

NIGERIA LEGAL EDUCATION AND PRACTICE: NEED FOR A RENAISSANCE IN THE ERA OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)^β

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Abstract

The Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has assumed a distinctly relevant role in enhancing the legal education, legal practice and justice administration in courts all over the globe. Whereas retrieval and dissemination of information is highly essential to all facets of human endeavor, it is perhaps even more relevant to the legal professional. Today it is a significant dent on a lawyer's efficiency if he cannot make use of basic information technology, hence the need to incorporate the use of ICT in the lawyer's academic and vocational training.

However some factors have continued to hamper ICT use in the legal system. Most of these factors are related to the poor economic and infrastructural situation of the country but certainly not limited thereto.

This paper will examine the need to inculcate ICT into the Nigerian legal system with a view to reengineering the legal education and practice. It explores the challenges and prospects for integration of ICT into legal training and practice.

Introduction

It is said that a lawyer can only be as good as the system of legal education that produces him¹ - academic as well as vocational. Legal education is a vital ingredient that affects the quality of our justice system as well as the role of lawyers

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¹ Hon Justice M. O. Onolaja, 'Problem of Legal Education in Nigeria'

<http://www.alimiandco.com/publications/ACCREDITATION%20AND%20LEGAL%20EDUCATION%20IN%20NIGERIA.pdf> accessed 25th February, 2014

in the political, economical and social development of our country.² An appreciation of the lawyer's role to the client, the profession, the society and the state is of fundamental importance as his role affects all aspects of the wellbeing of the society. His role depends on his place in the legal profession. As a legal practitioner, it lies in his functioning as *deus advocatus*. As a judge his role lies in his skills in being able to properly appreciate a legal argument and make such judicial 'legislation' that will settle the law. The quality of judicial pronouncements and the coherence of the reasoning underlying the judgment depend on the quality of the argument presented in court by the advocate and upon the ability of the court. All these depend on the quality of our legal education.³

The lawyer is always faced with the arduous task of making the justice system work. He brings the law to the non lawyer by advising clients, drafting legal documents, embarking on legal transactions, litigation. All these activities require a high level of documentation and information processing, storage and retrieval. The information intensiveness of a lawyer's job is such that the tools and technologies that would speed up the documentation and management are not only important but professionally necessary. The value of accuracy, correctness, completeness,

² Global Issues Series, 'Role of Lawyer' http://www.westglobalissues.com/forms/ethics_sample.pdf accessed 26th February, 2014

³ O. Ojo, 'Chairman's Opening Address' [2003] 5th Distinguished Jurist Lecture published by National Association of Democratic Lawyers (NADL), 5

relevance and timeliness cannot be overemphasized in the work of a lawyer.⁴ These are the characteristics of the information and communication technology (ICT) which can properly serve the legal profession.

It is therefore crucial that our legal system be subject of regular evaluation not only to highlight the problems confronting it but also to highlight possible solutions.

This paper examines the need for a new reawakening in the legal system of Nigeria in the face of sophistication in the processing of information. It captures the legal system through its historical evolution till date. It advocates the relevance of ICT to legal practice while noting the lethargic progression towards an ICT-dependent legal system in Nigeria.

History of Legal Education in Nigeria

Legal education in Nigeria dates back to the advent of colonialism in 1860s. The pre-colonial communities in what later became Nigeria were based on simple social, political and economic structures. Then there was no need for legal education because there was no need for any.⁵ With colonialism came enormous socio-economic and political adjustments in the Nigerian communities. Socially a new society emerged in the urban centre in which contracts, rather than status,

⁴ J. E. Owoeye, 'Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Use as a Predictor of Lawyers' Productivity' [2011] *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-Journal)* Paper 662, 3

⁵ O. Doherty, *Legal Practice and Management in Nigeria* (Cavendish 1998) 5

governed interpersonal relationship. Resolution of disputes became less amenable to traditional methods of arbitration. The colonialist had to establish the Native and English types courts to adjudicate disputes.⁶

With the creation of the English-type courts came the need for lawyers. They were needed to occupy judicial positions, advise colonial administrators and to plead the case of the litigant in the English-type courts.⁷ However there were very few legally qualified persons to render these services. For instance, “*of the seven men who served as Chief Magistrates for Lagos between 1862 and 1905, only three had legal qualifications. Of the remaining four, two were ‘writing clerks’, one was a merchant and the fourth was a Commander of the West Indian garrison stationed in Lagos*”.⁸

In 1876 the Supreme Court Ordinance was enacted to regulate the legal profession and to define those who could engage in the practice of law in the colony. The Ordinance provided that those who had already been admitted as barristers or advocates in Great Britain or Ireland, or as solicitors or writers to the signet, in any

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ Hon Justice M. O. Onolaja (n 1) 2-3

⁸ Omoniyi Adewoye, ‘The Judicial System in Southern Nigeria 1854-1954: Law and Justice in Dependency’ (1979) 5 *My JSTOR* 52.

of the courts at London, Dublin, or Edinburgh were to be allowed by the Chief Justice to practice as barristers and solicitors in the colony.⁹

In view of the acute short of qualified persons, those who by close contact with legal practitioners were deemed sufficiently knowledgeable in the law could be admitted to practice as attorneys. These persons must be 'fit and proper' with basic education and some knowledge of the English law and practice.¹⁰ With this, court clerks who had acquired knowledge of the rudiments of English law were appointed attorneys and granted license to practice for six months. Their licenses were renewable at the expiration of six months, provided they were of good behavior. These appointed attorneys were known as local-made Solicitors, self-taught attorneys or Colonial Solicitors.

Another difficulty faced in this period was that the colonies could not afford the luxury of separating barristers (those who appeared in court) from solicitors (those who are confined to the office work) as was the case in England. This marked the beginning of the fused legal system in Nigeria.¹¹

In 1945, the Supreme Court (Civil Procedure) Rules ended the era of self taught attorneys who, although not professionally qualified, were allowed to function as

⁹ Yemi Akinseye-George 'Legal Education in Nigeria' *The Jurist* <http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/world/nigeria.htm> accessed 27th February, 2014

¹⁰ See Section 74 The Supreme Court Ordinance No.4 of 1876; Order xvi r. 1, The Supreme Court (Civil Procedure) Rules 1948

¹¹ Yemi Akinseye-George (n 9)

barristers and solicitors. Henceforth, only a person who was entitled to practice as a barrister in England or Ireland or as an advocate in Scotland could be admitted to practice in Nigeria. (Order 16, Rule 1 of the Supreme Court Ordinance No. 43 of 1943). This arrangement proved inadequate because the foreign-trained lawyers were not well grounded in local legislation, indigenous customary law as well as the Islamic law. In addition they were usually qualified either as barristers or as solicitors as against the fused system operative in Nigeria.¹² As a result they found it difficult combining both aspects of the profession in practice. Therefore many of them went into politics, business or other vocations.¹³

In 1960 the British Government appointed a committee headed by Lord Denning to review legal education that would cater for Africans studying in the United Kingdom. After acknowledging the inadequacies of the existing training programmes, the Committee recommended expanding the course contents in order to accommodate the peculiar needs of African countries. Particularly noteworthy is the recommendation of the Committee to introduce a substantial period of practical training for African students.

¹² The Legal Profession was (and still is) a split profession in England. Lawyers qualify by training either as Barristers or as Solicitors. To qualify as a Barrister, a person needed only to join one of the four Inns of Court, namely, Middle Temple, Inner Temple, Lincoln's Inn and Grays Inn, read for the Bar examinations, keep twelve dining terms which was compulsory and then be called to the Bar, without necessarily obtaining a law degree. On the other hand, qualification as a Solicitor was by taking a Law Society's Solicitors' Examination after articleship with experienced Solicitors. However, most Nigerian lawyers then trained as Barristers only but came to Nigeria to enrol as Barristers and Solicitors because Legal Profession in Nigeria has always been fused from the beginning.

¹³ Yemi Akinseye-George (n 9)

Earlier in 1959 the government of Nigeria had tried to correct this anomaly by setting up the Unsworth Committee to consider and make recommendations for the future of the legal profession in Nigeria with particular reference to admission to practice, audience before court and legal education. The Committee recommended inter alia that:¹⁴

- a. Legal education should be provided locally and adapted to the needs of Nigeria.
- b. Law faculties should be established at University of Ibadan and any other subsequent universities to offer degrees in Law.
- c. A Law School should be established in Lagos to provide practical training for Law graduates.
- d. A Law degree should be a requirement for practice of Law in Nigeria.

The recommendations in both committees, it is noteworthy, later formed the bulk of the two Acts, - the Legal Education Act 1962 and the Legal Practitioners Act 1962, subsequently replaced and consolidated in the Legal Education (Consolidation, etc) Act (Cap 206) Laws of Federation of Nigeria 1990 and the Legal Practitioners Act (Cap 207) LFN 1990. While the former regulates legal education, the latter regulated the practice of Law in Nigeria.

¹⁴ Committee on the Future of the Nigerian Legal Profession, 'Report of the Committee on the Future of Nigerian Legal Profession' (Federal Government Press 1959) para.1 p.1

The recommendations and follow-up legislation put in place a modified two tier system of legal education and training which like, in the United Kingdom, separated the academic from the vocational stages. Unlike in the United Kingdom, however, a Law degree became the basis for qualification. This provided for a single point of entry to the profession as against the United Kingdom which has multiple entry and exit points for the legal profession.¹⁵ More significantly the framework provided for the possibility of a thorough and in-depth study of Law in the university through a law degree in contrast to the United Kingdom which permits other non-degree qualifications for entry to the profession.¹⁶

Today the Nigerian Law School admits only persons holding a law degree from an approved University or persons who passed the Solicitors final examination of Great Britain and Ireland.¹⁷ The latter are required to take and pass the following subjects in the Bar Part 1 Examination: Nigerian Legal System, Nigerian Land Law, Nigerian Criminal Law and Nigerian Constitutional Law. The aim of this design is to introduce foreign-trained students to the general principles of Nigerian law and to arm them with the necessary skills and mental preparation to solve problems that are uniquely domestic and Nigerian.

¹⁵ Dr. Tahir Mamman, 'A Review of the Framework of Legal Education in Nigerian Universities', (Justice M.M. Akanbi Annual Lecture, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Monday 8th November, 2010).

¹⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁷ Yemi Akinseye-George (n 9)

Legal Education and Practice Today in the Face of the ICT

Legal education and practice as they exist today are not what they were some decades back.¹⁸ In 1897, a solicitor's office where conveyances were prepared would usually have a highly qualified calligrapher trained to write pages and pages of words on indenture papers without a scratch or a mistake and in the most beautiful handwriting you can ever imagine.¹⁹ But the development of electric typewriter as an office writing machine in 1920 saw the discontinuance of the need for a calligrapher.²⁰ Subsequently, the Fax Machine, Word Processor, the Computer, the Email all came to have vital consequences on the operations of a lawyer. These advancements call for the need to adapt the entire legal educational system, the organization and functioning of the courts and the legal practitioners' offices to the new era of ICT in order to facilitate the judicial and legal processes.

Information technology easily affords a new paradigm shift in how things are done. The lawyer is not left out. Technology is enabling lawyers to complete more work at their desks with less dependence on support staff and the library. More solicitors are drafting documents on the computer instead of a writing pad. Communication speed within and without the firm, and the management of large amount of

¹⁸ Joe- Kyari Gadzama, 'Modernizing Legal Practice in Nigeria' *Punch* (Lagos, 26 August 2013) <http://www.punchng.com/feature/the-law-you/modernising-legal-practice-in-nigeria-2/> accessed 3rd March, 2014

¹⁹ Chief Rotimi Williams, *Keynote Address on Challenges of Legal Practice in the 21st Century Nigeria* (Chief Rotimi Williams Chambers, 1997-2007) 1

<http://www.frawilliams.com/media/challenges%20of%20legal%20practice.pdf> accessed 3rd March, 2014

²⁰ *Ibid*

information has been enhanced with technology. Research capability has been expanded and as a consequence computer-assisted legal research, use of emails, electronic drafting and presentation, etc have introduced high technology to the running of law offices.

It cannot however be said that this development has touched the entire gamut of the legal system to make needless a deliberate and guided effort at integrating ICT into the legal process.

The legal system can be said to start from the classroom to be followed by law practice in the office and the court. It is thus needful to consider ICT and (a) legal education (b) law office operation (c) practice and procedure of courts of law.

a. Legal Education and ICT

The need for a system of legal education that can be guaranteed to produce such lawyers with necessary skills and capacity to meet the evolving needs of the society has always been felt. As far back as 1933, Lord Sankey, observed that:

The courts are becoming more and more concerned with great social experiment. Law joins hands as never before with problems in economics, problems in political science, problems in techniques of administration. It is important that the curricular of our law schools should send out lawyers trained to appreciate the meaning of these relationships. They must shape the mind to a critical understanding of the foundation of jurisprudence. Unless the training we give, supplies these perspectives, there is a grave danger that the lawyer will not prove adequate to the big problems, he has to help in solving Our educational methods have to breed a race of lawyers able to utilize the spirit of law reform for highest uses. They have to teach at once the importance of stability and change ... we must also turn out lawyers

*with a courage to criticize what is accepted, to construct what is necessary for new situations, and new duties both at home and abroad.*²¹

This critical position of Lord Sankey as far back as 1933 is even more relevant today in the face of recent advancements and developments in technology. These have had important impact on education and teaching and how it may be harnessed by law teachers.

The use of ICT in education is referred to as e-learning. E-learning has been defined as “the use of new multimedia technology and the internet to enhance the quality of learning by enabling access to means and services as well as enable exchange and cooperation over distance”.²² According to Olaniyi, e-learning is all about learning that occurs at the computer.²³ Thus e-legal learning is the use of information, communication and instructional technologies to enhance students’ learning of law and to provide law teachers with environments and tools for teaching law.²⁴

Since the beginning of eighties, ICT has been introduced into legal education at law schools and law faculties in Europe.²⁵ The first applications in this field were

²¹ Hon. Justice M. O. Onolaja (n 1) citing Lord Sankey cited by F. Oditah op.cit (quoting from L.C.B Gower, English Legal Training (1950) 13 MLR 137 at161)

²² Gutierrez-Diaz www.elearningeuropa.info accessed March 3rd 2014

²³ S. S. Olaniyi, ‘E-Learning Technology: the Nigeria Experience’, (Shape the Change XXIII FIG Munich, Germany, October 8 – 13, 2006) 2-3

²⁴ . Antoinette J. Muntjewerff, ‘ICT in Legal Education’ (2009) 10(07) *German Law Journal* 671

²⁵ Antoinette J. Muntjewerff (n 22) 672

databanks of statutes and precedents, soon to be followed by computer-assisted instructional programs.²⁶

With the fast growth of the internet, many law schools and law faculties in Europe are moving their education and training to the web environment. The web environment enables a more integrated approach of using the technologies in legal education. It also enables teachers to assemble, store and use materials for teaching law. More importantly, it may open new ways of teaching and learning law, for example, by providing students with an environment in which they can manage legal information and legal knowledge for their personal and professional use.²⁷

Paul and Antoinette capture some useful exemplars of web-based teaching and learning as practiced throughout European law schools and faculties.²⁸

- The Faculty of Law at the University of Helsinki created two WebPages for students in their teaching and research area and for disseminating general information regarding web teaching to the rest of the faculty. The Faculty makes use of electronic learning environment for all first year students
- The Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität in Münster uses an internet based learning tool that is designed to help German law students in preparing for their first degree. The program is integrated with interactive tools and

²⁶ *ibid*

²⁷ *ibid*

²⁸ Paul Maharg & Antoinette J. Muntjewerff, 'Through a Screen, Darkly: Electronic Legal Education in Europe' 36(3) *Electronic Legal Education in Europe* 311

substantive materials, for example self-test on different fields of law, a video simulation of an oral exam.

- In the University of Barcelona, Miguel Peguera makes use of a virtual office environment metaphor for his students that mimic a professional legal environment.
- At the department of legal sciences of the University of Trento, the course materials and the texts are posted on the web for students' accessibility. Also a CD titled Researching the Law is used as a virtual library with the aim to explain how a lawyer can retrieve legal materials (statutes, case laws and legal literature), consulting specialized books and periodicals.

These, and many other examples, reveal the range and variety of web-based teaching and learning, much of which is localized to the peculiarities of the institutions.

The Nigerian Law School has recently improved in the use of computer and computer-based media to enhance its teaching and learning process. Compact Discs (CDs) containing law reports and relevant cases are now available to students to enhance their research. Also students are now required to have laptops as most materials are now made available in soft copies for students. Recently too, the use of power point presentation on computer projectors has become the system in most

of the Nigerian law school branches.²⁹ This has introduced more efficiency into the system.

In sum, the increased use of computer in the law school has altered the experience of law students and the activities of law teachers.

b. practice and procedure of courts of law

The system of practice in Nigerian courts is for judges to take down proceedings by long hand. This system is usually very tedious and exceedingly slow. Virtually all courts in Nigeria are yet to afford themselves the full advantages of modern technologies. Perhaps the only exception is Lagos State where a particular software called Total Eclipse Computer Aided Transcription software for transcription of court proceedings into texts after having been recorded by an electronic recording device. This has relieved the courts of the herculean task of having to write down proceedings word for word.

Of note however is that in most states in Nigeria, the old mechanical practice is still very much in vogue where proceedings are still written down by presiding officers in long hand. It is quite difficult to explain why this technology has not been embraced in other parts of the country.

Other aspects of judicial processes practiced in other jurisdiction include electronic filing of processes in most courts. Where it has been introduced it has been riddled

²⁹ There are six law school branches in Nigeria located in Lagos, Abuja, Enugu, Kano, Bayelsa and Adamawa. The first branch of law school to be established in Nigeria was the Lagos law school in 1962.

with delays. The Nigerian legal system is yet to advance technologically to electronic filing of cases. Also, case flow and caseloads management within courts are neither automated nor are course lists accessible online.

Challenges with Use of ICT in the Nigerian Legal System

1. Evolving an ICT proficient labour force

One of the difficulties that are attendant to the introduction of ICT in the Nigerian legal system is the want of proficiency in information technology. Many of the actors in all sectors of the legal system know little about the use of computer in some cases while in some other cases they are complete computer illiterates. As a result of this hindrance many of such people do not encourage the idea of introduction of computer in the various sectors of the legal system.

An instance in focus is the e-law reports. Many lawyers have not taken advantage of the use of computer and computer-reliant wares for their research into reported cases. They cannot help being fully dependent on hard copies. Ditto the judicial officers. This unwillingness has seemingly predetermined a ceiling to the potential advancement in information technology in legal practice.

Many law teachers are also faced with the same challenge. A professor of law may find himself completely in the dark as to impacting the knowledge of law with the use of a simple power point presentation. This may inform why many law faculties in Nigeria are yet to fully introduce ICT into the learning of substantive law. Many

of these teachers' were not trained during the computer age or when computer had been largely embraced. Understandably their ability and willingness to integrate ICT into their teaching will largely be dependent on the professional training and development which they received.³⁰ Thus the want of such training has only heightened fear of relevance in such work force. This has engendered ICT anarchy.

2. Optimizing technological Infrastructures

The need for the introduction of ICT into legal education and practice is for efficiency, speed and enhanced productivity. While ICT has found its way into use in some facets of the legal system, there is a high fence the system has to cross in order for it to live up to an optimized standard. There have been disappointments with the level of effectiveness. That is, where ICT has been introduced the 'revolutionary' potency of such development can hardly be said to have been achieved. In Lagos state there has been cries from a lot of lawyers lamenting the introduction of ICT in the filing of processes due to the difficulties they experience while using the electronic case filing system that the Lagos state judiciary introduced recently.³¹ In many Nigerian universities, the use of ICT has been introduced in registration of courses, clearance, payment of fees, accessing of results, etc. Relying on ICT for these purposes has rather occasioned a lot of

³⁰ Adewale O. Abolade and Dr. Mudasiru O. Yusuf, 'Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the Nigerian Teacher Education Programme' (2005) 3(1) *African Journal of Educational Studies* 4

³¹ m.news24.com 'Lagos Lawyers Lament e-system' <http://m.news24.com/nigeria/National/News/Lagos-lawyers-lament-e-system-20140121> accessed 12th March, 222014

hardship for students due to inefficiency and poor systems' speed often experienced by them.³² The point being made is that it is not enough to introduce ICT into legal education; such step must achieve a set goal of a simplified and flexible teaching and learning process with optimized quality output. This can only be a reality if new cybernetic technologies that can provide new and potent opportunities are made available to revolutionize both access and the quality of professional learning.³³

3. The problem of funding

Despite the enthusiastic endorsement of ICT in the Nigerian legal system, there is the big cankerworm of funding. Funding is the crux of the matter. The bulk of resources available to legal education and judicial institutions are from the various tiers of government. The effect is that legal training institutions and the entire spectrum of the judiciary have to scramble for available meager resources with other departments of the government. The legal education institutions and the judiciary are the worst for it since they are not designed as revenue-generating units.³⁴

The problem of funding reflects in the use of ICT research facilities in law libraries. Due to want of funds, most law libraries cannot afford modern computers and where those computers are available they are usually not connected to the internet.

³² Faiz Bashir, 'The Tale of Nigerian University Portals' (2010) <http://faizbash.wordpress.com/2010/01/22/the-tale-of-nigerian-university-portals/> accessed 12th March, 2014

³³ Mary Hooker, *Concept Note: the Use of ICT in Teacher Professional Development* (GeSCI 2009) 2

³⁴ Audu Echono 'ICT and the Advancement of Legal Studies and Practice in Nigeria' *The Lawyers Chronicle* <http://thelawyerschronicle.com/ict-and-the-advancement-of-legal-studies-and-practice-in-nigeria/> accessed 13th March, 2014

The use of internet in the libraries is now an endeavor that is greatly advocated as it has provided a platform for libraries and information systems to cooperate in order to increase access to all kinds of information locally and globally.³⁵ Use of ICTs in libraries – be it academic libraries, court libraries, solicitor’s library, the ministry of justice law library – necessitates the need for more money to maintain and upgrade both equipment and software, pay databases and facilitate internet connections.³⁶ Many law reports are accessible these days online. But legal researchers may not be able to take advantage of the huge potential benefits of internet facilities in law libraries.

Even lawyer in private law firms, especially those owned by junior lawyers, cannot afford to invest in ICT as a result of the general economic situation of the country. It has been observed that high cost of computers and software represents a serious impediment to accessibility of ICT in Africa.³⁷

4. Failure to integrate ICT in the curricula of law faculties

The various universities in Nigeria are yet to fully integrate the use of ICT in the various faculties in the teaching and learning process. There is still heavy dependence on traditional methods: while law teachers still use chalk and

³⁵ Rita John-Okeke, ‘Bibliographic Networking and Law Libraries in Nigeria’ (2013) 5(1) *International Journal of Library and Information Science* 8

³⁶ Hussaini Ali, J. E. Owoeye & Stella N. I. Anasi ‘Resource Sharing Among Law Libraries: an Imperative for Legal Research and the Administration of Justice in Nigeria’ (2010) *Library Philosophy and Practice* <http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/ali-owoeye-anasi.htm> accessed 13th March, 2014

³⁷ Clara Ademilola Coker ‘The Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) Among Legal Practitioners in Ibadan Metropolis’ (2014) 2(1) *Journal of Computer Sciences and Applications* 7

chalkboards, students still handwrite their papers. Institutions of Higher Learning across the world have been adopting ICT teaching and learning technologies to create an environment for both students and instructors to engage in collaborative learning and gain access to information.³⁸ In the USA anyone studying any subject in an American University must know how to type as handwritten term papers and dissertations will not be accepted.³⁹ Similarly in other parts of the Western world, the use of research tools by students freely available in the internet is common place. This skill form part of the basics taught as part of the “Legal Skills and Methods” course offered in the first year of many overseas LLB courses.⁴⁰

Some law faculties offer courses on Use of Computer. Of note however is that these courses are thought only theoretically with little or no practical aspects. As a result law students cannot properly appreciate the relevance of ICT to legal research.

5. Others

ICT use in the legal profession has been hampered by several other areas of challenges such as poor power supply in the country, unfavorable government policies, lack of training culture in ICT skills, general infrastructural inadequacies.⁴¹

³⁸ David Oladipo Olalekan, ‘The Impact of Information and Communication Technology Proficiency on Labour Productivity in Nigeria: a Case of University of Ilorin’ (2012) 5(3) *Continental J. Social Sciences* 7

³⁹ Funke Adekoya, ‘The Problems of Legal Education in Nigeria – Setting the Tone for Discussion’ (Summit on the Future of Legal Education, Sheraton Hotels and Towers, Abuja, 2006) 5

⁴⁰ *Ibid*

⁴¹ J. E. Owoeye (n 4) 6

Conclusion and Recommendation

The indispensability of ICT in legal education and practice for an effective and efficient legal system in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. Legal practice, the adjudication of legal disputes, teaching of law, etc all require effective adoption and use of ICT. It has been shown in this paper that ICT is beginning to be appreciated in Nigerian legal system but at a snail's pace and with significant inadequacies, such as those noted hereinbefore in Lagos State judiciary. Legal practitioners in private and public sectors still cling fervently to manual style of legal research either as a result of conservatism or lack of resources to procure efficient ICT facilities.

It is therefore recommended as follows.

1. Introducing more practicability into legal training in the use of ICT in law faculties. This will require a review of the curriculum so as to reflect the modern trends in the teaching and learning of law as obtainable internationally.
2. Compulsory ICT training for judicial officers as well as court worker in order to equip them with the use of ICT.
3. Government should equip law libraries of courts, ministry of justice and law faculties. Beyond equipping of libraries is ensuring that the most efficient and

modern ICT facilities are made available in the libraries in order to achieve the best and most efficient output.

4. Government economic policies should be framed to encourage the importation of ICT facilities at affordable prices.
5. The problem of power outage must be tackled headlong by government. However efficient ICT facilities are, they cannot be enjoyed without adequate power supply, a problem which continues to linger on in Nigeria. Users of ICT continue to depend on alternative sources of power supply and this goes a long way in discouraging users of ICT facilities due to high cost of doing so.