

**AWARENESS AND COMPLIANCE WITH COPYRIGHT POLICY AMONG
PHOTOCOPY SERVICE PROVIDERS IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN
EDO STATE**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated awareness and compliance with copyright policy among photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State. This study adopted descriptive survey design of the correlational type as its research design. Three research objectives that were translated into two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. The population of the study comprises 49 Photocopy service providers in the private university libraries. The questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequency, percentages, and mean, with criterion mean placed at 2.50 to interpret the quantitative data collected. Pearson correlational coefficient was used for test of hypothesis. Findings indicated that photocopy service providers and library staff are aware of copyright policy but do not comply due to some challenges such as: economic pressure and lack of enforcement mechanisms which they identify as an obstacle. The tested hypothesis revealed a weak negative correlation between awareness and compliance with copyright policy. It was recommended that stronger enforcement copyright regulations and the implementation of more effective monitoring system should be in place to ensure compliance.

Keywords: copyright, copyright policy, copyright awareness, copyright compliance, photocopy services

Introduction

Copyright Policy are laws designed to protect the rights of authors and creators by granting them exclusive rights to reproduce, distribute, and display their works. Copyright policies are crucial for protecting the intellectual property rights of authors and creators. In the digital age, the dissemination of information and knowledge is crucial for academic and research progress. University libraries play a pivotal role in providing access to a vast array of resources, including books, journals, and other scholarly materials. However, with the rising costs of educational materials and the need for easy access, photocopy services have become a common feature in university libraries. These services offer a convenient way for students and faculty to obtain copies of necessary materials for their studies and research. The issue of copyright compliance is critical in academic environments where the reproduction of materials is a frequent necessity and photocopy service providers, especially in university libraries, play a significant role in this context.

In the context of university libraries, adhering to copyright policies is essential to ensure that the intellectual property rights of authors are respected and that the libraries operate within the legal framework (Ramabina & Nsibirwa 2024). Non-compliance with copyright laws can lead to legal consequences for both the institution and the individuals involved, and it undermines the ethical standards of academic institutions (Nworie et al. 2019). This now begs the question on whether or not, the personnel involved are aware of and comply with these copyright policies.

Awareness of copyright is the act of being informed and knowledgeable of copyright laws. The understanding of the basic principles of copyright includes what constitutes copyright infringement and the legal implication. Many studies like the research by Agaber and Agwu (2013) highlights that many service

providers are not aware of the specifics of copyright laws, such as what constitutes infringement and penalties for non-compliance. This lack of awareness can be attributed to inadequate training and education on copyright issues. Compliance with copyright laws however involves adherence to guidelines with copyright policy. It is the understanding and acting in accordance with both legal requirements and ethical standards regarding copyright among photocopy service providers. Several studies have identified common challenges to compliance, including: Economic factors, Institutional policies, Technology integration, Education and Training, insufficient resources etc. Okoye (2018) for example found that many photocopy service providers in university libraries do not comply with copyright policies because enforcement mechanisms are weak and penalties are rarely imposed. Libraries with strict enforcement policies and regular audits tend to have higher compliance rates. Moreso, Adeyemi, (2014) stated that many photocopy service providers prioritize profit over legal adherence leading to non-compliance. He further stated that some providers lack access to updated information on copyright laws which hinders their ability to comply.

Non-compliance with copyright policy has several negative implications, including legal repercussions for the institution involved and a general erosion of respect for intellectual property rights. Continuous education and training programs tailored to the needs of photocopy service providers can significantly improve compliance. In the same vein, the establishment of clear and enforceable institutional policies regarding copyright can help in mitigating non-compliance Okoye, (2018).

Academic libraries are structured to have bindery and reprographic units with the objective of mending worn out materials for it to reclaim its original shape or make copies of some pages of library material for academic or research purpose. These units are usually manned by non-professionals who may not be aware of copyright policies and so may not comply with these policies. The situation in private university libraries in Edo state seems similar from the researchers' perspective and so this study seeks to provide a clearer picture by investigating the

awareness and compliance with copyright policy among photocopy service providers in private University Libraries in Edo State.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the existence of copyright laws designed to protect intellectual property, there is grave concern which was based on the researchers' observation and working relationship in libraries with the service providers that library staff and photocopy service providers in Private university libraries in Edo State may not be fully aware of or compliant with these policies. This lack of awareness and compliance can lead to unauthorized reproduction of copyrighted materials, which infringes on the rights of authors and publishers and potentially results in legal and financial repercussions for the individual and institutions involved. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the level of awareness and the extent of compliance with copyright policy among photocopy service providers in these private universities, identifying the factors influencing their behavior and proposing strategies to enhance adherence to copyright regulations.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate awareness and compliance with copyright policy among library staff and photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State.

While the specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the level of awareness with copyright policy among library staff and photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State.
2. Determine the extent of compliance with copyright policy among library staff and photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State.

3. To examine the relationship between awareness and compliance with copyright policy among library staff and photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State.

Research questions

The following questions were articulated to be answered.

- i. What is the level of awareness of copyright policy among library staff and photocopy service providers in Private University Libraries in Edo State?
- ii. What is the extent of compliance with copyright policy among library staff and photocopy service providers in Private University Libraries in Edo State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypothesis was formulated for this study

H₀₁: There is no relationship between awareness and compliance with copyright policy among library staff and photocopy service providers in Edo State

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The issue of copyright awareness and compliance is critical in academic environment where reproduction of materials is a frequent necessity, photocopy service providers, especially in university libraries, play a significant role in this context and as such are expected to be aware and comply with the extant copyright policies.

Awareness with copyright policy

Many studies have shown that awareness of copyright laws among photocopy service providers is generally low. This lack of awareness can be attributed to inadequate training and education on copyright issues as highlighted by a research by Agaber and Agwu (2013) who averred that many

service providers are not aware of the specifics of copyright laws, such as what constitutes infringement and penalties for non-compliance. Similarly, Tella and Oyeyemi, (2017) stress the need to pay attention to copyright awareness in their paper entitled: “Undergraduate Students’ Knowledge on Copyright Infringement” they, buttress the fact that attention has been given to copyright awareness with the view to increasing compliance and this has prompted them to make this recommendations that libraries, librarians and lecturers should help increase the level of awareness of copyright laws among students by organizing orientation programs/user education to raise students’ awareness of copyright laws and motivate compliance. Morrison and Secker (2015) however reported that information professionals in the UK are highly aware of copyright issues, 10% of the respondents thought that their services did not require them to be with copyright legislation. Though Morrison and Secker (2015), and National Union of Students for the IP Awareness Network and the Intellectual Property NUS (2013) indicated that the level of copyright awareness is mostly high among library staff and it is poor among students, other authors expressed a different opinion that librarians and staff of Academic libraries in many countries of the world generally have low levels of awareness and understanding of copyright issues. For instance, Olaka (2010) in Kenya, Korletey (2014) in Ghana; and Todorova et al. (2017) in a study in 13 countries, namely Croatia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Lithuania, Romania, Finland, France, Portugal, Norway, Turkey, Mexico, USA and UK concluded that awareness and understanding of copyright issues among librarians are generally low. More so, awareness of copyright law can be enhanced significantly through training programs and educational initiative.

This is in agreement with the study by Aboyade et al. (2015) on copyright infringement and photocopying services among University students and teachers in Nigeria observed that 35.6% of the students affirm yes to their awareness of Nigerian copyright policy while 64.4% affirm not

aware to copyright policy. This is an indication that majority of the respondents are not aware of the existence of Nigerian copyright policy. Igbeneghu (2009) as cited by Sambo et al., (2017) observed that 86% of the respondents photocopy frequently while 1.1% of the respondents do not photocopy frequently, 21.8% of the respondents stated that they photocopy some chapters from books, 3.2% photocopy some pages from journals, 17.5% photocopy a whole textbooks. In the same work, 10.6% of the respondents agree that there is a limit to the amount of the photocopies that could be made from published materials for their customer, 86% indicate that they do not have limit to the amount of the photocopies that could be made from published materials.

Similarly, Sambo et al (2016) in their study of photocopying practice and copyright policy in Nigerian libraries note that 31% of the respondents mostly photocopied textbooks, 27% indicate manuscript, lecture notes, project, while 14% of the respondents' photocopy journals. In the same vein, 72% of the respondents indicate that they are aware of copyright policy.

Compliance with copyright policy

Compliance with copyright laws among photocopy service providers is often poor. This is due to several factors including economic incentives to provide cheaper services by ignoring copyright restrictions. Okiy (2005) found that many photocopy service providers in university libraries do not comply with copyright policies because enforcement mechanisms are weak and penalties are rarely imposed. Compliance levels vary significantly across institutions, the compliance is often influenced by the enforcement mechanisms in place. Libraries with strict enforcement policies and regular audits tend to have higher compliance rates. Several challenges hinder compliance, including economic pressure and the high cost of purchasing original material this was supported by Adomi and Igun (2015) that photocopy service providers often face financial constraints that

make adhering to copyright laws difficult. In combating the compliance menace, Tella and Oyeyemi (2017) made some allusions that library officers and lecturers should help increase the level of awareness of copyright laws among students by organizing orientation program on awareness of copyright laws and motivate compliance.

Several studies have identified common challenges to compliance, including: Economic factors, Institutional policies, Technology integration, Education and Training, insufficient resources etc. According to Adeyemi, (2014) “Many photocopy service providers prioritize profit over legal adherence leading to non-compliance”. Some providers lack access to updated information on copyright laws which hinders their ability to comply. Non-compliance with copyright policy has several negative implications, including legal repercussions for the institution involved and a general erosion of respect for intellectual property rights. Continuous education and training programs tailored to the needs of photocopy service providers can significantly improve compliance. Okoye, (2018) stated that establishing clear and enforceable institutional policies regarding copyright can help in mitigating non-compliance. Effective enforcement of copy right policies is essential for compliance.

Copyright Law and Photocopying

The practice of photocopying copyrighted works is the order of the day. Information users often seen photocopying volumes of books for various purposes without being conscious of their implications. Photocopying copyrighted works without permission is a copyright law violation. However, Onoyeyan (2018), states that the copyright law under the doctrine of fair use creates a legal exception for photocopying. Fair use specifically states that photocopying without permission could be invoked for purposes of research, private use, criticism or review of the reporting of current events. The concept of photocopying covers a majority of the processes used

for permanent reproduction of text. Bush and Dreyfuss in Onoyeyan (2018) report that until the late 1960s, the usual means of obtaining multiple copies of textual matter was by carbon copying and stencil duplication. Igbeneghu (2009) as cited in Odu and Obun (2019) observes the alarming and indiscriminate rate of photocopying copyrighted materials in Nigeria, which is described as a violation of authors' rights. The author notes that the high price of books, especially foreign books, is one of the causes of this unwholesome act. Onoyeyan (2018) supports this view by stating that high prices of books, coupled with a shortage of books, have led to the boom of photocopying as a lucrative business in Nigeria. In the same vein, the author attributes the high rate of photocopying copyrighted works to the low level of copyright awareness in Nigeria, caused by the high illiteracy status of the country's people. This cankerworm has militated against effective copyright administration in Nigeria. However, Igbeneghu (2009) as cited in Odu and Obun (2019) maintains that photocopying of library resources serves a vital role in the Nigerian education system. It is used in information dissemination on a large scale among students, lecturers, and researchers in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria, which at the same time propels the education system.

Ajebomogunmi (2011) as cited by Nworie et al. (2019) submits that photocopying of copyright materials should be done within the stipulated standard due to the fact that not every student has enough money to purchase all the information materials needed for their studies and research, hence their gross dependence on photocopying for survival. In spite of the justifications given for photocopying of copyrighted works, it is argued that the high and uncontrolled rate of photocopying poses a threat to growth and development. It is therefore pertinent to come to terms that despite the harsh realities of the present economic situation in the world, there is no justifiable reason to rob copyright holders of their legitimate rights to benefit from their labour. Photocopying of library resources serves many roles in the Nigerian education system; it is used in information

dissemination on a large scale among students, lecturers and researchers in the tertiary institution environment in Nigeria and also keeps the educational system going. A key responsibility of librarians is providing access to information to all in order to generate the creation of new intellectual property, Darkey & Akussah, (2008) as cited by Ramabina and Nsibirwa (2023). One way to make access easier is through the provision of photocopying for users.

Role of University Libraries and librarians in copyright protection.

University libraries often play a pivotal role in educating service providers about copyright policies with the notion that libraries that actively engage in training and dissemination of information about copyright laws have higher rates of compliance among their photocopy service providers. In disseminating information about copyright policies. Libraries should have clear and comprehensive copyright policies in place which should be regularly updated to reflect changes in the law and technology advancements with emphasizes that libraries must actively promote copyright awareness through posters, handouts and digital content.

Afegbu (2017), states that the right guidance should be provided to library users by librarians on how to photocopy library resources with compliance to copyright policy in the library. Libraries are often the only entities that provide access to the vast majority of copyrighted works that lose market vitality long before the expiration of the copyrights, and are often the only entities that preserve public domain materials. Fabunmi (2009) as cited by Onoyeyan (2018) stress that photocopying an entire work is disallowed, if photocopying is to be made for educational purposes, Librarians should ensure that precise citation is done by any researcher for any piece of information collected from a given source in the Library.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive research design to examine the awareness and compliance with copyright policy among library staff and photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State. The population of the study comprises 49 library staff and photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State. Total enumeration sampling technique was adopted because of the small number of population of the study. Data was collected using questionnaire which was developed based on the research objectives. Collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency and mean ($\bar{x}$) with criterion mean placed at 2.50, to interpret the quantitative data collected through the questionnaire.

Presentation of results

What is the level of awareness with copyright policy among library staff and photocopy service provider in private university libraries in Edo State?

(a) Are you aware of copyright policy in the context of photocopy services in the libraries?

Table 1: Level of Awareness with Copyright Policy among photocopy service Providers in Private university libraries in Edo State

Statement	Frequency	X
Yes	45	2.88
No	2	
Not Sure	2	
Criterion Mean		2.50

The calculated mean of 2.88 is higher than the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicate that, on average, respondent are aware of copyright policy in the context of photocopy services. This suggest a generally well-informed respondent group.

What is the extent of compliance with copyright policy among photocopy service provider in private university libraries in Edo State?

(b) Do you have any policies in place to ensure compliance will copyright policy in your photocopy services?

Table 2: Extent of compliance with copyright policy among photocopy service Provider in private university libraries in Edo State

Statement	Frequency	Percent
Yes	15	30.6
No	34	69.4
Total	49	100.0

The majority of respondents (69.5%) do not comply with copyright policy in photocopy services while a minority (30.6%) complied.

Testing of the Hypotheses

There is no significant relationship between awareness and compliance with copyright policy among photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State

Table 3. Relationship between awareness and compliance with copyright policy

		Level of awareness with copyright policy	Extent of Compliance with copyright policy
Level of awareness with copyright policy	Pearson correlation	1	0.684**
	Sig.(2-tailed)		0.000
	N	49	49
Extent of compliance with copyright policy	Pearson correlation	0.684**	
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	49	49

The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.684 indicates a strong positive relationship between the level of awareness with copyright policy and the extent of compliance with copyright policy

among the 49 respondents. The p-value of 0.000 (which is less than 0.05) shows that this relationship is statistically significant. This means that as awareness of copyright policy increases, compliance also tends to increase, and the result is unlikely due to chance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming a meaningful association between the two variables.

4.2: Discussion of Findings

Level of Awareness with copyright policy

The study found that there is a high level of awareness with copyright policy among library staff and photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State Nigeria. This may be because the focus of the study is on library staff and photocopying service providers within the library who are often managed by professional librarians with adequate knowledge on copyright policies. This finding negates the findings of Agaber and Agwu (2013) who averred that many service providers are not aware of the specifics of copyright laws, such as what constitutes infringement and penalties for non-compliance. In the same vein, Tella and Oyeyemi, (2017) stress the need to pay attention to copyright awareness, the researchers buttress the fact that attention has been given to copyright awareness with the view to increasing compliance. The finding however supports that of Morrison and Secker (2015) that reported that information professionals in the UK are highly aware of copyright issues.

Extent of compliance with copyright policy

The study found that there is a low level of compliance with copyright policy among photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State. Despite the high level of awareness of copyright the compliance among library staff and photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State is still very low. This may be attributed to the lack of enforcement

mechanism by the authorities concerned. This finding is in line with that of Okiy (2005) who found that many photocopy service providers in university libraries do not comply with copyright policies because enforcement mechanisms are weak and penalties are rarely imposed. Also, Adomi and Igun (2015) disclosed that photocopy service providers often face financial constraints that make adhering to copyright laws difficult.

Relationship between awareness and compliance with copyright policy among library staff and photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State

The study revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between awareness and compliance with copyright policy. Hence, there is a significant relationship between awareness and compliance with copyright policy among photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo state. This finding agreed with the findings of Korlety (2014) in Ghana on the level of awareness and compliance with copyright law. This could be corroborated with the fact that one can only comply or obey rules, regulations to the extent he or she is aware of it. Therefore, an increase in the awareness with copyright policy will lead to an increase in compliance with copyright policy and vice versa.

CONCLUSION

Consequently, based on the analysis of the data, it can be concluded that awareness with copyright policy among library staff and photocopy service providers in private university libraries in Edo State reveals that awareness is relatively high however there is a significant gap in compliance. Consequently, most library staff and photocopy service providers are aware of the existence of copyright laws and the importance to adhering to them but despite the awareness, actual compliance with copyright laws is inconsistency which may be caused by several factors such as:

Economic pressure, Lack of monitoring enforcement and ambiguity and complexity of copyright policies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings derived from this study, the following recommendations are hereby put forward.

- Libraries are advised to promote the awareness of copyright policies by organizing workshops and seminars on copyright policies for library staff and photocopy service providers. Legal experts and representatives from copyright organizations could be invited to speak. Awareness can also be promoted through the distribution of pamphlets, posters, and handouts that explain key aspect of copyright laws, focusing on what constitutes infringements and the consequently. Another way to promote awareness is through the adoption of digital platforms like university websites, social media, and email newsletters to share information about copyright policies and by placing clear and informative signs near photocopy machines and services areas outlining copyright rules and regulations.
- The University management can also make it mandatory for all library staff and photocopy service providers to undergo training on copyright policies before they can operate within university premises. The institutions should also implement a continuous education program that requires library staff and photocopy service providers to update their knowledge periodically
- Authorities should consider strengthening the enforcement of copyright policies to ensure better compliance among library staff and photocopy service providers by appointing compliance officers within the University libraries to oversee and enforce copyright adherence among photocopy service providers and by conducting regular audits to ensure

compliance with copyright policies. This can include checking record of photocopied materials and ensuring proper permissions are obtained.

- Finally, Universities are to develop and disseminate clear copyright policies tailored specifically for photocopy services within university libraries.

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