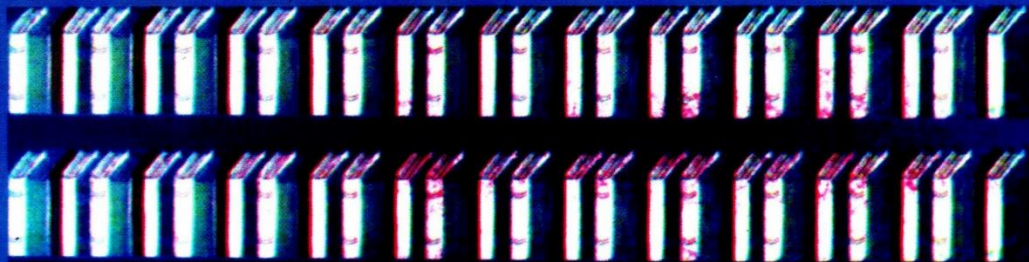
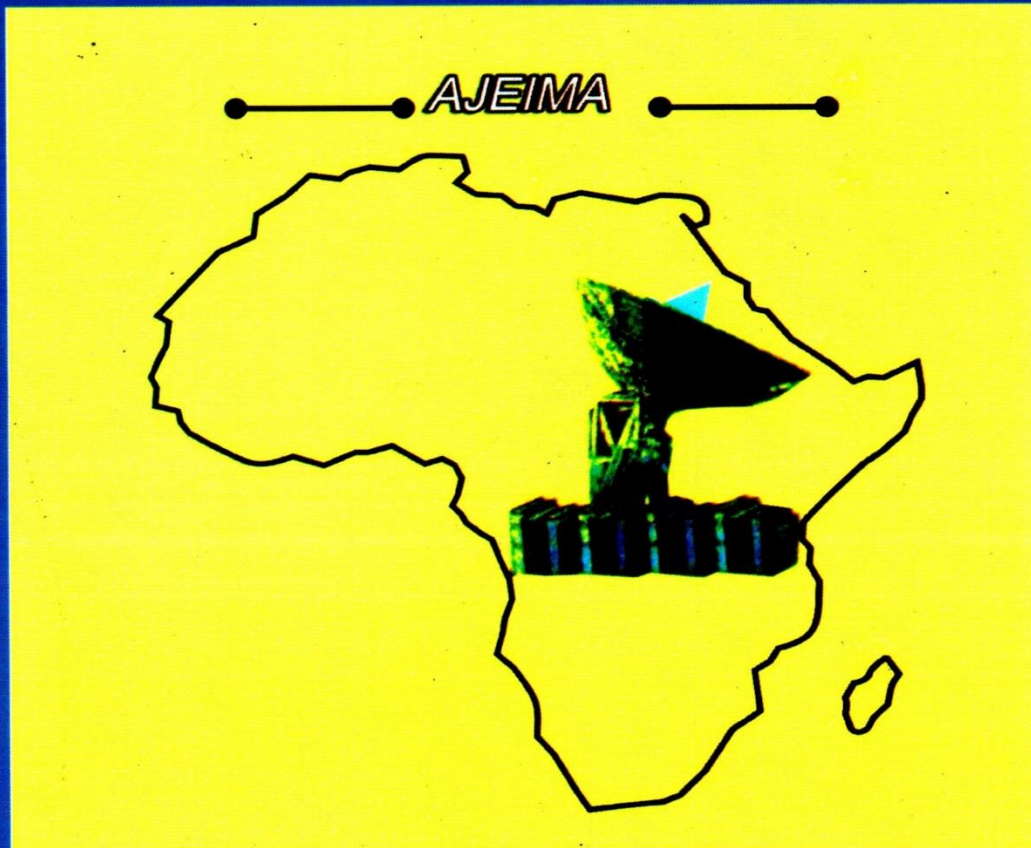


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## Availability and Utilisation of Print Resources in the University of Uyo Law Library

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### Abstract

*This study investigated the availability and utilisation of print resources in the University of Uyo law library. A research question and a hypothesis were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey design was employed, and the population for the study was 198 registered law students. Census sampling technique was employed in this study. A structured questionnaire entitled "availability and utilisation of print resources by law students in University of Uyo library (AUPRLSUULQ) was used to gather data for the study. T-test analysis was used to test the hypothesis at 0.5 significant level. The findings revealed that there is a significant influence of availability of print information resources on utilisation by the law students in University of Uyo law library. The study concluded that availability of information resources significantly influenced utilisation in the Law Library. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that the University management should provide timely release of sufficient funds to be used for effective collection development in the law library.*

**Keywords:** *Availability, Utilisation, Print Resources*

## Introduction

The library, according to Okiy (2004), has long been the institution most concerned with methods, skills, and systems for the acquisition, storage, preservation, retrieval, and dissemination of information. Bryson (2011) emphasised that the depth of a library concerned has always been determined primarily by the needs of those it serves (clientele); consequently, the demand for effective and efficient access to information is determined by the availability of information resources. Law libraries belong to the class of libraries called special libraries within the academic environment and they collect and hold predominantly legal information. The Law Library of University of Uyo is an academic library, a faculty resource centre which caters for the information needs of the law students, law lecturers, and other legal researchers (by consent of the Law Librarian). They provide research aids to the above mentioned group of people and also support learning through teaching, thereby enabling them to attain information literacy.

Law libraries are to the legal professionals, what the stethoscope is to medical doctors; and laboratories to scientists. The Council of Legal Education which is responsible for the vocational training of lawyers recommends that every Faculty of Law should have a Law Library distinct from the University Library. Amakiri (2014) outlined some of the objectives of the law library to include the following

- To make available law materials to users;
- To provide a conducive environment for reading to law students and legal practitioners;
- To provide referral services to law users;
- To provide lending and reference services to users; and
- To provide internet services, databases and e-resources to users.

Law libraries do not only provide services but resources to back up the services provided. Law resources, according to Ejimofor (2001), are embodying, interacted or structured data used for the practice of law, teaching and study of law as well as the conduct of legal research. Law resources comprise of print resources, statutes, standard law textbooks, periodicals, Legislations, Decrees, Acts of parliament, Rules and Regulations by quasi-judicial bodies, legal databases and e-resources. However, this paper intends to focus on only the print resources. Print resources are information materials that are published and are tangible for readability without the use of electronic appliances. Books, journals, law reports, laws, statutes, Decrees, Acts, etc, are some of the printed information resources that *are available in the law library*. Books and periodicals still comprise the main kind of print resources in the law library in University of Uyo. Access to these print information resources is through a library's catalogue.

The concept of utilisation of information resources is the exploitation of the information resources to satisfy information needs. Buckland (1995) identifies utilisation as an activity which measures the worth of the item to a library or information system. Utilisation is a single criterion, which is used to determine the reason for retaining a document within the collection of a library. Utilisation is essential in guiding the collection development effort of a library. 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). The utilisation of these information resources therefore, to a large extent is dependent on the availability of these resources in the law library. It is against this background that this study sought to investigate the availability and utilisation of print resources in the University of Uyo Law Library.

### **Historical Background of Ime Umanah Law Library**

The Law Library has been an integral part of the Faculty of Law ever since it was commissioned on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of February, 1988 when the University of Cross River State hosted the inauguration of a chair of professorship in Law both of which were exclusively endowed by Late Mr. Ime Umanah. The Law Library is housed on the second floor of the Udo Udoma Law building and it is headed by the Law Librarian with other supporting staff that work together as a unified team to offer information services to the teaming

students population, as well as the Faculty, University and other members of the public who are interested in legal research.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The availability of print resources in the library makes the library relevant to its clientele. The law library stocks legal information resources and the power and role of information for legal research is as strong and important as justice itself; however, it is worthy of note that despite the print information resources that are available in the law library, the question of appropriate utilisation still exists. This may be as result of inadequate awareness of the availability of these resources by law students. Students will rather come to the library with their books to read, with the perception that library resources are inadequate and out-dated. Furthermore, where users do not possess adequate information literacy and retrieval skills this may pose a challenge to them in their utilisation of the available print resources in the University of Uyo law library as some users will like to use the resource but do not have adequate skills in information retrieval. Hence, this research seeks to establish the level of availability of print information resources in the University of Uyo law library and if these resources are available, if they are utilised by law students of the University of Uyo.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to establish the influence of availability of print resources on

utilisation by law students in the University of Uyo law library.

### **Research Question**

How does availability of print resources influence utilisation by law students in University of Uyo Law Library?

### **Research Hypothesis**

There is no significant influence of availability of print resources on utilisation by law students in University of Uyo Law Library.

### **Literature Review**

The use of print resources in the library is thus indispensable to the students in order to achieve their academic objective. Availability of print legal resources in law libraries is regarded as the right that should be provided to all library users. This is essentially so because of the advantages and importance of information to the legal profession. Basically, print information resources are materials that users consult in making decisions and also for problem-solving. These sources could be primary or secondary sources. Ojedokun (2007) noted that primary sources are uninterpreted, first hand materials such as records and raw data. In other words, print resources are sources that users make use of from time to time in order to meet their information needs.

Udoh (2003) reports that a survey conducted on the availability of print resources (textbooks) in academic libraries throughout the country revealed insufficient textbooks in academic libraries. However, Clinch (2001) in his

study espouses that law textbooks are a systematic, narrative explanation of a commentary on the law. The author further identified five types of print resources as follows: books of authority, modern textbooks, casebooks, practice books and precedent books. Sanni (2006) also observed that in Nigeria, print information resources of reputable standard have been written by learned scholars and jurists in the field of law, which constitutes very important sources of Nigerian law; however, print resources of a library can influence its use by law students. Literature has revealed that print information resources availability does not mean accessibility and utilisation; therefore university libraries are to market their resources and service to attract utilisation; however, the level of the law students' learning and research productivity is likely to depend on the availability and utilisation of the various legal information resources, both print and non-print. Momodu (2002) reaffirmed that effective use of the various information sources will improve the cross-fertilisation of ideas that may lead to generation of new information.

Doren (2015) carried out a study on the use of law information sources in legal research by Nigerian University law students. Doren investigated the law information sources used in legal research among undergraduate law student in Nigerian Universities. Twelve faculty of law libraries were purposively selected from among the thirty four universities that offer law in the country. In all, 1534 law

students were randomly selected from the total population of 7,219 registered law students at the time of the study. A descriptive survey method was used to obtain open and close ended data from law students: the finding revealed that primary and secondary law sources in both print and electronic formats were available in Nigerian university law libraries. It was also found that print law sources were mostly available in the law libraries which the law students frequently used in legal research to access law related information. The study recommended that the university managements should provide relevant information sources especially electronic resources to enable legal research in the law libraries.

Ukpanah & Afolabi (2013) investigated the availability of cited law resources by law students in universities of Uyo and Calabar law libraries. The objective of the study was to determine the availability and utilisation of cited law reports, law journals and textbooks by final year undergraduate law students in the two universities law libraries. The survey research design was used for the study. A sample of 450 undergraduate law students' projects from the two law libraries were used for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a checklist. The result indicated that over 50% of the cited law resources were available in these law libraries and law students cited mostly what were available in the law libraries for their research. It was recommended that law libraries should be properly funded to enable

them achieve their goals and objectives. These reviews relate to this study in the sense that the finding revealed that there are availability of information resources in the law library, also that law students make use of the available information resources for learning and research.

### **Methodology**

The study was descriptive in research. The population consists of all year 3, 4 and 5 law students of 2014 /2015 academic session who had registered with the library. The entire population of 198 targeted law students in the University of Uyo served as the study sample. A questionnaire was used to collect data. The instrument was personally administered by the researchers to respondents in University of Uyo Law Library. Out of the 198 copies of the questionnaire that was administered, 145 were found to be valid while 43 copies were invalidated.

Census sampling technique was used in the study. The rationale for using the above named sampling technique was because the population was a small number and the subjects were easily accessible. In this research, the data collected were analysed using Mean and Standard Deviation to answer the research question and hypothesis was analysed using t-test statistics at .05 significant level.

**Research Question:** How does the availability of print resources influence utilisation by law students in the University of Uyo law library?

**Table 1: Results of Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis on Availability and Utilisation of Print Resources in University of Uyo Law Library**

Print Resources	N	Mean	S.D
Available	135	8.35	1.46
Not available	10	6.00	0.00

Table 1 revealed the Mean and Standard Deviation on the influence of availability of print resources on students' utilisation in University of Uyo law library. The result showed that students make use of print resources when they are available than when they are not. This is evidenced in the high and low Mean scores 8.35 and 6.00 for utilisation of print resources when

available and not available respectively. The result means that availability of print resources influences their utilisation by students in university of Uyo law library.

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant influence of availability of print resources on utilisation by Students of University of Uyo Law Library.

**Table 2: Independent t-Test Analysis on the Influence of Availability of print resources on Utilisation by Law Students**

Printed Resources	N	Mean	S.D	t-cal
Available	135	8.35	1.46	5.08
Not available	10	6.00	0.00	

*Significant at .05; df = 143; critical t = 1.96.*

The result in Table 2 revealed that the calculated t-value of 5.08 is greater than the critical-t value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance with 143 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence of availability of print resources on utilisation by law students in university of Uyo law library is rejected in favour of the alternative one which states that availability of print resources significantly influences students' utilisation in University of Uyo Law Library.

### Discussion of Findings

The result of data analysis in Table 2 was significant due to the fact that the obtained t-value of 5.08 was greater than the critical value of 1.96 at .05 level of significant with 143 degree of freedom. This showed that the availability of print resources significantly influences utilisation in the University of Uyo law library. The findings are in line with a study by Uhegbu (2002) which affirmed that, without availability of information resources, accessibility will be difficult and its utilisation impaired. Sanni (2006) also observed that in Nigeria, print information resources



of reputable standard have been written by learned scholars and jurists in the field of law, which constitutes very important sources of Nigerian law thus it can be said that availability of print resources of a library can influence its use by law students.

### Conclusion

Consequent upon the result of this study, it was concluded that there is a significant influence of availability on utilisation of print information resources in the University of Uyo Law Library, and that availability largely influences its consequent utilisation.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings obtained and the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are put forward:

- The University management should provide timely release of sufficient funds to be used for effective collection development of the law library
- The law library should provide adequate stock of print resources for students' utilization.
- The law library should comply strictly with the recommendation of Council of Legal Education that Faculty Law Libraries should acquire six (6) copies each of textbooks maximum and four (4) copies of each title minimum.
- The law librarian should ensure that print information resources with extensive

subject coverage are acquired as this would boost the overall collection of the library.

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