

Legal Information Resources Availability and Utilisation as Determinants of Law Lecturers Research Productivity in Nigerian universities

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the legal information resources availability and utilisation as determinants of law lecturers research productivity in Nigerian universities. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The multistage sampling technique was used to select 517 out of 905 lecturers from sixteen faculties of law in twenty-nine universities across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. A self-developed questionnaire was used for lecturers and eighty percent response rate was obtained. Four research questions and one hypothesis were answered and data were analysed using descriptive statistics. The result shows that law books, legal periodicals, reference materials, law reports, reference materials, legislation and statutes, newspapers, loose leaf, indexes and abstracts, and digests were readily available to Law lecturers. E-resources and online legal databases were less available and had the lowest scores in terms of availability. The study found that legal information resources such as law reports, legal periodicals, legislation and statutes, indexes and abstracts, law book, non-legal materials, reference materials, digests and e-resources were used by lecturers in Nigerian universities. Also, the analysis establishes the fact that the research productivity of the lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities was higher in publication of journal articles, chapters in books, conference proceedings, and international peer-reviewed journals but low in co-authored books, textbooks publication, and occasional papers.

Keywords: Availability, Utilisation, Research productivity, Law lecturers, Legal information resources, Nigeria.

Introduction

Globally, universities are recognised as the centres of production of knowledge accumulation and knowledge transfer through research and scholarship. While there has been a tendency to ascribe more value to place teaching over research and community service delivery, it is increasingly clear that research is extremely critical and important if universities are to serve as engines of national development (Fadokun, 2009; Grigore, Candidatu, and Bliedeanu, 2009). Nirman (2007) avers that the mission of higher education is to advance knowledge, create knowledge, disseminate knowledge through research and provide service to the community.

In universities all over the world, recognition and advancement of individual academic staff depend largely on the quantity and quality of his research output in the form of journal articles, books, technical reports and other publications. (Ochai and Nedosa, 1998). The fruits of research and scholarship are new knowledge and facts which are disseminated to the academic community through scholarly publications and seminars. In research, knowledge is added to, problems are solved, and inadmissible view points are refuted while scholarly conclusions are formulated (Gasiokwu, 2001). Therefore, one of the preoccupations of any law lecturer is to conduct research. It is often argued that those faculties who are research active are more likely to be up-to-date in discipline-specific knowledge and can use their research findings in preparing teaching materials (Marsh & Hattie, 2002). Publication output is one of the strong determinants of productivity of researchers. The researcher may disseminate his findings either through oral presentation at a conference, workshop and seminar or in form of publications in journals and as theses and dissertations, reports or books. Research publications in the universities and research institutes are significant indicators of academic productivity and national development. Interestingly, research publications have been a source of information that is constantly changing the face of the world engineering growth, progress, development and unimproved society. Brabazon (2001) contended that publications in scholarly journals allow academics to communicate in a disciplined and rigorous manner with their national and international colleagues.

Legal research, according to Ayua (2001) has been concerned with the development or elaboration of legal doctrine and the normative purposes of law, using such materials as laws, regulations, rulings and cases. Thus, legal information resources could be referred to as legal literature such as law books, law reports, legislation and statutes, legal periodicals, government publications, reference materials and other inter-related

non-legal books, e-resources, unpublished works of law, for example conference papers, theses on law, and so on. Legal literature is an indispensable tool of legal education. The law student requires access to it. The law lecturer, to be current today cannot function without legal information resources. These resources should be available to law lecturers so as to facilitate its utilization for research purposes. Availability of information resources helps in facilitating legal research (Ainoko and Boman, 2009). Thus, it is very important for available legal information resources to be accessible to law lecturers.

Studies that dwell on availability, accessibility and use of information resources have received considerable attention from researchers. Stevenson (1997) therefore defined availability of information resources “as being able to be obtain, and used”. These information resources could be in form of books, periodicals, abstracts, indexes, reference materials, audio-visuals, information technologies (IT), and databases. Uhegbu (2001) affirmed that, without available information, accessibility will be difficult and its utilization impaired. Availability of relevant legal information resources affects how frequently law lecturers’ use them. (Eason, Richardson, and Yu, 2000).

Wilson (2000) submitted that information use is the physical and mental acts humans employ to incorporate found information into their knowledge base or knowledge structure. While stressing the importance of information for every profession, Haruna and Mabawonku (2001), affirmed that legal practitioners depend very much on relevant, precise and timely information for success in their profession. The complexity of the legal profession naturally demands maximum information utilisation for appropriate and effective legal research. There are many avenues cutting across the spectrum of the entire society that are open to law lecturers through which they can harness and process information for effective legal research. Research is the engine that generates new knowledge and provides ideas for national development (Ntiamoah-Badu, 2008). The outcome of research is usually published. The worth of a lecturer is usually determined by the quantity and quality of his or her publications. Publication output of every lecturer to a great extent, determines his or her promotion based on the policy of “publish or perish”.

Law lecturers are an invaluable asset to the nation. They can be regarded as knowledge workers and social scientists because law is a discipline that regulates human conducts and interactions in a society. Research productivity of every law lecturer usually determines his or her career advancement in Nigerian universities. According to Mabawonku (2005), academics in Nigeria, like their counterparts all over the world have to do research and publish in order to advance professionally and to retain their tenure. In order to extend the frontiers of knowledge in all disciplines, academics need to embark on research. Research production in the academia is reflected in the number and quality of articles in accredited journals, books, chapters in books, conference proceedings published by academic staff members (Akuogwu, Udida and Basse, 2006; Torchich, 2008).

However, the level of the law lecturers research productivity is likely to depend on the availability and utilisation of the various legal information resources. Momodu (2002) reaffirmed that effective use of the various information sources will improve the cross-fertilization of ideas that may lead to generation of new information.

It is a common knowledge in Nigeria today that books are in short supply. Virtually all professions - doctors, engineers, teachers and lawyers complain of lack of current and adequate information in their fields. Among the various professions in the country, the legal profession is one which requires the use of relevant, timely, and current information in the form of texts, that is, legal information resources to successfully carry out the legal research. Generally, as noted by Fowler (2007), legal profession operates in an information intensive environment. Therefore, to understand the influence of legal information resources availability and utilisation on research productivity of law lecturers, it is necessary to obtain empirical evidence.

Research Questions

The study tried to answer the following research questions

1. What are the legal information resources available for use to law lecturers?
2. What are the types of legal information resources utilised by law lecturers for research?
3. What is the extent of use of various legal information resources by law lecturers?
4. What is the level of research productivity of lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

There is no significant relationship among legal information resources availability, utilisation and research productivity of lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities.

Literature Review

Legal information resources are essential ingredients for effective legal research. Thus, legal information resources could be referred to as legal literature such as law books, law reports, legislation and statutes, legal

periodicals, government publications, reference materials and other inter-related non-legal books, e-resources, unpublished works of law, for example conference papers, theses on law, and so on. Legal literature is an indispensable tool of legal education. Hence, availability of information entails the provision and supply of information at the right quantity and time. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) argued that availability of information should be viewed from both national and instructional levels. They attributed the lack of availability of information sources to the steady proliferation of Nigerian universities: federal, state, and private, along with increases in students and faculty, and the diversification of courses and academic and research programmes, without adequate information resources to meet the actual and information needs. They identify obstacles to the development of adequate information resources. Availability of information resources helps in facilitating legal research (Ainoko and Boman, 2009). On availability of information resources to legal practitioners in the Federal Capital Territory, Ainoko and Boman (2009) asserted that information resources such as laws which comprise the Laws of Federation and those of the various regions and states, law reports, dictionaries, magazines and newspapers are available in the chambers/offices of legal practitioners. However, the study revealed that low level availability of electronic resources in their chambers was due to lack of fund.

As regards information resources use, Malumfashi (2001) asserted that the use of information to a large extent depends on the efforts put in place by the information scientist in organising information resources at the right time for the timely use by lecturers and their likes. Haruna and Mabanwonku (2001) investigated the relationship between information resources utilisation and professional effectiveness attributes of legal practitioners in Lagos, Nigeria and concluded that acquisition and utilisation of relevant, precise and timely information had contributed to effective legal practice of the practitioners in Lagos State, Nigeria. Utilisation of Information is goal oriented with the aim of solving a problem, and having a better understanding of previous knowledge, and situations (Uhegbu, 2002).

Publication output is one of the strong determinants of productivity of researchers. The researcher may disseminate his findings either through oral presentation at a conference, workshop and seminar or in form of publications in journals and as theses and dissertations, reports or books. It may also be disseminated on the internet. The importance of publications output in a research environment cannot be overemphasised. It can be regarded as the fruit of the labour of research activity and it is a major parameter by which productivity of researchers is adjudged.

According to a study conducted by Popoola (2002) on the effects of utilisation on research output of social scientists, the quantity of research could be measured by counting the number of books published, or journal articles produced over a period. The findings of a research, presented in descriptive statements are usually widely disseminated for other researchers in the discipline to be able to react to the study. However, measurements of research productivity have nearly been the exclusive preserve of developed countries. The criteria for determining world class universities are not so much the sizes of students' population or the quality of community services, but the scientific research outputs (Chiemeké et al (2009).

Research productivity includes research publication in professional journals and in conference proceedings, writing a book or chapter, gathering and analysing original evidence, working with post-graduate students on dissertations and class projects, obtaining research grants, carrying out editorial duties, obtaining patents and licenses, writing monographs, developing experimental designs, producing works of an artistic or creative nature and engaging in public debates and commentaries. Thus, one of the strategies for determining research productivity is to assess the quantity of publications which researchers communicate through primary or other sources. Reporting on research productivity in developing countries, Arunachalam (1999) cited by Nwagwu (2007), opined that South Africa and Nigeria are the only two African countries whose works dominate developing countries.

Communication of legal information is one of the most important aspects of legal research. Aina (2002) posited that the need to document all the stages involved in research is crucial. The purpose is mainly to disseminate the findings so that the researcher's peers can adjudge the research as well as being aware of the contribution of the research to knowledge. There are varieties of ways to disseminating the findings. Some of the methods used include conferences, workshops, seminars, annual reports, technical reports, theses and dissertations, books or chapters in books and journal articles or even web publishing.

Academic researchers publish to establish their claim to a specific result at a specific point in time. Brabazon (2001) contended that publications in scholarly journals allow academics to communicate in a disciplined and rigorous manner with their national and international colleagues. Commenting further Okeh (2003) observed that without scholarly publications being generated, there would neither be materials to study by those involved nor knowledge passed on about what was done, how it was done and how it should be done. He concluded that scholarly publications form the cornerstone of academic life in all disciplines and professions. In addition, Nwakanma (2003) opined that research results could be used to effect change, pass on an opinion or belief and also confirm or establish a theory. In other words, it can help in objective analysis of issues and clarification of concepts. When researchers publish their academic studies, it is an opportunity for their peers to

access their research and communicate with other academics interested in a similar subject area (Besimoglu, 2007). It may also result in invitations to attend conferences and to referee important papers and books. The publication of research results is a significant link between the areas of communication and academic awards, thus academic societies were founded to encourage communication amongst their members (Besimoglu, 2007). Research publications in the universities and research institutes are significant indicators of academic productivity and national development. Interestingly, research publications have been a source of information that is constantly changing the face of the world engineering growth, progress, development and unimproved society.

The literature pointed out that legal information resources are basic tools for legal research by Law lecturers for increased research productivity. It has also shown that lecturers need access to legal information resources to enhance their research productivity. Some previous studies have found that research productivity of lecturers could be measured over a period of time. However, it is clear from literature that much research has not been done on the extent to which legal information resources are available, accessible, and utilised by law lecturers to improve their research productivity in law faculties in Nigerian universities.. Thus, this work is necessary to fill the gap and to provide a reference point for future studies.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted. The multistage sampling technique was used to select 517 out of 905 lecturers from sixteen Faculties of law in twenty-nine universities across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria namely North Central, North East, North West, South East, South West and South South (*NUC Bulletin*, 2009). A self-developed questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The research questions were analysed using descriptive statistics, such as mean, standard deviations and variance, while the hypothesis was tested with Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion of Findings

The results/findings of the study are reported below based on the research questions.

What Are the Legal Information Resources Available For Use to Law Lecturers?

In order to answer the first research question, the legal information resources that were available to lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities was defined by 13 components and they were measured with a scale of items (2-Available, 1- Not available) in order to determine their level of availability. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the data collected and the result are presented in table 1. The overall result shows that law books were mostly available in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities with a mean score of (M= .1067), followed by legal periodicals (M = .7667) reference materials (M=.8867), law reports (M= .9800), government publications (M= .1933), non-legal materials (M=.8733), legislation and statutes (M=.1633), newspapers (M= .1933), loose leaf (M=.8133), indexes and abstracts (M=.8667), digests (M=.8933). E-resources and online legal databases were less available and had the lowest scores (M= .8800 and M= .41 respectively) in terms of availability. This implies that e-resources and online legal databases were less available resources in the Faculties when compared to other legal information considered in this study. Based on the analysis of the scores obtained, it could be deduced that law reports, government publications, non-legal materials legislation and statutes, newspapers, loose leaf, indexes and abstracts and digests were the most available legal information resources to lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities.

Table 1: Availability of legal information resources in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities

S/N	Legal Information Resources	Available N%	Not Available N%	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Law Reports	364 (87.9%)	50 (12.0%)	.9800	.14047
2	Legislation and Statutes	278 (67.1 %)	136 (32.8%)	.1633	.34424
3	Legal Periodicals	379 (91.5%)	35 (8.4%)	.7667	.42437
4	Government Publications	288 (69.5%)	126(30.4%)	.1933	.39624
5	Law Books	386 (93.2%)	28 (6.7%)	.1067	.30972
6	Reference Materials	367 (88.6%)	47(11.3%)	.8867	.44107
7	E-Resources	151 (36.4%)	263(63.5%)	.8800	.32605
8	Online Legal Databases	37 (8.9%)	377 (91.0%)	.41	.494
9	Non Legal Materials	131 (31.6%)	283(68.3%)	.8733	.33371
10	Indexes And Abstracts	273 (65.9%)	141 (34.0%)	.8667	.34107
11	Digests	247(59.6%)	167 (40.3%)	.8933	.30972
12	Newspapers	275 (66.4%)	139 (33.5%)	.1933	.39624
13	Loose Leaf	250(66.3%)	164 (39.6%)	.8133	.39095

N = 414

What are the Types of Legal Information Resources Utilised by Law Lecturers For Research?

In order to answer the second research question, the types of legal information resources utilised by lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities were defined by eleven (11) components and they were measured with a scale of 2 items (1 – Hardly Used, 2 – Mostly Used). Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the data collected and the results are presented below.

The overall result revealed that legal periodicals were mostly used by lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities with a frequency score of (96.8%) followed by law books (96.6%), then e-journals (87.9%), reference materials (87.4%), lexis-nexis (85.2%), law reports (84.0%), e-books (82.1%), legislation and statutes (76.0%). Based on the analysis of the mean scores obtained, it could be deduced that legal periodicals, law books, e-journals, reference materials, lexis-nexis, law reports, e-books, legislation and statutes were the types of resources that are mostly utilised by lecturers for research in Faculties of law in Nigerian universities (Table 2).

Table 2: Types of legal information resources in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities

S/N	Legal Information Resources	Mostly Used N%	Hardly Used N%
1	Law Reports	348 (84.0%)	66 (15.9%)
2	Legislation and Statutes	315(76.0 %)	99(23.9%)
3	Legal Periodicals	401 (96.8%)	13 (3.1%)
4	Government Publications	289 (69.8 %)	125(30.1%)
5	Law Books	400 (96.6%)	14(3.3%)
6	Reference Materials	362 (87.4%)	52 (12.5%)
7	Law Pavillion	280 (67.6%)	134 (32.3%)
8	Lexis-Nexis	353 (85.2%)	61 (14.7%)
9	E-Journals	364(87.9%)	48(12.0%)
10	E-Books	340(82.1%)	74(17.8%)
11	Non-Legal Materials	22 (5.3%)	392 (94.6%)

N = 414

What is the Extent of Use of Various Legal Information Resources by Law Lecturers?

The descriptive statistics showed the frequency of use of various legal information resources by law lecturers. From the simple percentage analysis, results indicated that the following legal information resources are used daily by the law lecturers in universities in descending order. Law books (94.2%); legal periodicals (52.1%); law reports (48.3%); e-resources (47.1%); reference materials (13.2%); indexes and abstracts (10.8%); legislation and statutes (10.3%); non - legal materials (9.6%); and digests (3.3%). (Table 3)

Table 3: Utilisation of legal information resources in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities

S/N	Legal Information Resources	Daily N%	Weekly N%	Monthly N%	Quarterly N%	Never Used N%	Mean	SD
1	Law Reports	200 (48.3%)	63(15.2%)	101(24.3%)	50(12.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4.1867	1.26059
2	Legislation and Statutes	43 (10.3%)	56 (13.5%)	211(50.9%)	87 (21.0%)	17(4.1%)	3.8200	1.22650
3	Legal Periodicals	216 (52.1)	97 (23.4%)	78 (18.8%)	15 (3.6%)	8 (1.9%)	3.9400	1.16567
4	Government Publications	0 (0.0%)	22 (5.3%)	248 (60.0%)	108 (26.0%)	36 (8.6%)	1.9800	1.00649
5	Law Books	390(94.2%)	10 (2.4%)	8 (1.9%)	6 (1.4%)	0 (0.0%)	3.2667	1.37897
6	Reference Materials	55 (13.2%)	152(36.9%)	99 (23.9%)	75 (18.1%)	33(7.95%)	3.0400	1.26851
7	E-Resources	195(47.1%)	85 (20.5%)	57 (13.7%)	47 (11.3%)	30(7.2%)	2.0800	.97980
8	Online Legal Databases	65 (15.7%)	58 (14.0%)	44 (10.6%)	70 (16.9%)	177(42.7%)	1.6933	.71369
9	Non Legal Materials	40 (9.6%)	62 (14.9%)	60 (14.4%)	69 (16.6%)	183 (44.2%)	2.8533	1.38732
10	Indexes And Abstracts	45 (10.8%)	55 (13.2%)	102 (24.6%)	123 (29.7%)	89 (21.4%)	3.5067	1.24106
11	Digests	14(3.3%)	50 (12.0%)	20 (4.8%)	41 (9.9%)	289 (69.8%)	1.8200	1.19321
12	Newspapers	15 (3.6%)	9 (2.1%)	41 (10.0%)	128 (30.9%)	221 (53.3%)	1.5333	.67224
13	Loose Leaf	2 (0.5%)	20 (4.8%)	30 (7.2%)	180 (43.5%)	182 (43.9%)	1.7267	.79340

What is the Level of Research Productivity of Law lecturers?

Research productivity in this study, refers to the output published in chapters in books, co-authored textbooks, occasional papers, monographs, conference papers, articles in learned journals, and international peer-reviewed journals. In order to determine the level of research productivity of the respondents within the period of 3 years (2009-2011), average score of their productivity was computed. The result shows that two hundred and fifty eight (258), representing (62.3%) of the respondents had articles in learned journals. This result strongly confirms the culture of publish or perish that is a popular cliché among academics in Nigerian university settings. One hundred and sixty-two representing (39.1%) had conference proceedings. Also, one hundred and eighty- two (182) respondents representing (43.9%), had chapters in books. In Nigeria, university regulations state that academic staff members are to be evaluated for promotion every three years. Thus, the analysis establishes the fact that the research productivity of the lecturers in Faculties of law in Nigerian universities is higher in journal publications, chapters in books and conference proceedings. However, the research productivity of lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities is lower in textbook publications, monographs, co-authored books and occasional papers (Table 4).

Table 4: Research Productivity of Law Lecturers within Three-years (2009-2011)

S/N	Publications	N%	Mean	SD
1	Textbooks	50 (12.1%)	.1208	.32626
2	Chapters in Books	182 (43.9%)	2.4933	1.35976
3	Coauthored Books	34 (8.2%)	1.6333	1.21742
4	Monographs	26 (6.2%)	.4100	.13100
5	Occasional Papers	20 (4.8%)	.4000	.13000
6	Articles in Learned Journals	258 (62.3%)	5.6867	1.58913
7	Conference Proceedings	162 (39.1%)	.3200	.73567
8	International Peer-Reviewed Journals	70 (16.9%)	.1667	.37393

N = 414

One null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis is stated as:

There is no significant relationship between availability, and utilisation of legal information resources and research productivity of lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities.

Results on table 5 showed significant positive correlations between research productivity of law lecturers from the sampled Nigerian universities and availability of legal information resources ($r = .178, p < 0.05$), and utilisation of legal information resources ($r = .493, p < 0.05$). The null hypothesis is rejected. This means that improved research productivity of Law lecturers is related to legal information resources availability, and utilisation.

Table 5: Relationships between availability and utilisation of legal information resources and research productivity of lecturers in Faculties of law in Nigerian universities

Variables	No	Mean	1	2	3	4
Research productivity	414	10.3826	4.53604	1.000		
Availability of legal information	414	28.9664	5.60214	.178	1.000	
Utilisation of legal information resources	414	26.6309	10.67540	.493	.222	1.000

Note: N = 414; *P < .05 (Multiple Regression Analysis)

4.6 Discussion of Findings

In all the universities studied, the level of availability of legal information resources was high. Law books, legal periodicals, reference materials, law reports, reference materials, legislation and statutes, newspapers, loose leaf, indexes and abstracts, and digests were readily available to Law lecturers. E-resources and online legal databases were less available had the lowest scores in terms of availability. This implies that e-resources and online legal databases were less available resources when compared to other legal information considered in this study. Based on the analysis of the scores obtained, it could be deduced that law reports, government publications, non-legal materials legislation and statutes, newspapers, loose leaf, indexes and abstracts and digests were the most available legal information resources to law lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities. The result of this study is line with the findings of Ainoko and Boman (2009), which asserts that legal information resources such as laws which comprise the Laws of Federation and those of the various regions and states, law reports, dictionaries, magazines and newspapers are available in the chambers/offices of legal practitioners in the Federal Capital Territory. Other studies carried out within Nigerian universities which are in line with the findings of the study are Uhegbu (2001) and (Popoola, 2002).

The result revealed that legal periodicals were mostly used by lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities followed by law books, then e-journals, reference materials, lexis-nexis, law reports, e-books, legislation and statutes. Based on the findings of the analysis obtained, it could be deduced that legal periodicals, law books, e-journals, reference materials, lexis-nexis, law reports, e-books, legislation and statutes were the types of resources that are mostly utilised by law lecturers for research in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities. The findings disagreed with Olalude (2007) who studied utilisation of internet sources for research by information professionals in sub-Saharan Africa and found out that the scholarly electronic publications were available in Federal universities in Nigeria, but there was low use of scholarly electronic publications by lecturers in federal universities in Nigeria compared to their counterparts in Britain, United State, and even in Botswana and South Africa.

The study found that legal information resources such as law reports, legal periodicals, legislation and statutes, indexes and abstracts, law book, non- legal materials, reference materials, digests and e-resources were used daily by the law lecturers in Nigerian universities. The findings of this study is in agreement with Ocholla (2007) who studied academics from four faculties of the Moi University, Kenya and ranked the information resources they used in the following order of frequency: journals, textbooks, research reports, conference literature and others. This showed that journals are most frequently used by lecturers among other information resources.

Popoola (2008) in a study of the use of information sources and services and its effect on the research output of social scientist in Nigerian universities found that the use of information sources or services will improve the research output of the respondents (social scientists in Nigerian universities) and if information resources and services available in their institutional information system or elsewhere are used, their research output is more significantly enhanced.

The result of this study establishes that the research productivity of the lecturers in Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities, as influenced by availability and utilization of legal information resources is higher in journal publications, chapters in books, conference proceedings, and international peer-reviewed journals. These findings correspond with those of Popoola (2002), Okeh (2003), Oduwole and Ikhizama (2007).

However, the research productivity of the lecturers in Law faculties in universities in Nigeria is lower in co authored books, textbooks publication, and occasional papers. The reasons for low productivity could be as a result of the dual career nature of Law lecturers who teach and provide other legal services to the society. Furthermore, Olorunfoba and Ajayi (2006) asserted that evidence of scholarly publication is presented on a three – yearly basis as a criterion for promotion for lecturers in the Nigerian universities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The research has shown that legal information resources were available for use to law lecturers. The number of the available legal information resources was considered adequate with exception of e-resources and online legal databases. Faculties of Law in Nigerian universities provide a variety of legal information resources such as found law books, law reports, legal periodicals and reference materials to lecturers. However, the research productivity of Law lecturers was high in journal publications, chapters in books and conference proceedings and lower in textbook publications, monographs, co-authored books and occasional papers. The inference that can be drawn from the outcome of this study is that Legal information resources availability and utilisation play a crucial role in enhancing the research productivity of Law lecturers. There is no doubt that improved research productivity of Law lecturers reside in utilisation of varied Legal information resources which should be made available and accessible for Law lecturers to utilise. Based on the findings of this study, it could be recommended that there should be constant awareness programs in Law libraries to inform lecturers of the availability of useful legal information resources. There should be training of lecturers in the Faculties of Law on the use of legal information resources within and outside the library so as to efficiently assist them in accessing and retrieving information for research productivity; and Law libraries should acquire current legal information materials for lecturers use.

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