

**Full Length Research**

# Availability and Utilisation of cataloguing tools and resources in University law Libraries in Southern Nigeria

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This study was set out to investigate the availability and utilisation of cataloguing tools and resources for cataloguing legal information resources in university law libraries in Southern Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was the method adopted for the study. Observation checklist was employed to gather data on the availability of the tools and a self-developed questionnaire was used to gather information on the extent of utilisation of the tools from the twenty-two (22) universities studied. A total of sixty-six (66) copies of the questionnaire were distributed while fifty-three (53) copies were returned and used for the analysis. The results revealed that Moys Classification Scheme and Thesaurus for Legal Materials (MCT) was the most available and utilised tool in the law libraries. The study concluded that non-availability and utilisation of most of the cataloguing tools and resources might be as a result of high cost of the tools and also lack of skills by the cataloguers to use the tools, especially electronic tools. The study recommended that the universities should be committed to acquiring the tools and also providing training for the cataloguers to use the tools.

**Key Words:** Availability, Utilisation, Cataloguing tools and resources, University law libraries

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## INTRODUCTION

Law libraries are cornerstones of legal education, research and practice all over the world. They are special libraries and serve the information needs of law students and law teachers, legal practitioners, paralegals and general public. The law is embedded in legal information resources which the lawyer must have access to in order to do his job. Thus, law library services are geared toward the provision of the right kinds of information needed for legal education, research and practice. The services are divided into two broad parts- readers' services and technical services. The technical services

include acquisition, cataloguing and classification. Cataloguing and classification, also known as organisation of information materials, are the back bones of any law library services. Organisation of law information materials provides intellectual access to the law collection but differs so much from that of cataloguing other subjects. Levor (2006) and Ryesky (2007) concur that an academic law library is different in its content, organisation and use from other types of academic libraries.

Tools and resources used for cataloguing and

classification are referred to as Knowledge Organising Systems (KOS) (Hjørland, 2008). They are used in cataloguing and classification activities, and also in encoding bibliographic information into the library catalogues. They are in the form of codes, rules, subject headings and classification schemes. Utilisation of cataloguing tools and resources in libraries is very crucial to the work activities of the cataloguer. From the definitions of cataloguing tools and resources, it can be deduced that the use of cataloguing tools and resources and cataloguing job activities are inseparable. However, experience has shown that these tools are poorly utilised due to lack of skills by the cataloguers. Another challenge in the utilisation of the tools is non-availability of the tools. It is impossible to use what is not available. Hence, for cataloguers to perform optimally cataloguing tools and resources must be readily available and the cataloguers must possess the necessary competencies to use them. It has been observed that cataloguing tools and resources are not always available in libraries, even in library schools. Nwalo (2001) laments the dearth of these resources in the library schools. Some law librarians have also complained about lack of cataloguing tools and resources in their libraries. In fact, at the recent Workshop organised by the Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, law librarians were photocopying the current edition of Moys Classification Scheme and Thesaurus for Legal Materials (MCT). Aderinto and Obadare (2009) confirm high cost and obsolete cataloguing materials as major challenges facing cataloguers. Notwithstanding that cataloguing tools and resources are usually very expensive they should be made available for use in the libraries for effective organisation of knowledge.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Cataloguing tools and resources are essential in cataloguing processes. Thus, availability and use of these tools connote efficient provision of access to legal information resources in law libraries. However, experience has shown that the expensive nature of these tools hinders libraries from acquiring and using them. It therefore seems as if these tools are not adequately available in the university law libraries in Nigeria, especially the online tools; and also, seems as if some of the tools available are not extensively utilised in the law libraries. Hence, this study is set to find out the tools and resources available and used in the law libraries in Nigeria.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the tools and resources provided for

cataloguing and classification in law libraries in Southern Nigerian universities?

2. To what extent are the tools and resources utilised for cataloguing and classification in law libraries in Southern Nigerian universities?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Materials used in the cataloguing departments of the libraries to aid cataloguers in cataloguing and classification are referred to as tools (Ogunniyi, 2014). Manaf, Nadzar and Ibrahim (2009) define cataloguing tools as authoritative rules, codes, guidelines that are acceptable and used by the communities of practice, and regarded as essential to attain accuracy and consistency in the creation of a catalogue record. Miksa (2008) on the other hand, defines cataloguing tools and resources as any device or document (print-based or electronic) that assists in the creation of an original record or in the verification of bibliographic information in existing records. She pontificates that an architect can design a house with pen and paper, but a carpenter cannot be expected to build it without tools or materials. So, a cataloguer cannot achieve his/her purpose of providing access to information resources without effective use of cataloguing tools and resources. Manaf, Nadzar and Ibrahim (2009) carried out a study to assess cataloguers' perception towards cataloguing practices, especially the level of importance given to cataloguing tools. The respondents widely agreed and accepted the fact that cataloguing tools are important, the respondents viewed the cataloguing tools as something essential in the cataloguing process; however the usage or full utilisation of the tools is still questionable.

Six categories of cataloguing tools and resources have been identified by Miksa (2008) as cataloguing rules, subject headings, classification, cataloguing manuals, supplementary tools and MARC standards. Aina (2004) adds Cutter Tables, filing rules (ALA Filing Rules), authority files and reference books (gazetteers, atlases, encyclopaedia and dictionaries) as tools used in library to organise information resources. AACR2 is an important standard in cataloguing library materials. According to Cullingford (2011), the rules advice cataloguers how to create a catalogue record, how to select, and record information about an item's title, author, publisher, edition and so on. El-Sherbini (2013) points that AACR2 remained the dominant cataloguing standard but it presented growing challenges when attempt were made to apply it to Internet-based material. The new code called Resource Description and Access (RDA) was recently introduced but has not been widely used.

Subject headings or control vocabulary are another important cataloguing tools and resources used in libraries of all types including university law libraries. The

third category of cataloguing tools and resources are classification schemes. According to Barman (2011), a library classification system provides a means for organising the knowledge embodied in books, CDs, Web sites and other resources. Hilder (2012) discusses subject classification schemes as tools that enable resources to be grouped together or collocated through the assigning of a particular term. Some of the popular classification schemes are: Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) developed by Melvi Dewey an American librarian in 1876; the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) developed by two Belgian bibliographers Paul Otlet and Henri la Fontaine in 1885; the Library of Congress Classification Scheme (LC) founded by the Library of Congress under Herbert Putnam, the then Librarian of the Library of Congress of the United States of America in 1920; Bliss Bibliographic Classification by Henry Bliss in 1935, and so many in-house schemes.

DDC and LC are the two leading general classification schemes employed in the English-speaking library world. However, they lack sufficient depth for more specialised collections (Hilder, 2012). In the classification of law, DDC, UDC and BBC and a number of in-house schemes were employed before the development of LC Class K in 1968. DeCaen (2008) says that MCT is popular in Australia but observes that there can be no doubt that the LC classification is the most detailed classification of legal systems (citing van Laer). Modeste and Dina (2007) found that MCT was used by about two hundred law libraries from all sectors-law firms, courts, and academic-principally in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the U.K. Hilder (2012) concurs that MCT is widely used in British law libraries. Orbih and Aina (2014) survey found that at the Lagos State University, materials are organised using LC except for law books that are classified using MCT.

Advances in Information and telecommunication technologies have produced new tools that aid the online environment. The standard MARCIt for instance is a tool that aid cataloguing of web sites, working with web browser (Prasanna and Singhal, 2002). MARC- (Machine Readable Cataloguing) formats are tools used to make records available on the computer systems and different countries have developed their own version of MARC. (Cullingford, 2011). Dublin Core is the best known metadata standard that is distinct from cataloguing codes, and contains 15 basic elements, designed for aggregators, websites or software that gather and bring together in one place information from across the web. Library automation software packages are also tools used in libraries to create online catalogues and access to information materials online. Some of library automation software packages used in libraries are Alice for Window which is an integrated package that supports USMARC format; Libsys based on MARC format, USMARC and OCLC; and VTLs which is Window based.

These according to Husain and Ansar (2007) are being used in India. Bello and Mansor (2012) also found that the five academic libraries in Nigeria surveyed used Alice for Window, GLASS, SLAM, and VTLs. The software packages have cataloguing modules which make cataloguing faster by ignoring most of the punctuation marks with AACR2.

Despite the fact that these tools are available and used in libraries, the level of availability and extent of use of these resources are still questionable. For instance, Manaf, Nadzar and Ibrahim (2009) reveals that most of the tools used in the libraries were not updated properly and that most of the available AACR2 were the personal copies of the cataloguers while some of the copies were the photocopied version. Nampaye (2009) investigated how cataloguing tools and resources were being used by cataloguers in University of Malawi Libraries (UNIMA) and the Malawi National Library Services (MNLS) in providing access to information. The cataloguers and directors of libraries were surveyed by means of a self administered questionnaire and an interview schedule. Other information requested from the respondents related to the problems encountered with the tools and training offered to the cataloguers. A total of thirty-five cataloguers and directors of libraries responded yielding a 70% response rate. The results were analysed using SPSS. The study revealed that the majority of cataloguers in the UNIMA Libraries and the MNLS used the cataloguing tools and resources but relatively infrequently. Results also revealed that the cataloguers encountered various problems with the tools which most of them attributed to a lack of training to adequately prepare them for cataloguing requirements. In addition, the majority of libraries had cataloguing backlogs which were attributed to various factors such as a lack of professionally trained staff in cataloguing and a lack of cataloguing tools and resources. The expensive cost of the LC schedules was a burdensome factor resulting in some libraries acquiring a partial set of the schedules, as they could not afford to purchase the whole complete schedule. Most of the tools these libraries possess were not up-to-date. The study recommends a review of policy to enhance adequate provision of cataloguing tools and resources and to implement more training programmes for cataloguers in order to enhance their job performance.

Also, in a study by Bello and Mansor (2012), fifty cataloguers in five Nigerian university libraries were investigated to find the duties of cataloguers, tools available and in use to discharge their duties as well as their job performance using descriptive survey. Fifty copies of the questionnaires were administered and thirty-seven were found useful for data analysis. Descriptive statistics was used in analysing the data. The study found low cataloguers' staffing strength. Level of digitisation was low and the libraries still possess the card catalogue system; all the libraries still engage in manual

cataloguing work and uses traditional library working tools.

From the literature surveyed, studies on the use of cataloguing tools and resources in law libraries are limited. This has created the need to survey the availability and use of cataloguing tools and resources in law libraries in Nigeria.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The study used descriptive research design. The instruments used were self developed questionnaire and observation checklist. A total of 66 law cataloguers comprising 20 lawyer librarians, 30 librarians and 11 library officers/assistants and 5 lawyers who catalogue legal information materials from 22 university law libraries in Southern Nigeria were surveyed. The universities and the number of cataloguers are as follows: University of Nigeria, Nsukka (8), Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife (1), University of Lagos (8), University of Ibadan (2), Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (2), University of Benin (5), University of Port Harcourt (1), University of Uyo (8), University of Calabar (10), Adekunle Ajasin University, Ondo (1), Ebonyi State University (1), Ekiti State University (1), Abia State University (2), Delta State University (1), Rivers State University of Science & Technology (2), Ambrose Alli University, Edo State (1), Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ogun State (1), Chukwu Emeka Odimegwu Ojukwu University of Science & Technology, Anambra State (2), Osun State University (1), Niger Delta University, Bayelsa (2), Lagos State University, Ojoo (5) and Enugu State University of Science & Technology (1). No sampling was done; instead all the population was surveyed since the population is small.

Ten copies of the questionnaire were distributed to ten law cataloguers from Babcock and Afe Babalola Universities. The data collected were analysed using Cronbach Alpha to determine the internal consistency of the items of the instrument. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient revealed the reliability level of 0.97 and this was considered high enough for reliability.

## RESPONSE RATE

A total number of sixty-six (66) copies of questionnaire were administered at the universities, out of which fifty-three (53) copies were duly filled and returned giving a response rate of 80%.

## METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data obtained was analysed using simple descriptive

statistics like frequency counts and mean for answering the research questions. The data was also presented in tables.

## DATA ANALYSIS

### Research Question 1

What are the tools and resources provided for cataloguing and classification in law libraries in Southern Nigerian universities?

The result presented in table 1 above shows that out of the twenty-three cataloguing tools and resources mentioned in the study, an aggregate of eight are available, while fifteen are not available. Also, the researcher observes that Moys Classification Scheme and Thesaurus for Legal Materials is the most available and used tool in the 22 law libraries. A total number of 21 university law libraries have computers, 20 have Cataloguing in publication (CIP) while 19 have Internet facilities and Cutter tables respectively; while 14 have AACR2.. However, the researcher observed that 22 university law libraries do not have Resources Description and Access (RDA) Toolkit and Alice for Window. More also, it was observed that 21 university law libraries do not have KOHA and Millennium library software.

### Research Question 2

To what extent are the tools and resources utilised for cataloguing and classification in law libraries in Southern Nigerian universities?

Table 2 reveals that Moys Classification and Thesaurus for Legal Materials ( $\bar{X}$ =3.91) and Cutter Tables ( $\bar{X}$ =3.57) are utilised to a very great extent in law libraries in the Southern Nigerian Universities. Computers ( $\bar{X}$  =3.45) are utilised to a great extent. However, most of the mentioned cataloguing tools and resources such as Stylus pen ( $\bar{X}$ =2.11), MARC Format ( $\bar{X}$  =1.96), Library of Congress Subject Headings List ( $\bar{x}$ =1.85), Integrated Library Systems such as VTLS ( $\bar{X}$ =1.81), KOHA ( $\bar{X}$ =1.75), Library of Congress Rule Interpretations ( $\bar{X}$ =1.72), AACR2 ( $\bar{X}$ =1.67), National Union Catalogues ( $\bar{X}$ =1.64), Online catalogue databases such, LC Online Catalogue ( $\bar{X}$ =1.58) and Adelaide University Law Library Online Catalogue ( $\bar{X}$ =1.58), Dublin Core ( $\bar{X}$ =1.57), Typewriters ( $\bar{X}$ =1.56), Millennium ( $\bar{X}$ =1.53), Sears List of Subject Headings ( $\bar{X}$ =1.47), Library of Congress Classification Scheme ( $\bar{X}$ =1.45), Dewey Decimal classification ( $\bar{X}$ =1.34) and Resource Description and

**Table 1:** Availability of cataloguing tools and resources in law libraries in Southern Nigerian universities

S/N	ITEMS	Available	Not Available
1	Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules2 (AACR2)	14	8
2	Library of Congress Rule Interpretations	9	13
3	Resources Description and Access (RDA) Toolkit	0	22
4	MARC Format	4	18
5	Dublin Core	4	18
6	Library of Congress Subject Headings List (LCSH)	13	9
7	Sears List of Subject Headings	0	22
8	Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC)	0	22
9	Library of Congress Classification Scheme (LC)	13	9
10	Moys Classification and Thesaurus for Legal Materials (MCT)	22	0
11	Computers	21	1
12	Internet Facilities	19	3
13	Integrated Library System (Software), VTLS,	2	20
14	KOHA	1	21
15	Alice for Window	0	22
16	Millennium	1	21
17	Online catalogue databases such, LC Online Catalogue	3	19
18	Adelaide University Law Library Online Catalogue	1	21
19	CIP	20	2
20	National Union Catalogue	6	16
21	Cutter Tables	19	3
22	Typewriters	10	12
23	Stylus Pen	7	15

**Table 2:** Mean ratings of the respondents on the extent of utilisation of cataloguing tools and resources in the university law libraries in Southern Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	VLE	LE	GE	VGE	$\bar{x}$	D
1	Moys Classification and Thesaurus for Legal Materials (MCT)	1	-	2	50	3.91	VGE
2	Cutter Tables	3	5	4	41	3.57	VGE
3	Computers	5	5	4	39	3.45	GE
4	CIP	10	6	12	25	2.98	LE
5	Stylus Pen	18	20	5	10	2.11	VLE
6	MARC Format	19	22	7	5	1.96	VLE
7	Library of Congress Subject Headings List (LCSH)	26	11	14	2	1.85	VLE
8	Internet	28	12	8	5	1.81	VLE
9	Integrated Library System (Software), VTLS	29	18	2	4	1.81	VLE
10	KOHA	33	8	4	8	1.75	VLE

11	<b>Library of Congress Rule Interpretations</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.72</b>	<b>VLE</b>
12	Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules2 (AACR2)	32	13	1	7	1.67	VLE
13	National Union Catalogue	26	22	3	2	1.64	VLE
14	Online catalogue databases such, LC Online Catalogue	29	19	3	2	1.58	VLE
15	Adelaide University Law Library Online Catalogue	30	17	4	2	1.58	VLE
16	Dublin Core	30	18	3	2	1.57	VLE
17	Typewriters	29	20	2	2	1.56	VLE
18	Millennium	35	12	2	4	1.53	VLE
19	Sears List of Subject Headings	35	13	3	2	1.47	VLE
20	Library of Congress Classification Scheme (LC)	40	6	3	4	1.45	VLE
21	Alice for Window	38	12	2	1	1.36	VLE
22	Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC)	42	7	1	3	1.34	VLE
23	Resources Description and Access (RDA) Toolkit	52	1	-	-	1.01	VLE

**NB= VLE= Very Low Extent; LE=Low Extent; GE=Great Extent; VGE=Very Great Extent; □ = □□□□**

Access Toolkit ( $\bar{x}$ =1.01) are utilised to a very low extent . The data reveal that only 3 out of the 22 items are greatly utilised in the study universities.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### *Availability of cataloguing tools and resources*

The study found that all the university law libraries in Southern Nigeria have basic cataloguing tools and resources. Moys Classification Scheme and Thesaurus for Legal Materials (MCT) was the most available resource in all the law libraries. However, cataloguing tools like Resource Description and Access (RDA) toolkits, MARC format, Dublin Core, integrated library software such as KOHA, Alice for Windows, Millennium, VTLS were not available in most of the law libraries. Availability of cataloguing tools and resources are sine qua non to their utilisation, as what is not available cannot be utilised. Law cataloguers need adequate provision of these resources to enable them provides quick and easy access to available legal information resources in the universities. Thus, the unavailability of most of the tools and resources may have affected cataloguers' job performance. This is in consonance with Nampaye's (2009) finding in his study of cataloguing tools and resources utilisation by cataloguers in University of Malawi Libraries (UNIMA) and the Malawi National Library Services (MNLS) that a lack of cataloguing tools and resources resulted to backlogs in the libraries. It was also observed that the available

copies of MCT in most of the law libraries were older editions. The researcher also observed that some law librarians were found making photocopies of the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of MCT during a recent Workshop held at Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, Lagos. This is also in consistent with the finding of Manaf, Nadzar and Ibrahim (2009) in a study to assess cataloguers' perception towards cataloguing practices, especially the level of importance given to cataloguing tools in private colleges' libraries in the Sarawak, Malaysia, that some of the copies detected in the libraries were the photocopied version.

From the findings, it is safe to say that there is low proportion of availability of cataloguing tools and resources in the university law libraries in Southern Nigeria. Most of the cataloguing tools and resources needed to provide access to electronic and digital information and services were not available. For instance, Resource Description and Access (RDA) toolkit and Alice for Windows were not available in all the law libraries. MARC format, Dublin Core, integrated library software such as KOHA, Millennium and VTLS were available in very few university law libraries in Southern Nigeria. SLIM software was available in one of the law libraries. The reason for the non-availability and non-utilisation of most of the cataloguing tools might be the expensive nature of the tools.

### *Extent of Utilisation of cataloguing tools and resources in university law libraries*

The findings on law cataloguers' extent of utilisation of

cataloguing tools and resources in the Nigerian university law libraries indicated that MCT as a cataloguing resource was utilised by the law cataloguers from the twenty-two university law libraries in Southern Nigeria, followed by Cutter Tables and Computers. Results further indicated that the remaining twenty items were utilised by few law libraries while some law libraries did not utilise them at all. From the results, very few cataloguers responded to using MARC Format or Dublin Core. This is because very few law libraries surveyed have automated their systems. This is in tandem with Bello and Mansor's (2012) study which found out that all the libraries surveyed still engage in manual cataloguing work and use traditional library working tools. Furthermore, the results also showed that few law libraries use integrated library software like Millennium, KOHA, VTLS and SLIM. Further results revealed that RDA toolkit, a new cataloguing tool that has emerged to replace Anglo-American Cataloguing Rule 2 (AACR2), was not utilised by the law cataloguers. This can be attributed to lack of awareness and skills by the cataloguers and also non-availability of the tools in the law libraries. Also, the rare and non-utilisation of tools like Library of Congress Subject Heading (LCSH) and Library of Congress (LC) can be attributed to the fact that the law cataloguers mostly use the Thesaurus attached to MCT to assign subject headings. They are not aware of the limitations of not using internationally accepted subject heading list like LCSH. Moreover, law libraries also acquire a sizeable number of non-legal information resources which general classification scheme like LC must be used to catalogue.

## CONCLUSION

Access to legal information materials can be assured when these materials are properly organised. This can only be possible when cataloguing tools and resources are provided and utilised by the law librarians. This study which was set out to investigate the cataloguing tools and resources available and utilised in the university law libraries in Southern Nigeria revealed low availability and poor utilisation of these tools in the university law libraries. The study concludes that these inadequacies must have adversely affected access to legal information to the teachers and students. Based on this, the study makes some suggestions towards improving the availability and utilisation of cataloguing tools and resources in the law libraries.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The universities must urgently address the issue of low availability of cataloguing tools and resources in the law libraries. The university libraries have to bear the cost of

duplicating these resources especially when the law libraries are located outside the university libraries due to the mandate by the National University Commission and the Council of Legal Education to establish the law libraries separate from the university libraries. Adequate funds must be provided to acquire these tools both print and electronic.

The poor utilisation of the tools especially the online tools by the law librarians must be tackled by improving the librarians' skills through training and retraining. In this regard, the universities must provide funds for training through conferences, workshops and short term training in law cataloguing.

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