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THE LAW AND PRACTICE OF REPROGRAPHIC RIGHTS AND FAIR USE CHALLENGE IN LAGOS STATE UNIVERSITY: AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

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Abstract

Educational institutions such as a University are charged with the responsibility of providing materials for teaching, and research and in actualising this, the University community is involved in various aspects of reprography. This paper investigates the reprographic rights and fair use challenges within the Lagos State University (LASU), with a focus on the legal framework, contemporary issues, and prevailing practices among students, lecturers, and university administrators. The research explores the intersection between Nigerian Copyright Act and educational practices involving photocopying, scanning, and digital reproduction of academic materials. Using an empirical methodology, the paper draws data from questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis to evaluate the level of awareness, compliance, and enforcement of reprographic rights and fair use provisions within the university community. Findings reveal a widespread practice of unauthorized reproduction of learning materials, largely driven by the high cost and limited availability of textbooks, coupled with inadequate institutional policies on copyright

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compliance. The paper further identifies gaps between legal prescriptions and academic realities, highlighting the tension between access to knowledge and intellectual property protection. It concludes by recommending university-based copyright policies together with collaboration with rights management organizations to foster a balanced approach that upholds both educational access and the rights of creators.

Keywords*:* Reprographic rights, fair use, copyright law, Lagos State University, intellectual property, educational access

1.0. INTRODUCTION

Reprography is a reproduction process that duplicates a published graphic image or text, using mechanical or electronic means like printing, photocopying, scanning, digitizing, electronic transmission, and electronic storage in databases. The term "repro" refers to rewriting or reproducing, while "graphy" pertains to printed or written material.[1] The term "reprography" was first coined and introduced as "office printing" during the First International Congress on Reprography held in Cologne, Germany, in 1963.

Reprographic rights are secondary rights used in reprography, varying based on whether the use occurs or takes place.[2] It encompasses the techniques and processes employed for copying and duplicating

This research constitutes a fact finding report of a TETfund Institutional Based Research of the Lagos State University TETfund.

[1] Overview of Reprography and Micrography UNIT 11 https://mmcmodinagar.ac.in/econtent/library-science/OVERVIEW-OF-REPROGRAPHY-AND-MICROGRAPHY.pdf accessed 2 January 2025.

[2] Understanding Reprographic Rights available at https://arsny.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Reprography-Memo.pdf accessed 02 January 2025.

documents, including the production of multiple copies. It is limited to small-scale operations and the non-professional nature of those carrying out the copying tasks and does not extend to commercial.[3] Reprographic rights are often managed on a "collective" basis using a collective management organization to monitor and enforce the rights and for collecting and distributing royalties to the rightsholder.[4]

Reprographic rights are essential for balancing the interests of copyright holders with the need for access to knowledge and learning resources in academic settings. One of the primary reasons reprographic rights are important in educational institutions is their role in facilitating access to learning resources. Textbooks, academic journals, and other educational materials are often expensive, and students and educators may not always have the financial means to purchase them.[5] Reprographic rights allow educational institutions to legally reproduce portions of these materials, ensuring that students and teachers have access to the information they need for teaching, learning, and research.[6] Also, Reprographic rights are also vital for supporting teaching and learning activities in educational institutions. Educators often rely on the ability to reproduce materials for classroom use, such as creating handouts, compiling course packs, or sharing digital copies of readings with students. Another important aspect

[3] Overview of Reprography and Micrography UNIT 11 https://mmcmodinagar.ac.in/econtent/library-science/OVERVIEW-OF-REPROGRAPHY-AND-MICROGRAPHY.pdf accessed 2 January 2025

[4] What are Reprographic Rights? https://asip-repro.org/reprography/what-are-reprographic-rights/ accessed 2 January 2025.

[5] Temitope O.Oloko Access to Knowledge in Nigeria: Accessible. *Journal of Oriental and African Studies* Greece Volume 30, Issue 1. Pp 56 - 76.

[6] Shaikh, Shihaam 2011-06. Reprographic Reproduction Rights Licensing. Other. University of Cape Town. OpenUCT.

of reprographic rights is their role in ensuring compliance with copyright laws. Educational institutions must navigate the complex legal landscape of copyright to avoid infringement while meeting the needs of their students and staff.[7] Reprographic rights also contribute to promoting equity in education by ensuring that all students, regardless of their financial background, have access to the resources they need to succeed. In many developing countries, including Nigeria, the high cost of textbooks and other educational materials can be a significant barrier to learning.[8] Despite their importance, reprographic rights in educational institutions are not without challenges. One major issue is the lack of awareness among students and educators about the legal limits of reprography, which can lead to unintentional copyright infringement. Additionally, the rise of digital technologies has complicated the enforcement of reprographic rights, as it has become easier to reproduce and distribute materials without authorization.

1.1. OVERVIEW OF THE TENSION BETWEEN REPROGRAPHIC RIGHTS AND FAIR USE IN ACADEMIC SETTINGS

Fair dealing is an affirmative defense against copyright infringement claims. It allows a party to use a copyrighted work without permission for purposes like criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, or research. There are no clear rules for determining fair dealing, but copyright law establishes four factors: purpose, nature of the work, proportion of the

[7] Ibid Shaikh.

[8] Bernard N. Atsumbe Access, Quality and Equity in Nigerian Education System: Emergent Issues and Agenda for Action *Journal of Arts and Education,* Vol 8 No. 1 2020.

portion used, and effect on the work's potential market value. Each factor must be considered, with the first and fourth being the most influential.[9]
The Nigerian Copyright Act of 2022 was mainly enacted to ensure that authors /creators of works that are the subject matter of copyright (whether literary, artistic or musical) benefit from their labour.[10] It should however be known that whilst the copyright legislation seeks to protect the intellectual creation of authors on one hand, it also seeks to ensure that members of the public have reasonable access to scientific and literary works for the benefit of education and development of the society.[11]

To protect the owners of literary works, the Copyright legislation discourages the illegal copying/reproduction of books and materials in which copyright exists. The protection offered by the legislation serves several purposes, a vital one being that the knowledge of the existence of financial reward is a natural stimulant that encourages the creative process. Another benefit that is attributable to the protection of copyright is the knowledge that ample protection of the results of intellectual creativity is necessary for the development and advancement of the Nigerian nation.
The ownership of copyright in addition to being a medium for the dissemination of thoughts and ideas, should also guarantee an author's financial gain for his work.[12] Unfortunately, in Nigeria, the reverse is the case as authors of literary works and other research materials especially in educational institutions, practically find it difficult to benefit from their

[9] What is Fair Use- Copyright Alliance available at https://copyrightalliance.org/faqs/what-is-fair-use/ accessed 2 January 2025.
[10] Section 1 (a) Copyright Act 2022.
[11] Ibid. s 1 (b)
[12] Temitope O. Oloko Possessory Rights in Copyrights: Authorship and Ownership in Nigeria Copyright Law LASU Book of Reading.

hard work due to several factors that are not limited to the problem of piracy and the wanton reprographic reproduction of textbooks. Empirical evidence reveals that several factors are responsible for the reprographic of literary works. This includes the lack of prioritising, high cost of books, nonchalant attitude to education, and lack of respect for intellectual creation and unavailability of learning materials.

1.2. RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY TO LAGOS STATE UNIVERSITY AND NIGERIAN COPYRIGHT LAW

This research sets out to investigate and ascertain the factors responsible for reprography in LASU, an institution where there should be an active awareness about the importance of intellectual creativity. The researchers fervently hope that undertaking the research will not only create awareness about the fact that wanton reproduction of informational materials is a violation of the copyright of creators and the existing law but also proffer practical solutions to the current menace. The aim of this paper is to investigate the degree to which photocopying of text books and materials that take place in the institution. Specifically, the research seeks to determine whether the volume of materials being photocopied/ reproduced by students still fall with the ambit of fair dealing and educational use. If not what are the reasons why this is so. In addition, the research will also strive to determine the role lecturers play in the photocopying of works. It will finally seek to recommend the creation of an institutional policy that will assist in curbing the uncontrollable reproduction of books and research materials generally.

2.0.CONTEXTUAL CLARIFICATIONS IN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

In recent years, issues surrounding the valuation of intellectual property and intangible assets have become increasingly important and the monetary value increasingly significant. This trend reflects the growing importance of IP and its economic value in the world today. An important component of intellectual property is the protection of the copyright of authors of literary, artistic and musical works which result from their creative and intellectual activities. Copyright offers a bundle of rights to the owner of copyright including the exclusive right to reproduce, publish, perform, adapt, distribute, sell, broadcast and license his/her work among other rights.[13] The exclusive rights of the copyright owner are however not unlimited as the Nigerian Copyright Act 2022 (the Act) in its second schedule establishes several limitations on these rights. While there are several exceptions to the exclusive rights of a copyright owner listed in the Part II from sections 20-27 of the Copyright Act 2022, it should be known that the research will only focus on the 'fair dealing' and 'educational purposes' exceptions only.[14]

2.1.Fair Dealing

The Fair Dealing or Fair Use exception is the most significant of the limitations to a copyright owner's exclusive right.[15] This exception seeks to balance the users' right to have access to research against the copyright owner's right to ensure the adequate protection of the result of his creative efforts allows the limited copying of copyrighted works for the purpose of research, private use, criticism/review or the reporting of current events, subject to the condition that, if the use is to be made public, it shall be accompanied by an acknowledgement of the title of the work and its

[13] Section 2 Copyright Act 2022.
[14] Ibid. s 20
[15] Ibid. s 20

authorship. Whilst there is no clear line distinguishing when a particular use constitutes a fair dealing or not, it is important to note that a major factor that determines whether the fair use exception has been abused depends on the extent of copying done and a host of other factors.

2.2.Educational Purposes

Apart from the fair use exception, another limitation to the exclusive right of authors relates to the use of copyrighted work for educational purposes. In this case, the law allows for the use of a work[16] in an approved educational institution for educational purposes. Copying, performing, playing, showing and recording of any work is allowed for educational purposes.

Although educational purpose had a wider use under the repealed Copyright Act of 2004 nevertheless, the Copyright Act 2022 also contains provision on the exceptions.

Under the Copyright Act 2022, Section 23 clearly states that:

> *subject to the provisions of this section, the reprographic copying of passages from published literary or musical works by or on behalf of an educational establishment for the purposes of instruction shall not infringe the copyright in the work. (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1), not more than five per cent of a work shall be copied by or on*

[16] Section 21 and 22 Copyright Act 2022; This is in line with the Berne Provisions as the Convention allows for the use of the whole work for teaching purposes so far as the use is compatible with fair practice.

> *behalf of an educational establishment within a period of three months.*[17]

Though the educational purposes exception is laudable because it does not unduly restrict the use of copyrighted works for educational or teaching purposes, it is necessary to highlight that the existence of this exception if not monitored can and has indeed been undermining the right of the holders. The incentive to create is at risk and the reason for this is not far-fetched as the creators of original works may feel that that the result of their toils is being made available freely without them enjoying the fruits that should accrue from their labour. Thus, the subject of limitations and exceptions to copyright requires maintaining careful balance between the rights of creators and the public interest to access to knowledge (copyright works).[18] In this part of the world, students rarely buy textbooks for courses but instead rely heavily on reproduction by way of copying books or articles. Copied material has become the main source of educational materials as students would rather copy textbooks than buy them unless it is made compulsory for them to buy it. As a matter of fact, most schools in Nigeria engage in and encourage (in practice) flagrant[19] reproduction of text books by providing 'unmonitored copying centres' owned by private individuals whose sole aim is to make profit without thinking that they are depriving some other persons the fruit of their labour.[20] It is necessary to reiterate that

[17] Emphasis ours.
[18] UNCTAD/ICTSD, Resource Book on TRIPS p.186; See also Temitope O. Oloko Copyright Exceptions and Limitation vis-a-vis Article 13 of the TRIPS Agreement', 326 to 365 in Current issues in Nigerian Law, edited by SOKEFUN Justus and AJE-FAMUYIDE Olufunke, Lagos:NOUN
[19] s 37 (5)(a) CA 2022.
[20] Even though there is a Reprographic Rights Organization of Nigeria (REPRONIG), REPRONIG is a licensed collecting society for reprographic rights since 2003 with

one of the major causes of loss of revenue for authors of creative works is the reproduction of their works through flagrant copying without permission.

3.0. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In view of the above, this study employed a structured quantitative research design, anchored on a well-designed questionnaire that was systematically divided into six core sections: demographics, awareness, current practices, challenges, recommendations, and informed consent. Each section was purposefully crafted to capture both the breadth and depth of respondents' perspectives, ensuring that the research objectives were comprehensively addressed. By combining both quantitative and qualitative elements, the instrument enabled the researchers to gather numerical insights as well as context-rich observations, thus adopting a mixed-methods lens within a predominantly quantitative framework.

The questionnaire was carefully developed to include a combination of closed-ended questions, multi-response (checkbox) items, and categorical scale questions (such as Likert-type scales). This design allowed respondents to express nuanced positions, such as levels of awareness, frequency of engagement in reproduction practices, or perceived institutional challenges. The closed-ended format facilitated precise measurement and quantification, while the multi-response and categorical items enhanced the exploratory power of the data, permitting the capture of layered opinions and experiences relevant to reprographic practices.

funding support from KOPINOR, the Reprographic Rights Organization of Norway. The organization is however only available on paper and have no effect of the massive copying of textbooks going on the all educational institutions.

A total of 410 respondents participated in the study, comprising students, academic staff, administrative staff, and librarians from Lagos State University. Participants were recruited through convenience sampling, whereby invitations were disseminated using institutional mailing lists, departmental networks, and personal outreach by the research team. While the use of convenience sampling represents a non-probabilistic method and limits the external generalisability of findings, it provided a pragmatic and effective strategy for accessing a diverse pool of participants. Importantly, this approach allowed the study to capture a broad institutional snapshot, reflecting varied perspectives across stakeholder groups and offering exploratory insights that are contextually grounded in the LASU environment. Upon completion of data collection, responses were downloaded from Google Forms and exported into a comma-separated values (CSV) format for further analysis. The dataset was then imported into the Python programming environment, where a series of systematic analytical steps were performed using well-established Python libraries, namely pandas, seaborn, matplotlib, and scipy. The analytical pipeline began with data cleaning and standardisation, including the renaming of long or ambiguous column headers, handling of missing or incomplete responses, and preparation of multi-select items for frequency analysis.

Subsequently, descriptive statistics were computed to provide foundational summaries of the data, such as frequencies, proportions, and measures of central tendency where applicable. These descriptive outputs were complemented by graphical visualisations, including bar charts, pie charts, and heatmaps, to enhance interpretability and communicate patterns effectively. The inferential phase of analysis employed chi-square tests of independence to examine associations between key categorical variables,

such as the relationship between respondents' roles and their awareness levels, or between formal training and permission-seeking behaviours. This enabled the identification of statistically meaningful relationships that extended beyond surface-level observations.

Thematic aggregation was applied to qualitative, open-ended responses, where participants' suggestions and observations were grouped and summarised to extract common themes and priority recommendations. This blended analytical approach allowed the study to address both the numerical scope and the experiential depth of the research questions.

Ethical integrity was maintained throughout the research process. Participants were explicitly informed of the study's purpose, and informed consent was obtained prior to data submission. Of particular note, no personally identifiable information was collected or analysed, ensuring full compliance with ethical standards governing research involving human participants. All data were handled securely, and confidentiality was rigorously preserved in both storage and analysis.

In sum, the methodological rigor underpinning this study ensured that the research findings are both robust and meaningful, providing a credible evidence base for assessing reprographic practices and informing institutional policy recommendations at Lagos State University.

4.0.RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

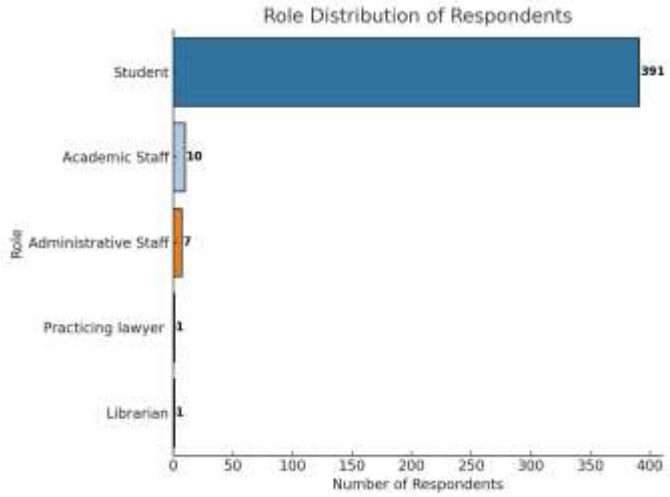
Section 1: Demographics and Awareness

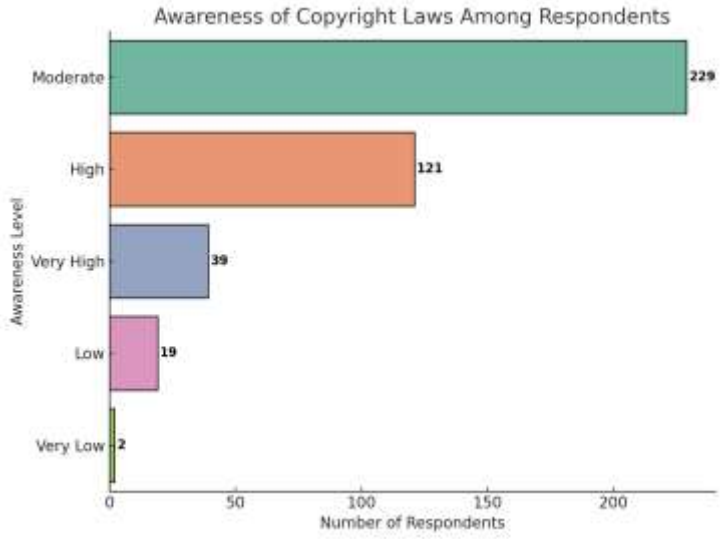
The demographic profile of the respondents provides essential context for understanding patterns of copyright knowledge and practices at Lagos State University (LASU). Among the 410 individuals who completed the

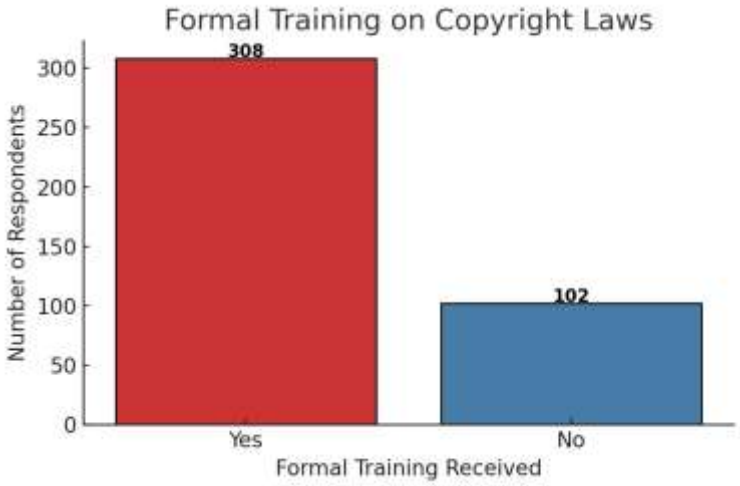
questionnaire, approximately 95% were students, while the remaining respondents were academic staff, administrative staff, or librarians. This distribution is consistent with the general population structure of the university and highlights the centrality of student behaviour in shaping institutional trends regarding the reproduction of copyrighted materials.

When examining awareness levels, the majority of respondents reported moderate familiarity with the principles of copyright law, indicating a general awareness of intellectual property protections but likely with limited depth or specificity. This is noteworthy given the academic context, where students and staff frequently engage with copyrighted materials as part of their routine educational activities.

Notably, only about 25% of respondents indicated that they had received any form of formal training on copyright issues, with staff members disproportionately represented in this group. This finding underscores a key gap: while students constitute the majority of reprographic users, they are also the least likely to have access to formal legal education on copyright compliance. These patterns highlight the need for institutional strategies that address both knowledge and behavioural gaps across the university community.


Role Distribution of Respondents
Student
391
Academic Staff
10
Administrative Staff
7
Practicing lawyer
1
Librarian
1
Role
0
50
100
150
200
250
300
350
400
Number of Respondents


Awareness of Copyright Laws Among Respondents
Moderate
229
High
121
Very High
39
Low
19
Very Low
2
Awareness Level
0
50
100
150
200
Number of Respondents



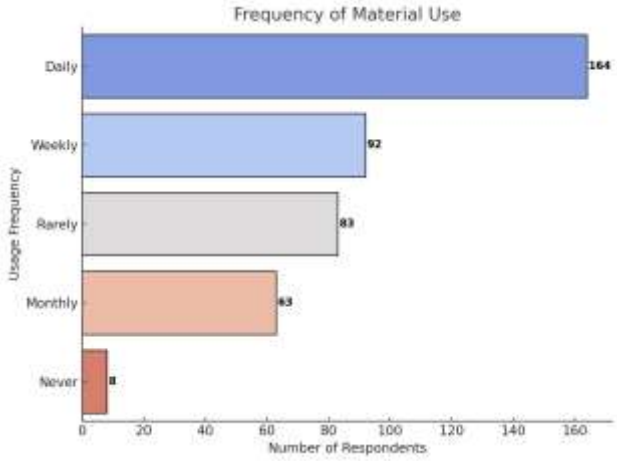
Section 2: Current Practices

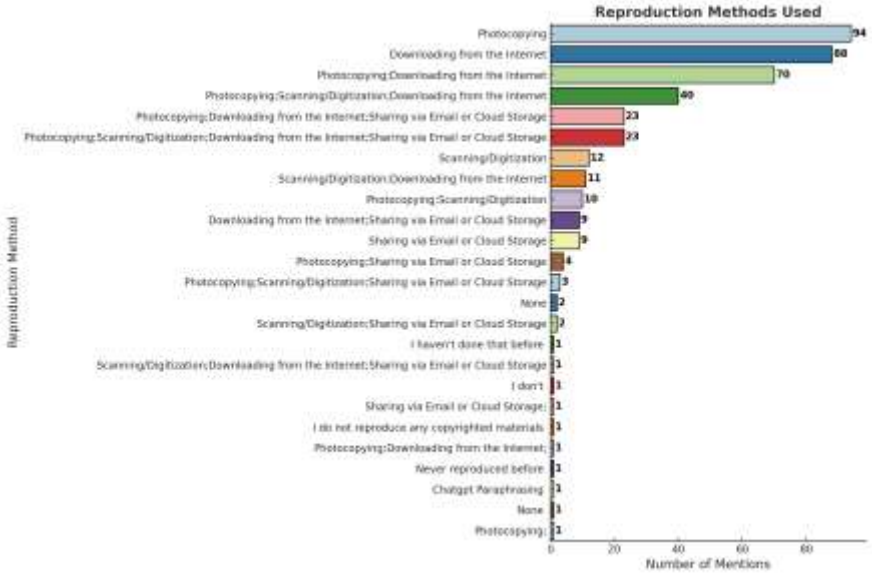
The findings reveal that the use of copyrighted materials is a frequent and routine part of academic life at Lagos State University (LASU). A large proportion of respondents indicated that they engage with such materials on a daily or weekly basis, reflecting the critical role that textbooks, journal articles, lecture notes, and similar resources play in supporting learning, teaching, and research activities. This high level of engagement, while academically justifiable, raises important concerns when examined alongside the methods of access and reproduction employed by the university community.

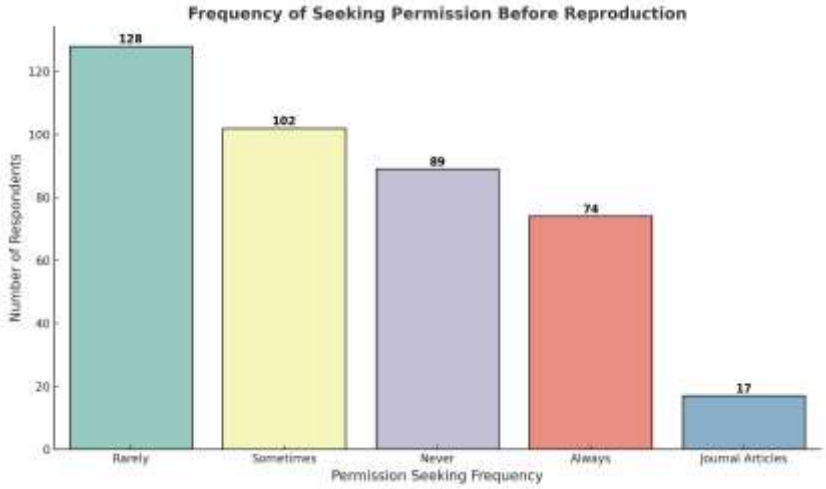
The study identified photocopying and downloading as the two dominant methods of reproducing copyrighted materials. These methods, while convenient and widespread, present substantial legal risks when conducted without proper permissions or outside the scope of fair dealing. Alarmingly, most respondents admitted that they rarely or never sought formal permission before reproducing materials, indicating a systemic pattern of

informal and potentially non-compliant behaviour. This is particularly concerning from a legal standpoint, as repeated and large-scale unauthorised reproduction could expose both individuals and the institution to liability under Nigerian copyright law.

The graphs accompanying this section (see Figure: Frequency of Material Use; Figure: Common Reproduction Methods) visually demonstrate the prevalence of high-frequency material use and the dominant reproduction techniques reported by respondents. Additionally, the third Figure summarises the frequency distribution of permission-seeking behaviours, clearly highlighting the gap between routine reproduction and formal compliance practices. Together, these findings underscore the urgent need for institutional reforms that not only raise awareness but also provide structured pathways for lawful access and reproduction of academic materials.







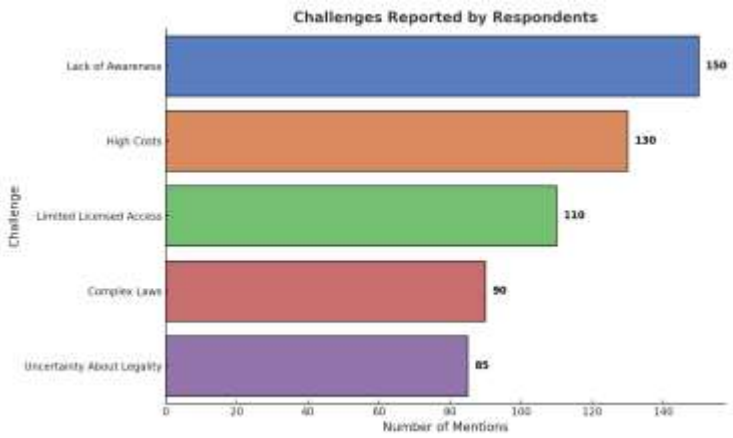
Section 3: Challenges and Barriers

The analysis of survey responses reveals several prominent challenges that hinder effective copyright compliance at Lagos State University (LASU). The most frequently cited barrier was a lack of awareness, with many respondents indicating that they did not fully understand the legal requirements surrounding the use and reproduction of copyrighted materials. This gap in understanding extended beyond students to include staff, reflecting an institutional challenge in communicating and embedding copyright literacy across the university community.

High costs emerged as another major constraint, as the financial burden of purchasing textbooks, journal subscriptions, and other licensed academic resources often led students to seek alternative — and sometimes unauthorised — means of access. This economic pressure amplifies the risk of infringement, as students feel compelled to prioritise affordability over legal compliance.

Further, respondents identified limited licensed access within institutional systems, such as inadequate library resources or restricted subscriptions, as a structural factor pushing them toward informal copying and downloading. Even when motivated to comply, many found the complexity of copyright laws — including the technical language, unclear boundaries of fair dealing, and procedural uncertainties — to be a practical obstacle, leaving them unsure of what actions were lawful.

These findings, illustrated in Figure (Challenges Reported by Respondents) , point to a multidimensional compliance problem. Addressing it will require not only individual training but also institutional investments in resources, policy clarity, and simplified, student-friendly guidance to bridge the gap between legal frameworks and everyday academic practice.



5.0.INFERENTIAL STATISTICS SUMMARY

To deepen the empirical examination of the relationships between respondent characteristics and copyright-related behaviours, this study conducted a series of chi-square (χ^2) tests of independence. These tests are well-suited for identifying associations between categorical variables, providing an inferential statistical layer that complements the descriptive analyses reported earlier. The variables examined included respondents' roles (student, staff, and librarian), awareness of copyright laws, receipt of formal training, and permission-seeking behaviours when reproducing copyrighted materials.

The results of these analyses are summarised in Table 1 and reveal both significant and non-significant patterns that offer valuable insights into the institutional dynamics at Lagos State University (LASU). Most prominently, the analysis revealed a significant association between respondent role and formal training($\chi^2 = 17.84, p < 0.001$), demonstrating that staff members were considerably more likely to have received formal copyright training compared to students. This is

unsurprising given the professional development opportunities typically afforded to staff, but it underscores an important institutional gap: students, despite being the largest group of material users, have disproportionately less access to structured legal education. This finding points to an urgent need for targeted interventions that expand training opportunities to the student population, particularly in light of their central role in reprographic practices.

In contrast, the chi-square tests revealed no significant associations between several other key variable pairs. For example, role and awareness ($\chi^2 = 1.98, p = 0.74$) showed no meaningful relationship, suggesting that students and staff report comparable levels of general awareness regarding copyright laws. Similarly, awareness and permission-seeking behaviour ($\chi^2 = 16.82, p = 0.40$) did not exhibit a significant association, indicating that simply knowing about legal frameworks does not reliably predict whether individuals will engage in lawful practices. This is a critical observation, as it challenges assumptions that educational efforts alone can secure compliance, echoing wider scholarly debates in legal studies and behavioural research.

One marginal finding emerged between formal training and permission-seeking behaviour ($\chi^2 = 8.67, p = 0.07$), where a near-significant trend suggested that individuals with formal training might be more inclined to seek permission before reproducing materials. Although this result did not meet the conventional significance threshold ($typically\ p < 0.05$), it nonetheless points to a potentially meaningful relationship that warrants further investigation in future studies or in the design of pilot interventions. Finally, role and permission-seeking behaviour ($\chi^2 = 3.67, p = 0.45$) also showed no significant association, underscoring that an individual's

institutional status — whether as a student, academic staff member, or librarian — does not, by itself, predict lawful or unlawful behaviour. Together, these inferential results suggest that while structural inequalities in access to training are real and impactful, awareness and institutional role alone are insufficient drivers of copyright compliance.

This reinforces a key institutional implication: LASU must go beyond simply raising awareness or offering training. Effective copyright governance requires the establishment of robust institutional policies, clearly defined compliance pathways, active enforcement mechanisms, and a cultural environment that prioritises ethical use and respect for intellectual property rights. Without this multi-layered approach, the institution risks perpetuating a compliance gap that leaves both individual users and the university vulnerable to legal and reputational risks.

Test	Chi-square(χ^2)	p-value	Interpretation
Role vs Awareness	1.98	0.74	No significant association
Formal Training vs Seek Permission	8.67	0.07	Marginal (non-significant) trend
Role vs Formal Training	17.84	<0.001	Significant; staff more likely to have training
Awareness vs Seek Permission	16.82	0.40	No significant association
Role vs Seek Permission	3.67	0.45	No significant association

6.0.DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the complex interplay between knowledge of copyright law, institutional practices, and actual compliance behaviours within Lagos State University (LASU). While the data show that a moderate level of awareness exists among both students and staff regarding the existence and general principles of copyright law, this awareness does not reliably translate into compliant behaviours, particularly with respect to obtaining permission prior to the reproduction of copyrighted materials. This gap between knowledge and action reveals not merely an individual shortcoming but reflects deeper systemic and institutional failures that exacerbate the problem.

At its core, copyright law in Nigeria, as articulated under the Nigerian Copyright Act, is designed to protect the intellectual property rights of authors and creators, granting them exclusive rights over the reproduction, distribution, and adaptation of their works. However, the law also carves out specific exceptions — notably the doctrine of "fair dealing" — which permit limited use of copyrighted materials for purposes such as education, research, private study, and criticism without the author's prior consent. Internationally, similar exceptions are found in copyright regimes such as the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and the U.S. fair use doctrine under the Copyright Act of 1976. Despite these legal allowances, the findings from this study suggest that at LASU, practices often extend well beyond the permissible boundaries of fair dealing, resulting in systematic infringement.

The role of formal training in shaping copyright awareness was shown to be significant: staff members were statistically more likely to have received formal training compared to students. However, even among those who had received such training, the likelihood of seeking permission before

reproduction remained low. This disconnect suggests that while educational interventions can improve knowledge, they are insufficient in isolation to alter entrenched behaviours. This insight aligns with legal scholarship emphasizing that compliance with law is rarely secured through knowledge alone but requires a combination of clear rules, institutional enforcement mechanisms, and a culture of normative adherence.

The institutional context at LASU appears to lack robust compliance frameworks. The absence of clear, well-disseminated institutional policies on reprographic rights, combined with weak enforcement and minimal monitoring, creates an environment in which both students and staff operate with limited accountability. As highlighted by the inferential results, no statistically significant association was observed between role (student vs. staff) and permission-seeking behaviour, nor between awareness levels and permission-seeking behaviour. This suggests that even individuals who are aware of copyright restrictions do not feel compelled or obligated to comply, likely due to the absence of institutional pressures or incentives to do so.

The critical role of lecturers must be foregrounded in this discussion. Lecturers occupy a dual position: on the one hand, they are themselves authors and rights holders whose works are at risk of unauthorised reproduction; on the other hand, they are educators who have the capacity — and arguably the professional responsibility — to instil respect for copyright norms among their students. The findings suggest that leveraging the authority and influence of lecturers could be pivotal in driving cultural change within the institution. This aligns with broader international practices where educational institutions embed copyright awareness into

curricular and co-curricular activities, empowering academic staff to serve as compliance champions.

When benchmarked against Nigerian legal standards and international best practices, LASU's current approach reveals critical weaknesses. For instance, many higher education institutions globally have established copyright offices, appointed copyright officers, and developed institutional copyright policies that are regularly communicated to the university community. They also run sustained educational campaigns, ensure the provision of licensed resources, and introduce technological solutions (such as digital rights management systems) to monitor and manage use. The absence of comparable mechanisms at LASU places it at risk of reputational damage, legal liability, and erosion of ethical standards.

In conclusion, this discussion highlights that achieving meaningful improvements in copyright compliance at LASU will require a multi-layered institutional strategy. Educational interventions are necessary but insufficient without the backing of clear policies, enforcement mechanisms, and an institutional culture that prioritises ethical use and respect for intellectual property rights. Lecturers, institutional leaders, and policymakers must work collaboratively to address these challenges, ensuring that LASU not only meets its legal obligations under Nigerian and international law but also models best practices for academic integrity and respect for the creative work of others.

7.0.CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study set out to investigate the extent to which reprographic practices at Lagos State University (LASU) align with the principles of fair dealing and copyright compliance as established under Nigerian law and

international standards. The research findings reveal a striking picture of institutional gaps, behavioural patterns, and systemic weaknesses that require urgent intervention.

One of the central findings is the pervasive reliance on copyrighted materials by students and staff, often through reproduction methods such as photocopying, scanning, and downloading. While such use is not inherently unlawful, the analysis shows that a substantial portion of these activities falls outside the permissible scope of fair dealing as defined by the Nigerian Copyright Act. Compounding this issue is the limited formal training available within the institution: only a minority of respondents — disproportionately staff over students — reported having received formal instruction on copyright compliance, leaving the majority to navigate complex legal terrain without adequate institutional support.

The study further reveals that there is little systematic effort to encourage or enforce permission-seeking behaviour among users of copyrighted materials. Inferential statistical analysis demonstrated no significant relationship between awareness levels and compliance behaviour, suggesting that knowledge alone does not suffice to drive lawful practices. These findings highlight the critical need to address the institutional culture surrounding copyright, as well as the structures that govern how members of the academic community engage with intellectual property.

Importantly, the research underscores a strong, expressed demand within the university community for clearer policies, structured training, and better institutional guidance. Respondents across roles signalled the need for the university to establish clearer frameworks, improve communication of legal obligations, and provide accessible support mechanisms. This internal

demand represents a valuable opportunity for the institution to implement meaningful reforms, backed by stakeholder buy-in.

In light of these findings, several key recommendations are proposed. First, the university should implement mandatory training workshops for both students and staff. These workshops should go beyond the mere dissemination of legal information, focusing instead on practical guidance, case-based learning, and capacity building to equip participants with the tools necessary to navigate real-world copyright scenarios.

Second, LASU must develop and publish a clear, accessible institutional policy on reprographic rights and copyright compliance. Such a policy should outline the rights and obligations of students, staff, and lecturers, clarify the scope of fair dealing, and specify the processes for obtaining permission when required. To ensure effectiveness, the policy must be widely disseminated through multiple channels, including student handbooks, staff induction programs, institutional websites, and regular communication updates.

Third, the establishment of a dedicated copyright compliance unit within the university is essential. This unit would serve as the institutional hub for managing copyright matters, providing advice, handling permissions, and monitoring compliance. It should also liaise with external bodies such as the Nigerian Copyright Commission, publishers, and rights management organisations to ensure that the institution remains aligned with national and international legal standards.

Fourth, LASU should explore collaborative partnerships with publishers and content providers to negotiate affordable licensing arrangements that

increase access to essential academic materials while reducing the need for unauthorised reproduction. By investing in institutional subscriptions, electronic library resources, and open educational resources (OER), the university can create a more compliant and resource-rich learning environment.

Fifth, the university should run continuous awareness campaigns, utilising posters, digital media, seminars, and workshops to promote a culture of respect for intellectual property rights. These campaigns should be tailored to address the specific needs and behaviours of different stakeholder groups, ensuring maximum relevance and impact.

Finally, lecturers should be empowered to play a leading role in promoting copyright compliance. As both content creators and educators, they are uniquely positioned to influence student behaviours and reinforce the importance of ethical and lawful use of materials. Training programs for lecturers should include components on how to integrate copyright education into their teaching and how to model best practices for their students.

In sum, this research highlights that addressing the challenges of reprographic infringement at LASU requires a multi-dimensional strategy, combining legal education, institutional policy reform, capacity building, and cultural change. By adopting these recommendations, the university can enhance its compliance with national and international legal frameworks, protect the rights of creators, and strengthen its standing as a centre of academic excellence committed to ethical practices.