Check for the Correct/Complete Citation

Have you ever experienced finding a case as in the citation but yet the case was not the one you needed.

Why does this happened???

The citation that you have might be incomplete or incorrect. But, don’t give up!!! There are ways to look for the case. Let’s check it out by following one of these steps...

For example, you are looking for:

Madzimbamuto v Lardner-Burke [1968] 1 AC 645

Reminder: before searching, you must identify the subject of the case and which country the report originated from in order to get to the needed information. For the abovementioned case, we know that it is on constitutional law and it originated from United Kingdom.

1. **Check in the textbooks of the specific subject.**
   Example: “Briefcase on constitutional & administrative law” by David Herling

   Look in the table of cases section. If the case is cited in this book, the correct citation can be found.

   Sometimes we can get alternative citation of the same case, meaning that the same case can also be found in other reports.

   From here, you will find out that the correct citation is: [1969] 1 AC 645, not [1968] 1 AC 645.
2. Check in any related reference tools or indexes

Most of the reports come with indexes. Check the subject and jurisdiction of the case and use the appropriate index to find the case.

Use the Library Catalogue/OPAC to check the location of the material. Some of Malaysian reports that have index are:

i. Mallal's Digest;
ii. Malayan Law Journal;
iii. All Malaysia Reports; etc.

In this example, we are using indexes/reference tools which originated from UK.

Sample a: Law Reports index

Sample b: Current Law Case Citator

Sample c: The Digest Consolidated index

The full citation of the case is available in the individual index - 8(2).

3. Check in the Internet

This is the easiest and most convenient method to check for the correct citation. But, not all the time we can get the information here. Or if it is available, sometimes it does not provide us with alternative citations.