A Study on Learning Environments of Government Law College Libraries in Tamil Nadu

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Abstract

Lawyers generally seek legal authority in court decisions and statutes relevant to the solution of factual problems in specific jurisdiction. These primary repositories of the law can easily be arranged chronologically on open shelves by jurisdiction or statewise. The target group of this study includes library users such as faculty members, research scholars and students from Dr.Ambedkar Law University and its affiliated Government Law College libraries in Tamilnadu have been taken up and analyzed. sample of library users were chosen from the Tamil Nadu Dr.Ambedkar Law University and its affiliated government Law colleges. Hundred and fifty respondents per College are selected as sample for the research from The Tamilnadu Dr.Ambedkar Law University and its seven affiliated Government Law College libraries in Tamilnadu and hence the sample size in 1200.

Keywords

Environment, Indexes, internet, E-resources, Bare Act. .

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Introduction

Law College Libraries have always been Practitioner oriented. Lawyers generally seek legal authority in court decisions and statutes relevant to the solution of factual problems in a specific jurisdiction. The tremendous growth of law book collections in the present century, however, the "information explosion" and the increasing demand for inter disciplinary materials in legal research have changed the concept that a law library is merely a collection of books in which legal authority can be found, and that can be easily arranged on shelves alphabetically by author or jurisdictionally under date of title. They suggest sources of information the lawyer can use and even more significantly, law librarians are trained to locate such sources when they are initially unknown to them.Law books are highly technical, tools that are difficult to use properly on occasion. Law librarians can skifully use indexes, conversion tables, tables, cases citations and other technical finding tools. They provide significant assistance to users because of their familiarity with bibliographies as well as many important sources. They know where to find the answers to questions involving business, medicines, history, the social sciences, economics and the applied sciences. Often the law librarian is the 'silent partner' in the research activities of lawyers, judges and scholars.

Review of Literature

Review of earlier studies is always considered to be a prominent activity in research. The present study deplay direct methods in collecting the existing literature by accessing libraries, searching articles from journals and bound volumes and dissertations and downloading, related articles from database and web. The reviewed articles centered round, use of information in Law Institutional libraries, information seeking behavior and reading habits.Devendra and khaiser Nikam (2014) found that information technology (IT) plays an important role in the development of libraries and information services. This paper aims to discuss the application of IT in the Law university libraries in South India". Survey method was followed for collecting primary data. As the research desired to include all the six law university libraries, no sampling method was adopted and the census population was considered. This study found the Wi-Fi internet facility was available in only four law university libraries viz., National law School of India University (NLSIU);

Karnataka, State Law University (KSLU) National University of Advanced Legal studies (NUALS), and National Academy of Legal studies and Research (NALSAR).

Kadhi and Hanchinal (2015), carried out a study on Information seeking behavior of law students in the changing digital environment. The purpose of this study is to serutinize the information seeking behavior of students of two law colleges in Mumbai. To know the information seeking behavior of law students, the concerned literature has been reviewed and questionnaire was randomly distributed to get the responses. The study mainly concentrates on frequency of visit to the library, purpose of information seeking, computer acquaintance, amount of time spent on information gathering activities, problem faced in information seeking etc. The results of the study reveal that books are still most heavily used resources by the students. A majority of the students are familiar with using offline and online legal databases. However, the students of both the colleges face the problem of information overload on internet and lack of skills to search information. Hence, the study recommends that formal users training programme shall be conducted to optimize the use of information sources and services.

Mallik and sen (2008) studied about information sources in Academic Law Libraries in India. They are of the opinion that the basic role played by libraries of Indian academic law institutes and available baisc information sources for resource building. Printed resources have been found to be specialized whereas online information resources are dynamic as they cover wide range of legal information. A web-page based study of the libraries of top twenty Indian academic legal institutes shows that more than half of the Indian premier academic legal Institutes do not provide any information regarding their online information resources and thus this may be assumed that they have hardly any online information resource. Eight of the India's top twenty academic legal institutes have well described libraries on the web with a variety of online resources which may be considered as shift change of libraries from printed information resources building to digital information dependency.

Oyesiku et al: (2006) did a study on Resources, services and management of academic. Law Libraries and Law Firm Libraries". The study included six academic law libraries two law court libraries and sevenlaw firm libraries of Nigeria. Out of the 15 libraries surveyed, library staff of 10 libraries responded to the questionnaire. It was found that all types of libraries had some information sources in law. Except one, none of the librarians of law firm libraries was professionally qualified. Only five libraries had written acquisition policy and 60% had serial sections. Strength of library staff varied among different types of libraries.

Lobar and Kumbar (2002) investigated the use of library facilities and information resources in sahyadri colleges, Shimoga (Karnataka). To collect the required data, a questionnaire was distributed among selected group of 100 teachers, out of which 42(84%) respondents were from Arts and Commerce college, and 49(98%) respondents are from science college. The findings of the study were that the majority of respondents visited the library for the purpose of consulting test books and reference books to acquire current and general information and to read newspapers and popular magazines, majority of the respondents (69.05%) and (63,27%) consulted the library cataloque for collecting information about documents available in the library. Majority of the respondents were found to be aware of the reading materials available.

SudhaRani.Y (2014) in her study on news paper reading habits, explores the use of news papers among the post graduate students at vikrama simha puri University College library, Nellore. Survey method was adopted for this study. The population consists of only the PG students of V.S.University, and the instrument used for collecting data was a self developed questionnaire. A total of 200 questionnaires were administrated to the students and only 152 were received. Hence the responses used for analysis was 76% of the questionnaire administered. The analysis revealed that majority of the respondents are reading news papers daily. It was a also indicated that favourite news papers among the students in English and Telugu language "The Hindu" and "Ecnadu" dailies. The finding also shows that students in V.S.University place high priority to read employment / education section in the newspaper.

Statement of the problem

The present study is entitled as, "A study of learning Environments of Government Law Colleges Libraries in Tamilnadu". The study intends to investigate from

the library users of the Government Law College libraries affiliated to the Tamilnadu Dr.Ambedkar Law University Chennai. The study seeks to understand among other things the sources and services that contribute a congenial environment for learning such as:

a) Purpose of visiting the library
b) Opinion about the adequacy of library materials.
c) Use of E-resources.
d) Availability/Accessibility of E-resources.
e) Opinion about overall sources and services of the library.

Objectives of the study

The following are the major objectives of the study.

1. To find out of the purpose of visit to the library.
2. To study the availability and accessibility of the legal information in law colleges in Tamilnadu.
3. To get the opinion from the library users regarding the adequacy of information resources in the libraries.
4. To study the use of E-resources by the library users.
5. To find out the level of satisfaction of ICT resources.
6. To collect the opinion from the library users of Law colleges libraries about learning environment that exists in libraries.

Methodology

The target group of this study includes library users such as faculty members, research scholars of the Tamilnadu Dr.Ambedkar Law University and its affiliated Government Law College libraries in Tamilnadu.For this study a sample of 1200 respondents have been selected from the eight government Law Colleges affiliated to Dr.Ambedkar Law University at the rate of 150 each on the basis of stratified random sampling method. The details of sampling has been tabulated belowData. The required data has been collected both from Primary and secondary sources. The selected 1200 respondents formed Primary source of information. Records of the Law Colleges Libraries, books, Articles appeared in the Journals and magazines formed secondary sources of information.

Analysis and Interpretation

With reference to the objectives framed for the study, the data collected has been tabulated, analysed applying various statistical tools and techniques and inferences arrived.

Table 1:Purpose of Visiting the Library

S. No.	Purposes	No. of Respondents	%
1	To Borrow and Return books	666	55.5
2	To read news papers magazines employment news	494	41.2
3	To consult reference books	333	27.8
4	To prepare cases	227	18.9
5	To read subject books	371	30.9
6	To complete class room Assignment	197	16.4
7	To refer question bank	192	16.0
8	To use thesis and dissertations	86	7.2
9	To use photocopier	106	8.8
10	To use internet	100	8.3
11	To prepare for seminar conference journal writing	136	11.33
12	To know the latest arrivals in library	48	4.0
13	Others if any	20	1.7
	Total	1200	100.

Table 1 presents the purpose of visit to the library by the respondents. The table shows that a majority of 666 (55.5%) respondents visit library either to borrower or return books. This is followed by 494(41.2%) of the respondents visit library to read newspapers, magazines or employment news. Next about 371(30.9%) go to libraries to read subject books, 333 (27.8%) to consult reference books. Hence, it is inferred that more than half of the respondents visit the library either to borrowor to return books and their second choice goes to read news papers.

Table 2: Opinion about the adequacy of legal formation in Law College Libraries.

S.No.	Sources	Adequate	No Comments	In adequate	Total
1.	Law Books	858 (71.5%)	91 (7.6%)	251 (20.9%)	1200
2	Legal Periodically	698 (58.2%)	132 (11%)	370 (30.8%)	1200
3	Legislation and Statutes	705 (58.8%)	140 (11.7%)	355 (29.6%)	1200
4	Law Journals	684 (57%)	136 (11.3%)	380 (31.7%)	1200
5	Magazines and news paper	718 (59.8%)	138 (11.5%)	138 (11.5%)	1200
6	Law Reports	646 (53.8%)	180 (15%)	374 (31.2%)	1200
7	Bare Act	627 (52.3%)	183 (15.3%)	390 (32.5%)	1200
8	E-Resources	610 (50.87%)	182 (15.2)	408 (34%)	1200
9	Online Legal database	552 (46%	216 (18.1)	432 (36%)	1200
10	Encyclopeadia	580 (48.3%)	254 (21.2%)	366 (30.5%)	1200

Table – 2 discuses the opinions about the adequacy of availability of legal information in law colleges libraries. The total weightages, mean and ranking opinions about the adequacy of legal information in law college libraries are presented in table 2. In order to know the relation frequency of opinion about the adequacy of legal information in law college libraries, scores of 3, 2 and 1 are given to responses of adequate, no comments and inadequate respectively. Total weightage is calculated for each opinion about the adequacy of legal information in Law College Library. Mean weightage is calculated by dividing the total weightage by the number of respondents included in the sample. Based on the mean weightage, the opinion about the adequacy of legal information in the Law Colleges libraries have been ranked.

Table 3: Opinion about the adequacy of information Resources in Law College Libraries

S. No.	Sources	Total Weightages	Mean Weightages	Rank
1	Law Books	3007	2.51	1
2	Legal Periodicals	2728	2.27	4
3	Legislation and statutes	2750	2.29	3
4	Law Journals	2704	225	5
5	Magazines and News Papers	2774	2.31	2
6	Law Reports	2672	223	6
7	Bare Act	2637	2.20	7
8	E-Resources	2602	2.17	9
9	Online legal data bases	2520	2.0	10
10	Encyclopaedia	2614	2.18	8

Table – 3 depicts the details of the relative frequency of opinion about the adequacy of sources regarding legal information available in the law college library such as weightage, mean weightage and ranks. Data presented in table 3 shows that the library users mainly report that adequacy of getting legal information from law books got the first rank. It is followed by news papers and magazinges, legislation and statutes, legal periodicals; law journals, law reports, Bare Act, encyclopaedia, e-resources and online database respectively inferred that majority consider Law Books as main source of information.

Table 4: E-Sources often used

S.No.	E – Sources	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	E – Books	586	48.8
2	E – Magazines	257	21.4
3	Internet Sources	283	23.6
4	E – Journals	118	9.8
5	Others if any	125	10.4
	Total	1349	114.0

Table 4 shows that among the overall respondents a majority of 586 (48.8%) respondents often use the E-books, this is followed by 283 (23.6%) seek internet sources, 257 (2.4%) E – Magazines, 125 (10.4%) of them cite other sources and 118 (9.8%) use E-journals. Hence, nearly half of the respondents often use the E-books. Hence, it is recommended that the library authorities should procure more number of E-books based on the legal information. It helps to access the legal information immediately.

Table 5: Level of satisfaction of Library ICT based services

S.No.	ICT based Services	Very good	Opinion (%)			
			Very good	Satisfaction	No commending	Poor
1	Current Awareness Services	350 (29.2)	372 (31)	283 (23.6)	122 (102)	73 (6.1)
2	SDI Services (Selective Desingation of information)	281 (23)	359 (29)	286 (23.8)	224 (18.7)	50 (42)
3	Subject-Bibliography	286 (23)	339 (28)	356 (29.7)	177 (14.8)	42 (3.5)
4	Electronic document delivery	276 (23)	289 (24.1)	346 (28.8)	228 (19)	61 (5.1)
5	Multimedia database services	255 (21.3)	255 (21.3)	300 (25)	233 (19.4)	89 (7.4)
6	CD/DVD leased services	256 (21.3)	279 (23.3)	267 (22.3)	270 (22.5)	128 (10.7)
7	Online databases for Law	271 (22.6)	326 (27.2)	301 (25.1)	200 (16.7)	102 (8.5)
8	E-Journals	274 (22.8)	360 (30)	314 (262)	168 (14)	84 (7)
9	E-books	280 (23.3)	329 (27.4)	298 (24.8)	203 (16.9)	90 (9.5)
10	Library Website	283 (23.6)	328 (27.3)	266 (22.2)	235 (19.6)	88 (7.3)
11	Web OPAC (E-Cataloque)	289 (24.1)	286 (23.8)	292 (24.3)	255 (21.3)	78 (6.5)
12	Reprograpic services	270 (22.5)	290 (24.2)	268 (22.3)	276 (23)	96 (8)

Table 5 shows the level of satisfaction of the ICT based services of the government Law College libraries is Tamilnadu by the users. The computed results of mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation of user's level of satisfaction of the ICT based services of Government Law Colleges libraries in Tamilnadu are calculated and inferred that it is very good by the majority of the respondents.

Table 6: Opinion about the Law College Libraries learning Environment – Age wise

S.No	Age group	Opinion					
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	17-20	120 (40.7)	107 (36.3)	46 (15.6)	9 (3.1)	13 (4.4)	295
2	21-25	266 (37.9)	231 (32.9)	155 (22.1)	44 (6.3)	6 (0.9)	702
3	26-30	62 (44)	44 (31.2)	23 (16.3)	6 (4.3)	6 (4.3)	141
4	31-35	11 (24.4)	24 (53.3)	9 (20)	1 (2.2)	-	45
5	36-40	4 (33.3)	6 (53)	2 (16.7)	-	-	12
6	41 and above	3 (60)	-	2 (40)	-	-	5
7	Total	466	412	237	60	25	220

It is evident from table 6 that among the various age group respondents, a majority of 120 (40.7%) respondents belong to the age group of 17-20 strongly agree with the existence of learning environment of the Law Colleges Libraries followed by 107(36.3%) agree. In fact out of 1200 about 466 strongly agreed and 412 agreed; 237 were neutral, to

disagree and 25 strongly disagreed about the existence of learning environment.

Findings of the study

1. More than half of the respondents visit the library either to borrow or return books and their second choice goes to read news papers or magazines or employment news.
2. A majority of the respondents opinion regarding the adequacy of legal information sources is law books and it has got first rank and it is followed by magazines and news papers has got second rank, legislation and statutes has got third rank and legal periodicals ranked fourth respectively.
3. More than half of the respondents acquire information resources from personal collection and their second choice goes to law digest.
4. Among the male respondents, a majority of 90.7% and 88.2% of the female Respondents read news papers regularly.
5. A majority of 466 respondents strongly agreed that adequacy of reference collection is very good, 412 agreed and 237 are neutral. More than three fifth of respondents belong to the age group of above 41 report that adequacy of reference collection is good.
6. About two-fifth of the rural and urban respondents opinion about the adequacy and accessibility of E-resources is very good. It is inferred from chi-square analysis that there is an association between the domicile sector of the respondents and their opinion about the adequacy and accessibility of E-resources.
7. Nearly half of the respondents often use the E-books and their second choice goes to internet sources.
8. About 46.5% of the respondents cite that lack of facilities is the main problem faced by the users while using E-resources.
9. About 87.9% of the respondents use E-mail for communication and 88% preferred using E-mail provider G-mail.
10. About 44.9% of the respondents get E-mail services from the college library.
11. The Co-efficient of variation is higher in CD/DVD based service which leads to less consistent or stable and it is less in subject Bibliography which leads to more consistent or stable with regard to the level of satisfaction of ICT based services of Law University and its affiliated government Law Colleges libraries in Tamilnadu.
12. Learning Environment:-
13. Among the age group 17-20 respondents, two-fifth of the respondents strongly agree about the existence of learning environment in the government Law College libraries.
14. Among the age group 21-25 respondents a majority of 37.9% strongly agree that learning environment exists in the government Law College Libraries.
15. Among the age group of 31-35, a majority of 53.3% of the respondents agree that learning environment exists.

    a. 20

16. About 65% of the respondents who are above 41 years of age strongly agreed that all learning environmental facilities exist in government Law College libraries.

Conclusion

Information has come to be regarded as a national resource, very essential to a nation's well being security. Information is a great national and international resource for the development in all the fields of a country. The availability of information and facilities to store and retrieve, gives a country, economic, technological as well as political advantage over other countries. The law libraries should be enhanced to provide Electronic based information such as CD-ROM databases, E-books, E-Journals and law online databases these will be of immense help to the law students, faculty members and practicing Advocates to enhance their legal information.

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