

Intersection of Studious Legal Research Philosophies and Scientific Chics in Nigeria: A Comprehensive Analysis

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Abstract

This study investigates the Intersection of Studious Legal Research Philosophies and Scientific Chics in Nigeria: a comprehensive analysis considering the challenges and opportunities in transitioning from traditional legal research approaches to systematic, procedural, and scientific methodologies in academic legal research in Nigeria. The study employed Non-doctrinal legal research design, though OSCOLA and NALT citation style were employed do to the nature of the study. Likert scale was used to compute the Mean for descriptive analysis and ANOVA was used for inferential statistical analysis, four hypotheses were tested to examine the utilization of scientific approaches, availability of relevant data and tools, institutional support, and the impact of citation styles on scientific legal research. The findings reveal that the utilization of scientific approaches remains low, despite adequate availability of resources. Institutional support for scientific methodologies is insufficient, and the current citation styles significantly affect the implementation of scientific approaches. Recommendations include comprehensive training programs, enhanced access to research tools, prioritization of scientific methodologies by academic institutions, and revision of citation styles or to develop Okuma-NC (hybrid) citation model to better support scientific research. These insights aim to contribute to the advancement of legal scholarship in Nigeria by promoting more rigorous, empirical, and interdisciplinary research practices.

Keywords: *Research, Empirical, Citation, Scientific Legal Research, Traditional Legal Research.*

Introduction

Background to the Study

Academic is closely related to education as they form the foundation of formal learning and knowledge acquisition within educational institutions. Academic disciplines provide the structure and content for educational curricula, guiding students in their pursuit of expertise and understanding in specific fields. Through academics, individuals engage in systematic study, critical thinking, research, and the development of skills necessary for personal and professional growth. Education, in turn, relies on academics to provide structured frameworks for teaching, learning, and intellectual advancement, ultimately preparing individuals for success in various aspects of life.

Legal education as one of formal process of learning is the process of training individuals to become legal professionals. In Nigeria, legal education requirements stipulated by the council of legal education for admission into the legal profession consist of two tier system of training a law degree from a recognize institution and practical training at the Nigerian School which is divided into two parts.

The first part, known as Bar part I involves intensive class room instruction covering Legal subjects, advocacy skills, writing and legal research and Part II which is the second part of Nigeria law school program which focuses on practical training through the bar final examination. Law scholar in Nigeria can also go further to pursue post graduate studies such as master's and PhD programs in law. These advanced degree

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provide opportunities for individuals to deepen their understanding of specific areas of law, conduct research, and contribute to the advancement of legal knowledge both as relates to law, and the law and society.

Legal education in Nigeria primarily aims as one of its duties to teach law students how to conduct research while seeing Legal research philosophy as the foundational principles and approaches guiding the systematic investigation and analysis of legal issues. It encompasses various methodologies, such as doctrinal, empirical, and theoretical research, aiming to understand, interpret, and apply legal norms and principles. This philosophy emphasizes critical thinking, thorough examination of legal texts, and the integration of interdisciplinary perspectives to advance legal knowledge and practice. However, there remains a question regarding the specific method legal scholars in the academic sector should use for their academic research. It's important to note that while academic research focuses on improving existing knowledge or developing new theories, legal professionals and practitioners pursuing different goals in research have the flexibility to choose their research methods, such as relying on doctrinal approaches which is conceptual and library based.

Research should be seen in academics as the careful, diligent and exhaustive investigation of a specific subject matter with a view to knowing the truth and making original contribution in the existing stock of knowledge. It is, in short, 'systematic or scientific search' in 'pursuit of knowledge' of the researcher and this is what is expected in the academic sector or world. This therefore implies that, only systematic intensive investigation into, or inquiry of fact qualifies to term 'research' more particularly an academic or scientific research. And a 'search' becomes 'systematic' when a researcher, in his quest for knowledge and quest of truth, collect the required data from various sources and in a variety of ways systematically and exposes data to a severe and intensive scrutiny. Systematic research has to be procedural in nature. Such research involves identification and definition of the problem, formulation of possible answer to the problem of study (that is the hypothesis), collection and organization of data, analyzing and interpretation of data collected, formulation of conclusion and generalizations, recommendation and implementation of recommended solutions on, and supported by, the collected information. It requires a sound design for investigation, the appropriate methods of data collection and a mode of analysis.

Generally, people understand scientific research as laboratory research that is carried out in the pure science disciplines, but currently it is not viewed that way, rather as a research method or system used by researchers to explore data, generate and test hypotheses, develop new theories and confirms or rejects earlier results.

Among the glaring features of a scientific research is that the research has to be systematic, Empirical, objective, falsifiable, replicable and contributes to the accumulation of knowledge in a particular field over time. In summary, the entire research methodology including the citation method employs in academic study explains to reasonable extent, its scientific standard.

A reference citation is the documentation needed to make your study/paper acceptable for academic purposes. It gives authoritative sources for your statements, helps the reader gain access to those sources, and acknowledges the fact that the information used in a paper did not originate with the writer. There are various citation styles in use as will be reviewed under the section for literature review.

The Citation style to use by the writer depends on some factors like, Nationality, style of research, exposure of the researcher on a particular method of citation, Discipline, Faculty and Supervisor (s).

In Nigerian law faculties, the Nigeria Association of Law Teachers (NALT) serves as the primary determinant factor for selecting the appropriate research methodology and citation style to employ. While the doctrinal research method has traditionally been widely accepted in legal research, there is a growing advocacy among legal scholars for the adoption of a more scientific research approach in academic legal research.

The push for a shift towards a more scientific approach in legal research has gained momentum, with Nigerian legal tutors, represented by NALT, joining the chorus and deduced...“.....more so that only

very few legal researchers are exposed to this type of research approach (non-doctrinal). Therefore, student researchers who wish to adopt non-doctrinal approach are encouraged to consult widely among social sciences researchers/lectures who are grounded in empirical research, to be properly guided”.

The shift towards a more scientific approach in academic legal research in Nigeria experiences some hitches which make it to find it difficult to adapt to some regularities of scientific research like methodology, types and sources of data, and citation. “.....Law faculties in Nigeria has neither standard format nor uniform citation guide for legal research writing in Nigeria. The available ones that are relevant to legal research, such as MLA, OSCOLA etc; are not only foreign, but they were not uniformly applied to the various law Faculties, such as obtained in the social sciences, humanities, and education Faculties. On further enquiries the NALT’s committee discovered that some Faculties of Law already key into to the use of MLA and OSCOLA for most of their format and style for citing all their local legal authorities; either deliberately or by default. One fundamental issue that is evident in both styles is that, they are insufficient or inadequate to address some of the local issues in our legal research writing and presentations. However, because of the flexibility and the user friendliness in both styles, and more so that majority of the law Faculties were already familiarized with both styles; the committee of Deans and Directors accepted as recommended by the NALT’s committee that features, technicalities and principles of MLA format OSCOLA citation style could be adapted instead of creating a new style in legal research.....”.

NALT in pushing for more scientific approach in academic legal research style, in adopting OSCOLA failed to consider its shortcoming in the area of restricting primary sources of data as Legal judgments, statutes, and statutory instruments.

Subsequently, NALT observed the multitude of citation style variations, leading to challenges and risks due to their diverse origins from distinct citation bodies and also that researchers and institutions are granted the freedom to choose a citation style based on the nature of problem investigating, their specialization, locality etc.

To address this, NALT introduced a citation style for Nigerian Law faculties closely resembling OSCOLA. This move aims to localize citation methods for uniformity but also they inherited some of the demerits of OSCOLA, for instance and still restricting primary sources of data as Legal judgments, statutes, and statutory instruments.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the aspirations and efforts of academic law scholars in Nigeria to transition from traditional legal research approaches to more systematic, procedural, and scientific methodologies, several obstacles impede this progress. A significant gap exists in the application of scientific methodologies to academic legal inquiries, undermining the efficacy and credibility of legal scholarship.

The challenges hindering the implementation of scientific research styles in the Nigerian academic legal sector include:

- Limited training in scientific research methodologies among legal researchers, leading to a reliance on anecdotal evidence, subjective reasoning, and limited empirical analysis.
- Isolation of legal research from other disciplines such as sociology, psychology, economics, and political science, which could offer valuable insights and methodologies for more rigorous analysis.
- Difficulty in accessing relevant data, literature, and research tools necessary for conducting scientific research, thereby restricting the scope and depth of inquiries.
- Insufficient prioritization and support from academic institutions and legal research centers for the adoption of scientific approaches, perpetuating outdated research methodologies and practices.

- Challenges in establishing a common citation style for academic legal research using scientific approaches, with restrictions posed by OSCOLA and NALT formats and considerations of data forms hindering the transition from traditional to more modern scientific research approaches.

The core problems of the study are addressed through the following objectives:

Objectives of the Study

In summary, the objectives of the study are to:

assess the Current State of Academic Legal Research in Nigeria.

evaluate the Availability and Accessibility of Research Resources.

analyze Institutional Support for Scientific Approaches in Legal Research

investigate Citation Style Practices in Nigerian Legal Research

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

To what extent are scientific approaches utilized in academic legal research in Nigeria?

What is the current status of availability and accessibility of relevant data, literature, and research tools necessary for conducting scientific legal research in Nigeria?

To what extent do academic institutions and legal research centers in Nigeria prioritize and provide support for the adoption of scientific methodologies in legal research?

What are the main challenges and reasons behind the lack of uniformity in citation styles?

Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis for Objective i

Null Hypothesis (H0): The utilization of scientific approaches in academic legal research in Nigeria is low.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): The utilization of scientific approaches in academic legal research in Nigeria is significant.

Hypothesis for Objective ii:

Null Hypothesis (H0): The availability and accessibility of relevant data, literature, and research tools necessary for conducting scientific legal research in Nigeria are limited.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): The availability and accessibility of relevant data, literature, and research tools necessary for conducting scientific legal research in Nigeria are sufficient.

Hypothesis for Objective iii

Null Hypothesis (H0): legal academic institutions and research centers in Nigeria do not prioritize or provide sufficient support for the adoption of scientific methodologies in legal research.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): legal academic institutions and research centers in Nigeria prioritize and provide sufficient support for the adoption of scientific methodologies in legal research.

Hypothesis for Objective iv

Null Hypothesis (H0): The legal research citation styles approved by NALT are not significantly affecting the implementation of scientific approach in academic legal research.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): The legal research citation styles approved by NALT are significantly affecting the implementation of scientific approach in academic legal research.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Framework

Research

Research is an expansive topic, intricately linked to almost every subject, idea, or discipline, including law. At its core, research is a quest for information, typically involving a specific subject sought by an individual.

The term 'research' can be challenging to define precisely due to its wide array of interpretations and meanings. In its most basic sense, it is understood as a pursuit for knowledge.

The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English spells out the meaning of 'research' as 'a careful investigation or inquiry specifically through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge'.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, research is the 'systematic investigation or inquiry aimed at contributing to knowledge of a theory, topic, etc., by careful consideration, observation, or study of a subject'. Research attempts to 'create order in the chaos that surrounds us'. D Slesinger and M Stephenson felt that the term 'research' is "the manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalizing to extend, correct or verify knowledge, whether that knowledge aids in construction of theory or in the practice of an art".

Research Methodology

Research methodology entails the methods and procedures utilized in conducting a study, primarily employed in scientific or academic research endeavors. It encompasses the comprehensive plan devised by the researcher for investigating a particular subject, subject to supervision during the process or peer review upon completion.

The research method which are the tools used to achieve the principles of research methodology will depend on your title and the research design or type of research employed or you embarked on. These methods have to do with issues relating to collecting of primary and secondary data and data analysis. The methods include observation, survey, experiment, text, questionnaire, interview, exploratory, co relational, cases study, regression, historical, analytical method, descriptive method, inferential method, comparative method, doctrinal, non- doctrinal etc. For one to carry out research effectively, it is of paramount important that the researcher has an in-depth knowledge of data and its source.

Research methodology is the specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyze information about a topic. In a research paper, the methodology section allows the reader to critically evaluate a study's overall validity and reliability. The methodology section answers two main questions: How was the data collected or generated? How was it analyzed?

Academic Research

Academic Research is a research conducted within the academic or educational environment with aim to contribute to the existing body of knowledge, advance understanding within a particular field, and often leads to the publication of findings in academic journals. It encompasses the comprehensive plan devised by the researcher for investigating a particular subject, subject to supervision during the process or peer review upon completion.

Academic research has grown to the extent that it is concise and well defined to the extent that essays and write ups that are not academic research are clearly noticed, hence academic research are procedural, systematic and scientific in nature.

Scientific Research Approach

Generally, people understand scientific research as laboratory research that is carried out in the pure science disciplines, but currently, it is not viewed that way, rather, as a research method or system used by researchers to explore data, generate and test hypotheses, develop new theories and confirms or rejects earlier results.

An academic and scientific research approach can be employed by researchers not minding the area of specialization or peculiarity of disciplines, a systematic, organized, and logical study can be made in Pure Sciences as well as other fields like Social Sciences, Management Sciences, Education, Law, Arts etc. scientific research is conducted for solving problems, it analyses all the dimensions of the problems, collects data, analyses and interprets the data, and finds out the solutions to the problems.

Academic Legal Research

Academic legal researches are those legal studies or researches made in the institutions of higher learning for academic purposes. These research works are always carried out by the legal academics, either legal students or legal tutors but has to be under supervision and monitoring to ensure adherence to academic research procedure that is research methodology. There are various types of academic legal research and some of them are:- Term papers, Seminar papers, Undergraduate final year long essay/Project, Master's dissertation or thesis (the terminology can differ based on geographical location or institutional preference), PhD Thesis or Dissertation(the terminology can differ based on geographical location or institutional preference), Conference papers, Journal articles, Other publishable papers, etc

Professional (Non-Academic) Legal Research

This is a kind of research conducted outside the conventional academic setting; it can be seen as non-academic research which is carried out by the legal professionals or practitioners using doctrinal approach. This type of research does not encompass the comprehensive plan devised by the academic researchers for investigating a particular subject, the research style is not also subjected to any formal supervision during the process or peer review upon completion and must not be suitable for publication in academic journal.

There are so many people and bodies that engage in one non- academic research or the other on daily bases and they do that for a need, may be to solve a peculiar problem, for instance Professional lawyers are often involved in Non-academic legal research on daily basis. For example, they examine what the law is in a specific situation, answer questions of law and solve legal problems. Some law firms, especially the larger ones, have a research department that conducts research. Sometimes the research conducted by professional firms' looks like the research conducted at universities or research institutions, but not always, hence they don't have the characteristics of academic and scientific research and the end targets are not the same.

Documentation and Citation

Documentation and citations of referenced works is of paramount importance in academic and scientific research. In carrying out a research work, it is expected that the researcher should consult and make use of other scholar's works and researches mostly in the review of literature. The researcher is also expected to document or provide proper citations to sources or work which he has made reference to and from where he has obtained the information as well as providing information that will be, it also helps to identify and retrieve the source of such information when the need be.

A reference citation is the documentation needed to make your study/paper acceptable for academic purposes. It gives authoritative sources for your statements, helps the reader gain access to those sources, and acknowledges the fact that the information used in a paper did not originate with the writer.

Some of the citation methods are American Psychological Association (APA), Modern Language Association (MLA), National Educational Association of the United States (NEA), IEEE(Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers), AMA(American Medical Association), Chicago/Turabian Kate L., Hubbel George S, Ballon Stephen V., Harvard Style, Classic Style, Vancouver, OSCOLA, NALT. etc.

Legal Research Philosophy

Legal research philosophy refers to the underlying principles and theories that guide the methods and approaches used in legal research. It shapes how researchers understand the law, its application, and its impact on society. There are several key philosophies in legal research and some of them include Doctrinal Research (Black Letter Law), which is one of the major branches of legal research methodology. It is the traditional legal research approach that focuses on the systematic analysis of legal rules, principles, and cases. It aims to clarify, interpret, and develop legal doctrines. An example is a study analyzing court decisions to determine how courts interpret a specific statute.

Another broader branch of legal research is Empirical Legal Research, which can also be viewed as a social-legal research approach. It uses quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate how laws affect behavior, attitudes, and outcomes in society. It examines the relationship between law and society, often using interdisciplinary methods to understand the social context of legal issues. An example is conducting surveys to assess the impact of new traffic laws on driving behavior.

There are some other examples of legal research philosophies that are not too popular, and some of them are Critical Legal Studies, which challenges traditional legal doctrines and seeks to uncover the underlying power structures and biases within the law. Another one is Comparative Legal Research, which compares legal systems or laws from different jurisdictions to understand differences and similarities. Additionally, there is Historical Legal Research, which investigates the history and development of laws and legal systems to understand their evolution and current form.

Theoretical Framework

Doctrinal Legal Research Theory

The doctrine of lapse, a formula formulated by Lord Dalhousie, Governor-General of India (1848–56), to deal with questions of succession in Hindu Indian states. Under this policy, if an Indian king or ruler didn't have a son to take over, their kingdom would become part of British India. This made many Indian states upset because they lost their independence

The roots of doctrinal research can then be traced to the positivist or the analytical school of law which was objective and value-free. It is more epistemologically oriented and does not concern itself with people or society. Though the law itself is normative, doctrinal research does not study it in a normative sense. It does not take into consideration the human aspects of law and how it affects people in society. In this type of research, we just concern ourselves with existing laws in the present state as they are. Its emergence can

be traced parallel to the rise of common law in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Common law has been developed by the efforts of jurists and the Court's decisions. The doctrine of precedents also developed around the same time. All of these developments are linked to doctrinal research as without it the other parallel developments would have been incomplete. It is when judges and attorneys investigated laws from various above-mentioned sources, that they could set the stage for the progress of common law.

The origin of doctrinal legal research can be traced back to the development of legal education and scholarship in Western legal traditions, particularly within the context of common law systems. The term "doctrinal" refers to the study and analysis of legal doctrines, principles, rules, and concepts as they are expressed in statutes, case law, and legal literature.

Doctrinal legal research has its roots in the study of law as a system of rules and principles that govern human conduct. It emerged alongside the formalization of legal education and the establishment of law schools in universities. Historically, legal education focused heavily on teaching students to understand and apply legal rules derived from statutes and judicial decisions.

One could argue that the origins of doctrinal legal research can be found in ancient legal traditions such as Roman law and early European legal systems, where scholars and jurists studied and interpreted legal texts to derive principles and rules applicable to different situations.

However, the modern form of doctrinal legal research as it is practiced today evolved primarily in the context of the development of common law systems, particularly in England and later in other common law jurisdictions such as the United States. With the growth of legal scholarship and the formalization of legal research methodologies, scholars began to systematically analyze legal texts, statutes, and case law to extract legal principles and doctrines.

S R Myneni defined doctrinal research as “a research that has been carried out on a legal proposition or propositions by way of analyzing the existing statutory provisions and cases by applying the reasoning power.”

It simply means reviewing and studying different legal documents and other sources and then deducing a complete answer to the question asked at the beginning by the means of rational interpretation and logical reasoning.

Some of the glaring features of doctrinal legal research are:

It considered primary data to be primary laws. That is binding laws that are codified in statutes, regulations, and case laws. Such primary data or law is sourced through primary sources. Primary sources mean the actual legal rules enacted by authorized state authorities whether by substantive legislation or by subsidiary legislations.

It considered secondary data and sources to be those legal information that are not binding rather explains primary laws and legal theories; including legal digests, treatises, journals, commentaries on or analysis of the primary sources.

The doctrinal legal research employs conceptual or library based approach.

Doctrinal legal research lacks systematicity, testability, and objectivity. Its outcomes neither contribute to existing theories nor establish new ones, rendering it outside the realm of academic or scientific research approaches.

Non-Doctrinal Legal Research Theory

The origin of non-doctrinal legal research may be very difficult to be traced to a particular period, person or origin though, after World War II, there was a growing emphasis on empiricism. Hence, the realist school

of thought developed. The realist school of thought brings to the forefront, the concern that laws are made for the benefit and regulation of society. Laws are there to fulfill society's needs. Therefore, they cannot be studied in isolation and must be developed as per society's requirements. Society is dynamic and so should be the law. Law should be suited to the needs of the real world.

Non-doctrinal legal research, also referred to as interdisciplinary legal research or socio-legal studies, has evolved as a response to the limitations of traditional legal analysis, which often focused narrowly on legal rules and principles

Then, Non-doctrinal research, also known as social-legal research, is research that employs methods taken from other disciplines to generate empirical data that answers research questions, hence it is anchored on empirical research. Empirical Legal Studies: Alongside theoretical developments, there has been a growing emphasis on empirical research methods within legal scholarship. Empirical legal studies utilize quantitative and qualitative methodologies to examine legal phenomena, such as the effects of laws on behavior, attitudes, and outcomes.

Non-doctrinal legal research has broadened the scope of legal scholarship, encouraging scholars to adopt interdisciplinary approaches and engage with a wide range of social, political, and cultural factors that influence the development and application of law. Non-doctrinal research, also known as socio-legal research, employs methods from other disciplines to generate empirical data that answers research questions. This type of research utilizes primary sources of legal information, such as observations, experiments, questionnaires, and surveys, to reach broader conclusions. These sources help analyze the practical aspects of law, such as its effects on non-legal fields and society as a whole.

In non-doctrinal research, a legal variable (such as a law) is studied alongside a non-legal variable (such as economic, social, political, or educational factors) to understand their relationship using qualitative or quantitative data. The realist school of thought emphasizes that laws are made for the benefit and regulation of society. Laws should fulfill society's needs and cannot be studied in isolation. Therefore, law must be developed to suit the dynamic requirements of the real world.

Empirical Review

In a paper presented at the National workshop on legal research and legal writing at the National Judicial Institute on Monday 5th September, 2022 titled "Advanced Legal Research Methodology: Practice and Procedure," H.D. Kutigi explores various types of legal research. These include doctrinal, non-doctrinal, and comparative legal research, as well as distinctions between descriptive vs. analytical research, applied vs. fundamental research, quantitative vs. qualitative research, and conceptual vs. empirical research. Kutigi evaluates these different approaches, but when discussing data and its sources, he focuses solely on the forms of data relevant to the doctrinal research approach. This creates a gap for legal researchers who wish to apply other types of legal research methodologies other than doctrinal style. In conclusion, Kutigi notes a global increase in interest from other disciplines in the study of law and a push towards advancing more empirical and socio-legal research. However, he also acknowledges that legal research in Nigeria remains limited in scope and impact.

In the Journal of Emerging Technology and Innovative Research (JETIR), October 2021, Vol. 8, Issue 10, S R Mohapatra's study titled "Legal Research Methodology: An Overview" examines different types of legal research, primarily from the perspective of doctrinal research. Mohapatra acknowledges that non-doctrinal legal research is a more recent development. He defines empirical research as relying solely on observation and experimentation rather than theory. Mohapatra employs the APA citation method and discusses types of data separately under doctrinal and non-doctrinal research. However, in some countries like Nigeria, national bodies such as the Nigerian Association of Law Teachers (NALT) mandate the use of citation methods like OSCOLA or the NALT citation method, which restrict types of data to primary and secondary sources, as considered by the doctrinal method. In conclusion, Mohapatra suggests that law can be termed a behavioral science since it regulates human behavior. He emphasizes that no legal source can provide

remedies for all situations indefinitely. As society changes, the law must evolve to remain relevant, active, and useful. The law must recognize its gaps and take steps to address them over time.

In the International Journal of Criminology and Sociology, 2020, A Budianto's study titled "Legal Research Methodology Reposition in Research on Social Science" examines various types of research and laws. Budianto concludes that legal research must be viewed as an active process. This involves not only reading books, principles, doctrines, and regulations but also actively seeking and using data to arrive at conclusions. Budianto argues that legal research should no longer distinguish between normative and sociological research or between qualitative and quantitative research. His study finds that law originates from the community and that the legal system comprises substance, system, and culture. Therefore, the unique nature of legal research (*Sui generis*) needs to be re-examined in its research context. In socio-legal research, primary data is crucial. Budianto identifies seven key sources of primary data: dissertations, national and international scientific journal articles, theses, interviews, academic papers, court verdicts, and cases. He emphasizes that the collection of primary data must be systematic, scientific, and rational. In conclusion, Budianto asserts that, beyond normative judicial research focused on legal principles, teachings, theories, and doctrines, there is a need to reposition the use of primary data in socio-legal research.

F Cownie inferred... "There is growing movement which calls for contextual and interdisciplinary research approach and the application of social science and scientific research methodologies in legal research".

Having the same view, T Sanne asserts... "We should note that doctrinal legal research does not pay much explicit attention to such issues like theoretical study. Legal scholars using doctrinal approach enjoy discussing current affairs and recent cases and take particular pride in seeing their works cited in a judgment or in parliamentary debate. Many legal scholars also justify their research topics by referring to new developments in practice, displaying more interest in the societal relevance than in the academic relevance of knowledge, that is, as science, it is crucial to know how it relates to the approaches and theories in the academic field".

Oluyemisi Bamgbose (SAN), Former Dean of Law University of Ibadan and Pioneer Member of Implementation and Monitoring Committee (2019) in the Manual on Legal Research Format and Citation Guide for Legal Research Writing (NALT's Blue Book Basic Guide) series number 2, 2021 asserts ".....However, it is yet to gain full popularity across Faculties in the areas of project writing at the PG level for Master's dissertation and PhD thesis and journal articles for publications on campuses. This may be partly due to lack of access to hard copies which are not in circulation to fully appreciate the rich contents of the Manual; especially, the first part which deals with the formats for project writing at all level in the Law Faculties. This next stage of publishing the manual into a Monograph is a healthy development, as this would further enhance the dissemination of the Manual widely. It is also observed with concerns that the Deans and Directors are yet to take active part in the implementation of this lofty idea of the Uniform approach to legal research writing. Disseminations would move faster by simply setting a committee by the Deans and Director in their respective campuses to look at the Manual to see the relevant areas for adoptions and making recommendation to the PGS as the normal practices of individual faculties to recommend in-house format and citation guides from the Faculties. I believe that to resolve this challenges the NALT executive need to work closely with the Committee of Deans and Directors to effectively carry out their responsibilities of formally recommending the new Manual to their respective PGS. Similarly, the EXCO need to work with the Implementation Committee to get feedback by way of annual report at the Association AGM to have evaluation of the level of implementation. Finally, to lay credence on this all-important document, I recommend that the association passes a resolution making a strong recommendation to the council of legal education to give it necessary statutory backing by making the document mandatory as part of requirements for the faculties of law accreditations in Nigeria."

Usman Muhammad Shu'aid, President NALT 2020 (Kano 2022) in the Manual on Legal Research Format and Citation Guide for Legal Research Writing (NALT's Blue Book Basic Guide) series number 2, 2021 posits ".....However, information reaching the Secretariat recently suggests that some Faculties that began very well with the Guide are now drawing back are even reverting back to the old fashions which are by no means uniform nor superior to the NALT Guide; and yet no documented reasons with the

Secretariat, to suggest that there had been any evidence to show that the New NALT Format is inferior to others being preferred. While enjoining other law faculties and institutes to embrace this manual in totality to achieve a uniform approach and coherence legal technical writing in Nigeria; we are also appealing to those faculties that had derail to come back to bring suggestions that will make the Manual more robust and users friendly rather than abandoning it. There is no going back on this FEAT that is already on record as one of the few achievements that the Association can lay solid claim. Meanwhile, assuming, there is still more room for improvement upon the manual, we need to accept in principle and apply the format in practical terms before we can create room for improvement. It is worth noting that it is the responsibility of individual Deans and Directors of the various faculties to present the style of writing to our respective Post Graduate Schools. Therefore, I enjoin all my colleagues-the Deans and Directors at our various facilities and research institutes to integrate this manual into our local settings both at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels and the institutes' technical legal writings.”

Summary of Reviewed Literature and Research Gap

Despite the recognized importance of moving towards non-doctrinal and interdisciplinary research approaches, there remains a significant gap in the practical application of these methodologies in Nigeria. The existing literature underscores a theoretical support for non-doctrinal and empirical research but demonstrates a persistent reliance on doctrinal principles when it comes to data classification and analysis.

Moreover, while there is an increasing call for the adoption of scientific methodologies in legal research, there is limited evidence of their widespread implementation in Nigerian academic legal research. This highlights a disconnect between the advocacy for methodological diversification and its practical execution.

The requirement for specific citation methods like OSCOLA and NALT academic legal research in Nigeria limits the adoption of more diverse and suitable citation styles for non-doctrinal and empirical research and this leads to a theoretical endorsement but practical underutilization of scientific legal research methodologies.

Legal scholars demonstrate a reluctance or lack of preparedness to fully adopt methodological diversity, often reverting to doctrinal approaches. There is a need for more developed frameworks and guidelines to systematically integrate primary data into legal research.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employs non-doctrinal legal research approach. Non-doctrinal research, also known as social-legal research, is a research style that employs methods taken from other disciplines to generate empirical data that answers research questions and in test of hypotheses. Though, OSCOLA and NALT styles were considered in referencing do to the nature of the research.

Nature of Data

The study utilizes both primary and secondary data, as deemed appropriate by the non-doctrinal legal research approach. In scientific research, primary data denotes the original data collected directly from the source by the researcher for the explicit purpose of their study. This type of data is firsthand, unprocessed, and unanalyzed, enabling researchers to address specific research questions and test hypotheses. In the other hand, secondary data in scientific research refers to data collected by individuals other than the user, or for purposes unrelated to the user's current research project. This data typically originates from sources such as books, reports, the internet, statistical databases, or studies conducted by other researchers.

Sources of Data

The study incorporates both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary sourcing occurs when data is collected firsthand by the researcher, meaning these sources provide information that has not been previously utilized by any other individual. Examples of primary sources include personal interviews, telephone calls, direct observations, and the use of questionnaires. On the other hand, secondary sources encompass various means through which secondary data are obtained. Typically, researchers utilize pre-existing data, and the methods employed to acquire such data are termed secondary sources. Examples of secondary sources include public records, previous research studies, government databases, internet sources, legal documents such as constitutions and case law, legal digests, treatises, law commentaries, statutes, law reviews, and textbooks, among others.

Population

In scientific research, the term "population" refers to the entire group that researchers aim to study or from which they intend to draw conclusions. It encompasses the complete set of observations or units that share a common characteristic, and it is defined according to the objectives and scope of the study.

The population of this study is drawn from the number of legal students currently in Nigerian law schools. These are law students that just finish writing their LL.B research projects, supervised by legal scholars using OSCOLA and NALT standard.

Table One. The Population of Legal Students in Nigerian Law School According to Statista Research Department, Is Given in The Table Below

School	Population
Abuja	1,837
Enugu	1274
Kano	1072
Lagos	1023
Baylesa	403
Yola	351
Total	5960

Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1261094/law-students-in-nigeria-by-city/>

Sample Size and Techniques

There are various methods to choose a sample, including random sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling, and convenience sampling. The choice depends on the research question, the nature of the population, and logistical considerations. For the purpose of this study, A stratified random sampling method was used to select 160 respondents (40 individuals from each institution) from 4 law schools across the federation. Yola and Baylesa couldn't be covered because of challenges beyond our control.

Analytical Techniques

To address the research questions, descriptive statistics were utilized, employing mean and standard deviation as key tools. Inferential statistics, specifically ANOVA, were used to test the research hypotheses.

Data Analyses

Descriptive and inferential statistical tools were employed in analysing the data while Mean Scores were used to answer the research questions. Having a four-point Likert scale to compute the Mean Score for the items of the questionnaire. However, to determine the acceptance and questionnaire items, a decision rule based on the statistical mean of the score was employed thus: $\text{Mean} = (4+3+2+1)/4=2.5$. Therefore, the

Mean for the response scale would be 2.5 and the decision rule is that any item with Mean Score of 2.5 and above is accepted and any item which Mean Scores are below 2.5 is rejected.

Descriptive Statistics

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	SD
1	There is need to frequently incorporate scientific methodologies in carrying out legal research	3.16	0.91
2	There is familiarity with scientific research methods in the context of legal studies	3.18	0.92
3	Scientific approaches are necessary for legal research in Nigeria	3.39	0.78
4	There are vivid challenges when trying to integrate scientific methods into legal research	3.31	0.89
	Grand	3.26	0.88

Researcher's Computation

Table 3. Evaluate The Availability and Accessibility of Research Resources for Conducting Scientific Legal Research in Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A
12	Academic legal institution and colleagues are supportive towards interdisciplinary research	2.45	1.04
13	Relevant data and literature are accessible for academic legal research	2.69	0.95
14	There are availability of research tools necessary for scientific legal research	2.13	0.95
15	Difficulties in accessing necessary research materials and tools are prevalent	2.45	0.98
16	Data and literature available for legal research in Nigeria are comprehensive and of high quality	2.90	0.87
	Grand	2.52	0.96

Researcher's computation

Table 4. Analyze Institutional Support for Scientific Approaches in Legal Research

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	SD
17	Academic institutions are supportive towards the adoption of scientific methodologies in legal research	2.65	0.77
18	Academic institution provide resources to facilitate the use of scientific approaches in legal research	2.40	0.74
19	Academic institution offer training/workshops on scientific research methods for legal scholars	2.49	0.71
20	Academic institutions in Nigeria do not give priority to scientific methodologies in legal research	2.81	0.68
	Grand	2.59	0.73

Researcher's computation

Table 5. Investigate Citation Style Practices in Nigerian Scientific Legal Research

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	SD
21	There are challenges with the lack of uniformity in citation styles in legal research	2.87	0.93

22	Lack of uniform citation styles affect the clarity and quality of legal research publications	2.88	0.98
23	There are significant discrepancies in citation styles when reviewing legal research papers	2.77	0.77
24	There should be solutions to achieve greater uniformity in citation styles in legal research	3.11	0.86
	Grand	2.91	0.89

Researcher's computation

Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics were employed to analyze the data obtained for the four preset objectives, using the ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) statistical tool. The following sections provide a detailed analysis of the data for the various hypotheses, including comprehensive descriptions and interpretations of the results.

Table 5. Hypothesis 1

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	115.359	3	38.453	150.970	0.062
Within Groups	39.734	156	.255		
Total	155.094	159			

Researcher's computation

Result: since $p = 0.062$ (sig) which is above 0.05, then we accept the null hypothesis that utilization of scientific approaches in academic Legal research is low.

Since the p -value (0.062) is greater than the significance level (0.05), we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the utilization of scientific approaches in academic legal research in Nigeria is significantly different from low utilization.

Based on the ANOVA results and the significance level, we therefore accept the null hypothesis that the utilization of scientific approaches in academic legal research in Nigeria is low. The p -value of 0.062 suggests that the observed differences in the data are not statistically significant at the 5% level.

This finding aligns with the observations of so many authorities in legal research writing like Oluyemisi Bamgbose (SAN), Former Dean of Law at the University of Ibadan and Pioneer Member of the Implementation and Monitoring Committee (2019), who noted in the Manual on Legal Research Format and Citation Guide for Legal Research Writing (NALT's Blue Book Basic Guide) series number 2, 2021 that however, Manual on Legal Research Format and Citation Guide for Legal Research Writing is yet to gain full popularity across Faculties in the areas of project writing at the PG level for Master's dissertation and PhD thesis and journal articles for publications on campuses.It is also observed with concerns that the Deans and Directors are yet to take active part in the implementation of this lofty idea of the Uniform approach to legal research writing.

Usman Muhammad Shu'aid, President of NALT 2020 (Kano 2022), also highlighted in the Manual on Legal Research Format and Citation Guide for Legal Research Writing (NALT's Blue Book Basic Guide) series number 2, 2021 that information reaching the Secretariat recently suggests that some Faculties that began very well with the Guide are now drawing back and are even reverting back to the old fashions which are by no means uniform nor superior to the NALT Guide; and yet no documented reasons with the Secretariat, to suggest that there had been any evidence to show that the New NALT Format is inferior to

others being preferred. While enjoining other law faculties and institutes to embrace this manual in totality to achieve a uniform approach and coherence legal technical writing in Nigeria; we are also appealing to those faculties that had derailed to come back to bring suggestions that will make the Manual more robust and user-friendly rather than abandoning it.

The study of Okuma, Chibuzor and others, titled “Research Ideologies among Legal Scholars and Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Academic Research Approaches.” agrees with the result on this objective where they posit and conclude that there are significant challenges and barriers hindering the adoption of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research approaches by legal scholars, students, and regulatory bodies in Nigeria. These challenges therefore become major factors that contribute to low utilization of scientific approaches in academic Legal research in Nigeria.

Table 6. Hypothesis 2

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	83.025	3	27.675	116.782	0.020
Within Groups	36.969	156	.237		
Total	119.994	159			

Researcher’s computation.

Result: since $p = 0.020$ (sig) which is below 0.05, then we reject the null hypothesis that availability of relevant data, literature, and research tools necessary for conducting scientific legal research in Nigeria are limited.

The result of the analysis indicates that Sum of Squares (Between Groups): 83.025, Degrees of Freedom (Between Groups): 3, Mean Square (Between Groups): 27.675, F-Value: 116.782, Significance (Sig. or p-value): 0.020, Sum of Squares (Within Groups): 36.969, Degrees of Freedom (Within Groups): 156, Mean Square (Within Groups): 0.237, Total Sum of Squares: 119.994, Total Degrees of Freedom: 159

Since the p-value (0.020) is below the significance level of 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis. This means that the availability and accessibility of relevant data, literature, and research tools necessary for conducting scientific legal research in Nigeria are not limited. This result is in conformity with the posits of other studies like Kutigi’s paper which evaluates various types of legal research methodologies and highlights a gap in the availability and accessibility of data for non-doctrinal research approaches in Nigeria. The analysis conducted here, however, suggests that there is adequate availability and accessibility of relevant data, literature, and research tools for scientific legal research, contrary to what might have been suggested about limitations. This implies that researchers in Nigeria have sufficient resources to conduct advanced legal research, potentially opening doors for more empirical and socio-legal studies as noted by Kutigi, hence the problem might be having the capability and skills needed by researcher to be able to put them in use.

This result is also in accordance with the assertions of S R Mohapatra's whose Study titled *Legal Research Methodology: An Overview* who suggests that law must evolve to remain relevant, active, and useful as society changes. He also suggests that law should recognize its gaps and address them over time while A Budianto's Study in the *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology*, 2020, titled “Legal Research Methodology Reposition in Research on Social Science” concludes that legal research must be viewed as an active process. This involves not only reading books, principles, doctrines, and regulations but also actively seeking and using data to arrive at conclusions. Budianto argues that legal research should no longer distinguish between normative and sociological research or between qualitative and quantitative research. His study finds that law originates from the community and that the legal system comprises substance, system, and culture. Therefore, the unique nature of legal research (*Sui generis*) needs to be re-examined in its research context. Budianto identifies seven key sources of primary data: dissertations, national and international scientific journal articles, theses, interviews, academic papers, court verdicts, and cases. He

emphasizes that the collection of primary data must be systematic, scientific, and rational. Both studies highlight the significant challenges faced in integrating scientific methodologies into legal research, supporting the findings of this analysis.

Table 7. Hypothesis 3

H0: legal academic institutions and research centers in Nigeria do not prioritize or provide sufficient support for the adoption of scientific methodologies in legal research

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	83.025	3	36.622	122.671	0.097
Within Groups	36.969	156	.092		
Total	119.994	159			

Researcher's computation.

Result: since $p = 0.097$ (sig) which is above 0.05, then we accept the null hypothesis that there is a significantly noticeable mean variation in legal academic institutions and research centers in Nigeria that do not prioritize or provide sufficient support for the adoption of scientific methodologies in legal research.

Since the p-value (0.097) is greater than the significance level (0.05), we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This indicates insufficient evidence to conclude that legal academic institutions and research centers in Nigeria prioritize or provide sufficient support for the adoption of scientific methodologies in legal research.

The analysis shows that the observed differences are not statistically significant, suggesting that the prioritization and support for scientific methodologies in legal research are not adequately emphasized by legal academic institutions and research centers in Nigeria. Consequently, these institutions do not place sufficient emphasis on or provide the necessary support for the adoption of scientific methodologies in legal research.

In reality, while legal scholar authorities and their regulatory bodies have expressed interest in transitioning to a legal scientific research approach, they have not taken substantial steps to ensure its implementation. This aligns with Olujemisi Bamgbose (SAN), Former Dean of Law at the University of Ibadan and Pioneer Member of the Implementation and Monitoring Committee, who recommended in the Manual on Legal Research Format and Citation Guide for Legal Research Writing (NALT's Blue Book Basic Guide) series number 2, 2021 that: "Finally, to lay credence on this all-important document I recommend that the association passes a resolution making a strong recommendation to the Council of Legal Education to give it necessary statutory backing by making the document mandatory as part of requirements for the faculties of law accreditations in Nigeria."

The result also agrees with the 2024 study by Okuma, Chibuzor, and others, titled "Research Ideologies among Legal Scholars and Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Academic Research Approaches." They advocate for increased funding and resources dedicated to supporting multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary legal research, establishing grants and scholarships for students and scholars engaged in such research approaches, and creating policies by regulatory bodies that support and incentivize multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research. They also recommend implementing institutional changes that promote a culture of collaboration and innovation within academic and regulatory settings.

Table 8. Hypothesis 4

H0: The legal research citation styles approved by NALT are not significantly affecting the implementation of scientific approach in academic legal research.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	118.059	3	39.453	150.970	0.002
Within Groups	39.734	156	.255		
Total	155.094	159			

Researcher's computation.

Result: since $p = 0.007$ (sig) which is below 0.05, then we reject the null hypothesis that The legal research citation styles approved by NALT are not significantly affecting the implementation of scientific approach in academic legal research. Since the p-value (0.007) is less than the significance level (0.05), we reject the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the legal research citation styles approved by NALT are significantly affecting the implementation of a scientific approach in academic legal research.

The analysis reveals that the observed differences are statistically significant. This suggests that the citation styles mandated by NALT have a notable and impactful effect on how scientific methodologies are applied in academic legal research in Nigeria. The strict adherence to specific citation styles may either facilitate or hinder the effective integration of scientific methods, depending on how well these styles support the presentation and analysis of empirical data. This result agrees with the conclusion of A Budiando's study in the International Journal of Criminology and Sociology, 2020, titled "Legal Research Methodology Reposition in Research on Social Science" where he concludes that legal research must be viewed as an active process and that there is need to reposition the use of primary data in socio legal research.

Okuma, Chibuzor, and others, in their study titled "Research Ideologies among Legal Scholars and Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Academic Research Approaches." in 2024 also agrees thatseveral challenges hinder the transition from traditional and doctrinal legal research to more academic, scientific, and multidisciplinary approaches by legal scholars. These challenges include as follows: The citation methods of OSCOLA (Oxford University Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities) and NALT (Nigerian Association of Law Teachers) are technically structured for traditional doctrinal legal research. Socio-legal, scientific and multidisciplinary researchers find it difficult to employ these methodologies in their work due to their rigid and specialized nature to traditional legal research approach. Also, the approach and understanding of data by OSCOLA and NALT make it nearly impossible for researchers to use these methodologies in socio-legal, scientific, multidisciplinary, or interdisciplinary research.

5.0 Summary and Conclusion

Objective 1: Determine if the utilization of scientific approaches in academic legal research in Nigeria is low.

The p-value of 0.062 is greater than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, indicating that the utilization of scientific approaches in academic legal research in Nigeria is indeed low. This conclusion is supported by observations from key legal research authorities, highlighting the ongoing reliance on traditional methods despite efforts to introduce systematic and scientific methodologies.

Summary: Scientific approaches in academic legal research in Nigeria are underutilized, reflecting a persistence of traditional research methodologies.

Objective 2: Assess the availability and accessibility of relevant data, literature, and research tools necessary for conducting scientific legal research in Nigeria.

Conclusion: The p-value of 0.020 is less than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis, indicating that relevant data, literature, and research tools are indeed available and accessible for conducting scientific legal research in Nigeria. This finding contradicts earlier perceptions of data limitations and suggests that resources for scientific legal research are adequately available.

Summary: Contrary to some previous beliefs, relevant data and resources necessary for scientific legal research in Nigeria are sufficiently available and accessible.

Objective 3: Investigate whether legal academic institutions and research centers in Nigeria prioritize and provide sufficient support for the adoption of scientific methodologies in legal research.

Conclusion: The p-value of 0.097 is greater than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, indicating that legal academic institutions and research centers in Nigeria do not prioritize or provide sufficient support for the adoption of scientific methodologies in legal research. Despite expressed interest, there is a lack of substantial implementation efforts.

Summary: Legal academic institutions and research centers in Nigeria do not sufficiently prioritize or support the adoption of scientific methodologies in legal research.

Objective 4: Examine whether the legal research citation styles approved by NALT significantly affect the implementation of scientific approaches in academic legal research.

Conclusion: The p-value of 0.007 is less than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis, indicating that the legal research citation styles approved by NALT significantly affect the implementation of scientific approaches in academic legal research. This suggests that current citation styles may either facilitate or hinder the effective integration of scientific methods.

Summary: NALT-approved citation styles significantly impact the implementation of scientific approaches in academic legal research, indicating a need for citation methods that better support scientific and empirical research.

Recommendations

Objective 1: Utilization of Scientific Approaches in Academic Legal Research

Implement comprehensive training programs for legal scholars to enhance their understanding and application of scientific research methodologies.

Increase awareness about the benefits of scientific approaches in legal research through workshops, seminars, and publications.

Objective 2: Availability and Accessibility of Relevant Data, Literature, and Research Tools

Ensure continuous development and updating of legal research databases to maintain the further availability of relevant data and literature and more important, train legal academic legal researchers on how best to access and use the appropriate data for scientific research.

Academic institutions should provide access to modern research tools and software to facilitate advanced legal research and also more important is to train legal academic legal researchers on how best to access and use the appropriate data for scientific research.

Objective 3: Prioritization and Support for Scientific Methodologies

Legal academic institutions should adopt more strong policies that prioritize scientific research methodologies and ensure strong adherence to it in academic legal researches like in LLB project, LL.M and PhD dissertation and thesis as the case may be. it should be also strictly apply in all the legal conference papers, workshops and legal publishable journal articles.

Increase funding and resources dedicated to supporting scientific legal research, including grants and scholarships for research initiatives.

Objective 4: Impact of Legal Research Citation Styles

Review and revise existing citation styles to better accommodate scientific and empirical research methods or better develop Okuma-NC (hybrid) research methodology and citation formula integrating aspects of OSCOLA, NALT, and APA enabling seamless application in socio-legal, scientific and interdisciplinary research within legal contexts.

Provide clear guidance and flexibility in citation styles to encourage the integration of scientific methodologies in legal research.

Contributions to Knowledge

Insight into Scientific Methodologies in Legal Research

The study provides a detailed understanding of the current state of scientific methodologies in Nigerian legal research. By highlighting the low utilization and challenges faced, it contributes to a deeper comprehension of the barriers and opportunities in integrating scientific approaches by examining the availability and accessibility of data and research tools, the study clarifies the extent to which these resources impact scientific legal research. This contributes to the body of knowledge on resource management and accessibility in legal research contexts.

Assessment of Institutional Support

The findings on the level of support from academic institutions and research centers provide a basis for understanding how institutional priorities and resources affect the adoption of scientific methodologies. This contributes to the discourse on institutional roles in advancing legal research practices.

Impact of Citation Styles

The study explores how citation styles, particularly those approved by NALT, influence the implementation of scientific approaches in legal research. This contributes to knowledge on the interaction between citation practices and research methodologies, offering insights for potential revisions and improvements in citation standards and recommends for Okuma-NC (hybrid) citation model.

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