

# A critical response to censorship of reading material on the youth

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The study focused on the effects of censoring books for children or young people. First, the author defined censorship as a ban in the context of censoring books because “ it is removed from wherever it was censored, restricting anyone’s access to it”. The author then stated that the main problem of censoring books is that it also prevents young people from learning various morals or lessons. The author also briefly discussed that censoring books violates the right to freedom of speech because it restricts the person from learning or reading what he or she wants. It was stated in the study that censoring books lead to negative effects such as ignorance of a person about his or her country’s situation (Nozaki and Selden), hinders a person’s ability to make moral decisions, and that a person’s mind may be manipulated due to lack of information and may cause the person to follow the majority. Lastly, the author concluded that censoring books are detrimental to a person’s intellectual growth because lack of information may cause a person to become an unconcerned adult.

The study was well thought and provides insight about the effects of censorship. However, a critical analysis on the study showed that it is mainly flawed because it lacks breadth and fairness according to the Universal Intellectual Standards (UIS), which resulted in hasty generalizations and biased conclusion.

According to the UIS, which is defined as the fundamental standards for critical thinking and analyzing, fairness is the freedom from prejudice or favoritism and breadth is the inclusion of a different perspective on a certain topic. With this, the study failed to exhibit both fairness and breadth because

of its one-sidedness and due to the fact that it does not include a different perspective.

The author cited multiple times about other studies to support the main argument that censorship is detrimental to the intellectual growth of a person. However, the author only cited studies that have the same argument as the author and did not include studies that concluded otherwise. For instance, the article of Nozaki and Selden and the article from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum cited by the author both concluded that a person will grow to be apathetic and unconcerned due to lack of information learned when younger. There was no article cited that challenged the idea or the main argument of the author. This showed that the study is mainly one-sided and did not consider another perspective on the topic, thus it lacked breadth. The author could have made the study more reliable by citing examples of studies that have a different perspective or stand on the topic. Citing a counterargument will make the study more reliable as it discussed both arguments and counterarguments. For instance, the author could have stated that “ people are influenced by what they read or see banning books that are offensive in nature can help prevent already vulnerable people from doing something bad” or that books may “ portray wrong information about individuals or groups that could incite violence against them”. The author could have used these studies to present the counterargument for the idea of the author, thus making the study discuss the topic deeper and provide deeper insight.

The study also lacked fairness in a way that the author simply stated the advantages or 'pros' of his argument. For example, when the author discussed the effects of censorship, the works cited and their conclusions all stated that censorship is detrimental. The author only discussed the negative effects of censorship and did not discuss the positive effects. Although it was also that censorship to books was done in order to restrict a young person from reading inappropriate or immoral scenarios according to the American Library Association, the author did not discuss this perspective in depth and only glossed over this as the author presented the negative effects that that ideology entails. This showed that the author was biased in writing and thus the study lacked fairness. The author could have made the study more reliable by elaborating on the benefits of censorship or simply cited studies that discussed the 'pros' of censoring books. For example, the author could have stated that "Children should not be exposed to sex, violence, adult themes that young people aren't ready to experience exposure to violence in media, including in books, can impact kids by making them act aggressively and desensitizing them to violence.". This would make the study unbiased because it is impartial and does not focus on only one side.

Aside from the quality of breadth and fairness, or lack thereof, the study had multiple instances in which the premises to a generalization is unclear or based on a pure assumption which resulted in several cases of hasty generalization. For example, the author assumed that a person who is uninformed about the true history of their country is affected negatively by censorship of books causing a negative effect on the person's ability to

contribute to a nation's development. The author then presented two examples of negative effects of censorship, such as the reason for the holocaust and superiority complex of the Germans during the 1940's and the study of Iain Couzin about the behavior of fishes. However, most of the ideas the author inferred from the two examples are considered to be assumptions due to the fact that it lacked basis and is not shown clearly how it is inferred from the examples. Therefore, due to multiple assumptions, unreliable sources, and lack of clear and unbiased premises, the conclusion of the study may be considered invalid as it lacks reliable premises. The conclusion may be considered valid if the premises were based on a deeper discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of censorship.

To summarize, it can be concluded that although the study gravitated on a central idea that censorship is detrimental to the intellectual growth of a person, it cannot be considered reliable since it lacked fairness and breadth and it contained conclusions based on assumptions. The study would be more reliable if the author discussed the benefits of censorship and cited studies with a similar idea in order to make the study more complex and thus provide a deeper insight on the topic. Even if the study was flawed, it provided a relevant insight that censorship may indeed cause a person to grow unaware especially in this time and age that fake information is prevalent. The idea that censorship also protects the person and may prevent the spreading of unreliable information could also be discussed by the author and other studies in consideration of time and the generation of the readers.