

THE ROLE OF ACADEMIC LAW LIBRARIANS IN PROMOTING LEGAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

The paper emphasises on the importance of education and training of academic law librarians which will enhance their critical role of provision of access to justice and aid in the promotion of national integration and development. The Concept of Education and National Integration and reasons why National Integration is a failure is discussed. The legal discipline, the importance of law libraries to legal profession and the development of academic law libraries are discussed. The paper also discussed the concept of education and training needs for academic law librarians as well as the various forms of training and the institutions and professional bodies involved in their training. The varied access to justice services and initiatives such as access to information, library services, collection development, provision of internet services, etc are discussed. The paper concluded by stating the challenges academic law librarians faced in the provision of these services.

Keywords: Academic Law Librarians; Legal Resources; National Development; Nigeria.

1.1 Introduction

Possibly, the greatest challenge facing Nigeria today is the threat to national unity as centrifugal tensions, resource control and self-determination, ethnicity based identity policies and religious cleavages have enveloped national consciousness. Since in 1960, national integration has been a top priority of government in Nigeria. The National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Scheme, the Unity Schools, Federal Character Principle and State Creation are examples of state policies intended to achieve this goal¹.

It is clear that the outcome of integration policies and programmes in Nigeria have fallen far below expectation, as primordial loyalties are still deep seated. Ethnic particularism is seen as the major cause of failure². Integration is a process that is anchored on values, and this can better be achieved through education.

1.2 The Concept of Education and National Integration

I. Education

The role of education toward the development for any nation cannot be overemphasized. Education is generally concerned with the transmission of worthwhile values such as skills, knowledge and planned activities

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¹Ibaba, Samuel Ibaba (2009) Education and National Integration in Nigeria. *Journal of Research in National Development* 7(2) December. 1-9.

² Ibaba, Samuel Ibaba *Ibid* p.1

that can develop learner's potentials for national development³. Adeyanju noted that no development can occur at all without education. To him, at personal level of development, education is one of the strongest weapons for escaping from poverty because it improves the quality and chances of the individual's progress⁴.

The development of man to enable him create and recreate himself⁵; the pursuit of a wider range of activities planned and managed for the benefit of society and its members⁶ the systematic influencing of peoples knowledge, skills and attitudes⁷; the transmission from one generation to another, the accumulated wisdom, knowledge, skills, values and attitudes of the society⁸.

It is clear that education makes man moral and ethical; inducts the individual into the shared values of society; develops commitment to societal goals in the individual; prepares the young members of society for the future; defines behavioural patterns of individuals and by extension the society. Education is the gateway to development, and the literature has adequately highlighted this. One of such studies has noted thus:

Formal education has a vital role to play in the development and social change of human communities. For development and change to take place, education is a must. It creates the environment and conditions conducive for change to take place ... education is the builder and molder of attitude and behaviour of members of the society which lend support to the process of development and change⁹.

Whereas the above reference emphasizes formal education, it is imperative to note that informal education also enhances the goals of development. Although the dominant expectation of education is development, it is also expected that it will enhance the integration sub-populations that are divided by language, religion, ethnicity¹⁰. Education is noted for three political roles-agent of political socialization into a nation's political culture; the training and selection of political elite, and the enhancement of political consciousness. Indeed, education is a product and processes that reforms society and reduces desirable change in behaviour patterns of individuals¹¹.

Training as an educational process has been defined by different scholar. Training is defined as the organized procedure by which people learn knowledge and

³ Anadauka, Uche, S. and Okafor, Chinyere F. *The Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects. JORIND 11(1) June, 2013 p.152*

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibaba, Samuel Ibaba op. cit p.1

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid

skills for a definite purpose. It is also defined as act of increasing skills of an employee for doing a particular job;¹² sees training as the process of equipping the employee particular the non-managerial employees with specific skill. People can learn new information, re-learn and reinforce existing knowledge and skills, and most importantly have time to think and consider what new options can help them improve their effectiveness at work¹³.

Training improves the employee's performance on the current job and prepares them for an intended job. In order to achieve this purpose, any training programme should try to bring positive changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes and attempt to increase the knowledge of a trainee would help him to know the policies, procedures, rules and regulations pertaining to his job and appreciation of the enterprise goals, objectives and policies.

II National Integration

National integration describes the togetherness or oneness felt by citizens of a country with regard to citizenship when individuals are naturally integrated they may feel a sense of pride or patriotism.

National integration isn't only about national spirit. It involves a feeling that brings people from all areas, dialects and beliefs together in a common endeavour. When national integration occurs individuals are likely to work together to build systems that enhance the prosperity of a nation and its people.

The word integration suggests a process of structural linkage between two or more parts of a system or systems. Its essence can be discerned from the functionalist view of society¹⁴.

Anele captures the functionalist perspective thus:

... Functionalism sees human society as a social system comprising sub-units or interdependent parts. These sub-units are interdependent on each other and are functionally interrelated. What this means is that every phenomenon found in the society performs useful functions towards the survival of the entire system or society. It equally means that the sub-units of the society otherwise referred to as social institutions – the family, relation, polity, economy, education, technology, are integrated and interdependent and all perform useful function towards the survival and stability of the society¹⁵.

¹²James, Chrisantus Naanma *et. al.* *Training, Training, forms of Training and Importance of Training*” Group Presentation on Human Resource Management Course. Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Administration Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria 2016 p.1

¹³Ibid

¹⁴Salvi, Siddheshwar S. “*What is Training and Development*”[https://www.amherst.edu/offices/human-research/training/what is training](https://www.amherst.edu/offices/human-research/training/what%20is%20training) (Accessed 21/9/2010)

¹⁵Ibaba, Samuel Ibaba op. cit p.2

It is discernable from the above reference that plural societies, with distinct ethnic nationalities operate as a system that requires each unit for the good of all. Thus, the different ethnic groups are the interrelated and interdependent sub-units that must function in unity. Integration can be political, economic, cultural or social. However, integration at the level of the country is mainly conceived as political integration, which is the outcome of a process whereby political actors of different ethnic nationalities or groups in a country abandon primordial ethnic loyalties, and embrace national identity.

The nation is a cultural entity that binds people together on the basis of culturally homogenous ties-common or related blood, a common language, a common customs and habits¹⁶. A nation is thus an exclusion group, and its essential features include homogenous cultural unit, specific and shared identity among members, deep attachment to a specific territory – the earthly, home, membership is limited by ties of blood, intermarriage, kinship and common descent; members have a shared understanding of who they are, how they originated and how developed overtime, as well as collective belonging¹⁷.

It is clear that individuals are units of integration, and members of a nation are integrated as they share a common identity. Thus, the term naturally integration is not applicable to a single nation, but involves two or more nations. A state is a political entity that is in many cases made of more than one nationality group. Thus, for example Nigeria is made of about 250 ethnic groups^{18, 19}.

The paper aims at identifying the role of academic law librarian in promoting legal and national development in Nigeria. It also identifies the challenges faced by academic law librarians in discharging these roles as well as proffering solution to overcome these challenges.

1.3 The Legal Discipline

The legal discipline is information-based and dependent on primary and secondary legal information sources. Law libraries are specialist libraries containing materials for teaching and study of law and also for conduct of legal research as well as for the practice of law²⁰. Dada sees the law library as a special hybrid of the act of librarianship. According to him, "the uniqueness of law as a different discipline in the comity of subject grouping is incontrovertible, and that this fact has influenced the studying and teaching of law, the conduct of legal research and the practice of law". Be it an academic law library, court library, ministry of justice law libraries, parliamentary library, the in-house chamber law library and commercial houses law libraries, the

¹⁶ Anele, A. A. (1999) *Social Change and Social Problems in Nigeria*. Owerri: Springfield Publishers. p.1

¹⁷ Rodce, C. L. *et al.* (1976) *Introduction to Political Science* Kogakusha: McGraw-Hill. p.3

¹⁸ Nna, N. J. (2004) *Contemporary Political Analysis*. Owerri: Springfield Publishers p.4

¹⁹ Ibaba, Samuel Ibaba op. cit p.2

²⁰ Ibid

primary objective of the collection is directed at serving the research and information needs of the parent body or organization²¹.

Ekundayo made terse presentation of these when he said:

What is anyone looking for in the legal profession anyway, if he does not intend keeping a good library? A lawyer is better off without a wig or gown: he may still make a living as a solicitor, legal executive or as an advocate appearing before those courts that carry on happily without robes. But with no library, he would be sharing the fate of a blind man holding a drivers licence²².

I. Academic Law Libraries and its Development

The change in the training of would be lawyers in the country brought academic law libraries into being²³. The ABU, OAU, UNILAG and UN, all founded in 1961/62, established Faculties of law. Other new universities and the oldest Nigerian University, the University of Ibadan have established faculties of law. These universities collected law books, journals, reviews, law reports, etc on a large scale, until then unprecedented in the country, to support both the teaching and research work of the faculties.

It is important to note another academic law library. The Institute of Administration, Zaria, before 1961 started legal training for the native court judges and in addition was preparing students for the Part 1 of the English Bar examinations. The Institute maintained a library which stocked law books in an appreciable number to support its programme. However, it also stocked books on Islamic law and on other law subjects though on minor scale.

The Nigerian law school library opened its doors to the first set of students sometime in 1962. Its collection reflects, to a great extent, the needs of students training for the practice of law. The training would be lawyers in the country coupled with the establishment of academic law libraries opened the avenue for meaningful research into the Nigerian legal system, resulting in a flood of Nigerian law literature covering all aspects of different law subjects. At that stage, however, postgraduate studies in any aspect of law were undertaken in overseas universities. Therefore, in 1963, the Nigerian Association of Law Teachers discussed the establishment of the Nigerian Institute of

²¹Ejimojo, P. N. *Law Libraries and Law Librarians: Making a Differences in the Knowledge Age* In A Compendium of Papers Presented at the 39th National Conference and Annual General Meeting of the Nigerian Library Association. Owerri Imo State 17th – 22nd June, 2001. p.1

²²Dada, T. O. (2002) "Imperatives of Adequate Funding of Law Libraries in the 21st Century in Nigeria". In Malomo, J. O. *et al* (eds.) *Legal Information Collection and Development in the 21st Century*, Pp 8-13.

²³Ekundayo, A. (2004) *"Legal Hints"* 2nd ed. Lagos: Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, p.4

Advanced Legal Studies (herein after referred to as the Institute") during its annual conference held at the University of Ife, then located at Ibadan²⁴.

The institute of Advanced Legal Studies was established in June 27, 1984 by a Federal Government Decree No. 18 of June 1984. The following except from the proceeding of the conference described the aims and objectives for the establishment of the institute:

... it is however vital that the Nigerian universities should provide facilities for legal research into the problems of African Law and it is our belief that most of this research cannot be done properly except in Africa... But although in our view, research into African Law should be undertaken in Africa, this will be practicable only if the texts and records at present widely scattered outside Africa (so far as Nigeria is concerned mainly in London) are made available locally...²⁵

II. The Law Librarians

By the training and orientation librarians are facilitators of the myriad information in our various libraries. Law librarians are the intermediary between legal researchers and available information. The information field is a competitive field that is why we have to excel in what we do and make a noticeable difference in order to earn respect and approval from our clients.

1.4 Training of Law Librarians

Professional development is an important component of ongoing library education and very critical to performance of their role. The library and information science profession is service oriented and therefore requires continually updated knowledge and skills for effective performance. The efficiency of any library and information centre depends on the caliber of its staff²⁶.

I. Techniques in Training of Law Librarians

The training given to employees differs in type and intensity depending on the nature of the job and the skill required as well as the experience of the employers concerned. Usually these development strategies could be carried out on-the-job or off-the-job. On-the-job training happens when an employee receives his training while performing his *bona fide* duties. In off-the-job situations, the employees participate in series of events that are removed from the work environment. A variety for training

²⁴Jegede, Oluremi. "Development in Law Libraries and their Service. In the Challenge of the Nigerian Nation: An Examination of its Legal Development" 1960-1985 edited by Aguda, T. Akinola. NIALS 1985 p.231.

²⁵Jegede, Oluremi Ibid p. 231

²⁶Ibid

techniques exist but ones deemed necessary for manpower needs of the law library are outlined as follows:

On and Off-The-Job Training Technique

- a) The law librarians undergo various training through; orientation/induction, in-house training and job rotation/transfer while on the other hand they also undergo off-the-job training technique such as; apprenticeship, vestibule training, in-service training, refresher course, seminar, conference and workshop, university – based training and exchange and sabbatical programme
- b) **In-house training:** This involves a formal method of on-the-job training which skills and knowledge are required by employees through internally updating the workers with new techniques or skills associated with the performance of their jobs²⁷. This could come in the form of in-house seminars, lectures, workshops, monthly colloquium, etc organized within the law library.
- c) **Orientation/induction:** Orientation involves socializing a staff that has joined the law library newly. The essence is to acquaint the staff that either joined the library newly or transferred from another department with the job procedure, working relationship, and the organizational hierarchy of the law library. This approach helps the new comer know from inception, what is expected of him.
- d) **Job Rotation/transfer:** There are two approaches to this method. A staff may be moved from one section of the law library to another to acquaint him with the different aspect of the library operation. The other approach may be through job enlargement – giving additional responsibilities to staff who has been elevated as a result of the acquisition of additional skill or knowledge. Transfers help to broaden the staff experience to various jobs being performed in the different sections of the law library.
- e) **Coaching/Counseling:** In this method, a young employee is attached to a senior employee to under study him. The purpose is to acquire the necessary knowledge and experience from the senior colleague. This approach is most appropriate for jobs that require specialized skill such as in cataloguing and classification of law materials, use of ICT in the organization of law materials. Coaching is also necessary when a management staff of the law library is about to leave the system.
- f) **Apprenticeship:** This method combines both on-the-job and off-the-job approach. Under this method a trainee, attaches himself to a trainee for an agreed period of time and probably for a fee. The

nd Famola, Mercy O. (2003) *Prospects for Continuing Professional Education for Library Science Professionals in Nigeria: The case of Delta State New Library World* 104, 499-508.

agreement could be formal or informal. Under the formal arrangement, the employer takes responsibilities for the cost of the training. Some libraries use this approach to train their bindery and secretarial staff.

- g) **Vestibule Training:** In vestibule training, the trainee learns the job in an environment that is similar to his real working environment. The training practices his skill with identical equipment he is expected to use in his actual work place. This method is most suitable for sensitive operation where maximum rejection is expected. The main purpose of this approach is to enable rejection at work place. Skills needed for Noters Up services can be acquired under the guidance by an experienced law librarian in another law library.
- h) **In-service Training:** This is an off-the-job training method which may be organized in an institution of higher learning or in a vocational centre. The cost of the training may be agreed upon between the law library and staff. The duration of the training is usually on short term basis. The Nigerian institute of Advanced legal studies have shown leadership in the training of law library staff are the use of Moy's Classification Scheme. This could be for free or for a minimal fee.
- i) **Refresher Course/Study Visit:** When there are new discoveries, innovation or new work tools, there is need to organize a refresher course. This training is administered by persons who are familiar and experienced enough on the use of such machine or tool. In this era of information packaging and delivery in digitalized form, library personnel with theoretical knowledge of library and information science may broaden and update their knowledge by understudying computer operations in other information and automated systems. Similarly, libraries that have fully automated their operation can educate staff of other law libraries who are about to embark on automation. Students from library and information science department do visit law libraries for practical experience. These refresher programmes help to update the knowledge of employees. It also helps to eliminate obsolesce. Obsolesce is loss of once held knowledge and failure to become familiar and knowledgeable about new knowledge in one's field. Advances in information and communication technologies have made it imperative that all law library staff must be trained and retrained from time to times.
- j) **Seminar, Conference and Workshop:** There are special meetings where law librarians discuss and exchange ideas, issues pertaining to law librarianship. In Nigeria, a number of such meetings are organized on law librarianship at the state and national levels. The annual conference of NALL is a good example. The Nigerian institute of Advanced Legal Studies do organize a biennial workshop

on technical services for Law Librarians and other category of staff working at different types of law library. I will come back to the activities of NAAL and NIALS later. Our colleagues at the judiciary also have such forum where they rob minds and exchange ideas on how to move the profession forward. Resolution reached at the end of such conferences and workshops helps to foster unity and standardization in the profession.

- k) **University – Based Training:** Training programmes for professional such as librarians and lawyers may involve their return to universities or research institutions to acquire additional qualification. Professional qualification for law librarians in the academic law libraries is such that they are expected to possess dual degrees in their career, they need postgraduate qualification up to doctoral degree level. Some organization do grant study leave with or without pay to their staff to embark on such programme; provided such staff pursue a course of study that is relevant to his position in the organization.
- l) **Exchange and Sabbatical Programme:** This is the most advanced method for training the managerial staff. In the exchange programme, cooperating libraries to acquire skill gain relevant experience fill a yawning gap or even help to train staff of member libraries. Few years ago, the University of Michigan an exchange programme²⁸. In sabbatical arrangement, the library staff may be sent to an academic or research programme that my last up to a year or more. It is another off the job training technique.

he Role Played by the IALS, NIALS and NALL in Training of Law librarians

The Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) London, UK

The Institute Advanced Legal Studies global Law library has a leading role in the training of law librarians and legal information professionals in the United Kingdom and provides opportunity for training to visiting Law Librarians from round the world. For example, Graduate Trainee Law Library Assistants Post is a one year graduate trainee scheme which provides a unique opportunity to develop professional skills in handling legal resources from around the world²⁹. The work offers useful balance of frontline duty sessions at busy enquiry points and sectional duties behind the-scenes in the library's Academic Services and Information Resources Sections.

bu, Mercy I. (2011) *Law Library Cooperation through Man-power Development; in Current Issues 'brary Development*, Anaeme, F. O and Abdullahi, L. S. (ed), p. 100-106
E. E. and Famola, Mercy O. Ibid

II. The Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (NAILS) Lagos Nigeria

The Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library Lagos, have trained and continues to train professional librarians new recruited for law libraries. St. Luis start courses for effective law library services for librarians working in law libraries³⁰.

III. The Nigerian Association of Law Libraries (NALL)

NALL has continued to advance the course of law libraries and law librarians through conferences, seminars and workshops. Its National Conference has become an annual event, for example 2017 conference was held in Katsina State High Court of Justice, Katsina 10th – 12th August, 2017³¹.

1.6 The Role of Academic Law Librarians in the Promotion of National Integration and Development in Nigeria

The central mission of a particular law school or law library is in promoting “access to justice”. Access to justice is common parlance in our society. The phrase is heard everywhere – in the media, in the classroom, in the street, and of course in the courthouse. We all have an idea of what it is, though we may be unable to articulate it. It’s a universal concept with definitions influence by individual attitudes and experiences. Access to justice is open to interpretation³². Zorza defines “access” as “the ability or freedom to obtain or make use of something”³³. Also defines “justice as the upholding of what is just (rightful, equitable). Access to justice could be define “as the freedom to obtain fair treatment and due reward in a court of law”³⁴.

Equal access to justice suggests that everyone, even those with severely limited financial resources, legal knowledge and time can navigate the legal system and obtain a just outcome³⁵. Without access to justice the National integration of any country is a myth on mirage.

The academic Law Librarians are obvious candidates for promoting access to justice. Not only are they experts at providing access to legal information, but they are also in constant contact with students preparing to become lawyers. Academic law librarians are involved in research institution through their duties at the reference desk. They conduct legal research, workshops and seminars, teach legal research courses, supervise student’s papers and advise journals and students organizations. In addition to these unique opportunities to positively influence their primary, patrons-future lawyers, judges and legislators – other opportunities for academic law librarians to promote access

³⁰Training for Law Librarian, UK 2017 p.1

³¹ Ajomo, M. Ayo (1989) *New Dimension in Nigerian Law*. NIALS, Lagos Series No. 3. pp. 317-318

³²Zorza, Richard (2014) *Law Librarians and Access to Justice: a Report of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) Special Committee on Aces to Justice* July, p. 1.

³³Ibid

³⁴Ibid

³⁵Ibid

to justice exist in the form of library services, collection development, legal research institution, etc³⁶.

However, library services and collection cost money, and in academic law librarians public patrons are typically at the bottom of the priority list of patrons groups served, after law students and faculty, other university students and faculty, and the bench and bar. Nevertheless, in promoting and supporting access to justice initiative, academic law librarians not only help the law school meet its standards; but also fulfill their own ethical obligation as members of their professional Association. When individuals have ready access to legal information, they can participate fully in the affairs of their government.

1.7 Access to Justice for National Integration and Development

The following is an examination of varied access to justice services and initiative academic law librarians can provide to support national integration and development of the country:

I. Access to information

Legal information professionals have an obligation to satisfy the needs, to promote the interest, and to respect the values of their clientele. Law firms, corporations, academic and government institutions and the general public have legal information needs that are best addressed by professional's committed to the belief that serving these information needs is a noble calling and fostering the equal participation of diverse people in library services underscores one of our basic tenets, open access to information for all individuals.

Furthermore, in recognition of the need to establish methods of preserving, maintaining, and retrieving legal information in many different forms, zealous service are provided using the most appropriate resources and implementing programmes consistent with our institutions mission and goals. Even if promoting access to justice is not central to the mission of a particular law school or law library, doing so will help the law students meet its NALL and NBA values and standard as well as help academic librarians satisfy their ethical obligations as member of NALL. Moreover, it is simply good public relations for law schools seeking to attract the best and the brightest, to support open and equal access to the system they promote.

II. Library Service

Academic law libraries can provide some type of public access to the public and require a pass from another library. Academic law libraries that are open to the public typically provide reference assistance to public patrons, along with computers to free online legal resources, government documents, and legal research database such as LexisNexis

³⁶Ibid p.2

Academic, Campus Law etc. In states without adequate provision libraries often seek to obtain legal research materials from academic law libraries. Academic law librarians could form alliances with prison libraries in their states to better serve this vulnerable patron group. For example university of Abuja law clinic library using the university campus law clinic liaise with the kuje prison library service to provide services to the group of patrons.

Collection development

Academic law libraries can maintain print collections that are geared toward serving the research needs of persons representing themselves in a legal matter, i.e. self-represented litigant patrons. Some integrate these materials into their collection, while others maintain special collections with titles such as self-help. By doing so, these libraries are serving not only the legal research needs of self-represented litigant patrons, but also those of solo practitioners and attorneys from small firms who cannot afford to pay for such services. The same is true of print materials which are often published for lawyers, but prove helpful to self-represented litigant patrons as well.

Provision of internet services

A wealth of legal information is available on the internet for free. Both public and private academic law librarians can help public patrons identify and access the best legal resources by creating websites for public patrons on free and low-cost legal research. These websites should be on topics of interest to public patrons, such as family, consumer, employment and criminal law, starting a small business or non-profit or copyrighting a work of art, to name a few. These websites could also include information on how to access free or low-cost legal representation from state agencies, legal aid organizations and pro bono programmes on how to navigate the various courts and court forms in that jurisdiction. With software such as: LibGuides now more available, it is becoming easier for academic law librarians to create and share materials on the web.

Additionally, academic law librarians can form partnerships to promote access to legal information. For example, the University of Jos Law Library and Faculty of Law Library of the Ahmadu Bello University Law Library can enter into inter-library cooperation by supplementing each other's collection by loaning legal information resources in the provision of legal resources. Another way academic libraries can use the internet to promote access to legal information is to digitize print and archival materials, such as state codes, state registers, and appellate court records and briefs and make them available on the websites.

Workshops and Training for Librarians

Academic Law librarians appreciate the difficulties non-law librarians face when assisting patrons with legal research. Academic law librarians are expert legal researchers and enjoy sharing their knowledge about legal research strategies and resources. One very effective way they can promote access to justice is to teach public and academic non-law librarians basic legal research skills and advise them on how to provide legal reference without giving legal advice. That is to say provide workshops or related training for other librarians or advise other librarians on how to avoid the unauthorized practice of law.

Academic law librarians can also teach legal reference courses and conduct continuing education seminars in persons and online through their local library schools and library associations. Another way academic law librarian can help public and academic non-law librarians to best recommend core collections of primary and secondary legal materials for self-represented patrons.

1.8 Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated that education and training of academic law librarians can serve as a vehicle for national integration. Academic law librarians have great potential to play an important role in making the judicial system more user-friendly and accessible for people without lawyers. Academic law librarians are part of the "access to justice movement, and they shouldn't let access to justice go into a solo, it is the centre of court's work. The opportunity is for law librarians to transform themselves as leaders in providing access to justice for all as part of a broad realignment of the legal system as a whole. However, academic law librarians are faced with challenges in the provision of access to justice such as under-funding of legal education, dearth of law resources, lack of current resources, e-library, etc.

To conclude therefore, for the academic law librarians to contribute effectively in promoting legal and national development in Nigeria, the following recommendations are made:

1. Legal Education in Nigeria should be properly funded. The reduction in the Federal allocation to Nigerian Universities affects the law faculties.
2. Lack of law resources is a threat to the currency of knowledge imparted on students. To be learned, a lawyer must be well-read, versed in research and ever alert about legal development in his environment. Therefore the need to make law information resources available.
3. State-of-the art e-library should be provided, to students, lecturers, etc for their legal research. In fact one of the criteria for accreditation of a law faculty these days is the provision of e-library for the faculty.
4. Training and retraining of academic law librarians should be done continuously in order to keep abreast of current developments in his field.