

# LEGAL INFORMATION SYSTEM AND SERVICES IN WEST BENGAL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF JUDICIAL SCIENCES (WBNUJS) AND HAZRA LAW COLLEGE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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**Abstract:** The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS) is an autonomous law university which offers several courses at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. WBNUJS or NUJS is considered as the one of the best amongst the elite national law school in India and built on the five- year law degree model proposed and implemented by the Bar Council of India. Hazra law college is one of the branches of University of Calcutta for the purpose of having higher studies in this field and Hazra Law College is one of the well-known law institutions in all over the country.

The present study is based on a comparative study between National University of Judicial Sciences, West Bengal (WBNUJS) and "Hazra Law College, University of Calcutta, West Bengal. The study wants to explore the comparison between National University of Judicial Sciences and Hazra Law College, University of Calcutta. It also wants to highlight the role of both legal institutions in West Bengal. This article will describe the present situations the growth and statistics and services of legal information system in West Bengal.

**Keywords:** Legal information retrieval, Academic library, Legal professionals, Hazra Law College, National University of Judicial Sciences, West Bengal.

**1. Introduction:** There is no doubt that information is important for the development of societies. Information seeking behavior is one of the heavily researched topics in library and information science and also scattered widely across various disciplines. In present society each and every people need proper information for their day to day activity as well as their development. Information is a symbol or set of symbols which has the potential for meaning. Information is also reduce uncertainty and assists in decision making. Information need is an individual or group's desire to locate and obtain information to satisfy a conscious or unconscious need. The 'information' and 'need' in 'information need' are an inseparable interconnection. The concept of information needs was coined by an American information journalist Robert S. Taylor in his article "The process of asking questions" published in American Documentation (Now is Journal of the American Society of Information Science and Technology). <sup>[3]</sup> The main objective of information need is explanation of observed phenomena of information use or expressed need. Proper and authentic information helps the legal professionals for making a good judgment and running a judicial system. In this study the target group is legal professionals, so their information need is modern and more advanced.

**2. Objective of the study:** The main objectives of this study are:

- ✓ To investigate the information need of legal professionals of these institutions;
- ✓ To identify different purposes for seeking the information and services of this legal professionals;
- ✓ To examine the different kinds of legal information sources used by such professionals;
- ✓ To know about the ICT tools they are using for the betterment of the library and to stay connected with national and international legal information systems;
- ✓ To identify the techniques of accessioning information this is used by the library of these institutions.

**3. Scope and coverage:** National University of Judicial Sciences, West Bengal (WBNUJS) is a central Govt. law university while Hazra Law College, University of Calcutta is a law university under state Govt. The study is based on the structural and functional comparison between one central Govt. law university and one state Govt. university law campus.

**4. Methodology:** A questionnaire was designed with unstructured mode. Mainly interview was taken from the libraries on the basis of questionnaire. The observation method was also taken into the consideration.

## 5. Legal information retrieval through academic library:

**5.1. Legal professional:** It is a profession where the professionals studies develops and apply law e.g. lawyers. Following are the listing of legal professionals in a judicial system:

- Judge
- Lawyer
- Advocate
- Attorney
- Solicitor
- Jurist

**5.2. Academic library:** An academic library is a library that is attached to a higher education institution which serves two complementary purposes to support the school's curriculum, and to support the research of the university faculty and students. It is unknown how many academic libraries there are internationally.

**5.3. Legal information retrieval:** Legal information retrieval is the science of information retrieval applied to legal text, including legislation, case law, and scholarly works. Accurate legal information retrieval is important to provide access to the law to laymen and legal professionals. Its importance has increased because of the vast and quickly increasing amount of legal documents available through electronic means. Legal information retrieval is a part of the growing field of legal informatics.

## 6. Brief description of WBNUJS and Hazra Law College:

**6.1. The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):** <sup>[5]</sup> The West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences was established under the WBNUJS Act, 1999 (West Bengal Act IX of 1999) adopted by the West Bengal legislature in July, 1999. The University was notified under clause (f) of section 2 of the UGC Act, 1956 in August 2004 and has been granted permanent affiliation by the Bar Council of India in July 2005.

**6.1.1. Objectives of WBNUJS:** Major objectives of the WBNUJS are:

- ✓ Advance and disseminate learning and knowledge of law and legal processes and their role in national development;
- ✓ Promote legal knowledge and to make law and the legal process efficient instruments of social development;
- ✓ Develop in the student and research scholar a sense of responsibility to serve society in the field of law by developing skills with regard to advocacy, legal service, legislation, law reforms and the like;
- ✓ Promote inter-disciplinary study of law in relation to management, technology, international cooperation and development;

**6.1.2. Library and information centre of WBNUJS:** <sup>[4]</sup> The library occupies a central location measuring 1500 sq. m. and provides seating for approximately 300 users. The open access system followed in the library allows unlimited access not only to the students but also to research scholars from different parts of the country.

The library collection has over 20,000 titles exclusive of titles donated by renowned personalities and organizations. The library also subscribes e-books and e-journals. The library subscribes to approximately 124 print journals, including foreign publications, which cover a wide range of legal as well as other related subjects. The library has the archives of the complete sets of most prestigious journals in the field of law. Adequate provision is made for general reading, newspapers and magazines.

Keeping in stride with the digital age, the library has enhanced its resources by subscribing to various leading online databases Hein Online, Westlaw, LexisNexis, Manupatra, EJURIX, SCC Online, JSTOR, SAGE journals, Kluwer Arbitration and EPW (NUJS Resources). The databases can be accessed across the campus on LAN and Wi-Fi and off-campus by 'Remote access'. The library is open 20 hours a day (24 x 7 during and before exams), and all days of the year except 3 national holidays. CCTV installation helps in support service. Implementation of RFID & digital library assistant (for stock management as well as self-checkout service), magnetic tattle tapes and security gate (for security purpose) have made it a very user friendly and state-of-the-art- technology library.

The library is an institutional member of various libraries around and also is a participating member of INFLIBNET's UGC-Infonet consortium and regularly contributes to Shodhganga, Shodhgangotri, and IndCat. The computer centre hosts nearly 70 machines backed by national knowledge network connectivity of 1 GBPS. The library also facilitates the use of Anti-plagiarism detection software 'Turnitin' and iThenticate. The library is fully automated on VIRTUA (VTLS) –Integrated library software.

**6.1.3. Library services:**

- ✓ Reference services
- ✓ Circulation services
- ✓ Bibliographic services
- ✓ CAS & SDI services
- ✓ News paper clippings services
- ✓ Content alert services

- ✓ Document delivery services
- ✓ Print, Scanning and photocopying services.

**6.2. Hazra Law College:** <sup>[2]</sup> Hazra Law College is one of the branches of University of Calcutta for the purpose of having higher studies in this field and Hazra Law College is one of the well-known law institutions in all over the country. Department of law, University of Calcutta also popularly known as Hazra Law College was established in the year of 1909, initially in the period since 1909 to 1983 the name of the college was University College of Law. Post 1983 the name was remained to department of law, University of Calcutta.

**6.2.1. Library and information centre of Hazra Law College:** <sup>[1]</sup> The library which was at first in the college street campus has been presently shifted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor at Hazra Campus, Department of law, University of Calcutta. The name of the library was previously Hazra law library. At present it has been upgraded to the status of a campus library and is known as Hazra law campus library, University of Calcutta vide Lib. Com. Dt. 25/05/2007 approved by syndicate dt. 26/06/2007. But now the aforesaid campus library is 12386 sq. ft. floor area (approx). This library consists of many old collections and rare books of eighteen century. Now this library provides current awareness service of books and current journals. Students, teachers and research scholars can access and download e-resources from this library.

#### 6.2.2. Library Services:

- ✓ Internet.
- ✓ Acquisition and technical.
- ✓ Circulation.
- ✓ Reference cum reading.
- ✓ Serials and periodicals (Old and current).
- ✓ Photo copying.

### 7. Discussions:

#### 7.1. Number of staffs of the library:

- **The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):** There are six professional staffs including librarian and assistant librarian.
- **Hazra Law College:** There are one deputy university librarian and three professional staffs and six semi-professional staffs.

#### 7.2. Number of users (only undergraduate and post graduate students):

- **The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):** There are around 700 students use the library on regular basis including the students of L.LM and L.LB.
- **Hazra Law College:** There are 600 L.LB students and 72 L.LM students use the library. Both have almost same number of user to their library.

#### 7.3. Number of research scholars:

- **The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):** There are the ranges of sixty five to sixty seven (65-67) research scholars who use this library regularly.
- **Hazra Law College:** There are fifty (50) research scholars and six regular teachers and ten guest teachers who use the library.

#### 7.4. Total number of collection:

- **The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):** Total number of documents is 22,000 including law reports and around 2000 donated books.
- **Hazra Law College:** Total number of collections is 76112 including books (52630), bound journals (22957), dissertations (236), seminar papers (243) and loose journals (46).

**7.5. Types of collection:**

- **The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):** Law reports, law reviews, legal periodicals, dictionaries and treatise are the main collection.
- **Hazra Law College:** Books, bound journals, dissertations, seminar papers, loose journals are the main collection.

**7.6. Classification scheme:**

- **The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):** 22<sup>nd</sup> edition of Dewey decimal classification scheme is used.
- **Hazra Law College:** 21<sup>st</sup> edition of Dewey decimal classification scheme is used.

**7.7. Cataloguing:**

- **The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):** MARC 21 is used.
- **Hazra Law College:** AACR2 is used.

**7.8. Uses of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID):**

- **The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):** RFID is used for the purposes of security and identification of books.
- **Hazra Law College:** No provision for using RFID as self-check mechanism.

**7.9. Conservation process:**

- **The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):** No preservation & conservation techniques of the documents because it is a new library.
- **Hazra Law College:** Fumigation chamber is used to eradicate the biological agents.

**7.10. Library budget:**

- **The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):** Approximately one crore is allotted for the development.
- **Hazra Law College:** Approximately eighty thousands rupees for the development.

**7.11. Library software:**

- **The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):** VTLS –Integrated library software is used.
- **Hazra Law College:** SOUL is used.

**8. Comparative study between the West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS) and Hazra Law College library:**

Sl. No.	Criteria	WBNUJS	Hazra Law College
i.	Number of staffs of the library	There are six professional staffs including librarian and assistant librarian	There are one deputy university librarian and three professional staffs and six semi-professional staffs.

ii.	Number of Users (only undergraduate and post graduate students)	Around 700 students use the library on regular basis including the students of L.LM and L.LB.	There are 600 L.LB students and 72 L.LM students.
iii.	Number of research scholars	Research scholars are in number, within the range of 65-67 and they use the library on regular basis.	50 research scholars are there and 06 regular teachers are there and 10 guest teachers also use the library.
iv.	Total number of collection	Total number of documents is 22,000 including law reports and around 2000 donated books are there.	Total number of collections is 76112 including books (52630), bound journals (22957), dissertations (236), seminar papers (243) and loose journals (46).
v.	Type of collection	Law reports, law reviews, legal periodicals, dictionaries and treatise.	Books, bound journals, dissertations, seminar papers, loose journals.
vi.	Classification scheme	22 <sup>nd</sup> edition of Dewey decimal classification Scheme is used.	21 <sup>st</sup> edition of Dewey Decimal classification scheme is used.
vii.	Process of cataloguing	Cataloguing is done by the help of MARC21.	For the purpose of Cataloguing MARC 21 is not used here, most probably cataloguing is done through using of AACR2.
viii.	Uses of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)	RFID is used to identify the books.	There is no provision for using RFID as self-check mechanism.
ix.	Conservation process	No data have been received about the preservation and conservation techniques of the documents of the NUJS library.	For the purpose of conservation, fumigation chamber is used to eradicate the biological agents.
x.	Library budget	Approximately one crore is allotted for the development of the library.	For the development of library approximately eighty thousand rupees is sanctioned.
xi.	Library software	NUJS uses VTLS as Library Software.	SOUL is used here

## 9. Findings of the study:

### 9.1. The West Bengal National University of Judicial Sciences (WBNUJS):

- Developing the student and research scholar a sense of responsibility to serve society in the field of law by developing skills with regard to advocacy, legal service, legislation, law reforms and the like.
- Promote inter-disciplinary study of law in relation to management, technology, international cooperation and development.
- The library is an institutional member of various libraries around and also is a participating member of INFLIBNET's UGC-Infonet consortium and regularly contributes to Shodhganga, Shodhgangotri and IndCat.
- NUJS uses VTLS as Library software
- The computer centre hosts nearly 70 machines backed by national knowledge network connectivity of 1 GBPS.
- The library is fully automated on VIRTUA (VTLS) –Integrated library software.

### 9.2. Hazra Law College:

- This library consists of many old collections and rare books of eighteen century.
- Library provides current awareness service of books and current journals.
- Research scholars can access and download e-resources from this library

- For the purpose of conservation, fumigation chamber is used to eradicate the biological agents.
- SOUL is used here as library software.

#### 10. Conclusion:

The conclusion of this article shows that the basic purposes of legal professionals are satisfactory. Both the institutes are able to provide satisfactory information to their user to their level best. Whether the existing legal information need sources like books, journals etc. are fulfilling the information requirement of the legal professional, it is observed that the various services are provided in both the legal institutions through their information systems.

#### 11. Suggestions:

After comparing the library services of two institutions, some suggestions have given by authors:

- Library financial budget should be utilized properly according to the user's requirement.
- Computer section should be updated with proper software and hardware equipments to access relevant information through web.
- Human resources, staff roles and their working skills should be developed with the changing pattern of ICT.
- Librarians of each institution should be superlative for their users providing high quality information.
- Library services should be compact with preservation and conservation system.

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