USE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES AND SERVICES AMONG LEGAL PROFESSIONALS: A SURVEY

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Abstract: The present study explores the use of digital resources and services by legal professionals of different law firm's legal professionals in Bengaluru. Legal and law libraries are considered as special libraries and their collections have tailored according to the user needs. A survey was conducted among the legal professionals of 04 selected law libraries in Bengaluru. Out of 150 questionnaires distributed, 118 (78.66%) valid responses were received back. The findings shows that legal professionals are much depending law libraries and they are visiting libraries every day, again legal professionals are having own collections of law related resources for their references. Majority of the professionals are using internet for accessing the e-resources and the main purpose of using them is for case law studies and judgement citations. It also examines the barriers the professionals are facing while using the e-resources and their level of satisfaction. As*some seniors advocate /respondents are having many problems to use or a accessing of e-resources due to lack of IT knowledge, and their limited access to the computers, even they have not awareness of legal databases and digital resources. 'Major, young and legal researchers' professionals are effectively utilizing the digital resources and legal data bases to information retrieval of case laws compendium and judgments'.* The study also reveals that almost all professionals are satisfied with the facilities available i.e. digital resources for accessing e-resources, different legal databases because it saves the time. Finally, poor internet connectivity, lack of time and availability of e-resources restricted to the firm are some of the difficulties they are facing.

Index Terms - **Digital library, e -resources, law libraries, legal professionals.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The law libraries are set to provide legal materials to assist legal practitioners and judicial officers and the role of information and communication technology in today's e- world is remarkable. It has extended efficiency, cost effectiveness, and accelerated at individual as well as the business or government level. We know that with the technology, we can able to conduct the academic researchers are even shop online. Now a day's Indian courts and advocates are sending notices by e mails to avoid delays. Law has been information based and information intensive. The law libraries and librarians play a unique and integral role in shaping the quality of the legal system at all levels by the virtue of their unique collection and services.

Libraries and books are legal professional's life partners. These resources and information and communication technology usage by the legal professional's penetration statistics has been on the rise continually over the last decades and format of information available on the web has affected information-seeking behavior. Especially in the law profession information seeking behaviors refers to searching and

utilizations of information by an individual and their collections and sources are tailored according to their needs. Hence, it is very important and essential for the legal professionals' libraries and Librarians to know the users' demands and way of seeking information.

The present days the legal professionals are much depending on e resources and online databases ex. AIR, CLA, SCC, Manupatra online for essay information retrieval and references relating to these library professionals and staffs should aware of information seeking behaviors of the legal professionals, then only they can able to provide digital sources and services according to their needs.

2. E-resources

The electronic resources are systems in which information is stored electronically and made accessible through electronic systems and computer networks. An electronic resource is defined as a resource which requires computer access or any electronic product that delivers a collection of data, be it text referring to full text bases, electronic journals, image collections, other multimedia products and numerical, graphical or time based, as a commercially available title that has been published with an aim to being marketed. These may be delivered on CD ROM, on tape, via internet and so on. Electronic resources provide access to information that might be restricted to the user because of geographical location or lack of finance. Electronic resources also provide access to current information as these are often updated frequently. Through their various search techniques electronic resources provide extensive links to explore additional resources or related content. In addition, electronic resources are considered as important resources of teaching, research and training. Thus, most of libraries as well as the universities of the present day provide electronic resources for higher education and research. Electronic resources deliver the collection of information as full text databases, e-journals, image collections, multimedia in the form of CD, tape, internet, web technology etc. E-resources may include e-journals, e-discussions, e-news, data archives, e-mail, online chatting, etc.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance and wide ranging scope of electronic resources for general communication, information retrieval and instructional delivery to support legal studies, teaching and research activities in tertiary educational institutions is acknowledged worldwide. The literature also shows that a number of relevant studies have been carried out on the use of e- resources by lecturers, research scholars and student's worldwide.The numbers of sources have been consulted and the content was gone through to identify the related studies on the present study of research. Some of the studies relevant to the present survey are:

Otike, J (2009) A study with lawyers in London in the United Kingdom. The legal professionals are priorities and depending on printed media as well electronic media is using as last and main purpose of this study is from where legal professionals are getting information's to fulfill their needs. Makri, S (2009)Study is in University College London. Here are respondent's suggestions are considering as priority base which needs essentially to improvements in libraries and information centers and each electronic resources how help full or supporting for the users to get their information. Naveed Ahmed, SadikBatcha. M (2009)A authors conducted a study in Bengaluru city: and finds that different types legal categories i.e. civil, criminal and other related sources are getting from the libraries timely and about the SDI & online resources respondents have positive response on it. Thanuskodi, S (2009) The study is in Central Law College, Salem. Here are finds that library users are expecting assistance towards using of digital resources. Therefore, library staffs need to concentrate on services about effective utilization of digital resources. Uluocha Anyaogu (Mrs) (2013) The mentioned studies In Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library In Lagos State. The study finds that all the responded has given positive response about digital resources which are available in library and need to update current law related sources time to time.

Chandra, K., et.all., (2014) presented the results of an investigation in the study on Use Pattern of E-Resources among Faculty Members in Arts and Science Colleges in Chennai concluded that most of the respondents were aware of e-resources available in their college library. They have accessed e-resources for their study and research purpose. Majority of the respondents opine that e-resources are useful.

Krishna dass, N., and Jayaraman, S. (2014) are discussed the utilization of e-Resources by Faculty Members and Research Scholars in Management Institutions affiliated to Bharathiar University, Coimbatore. The study showed that (46%) of the Faculty Members and Research Scholars are familiar with the use of e-resources, and majority of the members (42%) are using the e-resources for research work.

4. OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of the study reported here is to investigate the awareness, utilization of e-resources and the problems of search strategies adopted by the legal professionals in the field of law for accessing e-resources. The other objectives of the study are as follows:

- To know the frequency of visit to the libraries by the legal professionals

- To explore information seeking behavior of legal professional's

- To know the level of satisfaction among the legal professionals with respect to the digital resources and services

- To identify the most preferred online legal databases by legal professionals

- To know the problems faced by the legal professionals while using digital resources

- To suggest suitable recommendations to improve facilities and services related to the use of e-resources.

5. SCOPEAND LIMITATIONOF THE STUDY

The present study is limited to the legal professionals of 04 law libraries (Including High Court of Karnataka legal professionals) in Bangalore. The study highlights the digital resources and services, awareness and availability and use of e-resources by the legal professionals in law firm libraries and law libraries.Problems faced while accessing e-resources, level of satisfaction of the users, suitable recommendations to improve facilities and services.

6. METHODLOGY

To fulfil the objectives of the study we have adopted survey method, using withwell-structured questionnaire and interviews.
Designed questionnaire was distributed to the legal professionals of 04 Law firm libraries such asKhaitan& Co., N R Associates., Nagaraj Jain & Co., and Advocates high court of Karnataka, Bangalore. Total 150 questionnaires distributed 118 (78.66%) valid filled in questionnaires were collected.Along with data collection was carried out by semi-structured interviews.The data was analysed, tabulated, interpreted and presented in this paper using simple percentage technique.

7. Data Analysis And Interpretation

The analysis and interpretation of the data collected through the questionnaires distributed to the legal professionals of various law libraries in Bangalore and same as presented in the tables is given below.

7.1 Table I: Frequency of library visit

Frequency	Number of Respondent	Percentage
Every day	86	(72.88%)
Once in two days	24	(20.33%)
Once in week	08	(06.77%)

Legal professional's frequency visit of libraries in Table I indicates that library visiting frequency is the basic and very important aspect in this study. In response to the question how frequently do you use e-resources? The respondents have responded in different ways. Among the total respondents (72.88%) are visiting library every day it means legal professional are almost depending on the library sources to get their needed information's again here observe that (20.33%)respondents are visiting library once in two days and only (06.77%) respondents are vesting library once in a week.

7.2 Table II: Purpose of visit to the library
The results of the survey revealed that respondents visit the Library for different purposes;

Purpose	Number of Respondent	Percentage
To Read books	92	(77.96%)
To Barrow books	72	(61.01%)
To Read law journals	71	(60.16%)
To Read periodicals	66	(55.93%)

As shows in Table II major legal professionals are responded that their purpose of visit libraries to read the law related books and documents in libraries(77.96%)because maximum advocates are have their individual collections of information sources even (61.01%) respondents are barrows books from libraries and (60.16%)are visiting libraries to read particularlylaw journals and updating towards the research activities.

7.3 Table III: Purpose of using electronic resources
The purpose for which the e-resources were used by the users, as shown in following table

Purpose	Number of Respondent	Percentage
For Case study / Reference	94	(79.66%)
For Career Development	81	(68.64%)
Upgrading general Knowledge	56	(47.45%)
For Communication	28	(23.72%)

Here explains about legal professionals' awareness towards digital resources and the purpose of using electronic resources in Table III. Among the total respondents (79.66%) are responded that electronic resources they are using for the case studies /case references and the electronic resources are using to the career developments i.e. (68.64%). Even the respondents are using e resources for upgrading the knowledge (47.45%) to get the latest and current information on law subjects, for the communication (23.72%) is for using e resources.

7.4 Table IV: Type of digital resources accessed by Legal Professionals

Following table shows the types of e-resources accessed by the professionals to seek information for their needs.

Type of digital resources	Number of Respondent	Percentage
E-Database	84	(71.18%)
E-Journals	61	(51.69%)
E-Books	28	(23.72%)

The frequency usage of digital resources in this study we have observe that (71.18%) of respondents are express their interest on the digital resources are using to retrieve the law related information's with the help of latest digital devices and the (51.96%)respondents are shown that they accessing electronic online journals even(23.72%)respondents are using e- books to get relevant information's these all can be seen in the table IV.

7.5 Table V: Frequency usage of legal databases

Databases	Number of Respondent	Percentage
Manupatra	89	(75.42%)
SCC-Online	72	(61.01%)
LexisNexis	58	(49.15%)
Heinonline	44	(37.28%)

Online journals and online data bases are becoming very popular specially in law fields it is explains in Table V. because it saves time and printing papers, along with able to get accurate information within the meantime. In this study we asked a question about frequently using online consortia (75.42%) respondents are frequently using Manupatra online database. Followed by (61.01%) respondents are shown interest on SCC- online. Again, the corporate advocates are responded opinion about (49.15%) LexisNexis and (41.01%) respondents are using Hein online database to get relevant information.

7.6 Table VI: Satisfaction level of respondents with digital resources

Particulars	Number of Respondent	Percentage
Highly satisfied	54	(45.76%)
Satisfied	46	(38.98%)
Moderately Satisfied	18	(15.25%)

Table VI explains about level of satisfaction with digital resources. From the different law firms' legal professionals kind of digital resources facilities are getting by their respective firms according to that they have responded (45.76%) are highly satisfied with present e- sources availed in their law firms and followed by (38.98%) responded are satisfied with digital resources. Remaining (15.25%) respondents are expressing they are moderately satisfied.

7.7 Table VII: Problem faces while using e resources and services

Legal professionals problems faces while using digital resources it is indicates in Table VII

Frequency	Number of Respondent	Percentage
Lack of training	42	(35.59%)
IT related issues	36	(30.50%)
E resources are not adequate for needs	24	(20.33%)

Here we have observe that most of the senior advocates are not aware of digital resources still they prefer printed sources because of lack of training and awareness about digital resources which are available in legal profession hence(35.59%)respondents are needed training to get the relevant information as well to handle the digital resources. (30.50%) respondents are facing IT related issues and (20.33%) respondents' opinion is e resources are not adequate for needs.

8. DISCUSSION

In this study we find that legal professions are visiting libraries to every day to get their information along with they have their own collections of documents. Especially in law profession most of the legal professionals and practitioners depending on library sources there is no doubt. Now a day's libraries are becoming automated, digital libraries and books are becoming e books, e journals and providing online databases facilities to their users, these digital resources are now becoming user friendly and accessing information with many electronics devices Ex. Apps in mobiles- Fastcase, CA laws, Heinonline. Most of the legal professional are expressed their opinion is that digital resources are saving times, cost, printing papers and fast service they are getting through online. With this study we came to know that some of the senior most legal professionals are not aware of digital resources yet because all the small law firms are not having a professionally enriched digital library facilities till the date, they are using traditional books, documents this shows that they really need a training to using of digital resources and searching strategies to retrieve information from the online data bases. Therefore, libraries and librarians must take initiative to solve the problems of users like IT related issues, subscription of legal subject journals, online consortia's and must conduct orientation programs and related training to create awareness and effective utilizations of digital resources and online databases.

Overall in this study analyses, emerging of information and communication technology is not constant in a subject, research activities are going on in all the professional subjects. Again researchers and users are depending on digital resources to get their information in time. Similarly, in this study found that largest percentage of the legal professionals are depending on libraries and digital resources to get their needed information's and showed that legal professionals are spending more times on case studies references i.e. legal online journals and online databases. A good number of respondents are given positive opinions about the library staffs and they are expecting automated ICT based library services to retrieve information faster so the librarians and staffs have to create environment to attract and assisting to the users to make the best use of digital resources.

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are made:

- The study recommends that efforts to increase use of e-resources in the Library should concentrate on the selection of appropriate medium of information dissemination about the resource facility of the Library.

- The library must conduct training programmes to the legal professional /associates at regular intervals on the use the electronic resources effectively.

- Library staff display of content page of the e-journals can be added to the library website home page for attracting legal professionals and thereby increasing its usage.

- Digital library management software is needed to manage the digital documents and it will help the users to access the e-resources even from outside the campus and it also helps to solve the issues regarding the password of accessing different e-resources.

- More funds should be allocated for subscribing to more e- resources for the benefit of the user community.

- Suggestions from the users must be asked for before purchasing the e-resources. It will help to have a collection of only relevant e-resources and increase the satisfaction level of users. Computers with latest configurations should be made available in the library and the departments for speedy access to e-resources by the legal professionals.

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