

# Investigate the Role of Prepress as It Affects the Overall Print Production Quality in Somolu, Lagos, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

Prepress is an integral part of print production process which must be appropriately done in order to have quality prints. It includes planning of layout, determining the paper sizes that would go with a particular job, image areas, margin, colour (RGB or CMYK), the gripping of the printing machine, grains direction of paper or card, colour guide (Pantone), plates, image resolution/compression of the entire artwork, exporting method, bleeding, binding/collating method, folding, suggestion for the type of machine to be used, type of finishing required. Prepress in print production cannot be under estimated. It must be accurately done so as to make the final printed material looks impeccable and attractive. Prepress technically, can help to detect huge printing errors on time, it can also help to determine how final job will look like in terms of size, quality and precision. However, due to the negative stereotypes faced by the printers in Somolu based on their printing works, the investigation becomes imperative to know how prepress affects the overall print production process. Somolu printing works are usually referred to as “*Somolu Prints*”. This statement is often negatively used by some corporate print patrons and some members of the public to denote inferior or low-quality prints most especially in offset lithographic printing. Investigation by the researcher reveals that this is not true about the whole printers in Somolu. Against this backdrop, the researcher feels it is necessary to assess prepress aspect of print production to know its impacts on the whole process based on graphic design principles whether the printers put it into consideration in Somolu. In this research work, survey method was used and the analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) tool (descriptive statistics including simple percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviation) were used to analyse the data.

**Keywords:** Prepress, print production, image resolution, bleeding, offset/lithographic printing, Somolu Prints

## INTRODUCTION

Printing business has dominated the entire Somolu community over the years (Oke, Phillips, Kolawole, Ofiabulu and Adeyeye, 2008). Printed works are seen everywhere around us in our day to day lives. It serves various functions in education, communication and information. Its applicability in human everyday activities cannot be underrated as the society at large cannot operate, interact and socialise optimally without printed matters in publishing, fashion, health, advertising, legal documentation, production of different art works, photography, packaging and so on (Davis, 1991). Printing be defined as any of several techniques for reproducing texts and illustrations, in black or in colour, on a durable surface and in a desired number of identical copies (De Vinne, 2016). The utmost essence of printing is to achieve excellent print quality. Offset lithographic printing on which this research is based refers to a method of mass production printing where an image is transferred from a metallic plate onto a rubber blanket (offset) and then onto the final printing surface, like paper or other related materials (Adeyeye, 2020). According to Verikas et al, (2011), print quality refers to the clarity, sharpness, crispness and overall appearance of the printed text and images. It is usually measured in dot per inch (dpi) or pixel per inch (ppi). High quality print has high resolution with clear and defined lines, appealing vibrant colours and precise details. The major determinant of good print quality is proper adherence to the design principles and print production process ranging from design, press, prepress and finishing (colour (CMYK and RGB), overprint preview, resolution, registration, file export type, paper grains direction, colour density to mention but a few (Verikas et al, 2011). Prepress is usually done after design before the job gets to the press during print production

process. Prepress involves the process of preparing digital files for printing. It is essential in offset/lithographic printing and other forms of printing (Sheer, 2023).

### Statement of Research Problem

According to Adeyeye, Falola, Waribo and Akinbode (2015), Somolu is a beehive of printing in Lagos, where large number of printing stakeholders are found to carry out various forms of printing activities such as offset/lithographic printing, screen printing, flexography, gravure, digital printing to mention but a few. As the printers carry out their printing jobs, they are faced with the challenge of negative stereotype attributed to their printing works by some corporate print patrons and some members of the public. Observation from the researcher reveals that print quality in Somolu varies from one press to another which is largely due to experience, education and professional training of the printers. According to Adeyeye et al, (2015), printers and other printing stakeholders in Somolu have different backgrounds, some are trained while some are not and some are educated while some are not. Due to this reason, some corporate organisations and members of public derogatively described the printing works in Somolu as “*Somolu Print*” which connotatively refers to substandard prints (Ayodeji, 2015). As a result of the term “*Somolu Print*” based on the researcher’s experience and interaction with some printing stakeholders, the following statements can be deduced:

- a. some people’s perception about quality of Somolu printing works has changed most especially some corporate organisations,
- b. it describes Somolu as a place where printers do not follow normal print production ethics,
- c. it describes the community as a place unfit for high quality printing works,
- d. it describes Somolu community as a place where there are few or no professionals at all,
- e. and finally, it describes Somolu community as a place where only illiterates dominate the printing activities.

The question now is; does this expression truly represent the real situation? Though, there may be bad prints and at the same time, there are high quality prints depending on where and who prints such items. This forms the basis for the assessment in this research study.

### Research Question

The following research question guides the study.

- i. How does prepress affect the overall print quality in Somolu?

### Aim and Objective of the study

The study aims at investigating the role of prepress as it affects the overall print production quality in Somolu, Lagos, Nigeria.

The objective of the study is to:

- i. investigate how prepress affects the overall print quality in Somolu.

### Justification for the Study

Pinki (2017) talks about how the choice of people/printers in terms of different printing methods have effects on print quality. This only explains how different printing methods affect print quality without looking at other relevant factors. Kumaraguru, Rengasamy, Kumar and Venkadesh, (2014) explain how paper quality plays a pivotal role in achieving top-notch quality prints. They put it further that the quality of a printing paper is an important factor in deciding the quality of printing over it. Worldwide, the main challenges of the printing

industries are to meet the global market need in such a way as to produce paper of different specifications, depends upon its usage.

However, both researchers have worked on ways of achieving print quality in terms of printing methods and quality of paper but they have not been able to critically look into other relevant factors such as design as it affects final print production output quality. This research will look into all the afore-mentioned factor that determines the print quality in Somolu community, Lagos state to ascertain whether the printers take cognisance of its effects on printing works so as to achieve excellent quality prints.

The effect of pollution from the use of generators by printers in Somolu according to Onwuzoo (2022) has caused serious health hazards for the people in the community. In addition to being a major environmental hazard, it has adverse effects on print quality. In this regard, Onwuzoo did not look into other technical factors that influence print quality. Considering the gap left by Pinki, Kumaraguru et'al, and Onwuzoo, this research will attempt to address it. Subsequently, it will help to elucidate ways by which better quality prints in offset-lithographic printing are achieved by printers even in the face of various factors that may adversely affect the overall print production quality. The factors that will be used in determining quality prints under this study are; colour (CMYK and RGB) and print production processes (prepress: resolution, registration, file export type and paper sizes). This research will address the following about printing works in Somolu:

- a. show that printing is done professionally in Somolu;
- b. show that the quality of Somolu prints is not substandard;
- c. show that though the place is congested, quality printing works are produced seamlessly;
- d. explain more on professional printing works, how they are made unlike the unprofessional ones; and
- e. put Somolu printing works in the right perspective in order to increase the confidence of many print buyers.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Print production processes in offset/ lithographic printing

Commercial printing is an essential part of the modern business world, helping companies cost-effectively produce high-quality materials (Sheer, 2023). It is a complex process with many steps and considerations, but what exactly goes into making a successful print job? To answer that question, it is very important to take a closer look at the main steps of the process. It is also of great importance to get acquainted to which printing process most commonly used for commercial projects and why it has become so popular. With this knowledge in hand, one can make informed decisions about print needs. Print production processes play important role in ensuring that the finished products come out excellently and professionally. For any printer to have a standard finished job, print production processes such as costing/Estimation, design, prepress, press and post press must be thorough. Of all these processes, prepress is very germane in other to have a very good final job/product. Though, other processes are very essential but design strategically forms the basis for all other processes in order to achieve a desired final output. Design also helps to choose the right colour and resolve some likely problems that may arise in the course of actual printing and post printing works. Sheer (2023) states that when this process is well established in any printing business, quackery and unprofessional practices leading to substandard final products are greatly reduced.

**Pre-Press:** Sheer (2023) opines that this step includes composition, typesetting, graphic arts photography, formatting files according to industry standards and image assembly. It also includes planning of layout, determining the paper sizes that would go with a particular job, image areas, margin, colour (RGB or CMYK), the gripping of the printing machine, grain direction of paper or card, colour guide (Pantone), plates, image resolution/compression of the entire artwork, exporting method, bleeding, binding/collating method, folding, suggestion for the type of machine to be used, type of finishing required. These prepress operations prepare the

concept for a printed image to be converted into an image carrier, such as a plate, cylinder, or screen. The steps also involve converting digital files into a form that the press can understand and using software to prepare the files for printing. During the prepress step, proofing for errors and more is also done to ensure everything looks perfect before printing. The result should be an accurate representation of what the final product will look like once printed.

In fact, a press without standard pre-press in Somolu community may not be able to perform optimally or handle some special types of jobs. Some printers neither have this section in their press nor have the professional experience of this. The effect of this is substandard and unprofessional final products. A good printed material does not happen just like that, it is a product of good design and more importantly the prepress. Prepress in print production cannot be under estimated. It can help to detect huge printing errors on time, it can help to determine how final job will look like in terms of size, quality and precision. Finally it can help to eliminate colossal lost in print production. Below are some of the major things to look at carefully when carrying out pre-press work;

**i. Colour:** Colour plays an important role in the actual printing. The quality of an object or substance with respect to light reflected by the object, usually determined visually by measurement of hue, saturation, and brightness of the reflected light; saturation or chroma. Without colour/ink in printing, there may not be visible impression. In printing, printers make use of four basic colour ink which are; Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black (CMYK) (Peacocke, 1984).

**ii. RGB colour model:** RGB color mode uses red, green and blue as its primary colors. Because it uses light to define color, it is best used in digital projects like those displayed on smartphones or computers. Digital media has red, green and blue bulbs, which shine at different intensities to display color on LED screens. These bulbs try to mimic the red, green and blue color receptors in human eyes, known as cones (McGavin, et'al., 2005).

**When To Use RGB:** Wondering when to use RGB? RGB mode is best used when digital designs are in your project pipeline. While many printers nowadays are capable of converting RGB files to CMYK, it's best to avoid conversion at this stage if possible, because your colors will not be accurate in the final output. Whenever you are ready to begin designing, use RGB mode for online, app or social media projects like: Web or app logos, online buttons or graphics, Digital icons, online advertisements, Social media images, Profile photos, Social backgrounds, Video, GIFs and Online info-graphics.

**iii. Colour Density:** Regarding ink, the relative thickness of a layer of printed ink. (2) Regarding color, the relative ability of a color to absorb light reflected from it or block light passing through it. In printing, it refers to the thickness or lightness of ink on the printing surface. Colour/ink density should be maintained especially during production so that the printed materials can look alike in terms of appearance (Södergård et al., 1996).

**iv. Colour Variation:** This occurs when process colour (CMYK) is involved during printing. This happens when colour appears differently on printed copies with the same art work. This may be operator's or machine's issue. However, printing is a manufactured process, so there will always be slight variations in colour (NOUN project, 2023). Most printers will have an acceptable level of colour variance when they print a job, so be cognizant that slight variations are common and sometimes unavoidable. Secondly, understand that colour will print differently depending on a variety of factors (Parraman et al., 2008).

**v. Colour Registration:** It simply means positioning the plate where it belongs and positioning the paper where it belongs in relation to the plate while printing. When colour registers properly, printed job looks sharper and clearer. Printing many colours may create registration problem when those colours do not overlap and align properly. This commonly happens in offset and digital prints. Apart from machine and operator's issues, this may occur when an artwork is prepared using RGB colour combination instead of CMYK. It is very germane for Graphic Designer, Prepress professionals to correct this before the final production of a particular job (King et'al., 1995).

**vi. Pantone Colour Guide:** A good press should have this as one of the tools to be used during print production process. Pantone Colour Guides are of two types; the coated and uncoated. This guide shows how RGB colour

will appear when converted to CMYK and also how colour will appear on coated and uncoated surfaces (Schultz, 2014).

**vii. Coated Surface:** This refers to a surface covered by oily substance like varnish to make it look glossy. Example of coated surfaces are seen in matte paper, art paper and some types of vinyl.

**viii. Uncoated Surface:** This refers to a surface that are not covered with any oily substance. A good example is bond paper such as normal photocopying paper, alabaster bond, manila, and some special cards like antelope, onions and cardboards. Note: The absorbent rate on coated and uncoated surfaces are different. Uncoated surfaces absorb ink more than the coated one and makes ink colour to appear slightly on the surfaces. This knowledge is necessary when working for high profile organisations.

**ix. Image Compression:** Image compression is very important during print production process. The standard image for printing is about 300dpi most especially when printing magazine, books, flyers etc. However, when printing large format jobs the resolutions are always higher. The point here is that higher resolution images are technically better than low resolution in the final production (Van Assche et'al., 1997).

**x. Exporting Files:** According Tally (1999), different jobs need different export technique or format. For printing books, paper, magazines in lithography, pdf files are the best and for large format, TIFF files are the best. Other exporting methods appear in GIF, EPS, Jpegs, png and others. It is recommended for prepress professional to get acquainted with these methods to avoid unnecessary printing errors on the final printed job.

## Research Method: Introduction

This section focuses on the methodology that was adopted for this study. Under this section, research design, population, sampling frame, sample size, sampling techniques, instrumentation, validity, data collection and data analysis were looked into.

## Research Design

In order to suitably carry out this study, survey method form of research methodology was adopted.

## Research Population

The population for this study cut across all the printing stakeholders in Somolu community. These stakeholders are, Printers (large and small scale), Suppliers, Graphic Designer/Prepress Professionals, Residents, Drivers/Logistics personnel, Non printers and Chartered Institute of Professional Printers of Nigeria CIPPON.

**Sampling Frame:** Sample is the list or rule defining the population. It is the complete list of all members/units of the population from which each sampling unit is selected. In this research work, criterion and random sampling were used. According to Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, and Hoagwood (2015), criterion sampling is a purposive sampling method used in research to select individuals based on specific predetermined criteria or characteristics. Sampling frame in this research is the number of selected printing stakeholder in Somolu community.

**Sample Size:** There are so many streets in Somolu Local Government as revealed by the researcher's experience in the community. For the purpose of this study, the researcher uses criterion sampling to choose ten big and popular streets where clusters of printers carry out their business as the sample size to be considered. The streets are; Bajulaye, Abiodun, Apata, Moshalashi, Shipeolu, Oguntolu, Akeju, Awofeso, Olaleye and Agunbiade. Two printing stakeholders were selected from each category of stakeholders in these streets except residents where five houses were selected systematically in a street and one person was randomly selected from each house in a particular street. These stakeholders were given questionnaires that address objective Table 3.1 below shows some streets selected based on their sizes and large cluster of printers found there.

Table 3.1 showing selected streets based on their sizes and large cluster of printers found there.

S/N	Selected Streets in Somolu	Printers 2/Street	Residents 5houses/street 1 person/ house	2 Graphic Designers/ Pre-press Pro/Street	2Suppliers: /Street	2Driver/ Logistics personnel	2Print Buyers/ Street
1	Bajulaye	2	5	2	2	2	2
2	Abiodun	2	5	2	2	2	2
3	Apata	2	5	2	2	2	2
4	Shipeolu	2	5	2	2	2	2
5	Akeju	2	5	2	2	2	2
6	Awofeso	2	5	2	2	2	2
7	Oguntolu	2	5	2	2	2	2
8	Agunbiade	2	5	2	2	2	2
9	Moshalashi	2	5	2	2	2	2
10	Olaleye	2	5	2	2	2	2
	Total	20	50	20	20	20	20

Total number of **stakeholders** that were given questionnaires here were 150

Table 3.2 showing printing professional and Government officials within Somolu Local Government of Lagos state.

S/N	Selected Printing Professional and Government officials	Somolu Community/ Local Government Area
1	CIPPON members	10
2	Government Officials	10
	Total	20

Total number of **stakeholders** that were given questionnaires here were 20. Altogether, the stakeholders' size is 170

**Sample Size of Non-Printers in Somolu Community, Lagos State:**

The sample size for the non-printers was calculated using the Cochran's formula since the population of the non-printers are infinite. Cochran formula allows you to calculate an ideal sample size given a desired level of precision, desired confidence level, and the estimated proportion of the attribute present in the population (Chaokromthong and Sintao, 2021). The Cochran's formula is mathematically given as:

$$n_o = \frac{z^2pq}{e^2}$$

Where:

$n_o$  = the sample size

$z$  = selected critical value of desired confidence level

$p$  = estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population

$e$  = the desired level of precision

$q = 1-p$

Since, the degree of variability of the population is not known and  $p=0.5$ ,  $e=0.05$ ,  $z=1.96$ , so  $q=1-0.5= 0.5$ . Therefore, sample size:

$$= \frac{(1.96)^2(0.5)(0.5)}{0.05^2}$$

$$=384.16.$$

Therefore, the sample size of the non-printers for this study will approximately be 384. Altogether we have 554 respondents that attempted the questionnaires given to them (both purposively and randomly sampled).

### Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling would be adopted for sampling of all the stakeholders in the Somolu printing ecosystem except for the non-printers where random sampling would be used. This means that, the stakeholders were strategically selected for the study on the major streets in Somolu community.

**Sources of Data:** The sources of data for this research are of two kinds, namely:

**Primary Data:** This was collected through researcher's personal experience, in-depth interview, observation and survey. The researcher personally moved round the selected streets in Somolu community of Lagos state, carefully observed printing activities, conducted in-depth interviews and administered questionnaires to various stakeholders. The researcher's wealth of experience over the years in Somolu was also used as a source of data collection in this action based participatory research.

**Secondary Data:** These were sourced from both local and foreign books, journals, published studies, internet and other relevant sources.

### Method of Data Collection

In-depth interview, observation and structured questionnaires were used to collect the necessary data from the interviewees/respondents. Though, the method used for each objective was determined by what such objective entails. The interview questions were specially designed to capture certain objectives of the study while the questionnaires as well used specially for specific objectives of the study. The questionnaires were designed to have two sections: section A and B. Section A focused on the demographic data, such as age, gender and the like while section B focused on the entire variables of the study. Section B was designed to have 5 points rating scale which were Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD) and Undecided (U).

### Method of Data Analysis

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) tool (descriptive statistics including simple percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviation) were used to analyse the data.

Table 3.3 showing the research objective, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

S/N	Research Objective	Method of Data Collection	Method of Data Analysis
1	investigate the role of prepress as it affects overall print production quality,	Structured questionnaires	Descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages and mean (SPSS)

## RESULT PRESENTATION, DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### Introduction

This section deals specifically with the findings from the fieldwork. The data obtained from respondents on “Assessing how design affects the overall print quality in Somolu, Lagos, Nigeria” were analysed and discussed. Statistical Package for Social Science tool (SPSS) using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage and mean was used. Also, some other objectives of the study were analysed using discourse analysis. The respondents who were mainly printing stakeholders were grouped into nine (9) namely: Printers, Suppliers, Graphic Designer/Prepress Professionals, Residents, Drivers/Logistics personnel, non-printers (tailors, bankers, students, lawyers, engineers, lecturers and those people that do not participate directly in Somolu printing business), government officials, print buyers and members of Chartered Institute of Professional Printers of Nigeria (CIPPON). The questionnaires were administered to all the print stakeholders that were about five hundred and fifty-four (554). Out which five hundred and twenty (520) responses were received. About thirty-four (34) respondents did not return the questionnaires given to them and this came from the non-printers who were randomly selected from the streets of Somolu community such as tailors, bankers, lawyer, engineer, nurse, teacher, students, lecturers, pastors, business people and food vendors.

### Socio-Economic Profiles Of Respondents

#### Number of respondents on each street of the ten streets covered in the research:

Somolu is located along three popular places directly beside Ikorodu road in Lagos. These places are; Palmgrove, Elediye and Onipanu. Shipeolu is a big street that links these three places. Samples (streets) selected are places where large number of presses and printers can be found in Somolu community. The result in figure 4.1 shows that Shipeolu had highest percentage of (13.08%) of the respondents followed by Akeju with 11.73%, Olaleye had 10.77%, Apata had 10.58%, Awofeso had 10.38, Oguntolu had 10%, Bajulaye had 9.04%, Moshalashi had 8.46%, while Abiodun and Agunbiade had 8.27% and 7.69% respectively. Shipeolu, Akeju and Olaleye had highest percentages, this shows the population distribution in Somolu based on printing activities.

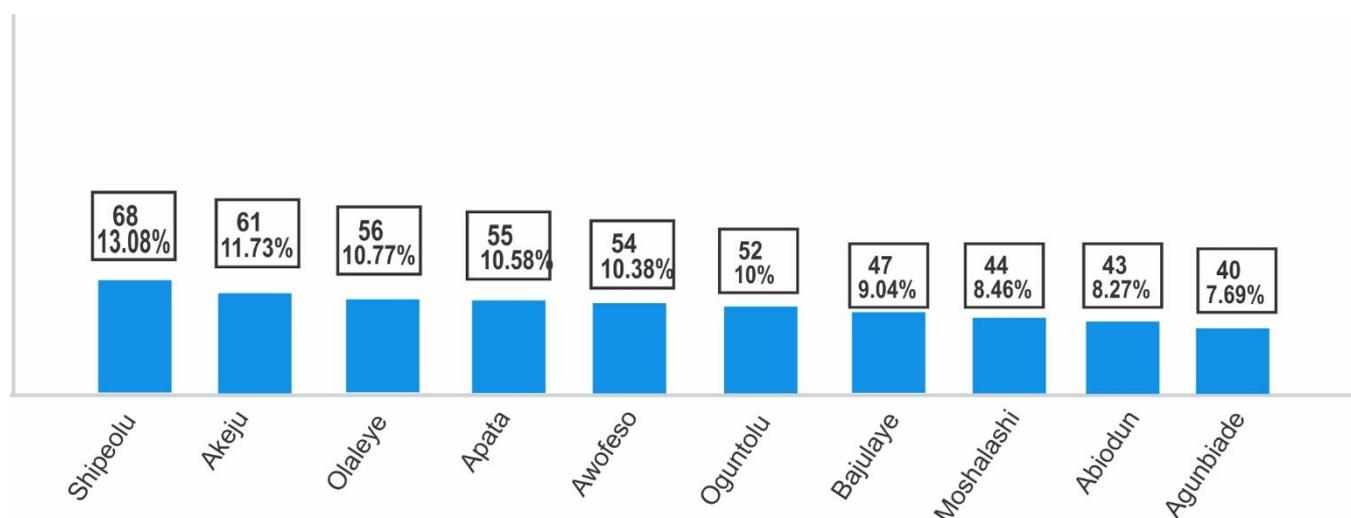


Figure 4.1: Showing the number of respondents in each street. Source: Researcher’s fieldwork (2025)

### Age Distribution of all the respondents

The result in figure 4.2 on the age distribution of the respondents shows that 13.85% of respondents were between the age of 18-30 years while the majority (52.88%) were within the age bracket of 31-45 years while 46-60 years were about 23.27% and the remaining 10% fell within the age of 60 years plus. The result therefore suggests that the youth and adult (31- 60 years) are majorly involved in printing activities. This suggestion may not be far-fetched from the fact that printing involves physical strength which can only be handled by people who are physically and mentally fit.

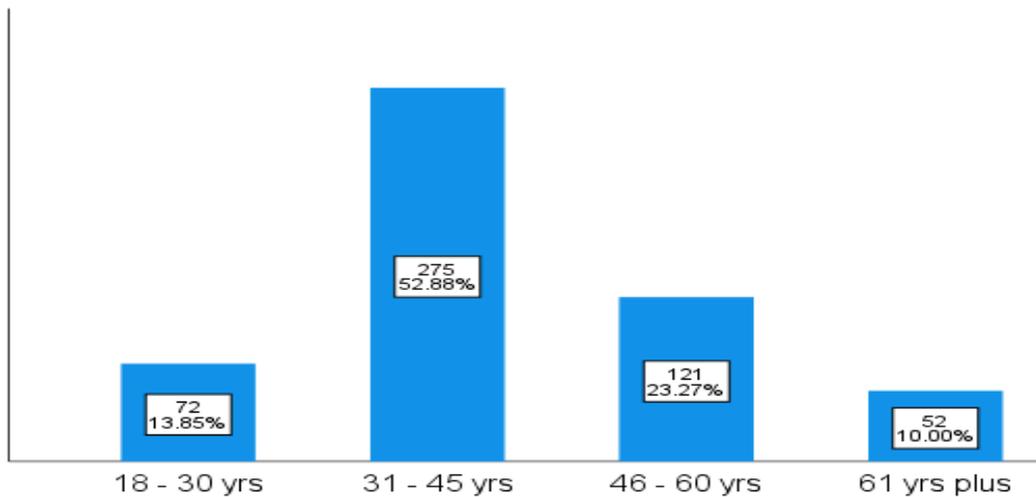


Figure 4.2: Showing the age distribution of all the respondents

### Occupation and description of all the respondents

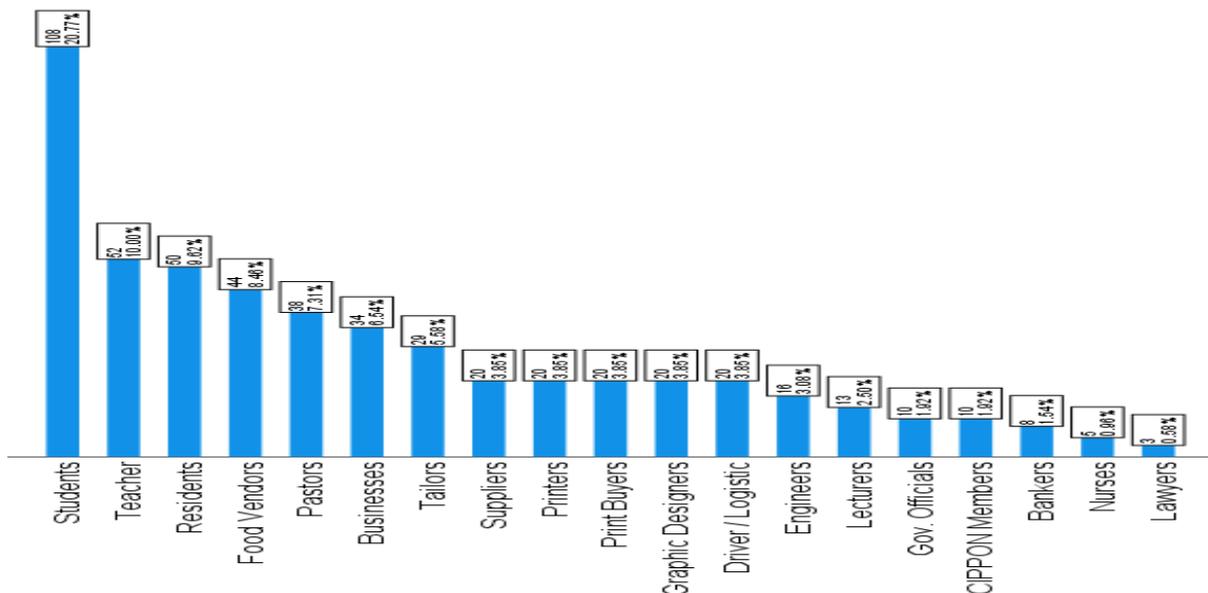


Figure 4.3: Showing the occupation and description of all the respondents Source: Researcher’s fieldwork (2025).

### The educational status of all the respondents

Figure 4.4 shows that people with secondary school certificates or less are more in the printing business than other people with higher qualifications. This suggests that people with lower academic qualifications can do well in the business.

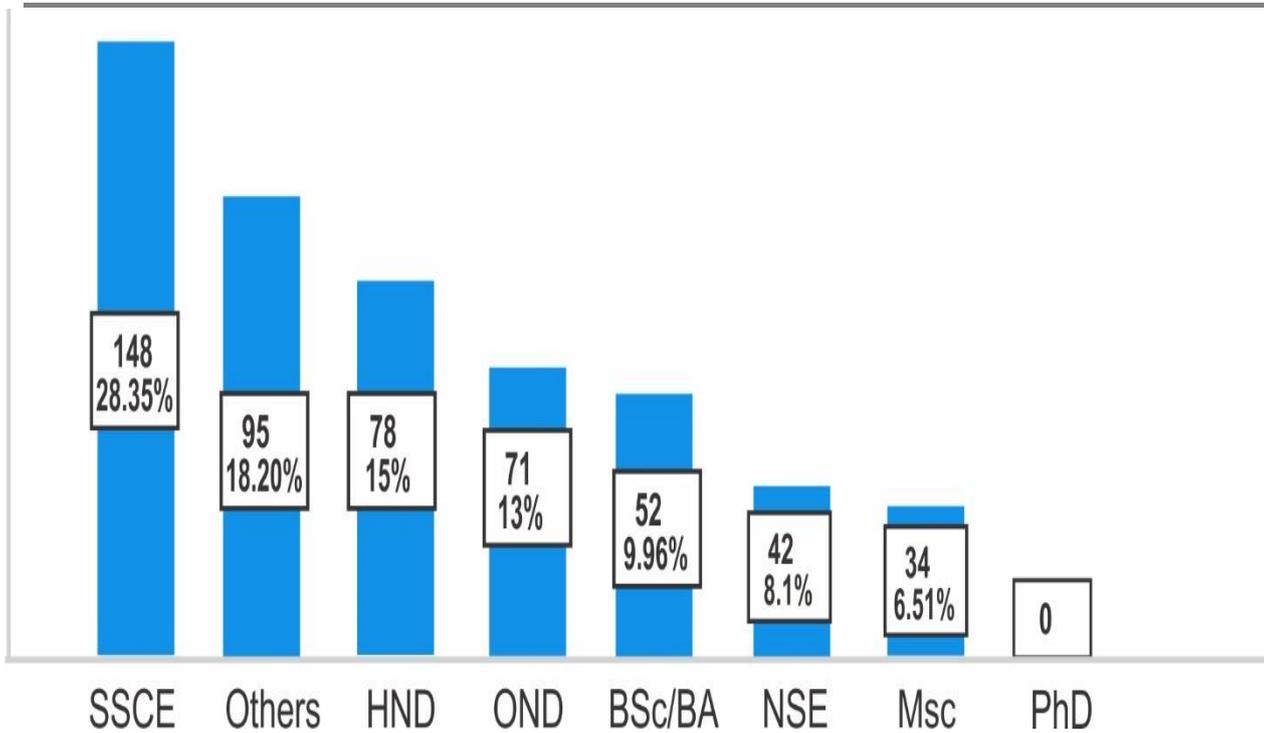


Figure 4.4: Showing the educational status of all the respondent

**Gender distribution of all the respondents**

The result in figure 4.5 shows that 74.62% of the respondents were male while only 25.38% were females. This suggests that printing profession in Somolu community is male dominated as shown in the chart.

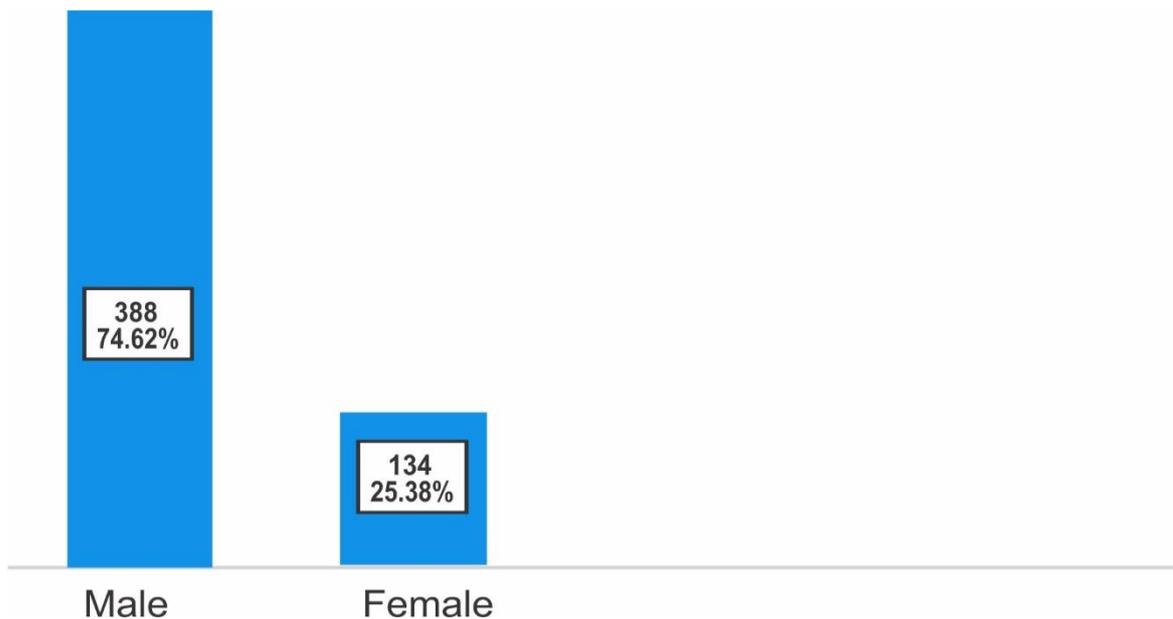


Figure 4.5: Showing the distribution of the respondents based on their gender

**Objective 3: Investigate the Role of Prepress as It Affects the Overall Print Production Quality**

**Prepress plays important role in achieving print quality**

The analysis in figure 4.28 shows that 51.54% of the respondents agreed, 30.58% strongly agreed while 10.96% were undecided, only 6.92% disagreed and no respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. This reveals that the printing practitioners in Somolu believed that prepress plays an important role in achieving print quality.

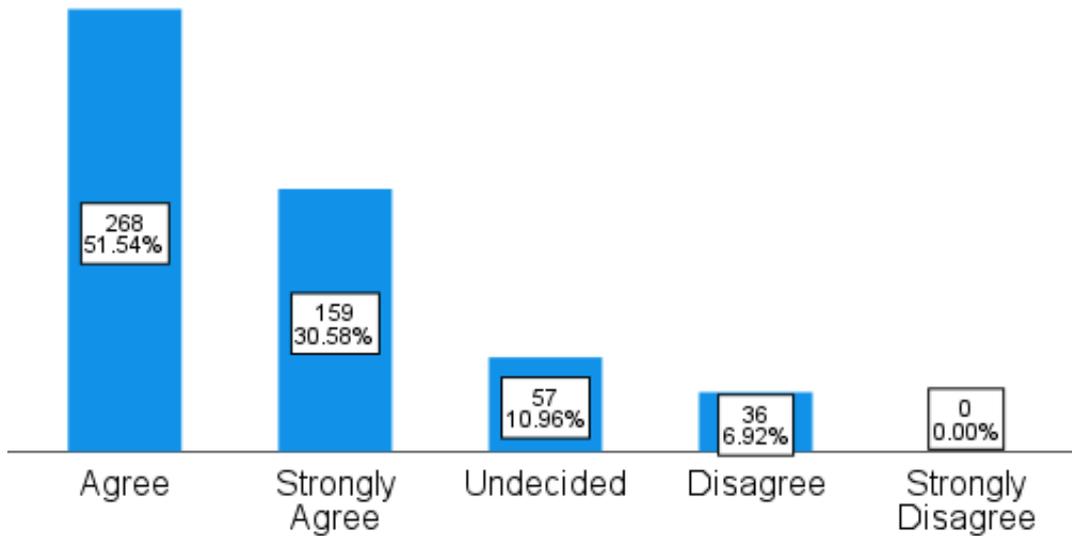


Figure 4.28: Showing the role of prepress in achieving print quality. Source: Researcher’s fieldwork (2025)

**Some presses that do not have prepress section outsource their prepress work in Somolu**

The result in figure 4.29 shows that 48.27% of the respondents agreed, 22.50% strongly agreed while 16.73% disagreed, 12.50% were undecided and no respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. This reveals that the printing practitioners in Somolu believed that prepress plays important role in achieving print quality.

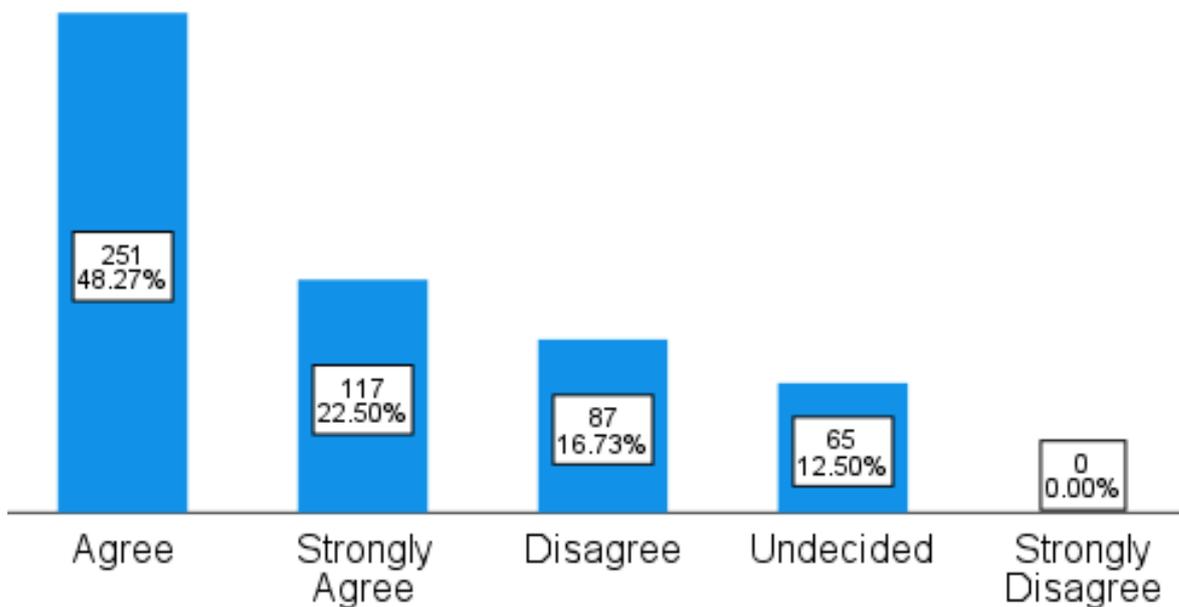


Figure 4.29: Showing that some presses that do not have prepress section outsource their prepress work in Somolu. Source: Researcher’s fieldwork (2025)

**Colour management is a function mostly carried out in prepress section**

The result in figure 4.30 shows that 57.31% of the respondents agreed, 24.42% strongly agreed while 15.58% were undecided, only 2.69% disagreed and no respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. This reveals that the printing practitioners in Somolu believed that colour management is a function mostly carried out in prepress section and it has positive effect on print quality when properly managed.

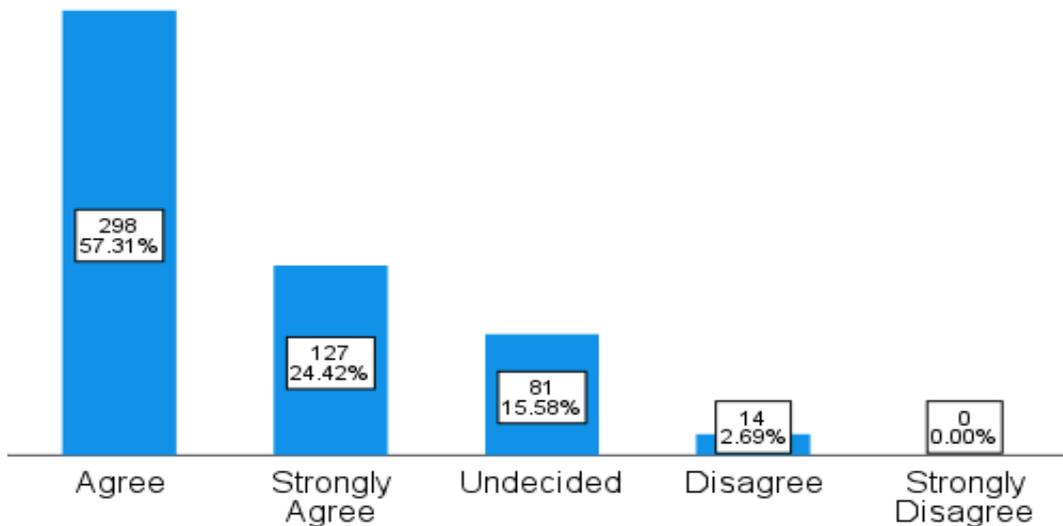


Figure 4.30: Showing that colour management is a function mostly carried out in prepress section. Source: Researcher’s fieldwork (2025)

**Image enhancement and retouching help final print production output**

The result in figure 4.31 shows that 56.92% of the respondents agreed, 36.15% strongly agreed while 6.92% were undecided and no respondents disagreed with the statement. This reveals that the printing practitioners in Somolu believed that image enhancement and retouching which are function of prepress help final print production output.

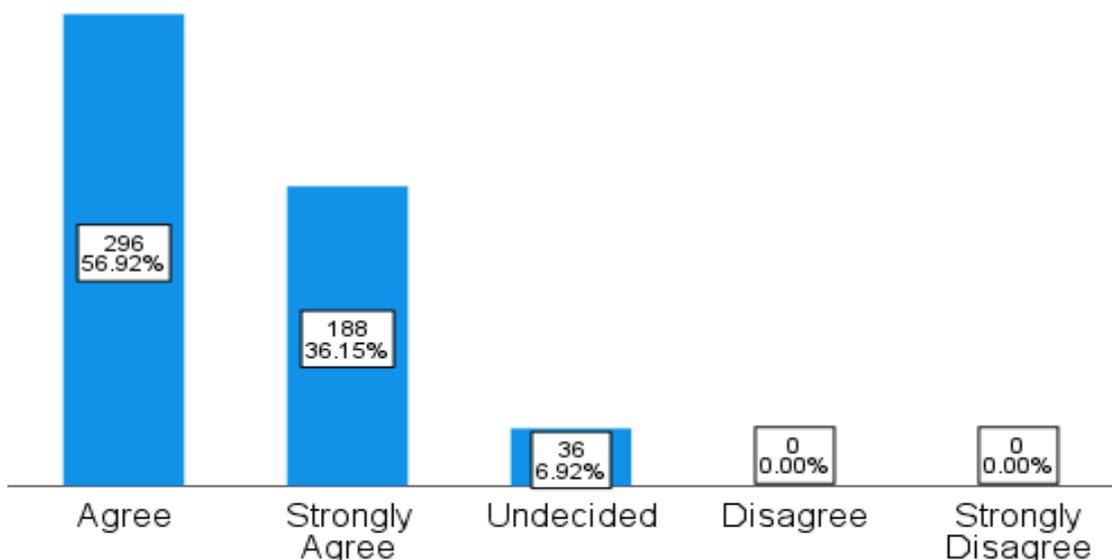


Figure 4.31: Showing that Image enhancement and retouching help final print production output, Source: Researcher’s fieldwork (2025)

**Presses that have prepress sections produce quality printing than others who do not have.**

The result in figure 4.32 reveals that 53.65% of the respondents agreed, 35.00% strongly agreed while 5.96% were undecided, 5.38% disagreed and no respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. This reveals that the printing practitioners in Somolu believed that presses that have prepress sections produce quality printing than others who do not have.

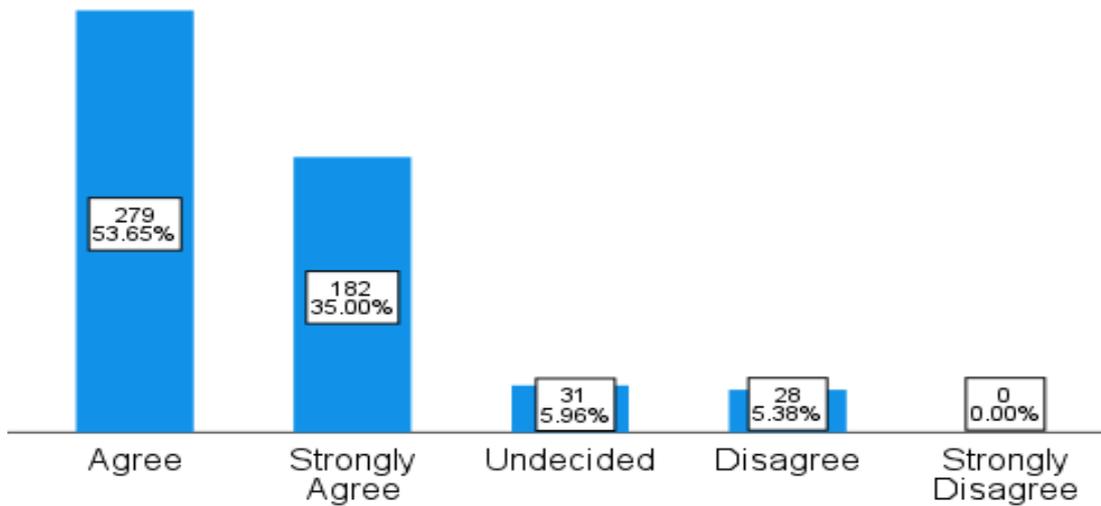


Figure 4.32: Showing that presses that have prepress sections produce quality printing than others who do not have. Source: Researcher’s fieldwork (2025)

**Some printers in Somolu are not familiar with prepress operations**

The result in figure 4.33 reveals that 65.76% of the respondents disagreed, 20.58% strongly disagreed while 10.96% were undecided, 2.69% agreed and no respondent strongly agreed with the statement. This reveals that the printing practitioners in Somolu are familiar with prepress operations. (65.76%, 20.58%, 10.96%, 2.69%, 0.00%).

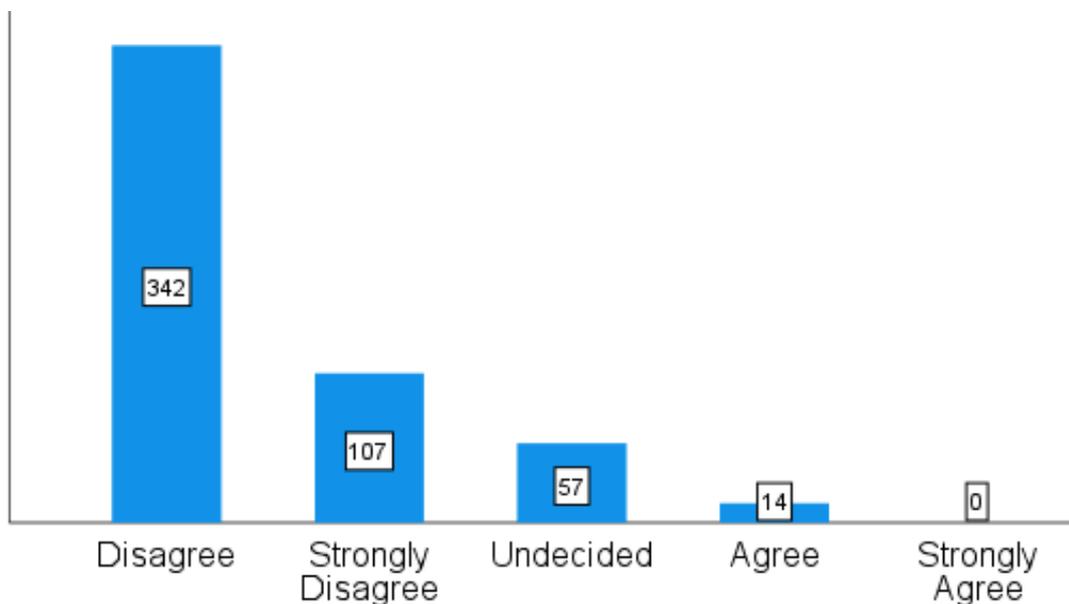


Figure 4.33: Showing that some printers in Somolu are not familiar with prepress operations. Source: Researcher’s fieldwork (2025)

**Printing errors are corrected during the prepress before the actual press stage**

The result in figure 4.34 reveals that 66.73% of the respondents agreed, 24.58% strongly agreed while 8.46% were undecided and no respondents either disagreed or strongly agreed with the statement. This reveals that the printing practitioners in Somolu accepted that printing errors are corrected during the prepress before the actual press stage and is always done to enhance print quality.

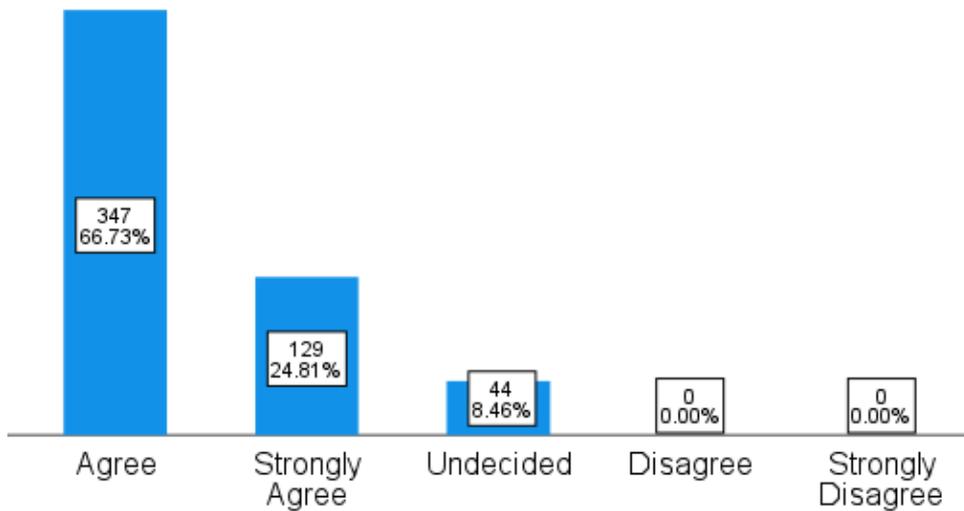


Figure 4.34: Showing that printing errors are corrected during the prepress before the actual press stage. Source: Researcher’s fieldwork (2025)

**Prepress automation helps in achieving high-quality print production output**

The result in figure 4.35 reveals that 52.12% of the respondents agreed, 35.00% strongly agreed while 12.88% were undecided and no respondents either disagreed or strongly agreed with the statement. This reveals that the printing practitioners in Somolu admitted that prepress automation helps in achieving high-quality print production output.

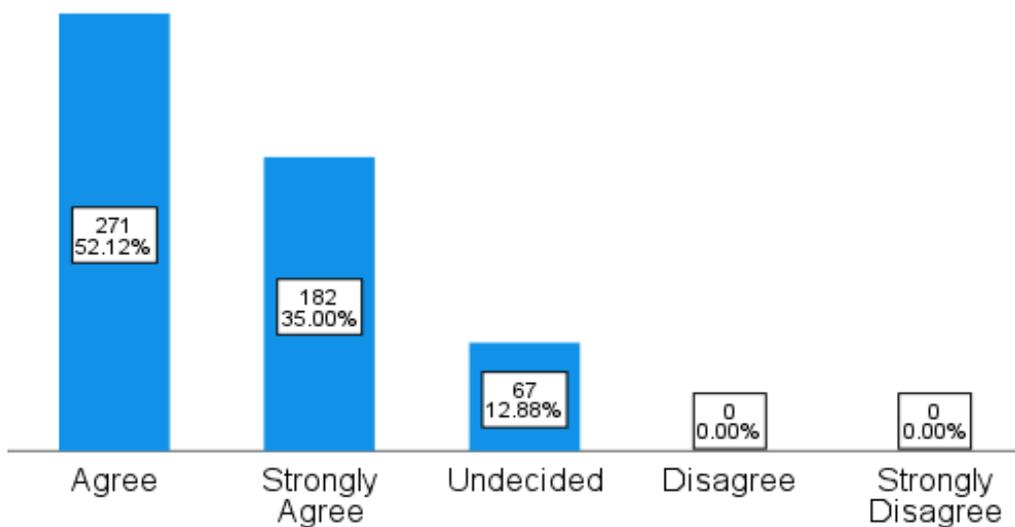


Figure 4.35: Showing that prepress automation helps in achieving high-quality print production output. Source: Researcher’s fieldwork (2025)

**Education and training of graphic designers in prepress are necessary in achieving print quality.**

The result in Figure 4.36 reveals that 48.27% of the respondents agreed, 37.69% strongly agreed while 10.96% were undecided, 3.08% disagreed and no respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. This reveals that the printing practitioners in Somolu admitted that education and training of graphic designers in prepress are necessary in achieving print quality.

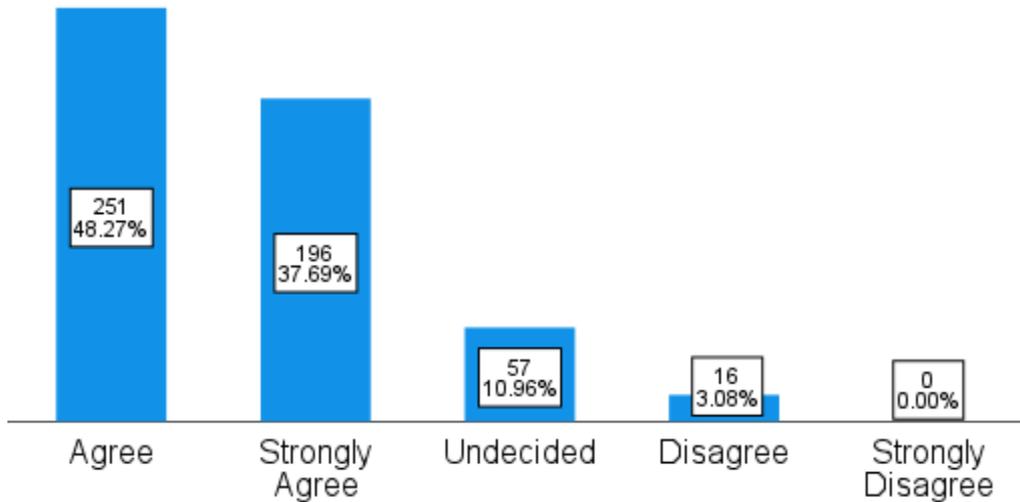


Figure 4.36: Showing that education and training of graphic designers in prepress are necessary in achieving print quality. **Source:** Researcher’s fieldwork (2025)

**Presses in Somolu community that do not have prepress section will not be able to perform optimally**

The result in figure 4.37 reveals that 57.12% of the respondents agreed, 36.15% strongly agreed while 4.23% were undecided, 2.50% disagreed and no respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. This reveals that the printing practitioners in Somolu admitted that presses in Somolu community who do not have prepress section will not be able to perform optimally.

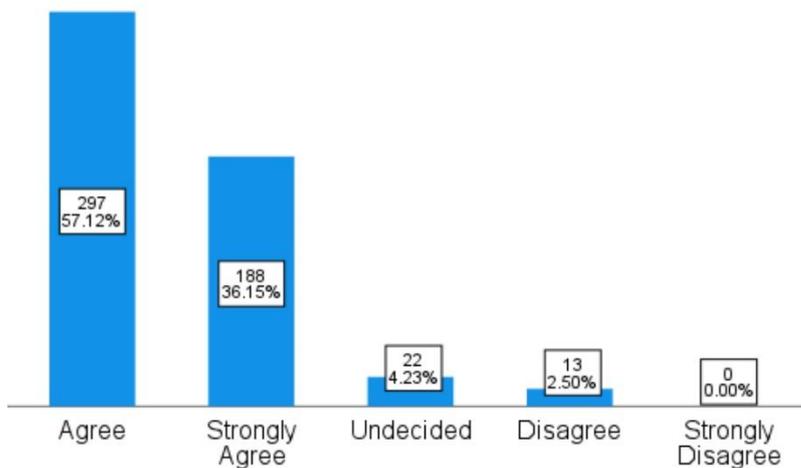


Figure 4.37: Showing Presses in Somolu community that do not have prepress section will not be able to perform optimally. **Source:** Researcher’s fieldwork (2025)

**Objective 3 Discussion: Investigate the Role of Prepress as It Affects Overall Print Production Quality**

Prepress involves the process of preparing digital files for printing. It is essential in offset/lithographic printing and other forms of printing (Sheer, 2023). In Somolu, as could be seen based on the response of respondents in section 4.5 of this research, not all presses have prepress section but they all agreed that prepress aids good quality prints. This can be explained that some presses may not have prepress section but they find means of doing their work from other presses that have all the printing facilities so as to improve their print quality. On colour management, most of the respondents agreed to this as could be seen in Figure 4.32. This reveals that without proper colour management during the prepress section, there is going to be issues with final print production output. CMYK and RGB colours are well managed during the prepress operation (Peacocke, 1984;

McGavin et al., 2005). Also, image enhancement and retouching help final print production based on the response of the respondent that attempted the questionnaires given to them. This is true as majority of the respondents agreed to this statement. Image enhancement and retouching for the right resolution and colour balance are essential. This statement is supported by Van Assche et'al (1997) that higher resolution images are technically better than low resolution in the final print production output. On the aspect of educating and training graphic designers on prepress, most of the respondents agreed that it is the right thing to do in order to improve quality of prints in Somolu. The result revealed that education and training of professionals are essential in achieving quality prints. This implies that presses in Somolu would definitely employ trained personnel for prepress purpose to handle their works in order to achieve quality prints.

## SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

### Summary

Somolu is a busy printing business hub, which attracts people from all walks of life. *'Somolu print'* is a term used by corporate patrons to describe printing in Somolu as being substandard. Based on the analysis of the objective mentioned in this research work, there are lots of printers in Somolu that produce quality prints and also follow standard print production ethics. Prepress is prerequisite to quality prints.

From the profile of all the respondents, Shipeolu, Akeju, Olaleye, Apata, Awofeso and Oguntolu have highest population which implies that printing activities take place there more than any other place. The age distribution shows that youths are many among the printers. On the gender distribution, there are more male respondents in the population which correlates with the actual reality in Somolu that male gender dominates the printing business.

Somolu apparently shows the trends in the printing industry from primitive stage to the recent advanced stage in printing technology. More importantly, there is hardly any form of printing technique that is not found in Somolu. Somolu in the present day is normally written as 'Somolu' not 'Shomolu'.

### Recommendations

Somolu over the years has been Nigerias's commercial printing centre. The business of printing has provided jobs for millions of people including the teeming youth and students who do this business on full or part-time basis to cater for their daily needs. In view of this, it becomes imperative that government should provide the following;

- a. provide adequate power supply so as to reduce excessive use of generator in the community.
- b. come under CIPPON and other printing bodies to organise training for printers on basic prepress techniques so that they can update themselves on current trends in prepress for quality prints.

### Conclusion

This research work has vividly given a clear investigation on how prepress affects the overall print quality. It can be deduced that this part of print production process is the basis for achieving error free production in offset lithographic printing. The research revealed that some of the printers produce high quality prints against the general perception by some corporate printing patrons who always view sub-standard prints as Somolu prints. This is because a lot of Somolu printers apply basic design principles in their print production processes.

### Contribution To Knowledge

It elucidated design clearly as one of the vital procedural ethics for professional conduct in print production process towards achieving superlative result in Somolu.

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