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**NIGERIA JUDICIAL SYSTEM MANAGEMENT AND ELECTRONIC LEGAL EVIDENCE SERVICE  
CONSUMERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE JUDICIAL SYSTEM MANAGEMENT  
SUSTAINABILITY**

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**Abstract**

*The paper fundamentally and empirically examined Nigeria judicial system management and electronic legal evidence consumers as well as the implications for effective judicial system management sustainability. The paper addressed the various court systems in Nigeria and further looked at the management and admissibility of electronic legal evidence services within the judiciary. Various challenges inherent in administering the electronic legal evidences and admissibility were also addressed. Data were drawn from purposively selected 154 respondents in courts in Rivers State. Data were analyzed using multiple regression technique at 0.05 significant level. The study revealed that Nigeria Judicial system management significantly relates to electronic legal evidence service consumers. It also revealed that electronic legal evidence communication is becoming strategically prevalent in the court proceedings. The paper concludes that effective judicial system management will enhance electronic legal evidence admissibility and sustainability. Employment of electronic forensic experts and consistency in the admissibility of electronic legal evidence were recommended amongst others.*

*Key words: Nigeria Judicial System Management; Evidence Act 2011; Electronic Legal Evidence Consumers (Litigants); Electronic Evidence Admissibility*

**Introduction**

The appointment of a committee on legal Education for African students by the British Government before independence in 1960 was due to the fact that self-taught attorneys practiced as barristers and solicitors. The arrow head of the committee was Lord Denning. The cardinal objective of the committee was to review the suitability of legal training offered in the Inns and Courts alongside with the needs of African Common Wealth countries. During that period under view, Self-taught attorneys were those who are not professionally suited, but

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were allowed to act as barristers and solicitors in the British Colonial Administration, which initially introduced a court system under the auspices of the British system.

In Nigeria, the Supreme Court (Civil Procedure) Rules of 1945 marked the end of the self-taught attorneys, and a strategic decision was taken specifying that only those individuals entitled to practice as barristers in England or Ireland or as an advocate in Scotland should be admitted to practice in Nigeria (Order 16, Rule of the Supreme Court Ordinance No 43 of 1943). However, this specified procedure proved to be inadequate as a result of the inadequacy of the foreign-trained lawyers who were not well in-tune with local laws and customs in Nigeria. In most cases, even those who were trained and qualified as barristers or solicitors in England or other foreign places with no fused legal profession, on return to the colony, found it very difficult to combine both aspects of the profession. As a result of this broad-based training inadequacy to cope up with the dynamics in legal profession as the environment demanded, many of them abandoned the profession and went into other areas of work such as business and politics (as still happening today). Based on these, the government of the day critically and strategically considered the necessity for “Legal Education System”, capable of responding to the peculiar needs of Nigeria’s indigenous community. The need to intensify the diversity of Legal Education System in Nigeria the incorporation of electronic legal evidence services is therefore necessary; as such e-evidence legal education knowledge can help the system even in periods such as the global COVID-19 Scourge that Nigeria is experiencing. In relation to this, the Lagos State Chief Judge, Honorable Justice Kazeen O. Alogba has recently issued a practice direction for remote hearing (e-evidence) of cases in the Lagos State judiciary with effective, April 2020.

**Research Problem and Objectives of the Study**

Nigeria, like some other countries in the world is continuously making strategic efforts to develop judicial legislation in order to facilitate electronic commerce, since the system is still faced with the problems associated with admitting electronic document/service as an evidence in the court, which also calls for special legal education (Ozuru and Chikwe 2015; and Chikwe and Ozurur 2014). In specific, the objective of this study is to examine if relationship exists between Nigeria judicial system management and electronic legal evidence services consumers, with the focus of protecting consumers (litigants) of legal services and enhancement of e-evidence admissibility in Nigeria.

**Research Questions**

- To what extent do legal practitioners relate to electronic legal service consumers in Nigeria?
- To what extent do court clerks relate to electronic legal service consumers in Nigeria?

**Study Variables and Conceptual Framework**

In this study, Nigeria Judicial System Management is our predictor variable; with its dimensions are Legal Practitioners and Court Clerks. Our criterion variable is Electronic Legal Service Consumers, with its measure as Litigants. The attributes to these variables are:

- **Nigeria Judicial System Management:** This arm of the government is saddled with the responsibility of performing duties relating to the interpretation of laws in courts that have been enacted by the legislature. The judiciary is conceptually defined as the court system of the country.

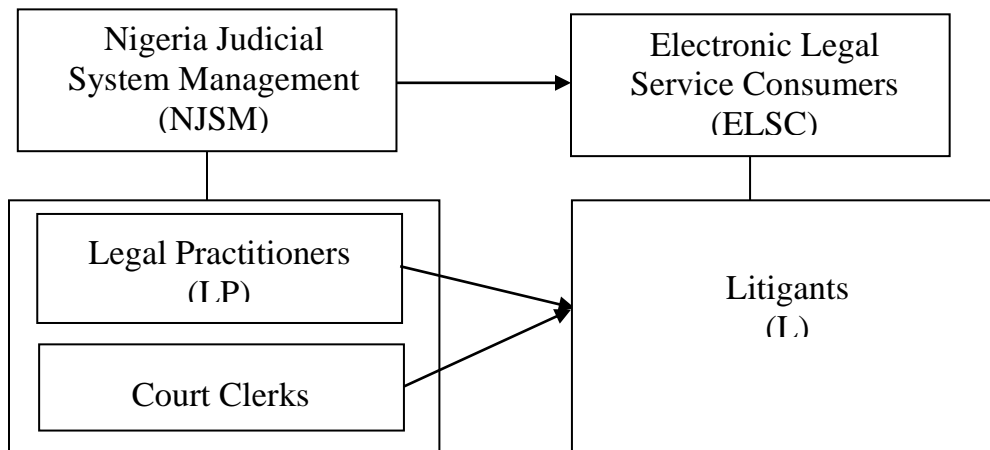
- **Legal Practitioner:** A lawyer who is trained and holds a practicing licence and certificate to practice in the courts of the land, as well as being admitted to the Bar (e.g. Nigeria Bar Association), stands for complainants or defendants who consume legal services in a court system.
- **Court Clerks:** The court clerks in some of the higher courts of the land are appointed, but sometime elected to office in lower courts. The court clerk administers oaths to witnesses, Jorus and grand jury. He or she holds the custodian of the seal that is used to authenticate copies of the court’s order or judgment.
- **Litigant(s):** A person or persons engaged or involved in a lawsuit or a party or parties to a lawsuit, for instance, plaintiffs (claimants) and defendants (respondents) are both litigants who consume electronic legal services in a court of law.

Based on our research variables, the operationalization or functional relationship is as stated hereunder:

ELSC = f(NJSM)	-	-	-	-	1
NJSM = LP, CC	-	-	-	-	2
ELSC = L	-	-	-	-	3

Where:

- ELSC = Electronic Legal Service Consumers
- NJSM = Nigeria Judiciary System Management
- LP = Legal Practitioners
- CC = Court Clerks
- L = Litigants



**Fig. 1:** Conceptual and operational framework of Nigeria judicial system management and electronic legal service consumers

**Source:** Authors’ Conceptualization

**Research Hypothesis**

Drawing from the research conceptual framework, the following hypotheses are formulated.

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant and positive relationship between legal practitioners in Nigeria judicial system management and electronic legal service consumers.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant and positive influence of court clerks in the Nigeria judicial system management and electronic legal service consumers.

## **Review of Relevant Literature**

### **Theoretical Foundations**

The legal profession in Nigeria was fundamentally embraced in about 1862, a period when the British colonial administration first introduced a system of courts drawn from the British system. This system witnessed the lifeblood of an organized legal profession that provided the vehicle that enhanced the application of English laws and procedures in Nigeria (<http://fisconline.gov.ng/history-judiciary.html> retrieved 2013). Accordingly, in 1876, the Supreme Court Ordinance was enacted in order to monitor the legal profession and define those who could engage in the practice of law in the colony. It is important to remark that this ordinance empowered any person that was admitted as barristers or advocates in Great Britain, or Ireland, or as solicitors in the colony (Ali, 2013).

In like manner, those who had close contact with legal practitioners, were deemed fit and sufficiently knowledgeable in law and could also be admitted as attorneys. As a result of acute shortage of qualified persons, the possibility of the colonies affording the luxury of separating barristers (i.e. those who appear in courts) from solicitors (i.e. those who are confined to office work), as was applicable then in England, became very remote. This scenario marked the beginning of a synergy and fused legal profession (Barristers and Solicitors) in Nigeria. On the whole, in 1945, the Supreme Court Civil Procedure Rules marked the end of self-taught attorneys, and in 1959, a committee was formed to oversee the future of legal profession in Nigeria, under the auspices of E.I.G. Unsworth, the then Attorney General of Nigeria. These processes witnessed the beginning of Nigeria Judicial System and management.

### **Nigeria Judicial System**

The word or concept termed Judiciary; can be defined as the court system of a country. It can be described as the branch of government vested with the judicial power. It is fundamentally regarded as the third arm of the government. The strategic function of the judiciary is the interpretation of the laws enacted by the legislature.

In a related development, the Judiciary that is known as the “judiciary system’, is a court system that readily interprets and applies the law in the country. In another development, judiciary is also used and collectively refers to the personnel of a court system, such as Judges, Magistrates, Court Registrars, Court Clerks and Lawyers forming the core of the Judiciary and the staff that maintain the smooth running of the system. As relatedly asserted by Lloyd (1991) and Okorie (2015), law itself is one of the institutions which are central to the social nature of man, and without which we would be a very different creature.

The power of the Federal Judiciary is exercised by federal courts that oversee disputes emanating between individuals, governments, as well as corporate entities in accordance with the law of the land. Consequent upon this, various courts, the functions, powers and their responsibilities at both federal and state levels constitute the formation of the Federal Judicature, which include:

- **Constitution Courts:** The constitutional court has the authority to look into matters dealing with the interpretation of the enforcement of the federal constitution along with

other duties within its reach. This court is comprised of the President with its guiding law to prescribe the required number of Justices of the constitution courts.

- **Federal High Courts:** These courts have jurisdiction in matters arising from civil and criminal cases, issues relating to the relevance of the federation such as taxes, customs, exercise duties, banking, copyright, admiralty, citizenship, etc.
- **Court of Appeals:** The Federal Courts of Appeal are made up of seating presidents and the justices of the court of Appeals amongst which, three of them, at least must be learned in Islamic Law, while three must be learned in customary law. It has exclusive jurisdiction to hear, interpret and determine appeals from the Federal High Courts, High Court of the Federal Capital Territory, State High Courts, Sharia Court of Appeals, Customary Court of Appeals, National Industrial Courts, a Court-Martial or other tribunals prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly.
- **Supreme (Apex) Court:** This is the highest court in Nigeria that makes final decision on all matters that are presented for appeals. It consists of the Chief justice of the Federation and a reasonable number of justices of the Supreme Court as may be deemed necessary by an Act of the National Assembly.
- **High Court of the Federal Capital Territory:** This arm of the court consists of a Judge and such number of Judges as may be prescribed by Law with unlimited jurisdiction as the State High Courts.
- **Other Courts of the Federal Capital:** Within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), are Sharia Court of Appeals and Customary Court of Appeals presided over by the Grand Khadi/Khadis for the Sharia Court and the President of Customary Court Appeal. The Sharia Court of Appeal exercises appellate and supervisory jurisdictions in civil proceedings relating to Islamic Law, while the Customary Court of Appeal exercises appellate and supervisory jurisdictions over civil proceedings on customary issues. Jurisdiction is the spinal cord of a court of law (Okanyi and Okeke, 2015).
- **State Courts:** Every state has its own High Courts, headed by a Chief Judge, supported by a number of judges as may be prescribed by the law of the state. The High Court exercises unlimited jurisdiction to hear, interpret and determine on civil and criminal proceedings under state law.
- **Other Courts of Appeal:** Here exists Sharia Court of Appeals and Customary Court of Appeal for any state that desire to have one. In addition, there are Election Tribunals and Election Appeal Tribunal in each state of the Federation to decide on irregular issues regarding any election (Obiaraeri, 2013).

### **Digital or Electronic Evidence and Admissibility**

As opined by Wigwe (2016), the law of Evidence forms the very basis upon which facts are proved or disproved in any judicial proceedings. According to Wigwe, it is the wheel upon which judicial proceedings ride in our Courts. In fact, cases are won or lost in judicial proceedings based on the sufficiency of evidence or lack of it in proof of facts in issues or facts relevant to the facts as issue generally (Wigwe, 2016).

The focus of admissibility of a computer or electronic generated document is on the security and reliability of the computer system that handles the record (Obiaraeri, 2012). It is

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further noted that, under the Evidence Act 2011, the rules made for admission of computer outputs are not excessively difficult, but they are not completely immune from judicial scrutiny.

The Evidence Act of 2011 – “Admissibility of statements in documents produced by computers”, states in section 84 sub sections 2(a), (b), (c), (d), 3(a), (b), (c), (d), and 4(a), (b), that a statement contained in a document produced via a computer, which statement is relevant to the facts in issue, is admissible as evidence on the fulfillment of the following (Obiaraeri, 2013).

- The computer from which the document was produced was used regularly during the material period to store electronic information or to process information of the kind stated in the document;
- The computer from which the document was produced also had stored in it other information of the kind contained in the document or of kind from which the information contained in the document was concerned.
- That through the material period, the computer was operating properly, and where it was not, evidence must be provided to establish that during the period when the computer was not operating properly, the production of the document or the accuracy of its contents were not compromised or affected;
- That the information in the statement is reproduced or derived from the information supplied to the computer in the ordinary course of the activities in question (Evidence Act 2011).

Electronic or Digital Evidence is any probative information stored in digital form that a party to a court case may use at trial. Before accepting electronic evidence, a court will determine if the evidence is relevant, whether it is authentic, it is here say and whether a copy is acceptable or the original is required (Wikipedia, 2013).

The use of the digital evidence has increased in the past several years as courts have allowed the use of e-mails, digital photographs, ATM transactions logs, word processing accounting programme, spread-sheets, internet browser history, data bases, the contents of computer memory, computer back-up, computer print-outs, global positioning system tracks, logs from a hotel’s electronic door-locks, audio files, video files, texts and power points that are electronically submitted for use at trial, hearing or motion docket. Locks and digital video or audio files in some courts in Nigeria and in some Western countries have also applied the Evidence Act 2011 to digital or electronic evidence in a similar way to traditional documents (Obiaraeri, 2012).

**E-Consumers of Legal Services**

E-consumer for the purpose of this paper means an individual who use computer generated or printouts for litigation in the court of law. As opined by Nwobike (2013), “the consumer in developing countries is sick, not necessary in a physiological sense, but in the legal sense of not having a formidable legal umbrella from which to repulse continuous importation of shoddy, dangerous and killer products most of which come from the developed ... Thus, a proper regime is yet to be charted for protecting consumers in developing countries” (Nwobike, 2013).

In the like manners, consumers of electronic legal services have the right to a fair hearing as well as right to evidentiary hearing in order to determine if such computer print-outs can be tendered for evidence in the court proceedings without investigation, identification, examination search and seizure, preservation, examination, analysis and reporting from a certified forensic expert. Consumers of legal services in Nigeria have the right for full authentication of the digital evidence as practiced in times of murder cases. However, in as much as consumers of Electronic Legal Services over the years have enjoyed adequate protection from disabuse of trial evidence with the Evidence Act of 1945 (Amended) , consumers of electronic legal evidence must be equally protected for an abuse in presenting digital evidence. Under the admissibility prong, electronic evidence is often ruled inadmissible by courts because it was obtained without authorization. In most jurisdictions a warrant is required to seize and investigate digital devices (Newman and Ellis, 2010).

### **Certificate Authenticating Computer Generated Documents**

Section 84(4) of the Evidence Act 2011, provides that where it is desirable to give a statement in evidence by virtue of section 84 of the Evidence Act 2011, a certificate identifying the document containing the statement and describing the manner in which the document was produced, with the particulars of any device involved in the production of the document, signed by a person occupying a responsible position in relation to the operation of electronic device, shall be primarily and sufficient evidence of the matters stated in the certificate (Chukwumerie, 2013). In a related development, the Lagos State Chief Judge (Kazeem O. Alogba) has set out in April, 2020, a new practice directions for the conduct of Remote Hearing of cases in the Lagos State Judiciary, in view of the current Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic, which has necessitated the use of Remote Hearing (e-evidence) to ensure that cases are heard and disposed of urgently where possible.

### **Litigants (Consumers) Admissibility of Electronic Legal Services Challenges in Nigeria Judiciary**

In this dispensation of digital economy, it poses some challenges for the courts as relatedly argued by Obiaraeri (2013), and in relation to the way and manner in which electronic documents can be used as evidence. This form of document is generally seen to be vulnerable to deliberate or in-deliberate changes that may be difficult to detect or possible not at all. Also, most documents that may be presented are likely to be copies of the original data contents of the document due to the nature of information system network (Akomoledge, 2008).

These factors nevertheless present challenges for courts in terms of admissibility of evidence, ranging from reliability, abuse of digital forensic experts, and absence of forensic investigation process provision in the judiciary, best evidence rule, hearsay rule and authenticity and integrity of the document. Further, even if it exists that electronic document satisfies the court tests to be presented for its admissibility; there is still the doubt of what should be attached to that documentary evidence (Bamodu, 2004).

- **Abuse of Digital Forensic Experts:** One of the major challenges in admission of electronic evidence is the authenticity of the computer generated document without an expert opinion from a professional digital forensic specialist, like in the murder trial where an expert in pathology will be called to testify to the circumstances surrounding the murder. As the courts require expert opinion in murder cases, the courts should also set standards

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on the employment of a forensic expert in the admission of electronic or digital evidence. The consumers (litigants) have a right and a fair admissibility of the evidence.

The courts neither have provision for a forensic expert nor a forensic investigation processes (as perceived). In the westernized countries, the court system has adequate protection of the consumers of legal services by establishing the use of digital forensic experts in a computer generated documents as well as an established forensic investigation process (as often heard).

- **Absence of Forensic Investigation Processes Provision in the Judiciary:** The court system as perceived is void of any reliable forensic investigative process such as the following steps or stages:
  - **Identification:** In this stage, the incidence is recognized, and as such requires investigations. The stage is further triggered as a result of detecting irregularities in a system, information concerning a crime, and so on.
  - **Search and Seizure:** Here, a search warrant must be obtained and required tools and techniques must of necessity be collected. Strategies which maximize the collection of unstained evidence and minimizing impact on victims should be adopted.
  - **Preservation:** This involves following step by step approach in order to stop or prevent any activity that can damage digital information that has been collected. An ongoing deletion process must be stopped in order to prevent persons from using the computers during collection, using the safest way in gathering information.
  - **Examination:** This relates to examining computer media, like floppy disks, hard disks drives, backup tapes, CD-rows as well as any other media used in storing data. Data objects may include time stamps, log files, data files containing specific languages, etc.
  - **Analysis:** In this case, the evidence has to be analyzed as to identify the perpetrators of crimes, claim damages and defend copy rights. This also requires noting importance, reconstructing data fragments and drawing some conclusions based on the type of document collected. Tests should be done more than once as to support the crime theory. Technical knowledge is also required at this juncture in order to carry out an effective analysis process.
  - **Reporting:** This stage involves translating, summing and providing some conclusions on the analysis of the evidence. Presentations must be in a way that every person should understand.
- **Best Evidence Rule:** Under the best evidence rule, the tender of the evidence must demonstrate the “Best Evidence” that is in relation to the documents and should show that original document or one close to it. Generally, electronic documents do not have so to say what is original, because they are copies or copies of copies of the first data inputted into the computer system (Chasse, 2007).

As a result, Nigeria Judicial system must be careful under the Best Evidence Rule. The courts should be very careful in allowing the admissibility of electronic evidence as the computer print-outs may tend to violate the Best Evidence Rule, as computer print-out may not be considered an original in some cases.

- **Hearsay Rule:** Under the “Hearsay Rule”, this is subject to permitted exceptions which prevent the use of second-hand information against information by an eye witness who is



subject to cross-examination and re-cross examination on the information. Therefore, a document purporting to represent the statement of an individual that is not called as a witness to present the document and be cross-examined on it, is likely to be subjected to the hearsay rule (Bamodu, 2004).

- **Reliability Issue:** This relates to electronic document consistency or reproducible in terms of making references in Judiciary. Reliability issue is another challenge in that; the courts must be satisfied with regard to the ‘reliability’ of the document. This means that, it is purported to be what it ought to be and the inherent integrity attached to it proving that, it has not been tampered with or modified from its original condition (Bamodu, 2004).

As argued by Obiaraeri (2012), the attention relating to the admissibility of computer or electronic generated document is on the security and reliability of the computer system that handles the records. The rules made for admissibility of computer outputs are not completely immune from judicial scrutiny as emphasized under the Evidence Act 2011, and the need for computer generated evidence authentication becomes necessary as specified in section 84(1) of the Evidence Act 2011, and stated implicit conditions.

- **Digital Media Alteration:** Another inherent challenge is the common attack on electronic evidence, which shows that digital media can be easily altered. Under this principle, proponents of e-evidence should be able to demonstrate the reliability of the computer equipment, the manner in which the basic data were initially imputed, the measures taken to ensure the accuracy of the data as entered, the method of storing the data and precautions taken to prevent loss, the reliability of the computer programmes used to process data, and the measures taken to verify the accuracy of the programme (Akomoledé, 2008).
- **Primary/Secondary Issue:** In addition, contents of documents must be proven by primary or secondary evidence. Primary evidence of document includes document itself, or each part of a document produced in counterparts or in parts, or each product of one uniform process of production, but excluding copies of a common original. Secondary evidence includes a written admission of the existence, condition or contents of the original document, in some specific circumstances, ‘any secondary evidence’ of the contents of the original presumably including oral testimony, a certified copy of original of a public document or a document of which the Act or any law permits the use of a certified copy (Evidence Act, 2011).

In all facets of life and businesses, the question on admissibility and use of computer printouts has been an admissible instrument issue in the courts. Since the passage of the Evidence Act of 2011, Nigerian courts have had varied and controversial opinions with regards to admitting electronic evidence in courts compared to affidavits. For instance, in Anyaebosi Vs R.F. Briscoe Nigeria Limited, the Supreme Court of Nigeria confirms in a unanimous decision that computer print outs are admissible in evidence under the current Section 97 of the Evidence Act, as such evidence amounts to secondary evidence (Bamodu, 2004).

- **Readability:** Another challenge in the judicial system is that electronic evidence is almost never in a format readable by humans, requiring additional steps to include digital documents as evidence (i.e. printing out the material). The change of format may mean that digital evidence does not qualify under the Best Evidence Rule.

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- **New Forms of Communication/Common Attack:** There is also the challenge to the courts arising from new forms of communication especially through information technology, as they must be carefully handled with well-crafted policies and rules that reflect the unique characteristics of this new form of communication.
- **Lack of Digital Forensic Practitioner:** Computer forensic investigation has become a dominant resource for lawyers both in criminal and civil proceedings. The forensic investigator is expected to be competent in the use of a variety of forensic tools in order to ensure that every forensic investigation process is conducted within the acceptable legal framework of the court system (Ami-Narh and Williams, 2008).
- **Affidavit Evidence:** There is the challenge to affidavit evidence by their very origin, nature and mode of transmission. In addition, storage and usage of electronically generated evidence pose certain challenges when used in evidence, particularly affidavit evidence challenges bordering on authenticity, integrity and confidentiality of the piece of evidence.
- **Lack of Confidentiality:** Electronically generated materials hardly enjoy confidentiality since they are legitimately, or illegitimately accessible to third parties, or undesirable/unpermitted readers or users. In this case, consumer’s right to privacy is totally neglected and violated.

**Methodology**

The strategic objective of this paper is to empirically investigate if Nigeria Judicial System Management significantly impacts on Electronic Legal Service Consumers in such ways that electronic or digital evidence can satisfy the tests of being admissible in the courts and the system sustainability. The study adopted cross-sectional survey design and a 5-point Likert coded scale measure in the questionnaire design. Data collection instrument relevance and consistency was ascertained. 170 respondents that constituted the sample size were statistically selected from statistically selected courts in Rivers State, Nigeria. Data were drawn from the 170 selected respondents and 154 copies of the questionnaire were found fit for use in analysis after data cleaning. Data were analyzed using multiple regression statistical techniques at 0.5 level of significance with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software, at 0.05 level of significance.

**Data Analysis, Findings and Discussions**

**Results on the Regression between Nigeria Judicial System Management and Electronic Legal Service Consumers**

**Table 1: Model Summary**

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std Error of the Estimate
	.857 <sup>a</sup>	.735	.730	.41563

**Table 2:** ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	87.395	4	21.848	126.47	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	31.267	181	.173		
Total	118.662	185			

a. Dependent Variable: Electronic Legal Service Consumers

b. Predictors: (Constant), Legal Practitioners, Court Clerks

**Table 3:** Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.223	.160		7.648	
1 Legal Practitioners	.786	.045	.743	17.400	.000
Court Clerks	.684	.029	.820	23.289	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Electronic Legal Service Consumers

As shows in table 1 above, the multiple regression analysis indicates that the R value is 0.857, the R square is 0.735 and the standard error of the estimate is .41563. The results of our analysis reveal that legal practitioners and court clerks as dimensions of Nigeria judicial system accounted for 85.7% in electronic legal service consumers in selected courts in the study area, while 24.3% is explained by other factors outside the model.

Table 2, analysis of variance (ANOVA), the results showed a regression sum of square value of 87.395, which is higher than the residual sum of squares value of 31.267. This implies that the predictor variables in the model accounted for most of the variations in the criterion variable and significantly influenced it.

In addition, the larger value of R square 0.735 indicates that the model is found fit in explaining the characteristics of the data or population of study. The adjusted R square value of 0.730 indicates that the value of R square very closely ascertains the goodness of fit of the model in the population.

The F calculated value of 126.475 which is greater than the critical F value, and such depicts the significance, relationship and reliability of the model as ascertained by the regression analysis results. Similarly, since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, it therefore implies statistical significance relationship exists between the predictor and criterion variables. This indicates that the predictor variable dimensions of legal practitioners and court clerks to a great extent influenced or explained the variations in the criterion variable of electronic legal service consumers through the measure (Litigants).

Furthermore, in table 3, a critical examination of the Beta Coefficients showed that Legal Practitioners made relatively the highest contributions or influence on electronic legal service consumers (Litigants). All these statistically explained that significant relationships exist between the predictor and criterion variables in the study area.

### Management Implications

In order to achieve effective judicial system management sustainability, the need has come to fore for the emphasis on the adoption and admissibility of electronic evidence in our

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courts in line with the Evidence Act 2011. This should be necessary as the world today has become a global village where information technology has made it possible to obtain evidence without being present at the scene of the incident, and where little useful action can be electronically recorded, stored, preserved, and at the end presented in a court of law at any time in order to obtain a competent judicial verdict, as well as the sustainability of effective judicial system management.

**Conclusions**

The findings of our study have revealed that Nigeria judicial system management relates to electronic legal service consumers. The study has also revealed the obvious clarity that electronic legal evidence and communication are becoming more and more prevalent in court proceedings. As a result, adequate time should be devoted to identifying and analyzing the authenticity admissibility challenges issues relative to electronic legal data involved in litigations. These issues should be looked into as early as possible, because they are critical to a successful presentation and admissibility of electronic evidence on summary judgments, at hearings or trials in the court.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are hereby advanced:

- A digital or electronic forensic expert must be employed to follow up the electronic evidence competency and processes that are needed before such document will be presented for evidence and admissibility in the court.
- The courts must establish a clear electronic legal format requirements and relevance.
- The rights of electronic legal service consumers (litigants) privacy must be adhered and sustained.
- The judiciary system creates awareness and educating the citizens on the challenges of electronic legal evidence documents.
- Admissibility of the electronic legal evidence must be consistent and universal in Nigeria judicial system and management.

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