconsistent application procedure	20	57.1
Logistics bottlenecks	18	51.4
Nonadherence to guidelines of practice	17	48.6
The unwillingness of some stakeholders	17	48.6

The study requested the participants to suggest measures to increase or improve awareness and compliance by the science-based researchers, and Table 6 presents their responses. All the 35 respondents opined that enlightenment campaigns by the National Library of Nigeria specific to science-based researchers and targeted at research institutes will improve awareness and compliance.

Similarly, about 74% of the respondents opined that if authors and publishers received monetary incentives, they will be encouraged to deposit their publications to the National Library willingly. Furthermore, all the respondents canvassed for government support for the book trade movement, especially in the current evolving digital era in which books are transforming from print to electronic formats.

The respondents also advocated for designated personnel of the National Library to be put in charge

of compliance of science researchers with the law. It would be the responsibility of the staff to ensure and maintain compliance. This suggestion corroborated Akidi and Omekwu's (2019) recommendation that "the National Library needs to step up its game of enforcing compliance to improve legal deposit practices".

About eight respondents agreed that if a higher penalty was introduced for non-compliance, the degree of defiance of the legal deposit law would be reduced. The penalty for non-compliance presently is 100 naira per publication as stated in the National Library Act (1970), which is ridiculously too low for any defaulter to feel its impact. Although less than 25% of the respondents advocated for its increase, changing the penalty regime based on the current economic realities could go a long way to improve the compliance rate with the legal deposit law by authors and publishers.



**Table 6: Factors Influencing Awareness and Compliance of Scientists**

Factors for influencing awareness and compliance of scientists to deposit their work with the NLN:	Responses (N=35)	
	Frequency	%
Enlightenment campaigns by the National Library	35	100
Monetary incentives to authors and publishers	26	74.3
Increasing the penalty for non-compliance	8	22.9
Provision of support for the book trade by government at all levels	35	100
Need for a designated person to maintain and ensure compliance in my organisation	29	82.9

## Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that science-based researchers in research institutes in Nigeria have a low level of awareness of their legal deposit obligations to the National Library of Nigeria, as against the findings of previous studies such as Nwagwu and Fabunmi (2011), Olanusi and Falade (2017), Mmeji (2018) and Ekere et al. (2021) who found high level of awareness among publishers in Nigeria. Previous public enlightenment and awareness campaigns of the National Library of Nigeria about the provisions of the Legal Deposit Act were usually targeted at commercial and institutional publishers who as a result, understood the need to submit their publications as legal deposits as a matter of obligation. However, awareness campaigns specific for research institutes and targeted at scientists have not been reported in the literature, and this may explain the low level of awareness discovered by this study.

Since the awareness of the legal deposit obligations is low among science-based researchers, their level of compliance with the law is expected to be equally low. The study reported this prediction in line with the findings of Olanusi and Falade (2017) and Rotimi (2020), who reported a low pattern of compliance with the law among authors and publishers in Nigeria. The study identified several factors responsible for the observed pattern of compliance with lack of awareness and clarity of

the provisions of the law taking the lead. It is, therefore, suitable for the National Library of Nigeria to be more dedicated to deliberate advocacy about the Legal Deposit Act for research institutes across Nigeria so that scientists can embrace and comply with the law without further ado. As inventors and producers of knowledge, science-based researchers are canonical to national development; therefore, their inventions and publications should be preserved to form a vital part of the national heritage for posterity and transmission to future generations.

As legislation alone does not guarantee compliance (Penzhorn et al., 2008), it is important that formidable mechanisms are in place to efficiently manage and implement the provisions of the legal deposit law to achieve significant levels of compliance by science-based researchers. The study confirmed that public enlightenment is a vital instrument to promote awareness and ensure compliance among science-based researchers, in agreement with Akidi (2012), Diamond (2019) and Ekere et al. (2021) who reported how the legal deposit sensitisation and promotion workshops of the National Library of Nigeria have stimulated awareness among publishers and authors. To further reinforce the advocacy and achieve improved compliance among science-based researchers, the National Library of Nigeria could engage librarians working in research institutes to promote the law and collect the publications, as Asubiojo (2020) recommended.

## Conclusion

The products and innovations of science-based research institutes in Nigeria contribute significantly to the social capital of Nigeria; hence, these should be deposited with the National Library of Nigeria as stipulated by its Act of 1970. The researchers and scientists in these institutes, irrespective of their fields and experiences, demonstrated a low level of awareness of and compliance with the legal deposit law as reported by the findings of this study. Many researchers did not understand their obligations as writers and publishers to the extent of depositing specific numbers of their publications with the National Library of Nigeria as legal deposits.

These findings are in tandem with the patterns reported in previous studies in different fields. This implies that non-compliance with the legal deposit obligations by writers and publishers, irrespective of their disciplines, could be a severe problem. Therefore, the National Library of Nigeria, as the compliance agency, should implement specific and deliberate mechanisms to encourage more compliance with the mandatory deposit of publications by writers and publishers in research institutes. Such efforts could include public enlightenment and sensitisation campaigns, monetary incentives for science-based authors and publishers, designating specific personnel for legal deposit campaigns and collection in research institutes and an upward review of the penalty for non-compliance.

National Library and librarians must consider the ultimate function of legal depository, which is the preservation of history, and do their best to enlighten, appeal, encourage, and motivate scientists to comply with their legal obligation fully. The National Library should begin to pay scheduled visits to research institutes to sensitise scientists and researchers to its functions through its state branches. Librarians in research institutes should give the National Library a helping hand in creating awareness about legal deposits through institutional advocacy and enlightenment for scientists and researchers in their communities to improve compliance.

Due to low responses to the survey, the study was limited by its inability to compare the levels of awareness of and compliance with legal deposit provisions among the scientists across different specialisations and research institutions, and mainly

because it was not primarily a comparative study. Future studies could explore this aspect to fill the gap and guide the NLN on where to concentrate its awareness and enlightenment campaigns about its legal deposit functions among knowledge producers and managers.

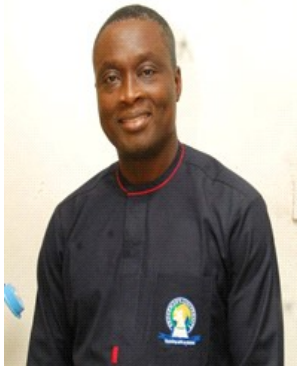
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**Akinniyi Adeleke** is the University Librarian of Tekena Tamuno Library, the Redeemer's University, Ede, Nigeria. He holds B.Sc. Food Science and Technology (OAU) Ile-Ife; MLS and PhD degrees of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria.



**Stephen Olakunle Alabi** is a doctoral student in the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. He is a Librarian at the Redeemer's University, Ede, Nigeria. He holds a Bachelor of Library and Information Studies degree from the University of Ibadan; and Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

