



Students' Perception and Utilization of Reprographic Section in Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Library, Effurun

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ABSTRACT

The impact of reprographic on document delivery service in libraries and information centres cannot be deserted. This paper assessed the students' perception and utilization of reprographic services in Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun. Library. The study population comprise 2,213 students of the university. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. Research questions were answered using frequency, bar chart and percentages for easy interpretation. The major findings of the study revealed that reprographic section was not only affected by lack of spares and consumable materials but also lack of technical know-how, insufficient equipment, funds and lack of air-condition/space among other. The frequent use of this section indicated that a lot need to be done to enhance and expand services of the unit, since some services like book binding, thesis binding, thermal binding, photograph, microfilm/micro reader, xerography and drilling were not done. The study recommends expansion of the unit, more funds and experts should be involved in the unit so as to curb the problems of technical know-how and spares/consumables.

Keywords: Reprographic services, Students perception, Utilization, FUPRE.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The reprographic section of Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Library Effurun is located at the main library. Its services are mainly confined only to the users of the library and research scholars engaged in road research and related activities. The following services were available in the reprographic section: Printing service, scanning service, photocopying service, laminating service and spiral binding service. Reprographic services are for official use, researchers, scholars and library users, as it also caters to the needs of its parent body and social welfare. The major aims of establishing the unit is to reduce print cost, photocopy cost and other services rendered by the unit, compared with other reprographic business centers within and outside the university. However, reprography as an inseparable part of information center and libraries as well as users,

plays an important role in communicating the recorded knowledge. Karuna (2010) opines that reprographic services acquired immediate importance in a library, because no library can claim to meet its entire demand from its own resources. It has to transact with other libraries and organizations for a part of its requirements. According to him, the materials borrowed from outside sources cannot be retained from an indefinite period. Reprography, as explained by (Singh and Garg, 2002). Arises as need for duplicating materials required constant use. The need is more imperative and utility relatively higher in an organization engaged in research activities.

Several photographic processes have been devised for producing copies. From the advent of the written word, the desirability of copies for duplicates has spurred the efforts of man. It includes the invention of photography (1849 – Frenchman, L.G.M. Dagurre and an English man, W.H.F. Talbold), Photostat (1900- France, Abbe Rena Graffin), and photocopying (1804). Hawkins typewrite, silver halide diazomethod, blue printing and brown printing, and electro fax (1954). The advent of the new system of reprography came into being in 1950 with reproduction (production a fresh) and photograph, the technique to produce images. Reprography has evolved over the year through the desire and need to document and distribute information. However, sophisticated electronic techniques led to the process of reprography in 1976, and 1980- 90s marked the advent of possible revolutionary change.

For the purpose of this study, the nature of services being rendered most, materials that are being photocopied most as well as period during which the students photocopying, printing, laminating, scanning activities attracted this research attention.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Utilization of reprographic services in any library is very critical to the library users in order to enhance their learning, teaching and research. However, utilization of reprographic services at the Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun Library has been faced with challenges, as library users are seen shunting to access services in the Unit. Therefore, this study assesses students' perception and utilization of reprographic services in Federal University of Petroleum Resources Effurun Library.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to evaluate the students' perception of reprographic services at Federal University of Petroleum Resources Library. It also aimed to determine the nature of the services rendered most, to identify materials that are being photocopied most and period at which the students photocopying, printing, lamination, and scanning activities are uppermost as well as various challenges confronting the section and suggest possible recommendation toward efficiency and effective service delivery in the unit.

1.3. Research Questions

The study sets out to provide answers to the following research questions:

- i. What is the nature of services being rendered most at the Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Library Effurun?
- ii. What kinds of materials that are being photocopied most in the library?

- iii. What is the period at which students use the Reprographic unit most?
- iv. What are the challenges confronting the Reprographic unit of the library?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Reprography, as explained by [Amodeo \(1983\)](#) is a term that is now used in place of photo duplication, photocopying, duplicating, printing, document reproduction or documentary reproduction. Reprography plays many roles in libraries, which among others, include dissemination of information on a large scale among and between libraries and their patrons, reproduction and catalogue preservation of records, security, storage of important documents, securing the protection of information in rare and important texts, extensive replications of information of unique collection of data, out of print books, manuscripts, back runs of volumes of periodicals and saving of space in the library [Karuna \(2010\)](#) Consequently, they further identified the importance of reprography in library and information services including speedy access and processes in acquiring an original work and elimination of time lag as well as saving space in the library through the redirection of bulky materials into formats like microfilm, microcytic and others. [Singh and Garg \(2002\)](#) highlighted the use of photocopying facilities in biomedical Information Centres and Libraries (ICLs) in India: A critical evaluation. Data was collected from 126 biomedical ICLs. Result reveals that overall percentage of reprography during 1994- 95 was about 65.08%, which increased to 80.95% during 1997- 98. It indicated that almost all the libraries have realised the need for reprography in the ICLs. [Igbeneghu \(2009\)](#) reported that reprography therefore helps ensuring effective services delivery in any form of libraries. In the face of economic recession, where libraries are grossly underfunded, reprographic services have come to play a significant role in academic library services. With reprography in place, one can get an exact copy of the original documents. Outwardly, reprography has enhanced the use of library materials. Users can now access copies of materials even in situation where somebody is using the original, photocopies could be made for others.

[Nganga \(1984\)](#) defined photocopy as an adaptation of photography whereby copies can be produced directly from the originals without need for re-creation of the image, for instance, a master for subsequent reproduction. The [New Webster's Dictionary of the English Language International edition \(1992\)](#) defined photocopy as a photographic reproduction of a document, illustration and so on.

It could be inferred from these definitions that:

- i. Photocopy involves the use of photographic technology to produce copies directly from the original document.
- ii. The technology utilized in the production of copies directly from the original document could be similar to photography.
- iii. The product must be such that could be read with the naked eye without the aid of an optical device.
- iv. The product is usually an exact replica of the original document.
- v. Photocopying does not require the preparation of a master before it can be carried out.

Studies have shown that photocopying has assumed an important role of making information accessible to users. [Igbeneghu \(2009\)](#) carry out a survey of photocopying practices in selected universities in Western Nigeria revealed that 75% of the respondents photocopied unpublished materials like manuscripts, lecture notes, theses, and others, constitute the bulk of what is being photocopied.

Page (1966) defined photocopy "as the copying by photography or quasi-photography and pseudo-photography." He stated further that since photography means writing with light, photocopying therefore involves the process of not only writing with light but with heat, which he described as an invisible light. The *International Encyclopedia of Information and Library Science* (1997) stated that reprography is an all-embracing term coined in the early 1960. It defined reprography "as the technology of producing and reproducing two-dimensional visual communication media in business and administrative operations."

The *Encyclopedia of Librarianship* (1968) also defined reprography as the "art of producing single or multiple copies of documents whether by photographic or other means.

The *Focal Encyclopedia of Photography* (1993) defined reprography "as a general term applied to photographic techniques of reproducing flat originals such as documents, drawings, photographs and printed matters. Its scope includes silver halide and non-silver copying processes such as microfilming and xerographic office copies and photomechanical reproduction."

Nganga (1984) defined reprography as the in-plant reproduction of two dimensional visual communication media (e.g. document) through photographic and non-photographic processes of image creation at a very rapid rate, but at a low cost for the purpose of executing business and administrative operations. Copies reproduced are usually very few and are not for commercial purposes. Lahood and Sullivan (1975) defined reprography as a class of processes whose purpose is to replicate by optical or photomechanical means previously created graphic or coded messages.

Nganga (1984) further categorized the processes or types of reprography into the following: Microscopy, Photocopy Duplicating and In-plant printing (Office printing)

Similarly, Mason (1968) defined photocopying as the making of copies by photographic process. He argued that copies should be such that could be read with the naked eyes or without the aid of an optical device.

The *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language* (1986) defined photocopy as a negative or positive photographic reproduction of graphic matter (as a drawing or printing). Kyle (1983) stated that one of the most important advantages of photocopying is that books are made more accessible to users, without exposing the original to damage from overuse, vandalism or theft. Similarly, Amodeo (1983) stated that the presence of photocopying machines in the library for photocopying purposes is to prevent the mutilation and theft of books. Orr (1990) stated that the photocopy process has, in recent years, evolved to a point that is possible to produce archival quality copies using different copiers, provided the equipment is supplied with archival paper and stable toner. In other words, materials could be copied for preservation purposes. More so, Igbeneghu (2009) stated that 37% of respondents indicated that photocopying activities is higher towards the examination period. The importance of photocopying notwithstanding, there are problems associated with it.

According to Nganga (1984) the problems associated with photocopying include high cost of equipment, high cost of maintenance and servicing, lack of spare parts, technical know-how and the problem of copyright. Similarly, Singh and Garg (2002) in his study stated that 57% of respondents indicated high cost of equipment and lack of technical know-how while 54% of the respondents indicated insufficient spare parts/ consumable items among others.

In addition, Amodeo (1983) stated that photocopying reduces the life-span of bound books, maps and bound serials because it causes them to wear and tear. He explained further that the wear and tear are caused by factors like the subsection of the binding to extreme strain during photocopying, the tightness of the binding, the use of inappropriate machines, carelessness during the process of photocopying and excessive photocopying. Similarly, ALA World Encyclopedia (1980) stated that photocopying is responsible for the wear and tear of books because of the difficulty involved in photocopying from bound volumes.

2.1. Research Method

The survey research method was adopted for the study because of its large population. The target population was the FUPRE students. Numbering 2,213 registered students (Registration Statistics. 2014/2015 Academic Session). A total of 1,670 respondents were selected out of the total population. The stratified random sampling technique was used to select them across the two colleges in the university. These are College of Technology and College of Science. The instrument used for data collection in this study was the questionnaire. The researcher administered and collected the questionnaire from the respondents. Thus, there was 84% rate of return distributed.

2.2. Data Analysis and Discussion

Out of 1,670 copies of the questionnaire that were administered to the students, 1,403 (84%) were retrieved. The data collected in the study is presented below.

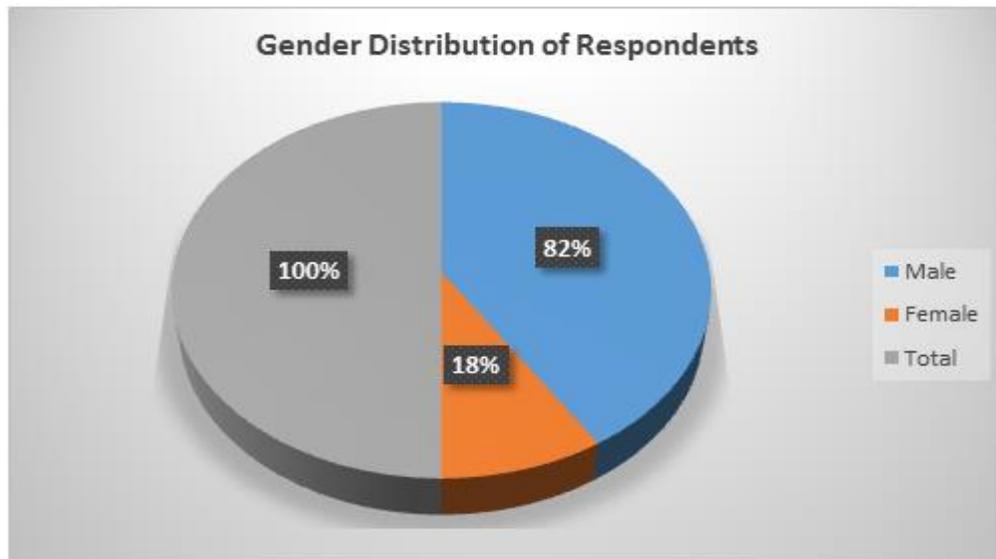


Fig-1. Gender distribution of respondents

Fig: 1, Shows that 82% of respondents are male while 18% are female. This represents the gender distribution of students involved in the survey.

Distribution of Respondents By Colleges

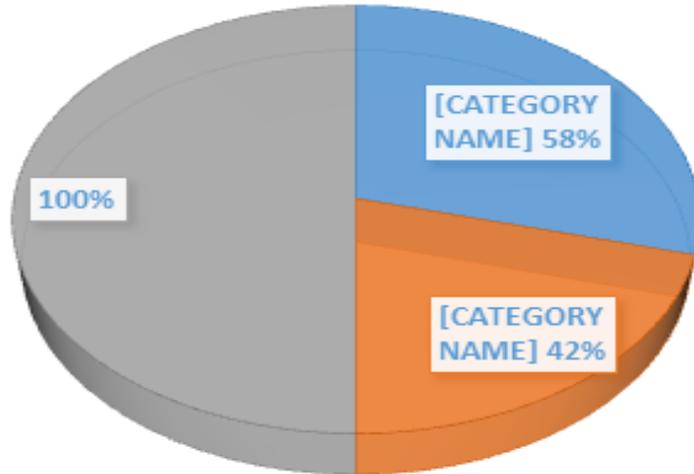


Fig-2. Distribution of respondents by colleges

As observed from fig. 2, 58% of the respondents are from College of Technology, whereas 42% of the respondents are from College of Science.

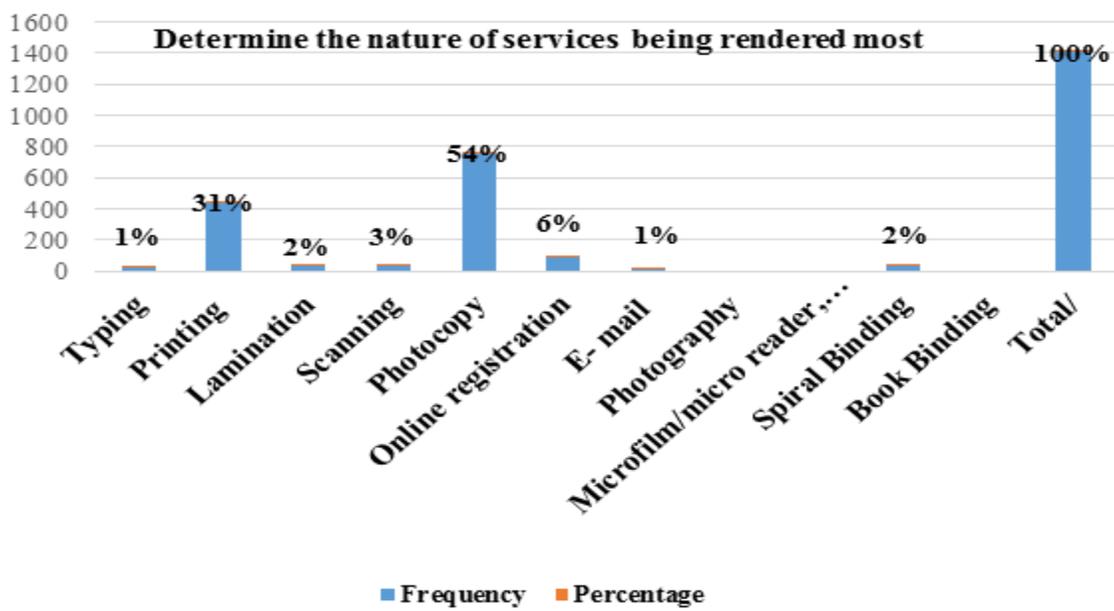


Fig-3. Determine the nature of services being rendered most

Figure: 3, showed the nature of services rendered most at the reprographic section of the library. It is evident that 54% of the respondents reported that photocopying services is rendered most. 31% of the respondents reported that printing services is rendered most while 6% indicated online registration. Another 3% indicated scanning, whereas 2% indicated spiral binding and lamination while 1% of the respondents indicated typing.

This implies that photocopying and printing are the services rendered most among others in the reprographic unit, whereas some services are not available at all, i.e. Book binding, photography and microfilm/micro reader etc.

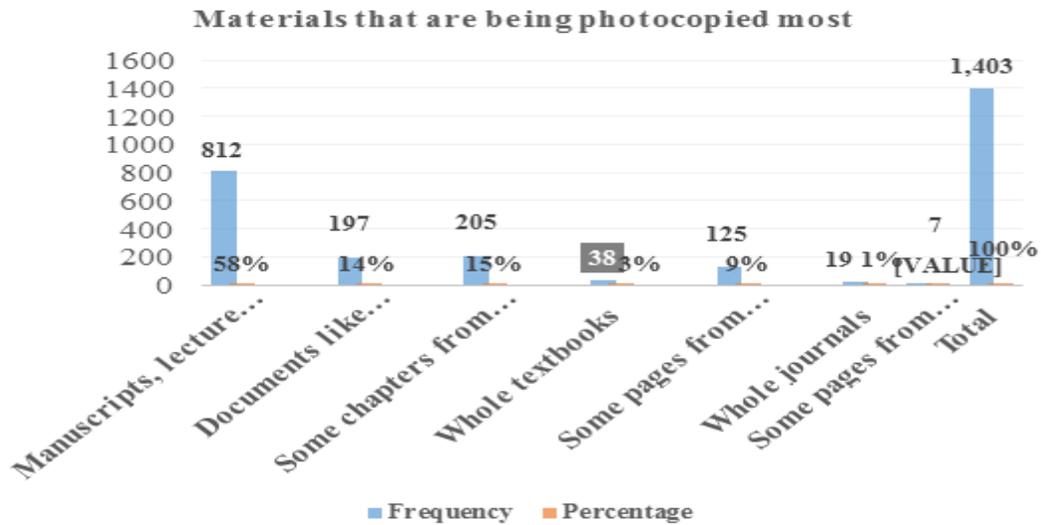


Fig-4. Materials that are being photocopied most

Result in figure 4 shows that 58% of the respondents photocopy materials like manuscripts, lecture notes, thesis, project etc. most whereas 15% of the respondents indicated some chapter from textbooks whereas 14% of them indicated documents like letter and certificate, 9% of the respondents photocopy some pages from journals publication whereas 3% and 1% of the respondents indicated photocopying whole textbooks and whole journals respectively.

From the data presented it implies that materials like manuscripts, lecture notes, theses, letters, certificates and some chapter from textbooks comprise the majority of what is being photocopied most in reprographic section at Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Library.

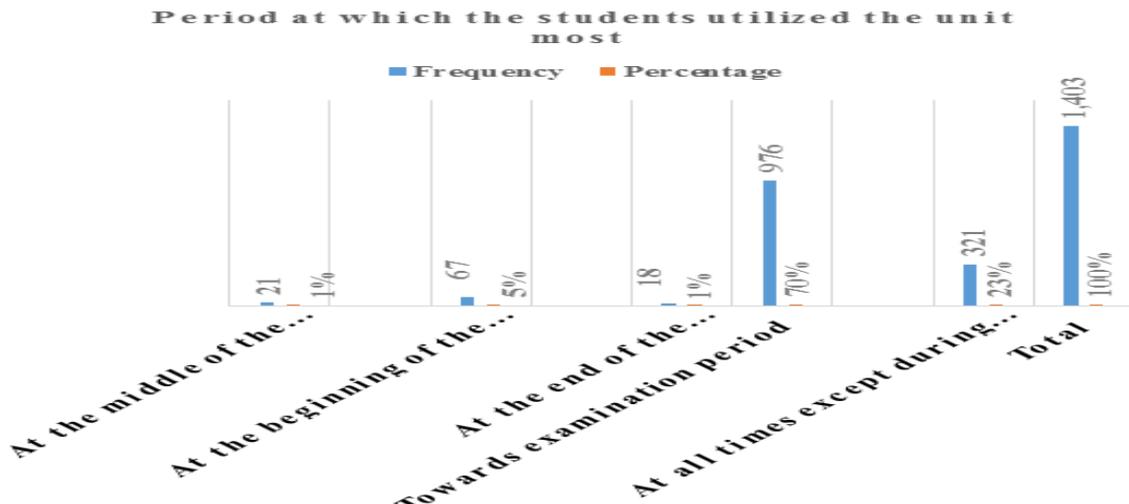


Fig-5. Period at which the students utilized the unit most

Figure 5, reveals that 70% of the respondents indicated that they utilized the unit most towards examination period whereas 23% specified that all time except during vacation period while 5% emphasised at the beginning of the semester whereas 2% indicated that they utilised the unit at the middle of the semester while 1% reported that they utilised the unit most at the end of the examination. This means that students utilised the unit most towards examination period.

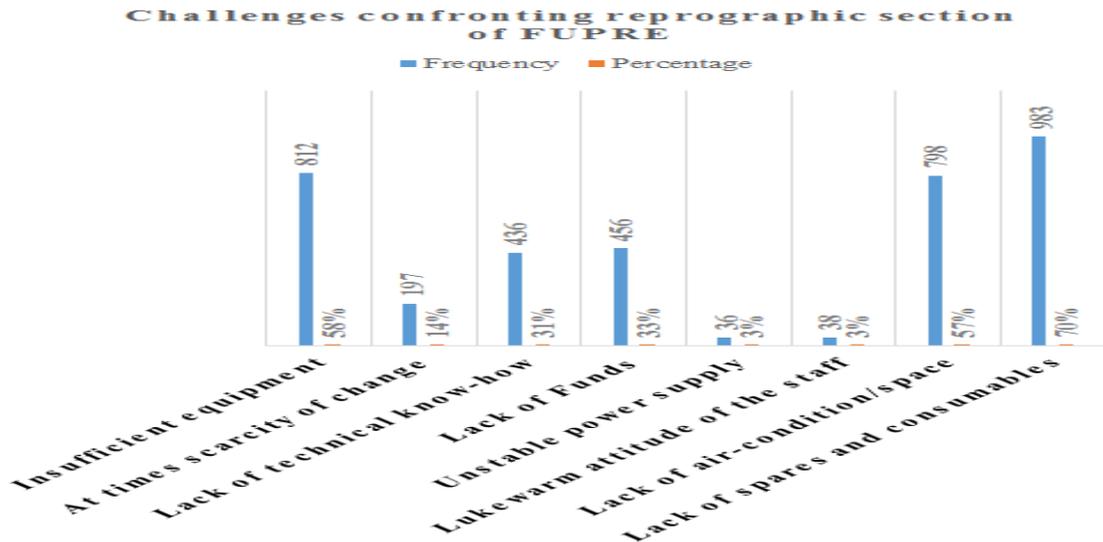


Fig-6. Challenges confronting reprographic section of Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Library.

Result in fig. 6 shows a number of challenges confronting utilization of reprographic services in FUPRE Library. These include lack of space/consumables as indicated by 70% of the respondents. 57% of the respondents indicated lack of air-condition/cross-ventilation, 58% noted insufficient equipment and lack of funds was identified by 33% of the respondents as a challenge, 31% indicated technical know-how while 3% of the respondents indicated unstable power supply and lukewarm attitude respectively.

3. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Findings in figure 1 revealed that 82% of respondents are male while 18% are female. This indicates that more male participated in this study than their female counterpart. Findings in figure 2 shows that 58% of the respondents are from College of Technology while 42% are from College of Science who utilized the reprographic section of the library.

The finding in figure 3 reveals that majority (54%) of the respondents agreed that photocopying services is rendered mostly, whereas 31% of the respondents indicated that printing services is rendered mostly. This finding is supported by the findings of [Igbeneghu \(2009\)](#) who carried out a survey of photocopying practices in selected universities in Western Nigeria and found out that 75% of the respondents photocopied unpublished materials like manuscripts, lecture notes, theses, and others, constitute the bulk of what is being photocopied. The study in figure 4 sought to know the materials that are being photocopied by the respondents. It indicates that 58% of the respondents photocopied materials like manuscripts, lecture note, thesis, project etc.

The finding in figure 5 shows that 70% of the respondents utilized reprographic unit most within examination period. Igbeneghu (2009) in his study found out that 37% of the respondents indicated that photocopying activities is higher towards the examination period.

Finding in figure 6 indicated that 70% of the respondents identified lack of spare/consumables as challenges while 57% indicated lack of air-condition/space whereas 33% of respondents reported that lack of funds is a major challenge confronting the unit. This finding corroborates the findings of Singh and Garg (2002) stated that 57% of respondents indicated high cost of equipment and lack of technical know-how while 54% of the respondents indicated insufficient spare parts/ consumable items among others.

4. CONCLUSION

The library as a service unit provides various services to the library users. Some of the services are salient, while some are not noted. Reprographic is one of such that is not popular, but very important. This study has shown that reprographic services including photocopying, laminating, typing, printing, binding among others are important in delivery of library services to the library users. Academic libraries should intensify effort in making reprographic services available to library users to enhance their learning, teaching and research. Services such binding, photography among others should be made available to the users. Librarians should encourage the users to utilize their services at all time and not necessary during examination period, as this will avail users the opportunity to identify other services available in the section that would be helpful to them. This study identified some challenges that are not insurmountable to solve including lack of spare parts and consumables, space, conducive environment, machine breakdown and lack of skilful manpower. Based on the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The reprographic Section of Federal University of Petroleum Resources Library, Effurun should be expanded to accommodate more users at a time.
2. More funds should be provided to enable the section to solve major problems confronting it, which include lack of spares, consumables, air-condition/space, and insufficient equipment.
3. The university library management should keep the current high level of reprographic service in the unit.
4. The library management should provide training facilities or hire experts in reprographic technology in order to curb the challenge of skilful manpower and to pave way for quality reprographic services in the section.

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