

INFORMATION USE AND ACCESS PATTERN AMONG LEGAL PROFESSIONALS OF BANGALORE HIGH COURT AND ITS BENCHES: A USERS STUDY**Naveed Ahmed***Ph.D Research Scholar, Dept. of Library and Information Science, Annamalai University, Tamilnadu.***Dr.M.Sadik Batcha***Professor and Head, DLIS, Periyar University, Tamilnadu.***ABSTRACT**

Legal practitioners are involved directly in the administration of justice. They participate in court advise clients conduct legal transactions etc and therefore if there is an inadequate availability of legal information sources and services this will result in the production of ill-informed professionals who are not in touch with current legal information. This will in turn affect the administration of justice and society. For the present study The data were collected through questionnaire interview and critical incident. Follow up interviews were also held with legal academics legal practitioners. In addition interviews' conducted with law librarians, legal publishers and legal databases producers. The purpose of this study is mainly to examine and explore the existing situation of legal information services and sources and identify their problems in meeting the information needs of legal professionals.

The findings of this study will be used in developing a Legal Information System prototype as a practical solution. It aims to satisfy the information needs of legal professionals through providing legal information services and sources and providing a channel for exchanging information and knowledge.

Key Words:*Legal Information Sources, Job satisfaction, Information Sources, Frequency of visit, Document sources.*

1. INTRODUCTION

“The totality of human information behaviour in relation to sources and channels of information is including both active and passive information seeking and information use. Thus it includes face to face communication with others as well as the passive reception of information as in for example watching a TV advertisement without any intention to act on the information given.” Wilson 1999; For the purpose of this investigation legal professionals are defined as legal academics and legal practitioners such as lawyers, prosecutors and state lawyers. The main purpose behind selecting this group of legal professionals is that they are considered to be the main axis of the legal system in the country. It is likely that these professionals are heavy users of legal information. For example legal academics are responsible for legal education. Law graduates will be lawyers, prosecutors, state lawyers, legal scholars etc and therefore the level of legal academics' learning and training on seeking information will affect their students in one way or another.

Legal practitioners on the other hand are involved directly in the administration of justice. They participate in court advise clients conduct legal transactions etc and therefore if there is an inadequate availability of legal information sources and services this will result in the production of ill-informed professionals who are not in touch with current legal information. This will in turn affect the administration of justice and society.

2. SIGNIFICANCE OF PRESENT STUDY

There is a lack of available research in the area of the information seeking behaviour of legal professionals. Research on information seeking and use by professionals has been applied to a variety of disciplines such as law, education, engineering, and accountancy. The impact of technologies such as CD-ROMs, Multimedia, Computer networks, Internet, etc. have led to a paperless society. This study makes an attempt to model the information seeking behaviour of such professionals registered in Bangalore high court and its benches which has adopted the proper legal system. It also aims to project future requirements and to propose recommendations and practical.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURES

Numerous studies have shown that various types of professionals perceive their own collection to be the most accessible and will use those collections even if the information is rather limited, including Gbadamosi (2001), Igbeka and Atinmo (2001), Gbadamosi (2004), and Bello and Musa (2003). Studies of medical practitioners by Woolf and Benson (1991) have shown that they prefer to seek information from personal or office collections of known books and journals before going elsewhere to look for information. Legal professionals like other users have information needs. Cheatle 1992 suggested that lawyers have several such needs such as the need for legal rules inference examples general knowledge practice rules and abilities and the need for current awareness.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to identify information sources that are relevant in the discharge the duties of legal professionals, including varying formats and characteristics of each to legal practice and practitioners. The study will include individual preferences of legal professionals to the different law libraries and process of seeking and use of legal information. The main aims of this study are to investigate the information seeking behaviour and the information needs of legal professionals and examine whether the existing legal information sources meet their needs therefore the study's objectives

1. To investigate what kinds of legal information sources are used by such legal professionals.
2. To investigate the extent of dependency of different libraries and the frequency of their visit.
3. To find out the category wise dependency on different libraries and their frequency of visit to different libraries.
4. To analyze the extent of time spent in different libraries in collecting their required information.
5. To investigate the kinds of legal information collected and its extent of use.

5. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. The Respondents do not differ in their frequency of using legal information.
2. The Respondents do not differ in their extent of time spent in collecting medical information.
3. The Respondents do not differ in their purpose of collecting legal information.
4. The Respondents do not differ in their tools of search in collecting legal information.

6. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 : Table - 1 Analysis of Respondents' Association With other Jobs

The of the job/work	Junior Lawyer	Independent Lawyer	Senior Lawyer	Govt. Advocate	Notary Advocate	Panel Advocate	Total
Part-time teaching	48 (20.87)	77 (16.56)	72 (28.46)	127 (25.66)	21 (10.66)	22 (13.75)	367 (20.39)
Farming	52 (22.61)	142 (30.54)	106 (41.90)	238 (48.08)	74 (37.56)	48 (30.00)	660 (36.67)
Part-time business	114 (49.57)	184 (39.57)	43 (16.99)	84 (16.97)	86 (43.65)	74 (46.25)	585 (32.50)
other assignments	16 (6.96)	62 (13.33)	32 (12.65)	46 (9.29)	16 (8.12)	16 (10.00)	188 (10.44)
Total	230 (12.78)	465 (25.83)	253 (14.06)	495 (27.50)	197 (10.94)	160 (8.89)	1800

Table 1 explains analysis of respondents' association with other job other than their advocacy. The respondents are observed involving the other job works apart from their advocacy. The other jobs noted are Part time teaching, Farming, Part time business, and other assignments.

The majority of respondents are observed engaging themselves in farming. Out of the total population 36.67 percentages of respondents are engaging themselves in farming as part time work. There is about 32.50 percentages of respondents are observed doing part time business; it is ranked to the second in order. Some 20.39 percentages of respondents are involving themselves in part time teaching. A minimum of 10.44 percentages of legal professionals carry on some other assignments such as Social service, Legal advice at free of cost, writing articles at local journal publications and political activities.

While analyzing category wise involvement, Government advocates do part time teaching at 34.60 percentages followed by Independent lawyers at 20.98 percentages. In the case of farming, the same trend is noted. While analyzing the part time business, Independent lawyers records high percentages such as 31.45 and junior lawyers record 19.49 percentages. Independent lawyers are mostly found involving other assignments. The percentages shown by them are 32.98 at higher level.

6.2: Table - 2 Analyses of the Respondents’ Sources of Personal Collection

Personal and Online sources	Junior Lawyer			Independent Lawyer			Senior Lawyer			Govt. Advocate			Notary Advocate			Panel Advocate		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Books	174	56	230	328	137	465	179	74	253	421	74	495	127	70	197	141	19	160
Journals	196	34	230	389	76	465	192	61	253	402	93	495	112	85	197	94	66	160
Report/Digests	182	48	230	288	177	465	202	51	253	434	61	495	163	34	197	145	15	160
Online Data Bases	46	184	230	67	398	465	104	149	253	65	430	495	16	181	197	11	149	160
CD-ROM Data Base	37	193	230	185	280	465	166	87	253	214	281	495	118	79	197	122	38	160
Total	635	515	1150	1257	1068	2325	843	422	1265	1536	939	2475	536	449	985	513	287	800

Table 2 explains the personal collection of information sources owned by the respondents. The table also reflects the personal collection category wise. The sources of information that the respondents possess are books, Journals, Digests, Online databases and CD-ROM databases.

About 76.87 percentages of respondents’ have owned books as their personal collection of information. The sources of journals and digests are also found at the maximum level among the respondents. Their percentages are 76.94 and 78.55 respectively. The respondents’ have less percentage of collection of online databases and CD-ROM databases, they are found only 17.16 and 46.77 percentages respectively.

The analysis of individual category of respondents explains that the sources of book are highly possessed by all categories at the percentage rate of above 70. Yet Notary advocates fall behind in this source of information. In the case of Journals except Notary advocates and Panel advocates all other categories have owned journals at above 75 percentages.

The source of digest gives a different picture that majority of all the category of respondents have this source at appreciable level, but online databases is possessed only by Senior lawyers at the maximum percentages of 41.1 The source of CD-ROM databases is less owned by Junior lawyers, Independent lawyers and Government advocates.

6.3: Table - 3 Analysis of the Frequency of Visit to Libraries by the Respondents

S.No	Name of library	Frequency of visit				Total
		Daily	Weekly	Monthly	As and when required	
1	High court library	875	466	265	194	1800
2	Subordinate courts library	989	318	231	262	1800
3	Bar library	969	323	247	261	1800
4	Personal library	1312	42	44	402	1800
5	State central library	320	411	315	754	1800
6	other Libraries	370	281	351	798	1800
	Total	4835	1841	1453	2671	10800

Table 3 focuses on the frequency of visit to libraries by the respondents. The libraries taken for analysis are High Court library, Subordinate court libraries, Bar library, Personal library, State Central library and other libraries in Bangalore city.

The frequency is further analyzed with four point scale such as Daily, Weekly, and Monthly and as and when required. Out of the total population about 48.61 percentages of respondents make visit to High Court library daily and in the same way the respondents also visit daily to Subordinate Court library (54.94%) Bar Council library (53.83%) and personal library (72.88%) Even though the respondents do not visit State Central library and other libraries, they happen to visit these libraries as and when required which are calculated to 41.88 and 43.33 percentages respectively.

According to the frequency of visit of the respondents' personal library is ranked to the first which is regularly used by the respondents at the rate of 72.88 percentages. The second rank goes to Subordinate Courts libraries which are daily used by the respondents at the rate of 54.94 percentages. The third rank in order in the case of frequency goes to Bar Council library which is accounted to 53.83 percentages. The other frequencies to these libraries are observed less than 20.00 percentages.

6.4: Analysis of Frequency of Using Document Sources by the Respondents

Table 4 discusses the Analysis of frequency of document sources by the respondents. There are about 21 document sources found using by the respondents, they are analyzed in four point scale in the present study. Out of 21 document sources current central legislation is ranked to the first as it is highly used by the respondents at 10 percentages, next to that Court Karnataka Cases is placed to the second as it reflects 9.44 percentages of response. The third sources of documents which are used by the respondents are All India Reports and Labour Law journal. The fourth rank goes to corporate law advisor and the Law Weekly which are accounted to 7.77 percentages respectively.

The least used document sources found among the respondent users are Books of the law, General legal text, All India prevention of food adulteration cases and consumer protection judgment. The study brings out the result that Current Karnataka Cases, Current Central Legislation, Labour law Journal and Corporate law advisor are the document sources which are found regularly used by the respondents. The document sources like All India Reports and Law Weekly are found using by the respondents moderately. The document sources of Supreme Court Journal, Writ Law Reporter, Taxation and Bangalore Law Journal and Taxation are found rarely used by the respondents.

Out of 1800 respondents 42.61 percentages of respondents found using regularly document sources as tabulated above. Some 33.16 percentages of respondents say that they are getting used of these document sources sometimes at a moderate level.

Table 4: Analysis of Frequency of Using Document Sources by the Respondents

Source Document of Law	Regularly	Sometime	Rarely	Never	Total
All India reporter	53	55	32	10	150
Corporate law adviser	60	53	20	7	140
Current central legislation	63	60	37	20	180
Current Karnataka cases	69	52	38	11	170
Labour law journal	63	57	25	5	150
Law weekly	50	53	30	7	140
Law weekly [criminal]	40	33	10	7	90
Supreme court cases	43	31	13	8	95
Supreme court cases [criminal]	43	30	7	5	85
Supreme court journal	45	15	10	5	75
Writ law reporter	35	15	10	9	69
Taxation	38	22	10	5	75
Bangalore law journal	35	30	10	5	80
Bangalore law journal	30	20	10	10	70
All India prevention of the food adulteration cases	18	10	7	1	36
Arbitration law reporter	15	11	10	9	45
Consumer protection judgment	17	11	6	1	35
Books other than law	8	4	2	1	15
General legal texts	12	5	2	1	20
Privy council	19	11	8	2	40
other General Law	11	19	2	8	40
Total					1800

About 16.67 percentages of respondents are observed rarely using the tabulated document sources. Still the response shown by 7.61 percentages of respondents differs from the above results as they said that the tabulated document sources are never used by this category.

6.5: Table - 5 Analysis of Extent of Time Spent In Libraries by the Respondents

Name of Library	Less than 1 hour	1-2 hrs	2-4 hrs	More than 4 hrs	Total
High court library	1509	206	49	36	1800
Subordinate courts library	1578	170	36	16	1800
Bar library	1650	110	32	08	1800
Personal library	1423	180	139	58	1800
State central library	1768	24	08	00	1800
other Libraries	1766	24	10	00	1800
Total	9694	714	274	118	10800

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	13451.5	5	2690.3	3.596818	0.024502	2.901295
Columns	17539	3	5846.333	7.816302	0.002254	3.287382
Error	11219.5	15	747.9667			
Total	42210	23				

Table 5 shows the analysis of extent of time spent by the respondents in different libraries. The time span taken for analysis are less than an hour, 1-2 hours, 2-4 hours and more than 4 hours. Majority of users are found using different libraries for collecting legal information for their purpose. The span of time that they spent in libraries is somewhat appreciable. Out of 1800 total population about 80 percentage of population spend less than an hour in all libraries. The High Court library seems to have rich collection and so about 11.44 percentages of respondents spend 1-2 hours for using resources. Further 2.72 percentages of users spend 2-4 hours in High Court library, some 2.0 percentage of respondents are found as the voracious readers who spend more than 4 hours in the High Court library.

The same trend is noted in subordinate Court library. About 87.66 percentages of respondents spend less than an hour and 9.44 percentages of them spend 1-2 hours and only 2.0 percentages of users spend 2-4 hours in Subordinate Court library. In the case of Bar Council library maximum of 91.66 percentages of respondents 'spend less than an hour and 6.11 percentage of respondents spend 1-2 hours, further 1.77 percentages of them spend 2-4 hours in Bar Council library for collecting their required information. The analysis of time spent in personal library shows that maximum of 3.22 percentages of respondents spend more than 4 hours in reading the resources and about 7.72 percentages of respondents spend 2-4 hours in their personal library. The maximum span of time spent by the respondents in the State Central and other libraries is voted very less.

6.6: Table - 6 Analysis of Type of Information Required By the Respondents

Type of Information	Highly Used	Moderately Used	Occasionally Used	RarelyUsed	Total
Civil	53	55	32	10	150
Criminal	60	53	20	7	140
Constitutional	63	60	37	20	180
Labour / service laws	69	52	38	11	170
Banking laws	73	67	35	15	190
Company laws	60	63	40	17	180
PIL	50	43	10	07	110
Intellectual property rights	43	50	09	08	110
Taxation	53	40	18	09	120
Family law & succession	63	30	19	08	120
Property law	35	15	10	09	69
Consumer disputes	38	22	10	05	75
Maritime laws	35	30	08	07	80
Cyber law	35	20	10	05	70
Others	18	10	07	01	36
Total	748	610	303	139	1800

Table 6 discusses the Analysis of type of information required by the respondents there are about 15 types of information taken for analysis, further they are analyzed with the four point scale. The information about Banking Laws is seemed to be the top priority of information requirement among the respondents which is reflecting 10.55 percentages of response. The other required information by the respondents are about Constitutional law and Company law, both are accounting 10.00 percentages respectively.

The next priority of information goes to Labour or Service laws followed by Civil law and Criminal law. The least required information found in present study of about Cyber law and Property law. Among different types information requirement, the highly used information are totally accounted to 41.55 percentages by the respondents about 33.88 percentages of respondents make use of tabulated information at moderate level. Some 16.83 percentages of respondents differ from the above and say that they are occasionally using the information furnished in the table. Yet 7.72 percentages of respondents are found rarely using this information.

7. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The analysis of respondents' Association with other jobs brings out fact that farming and part time business are the top two items which are highly engaged by the legal professionals apart from advocacy. Government advocates highly involve in part time teaching and farming. Independent lawyers show greater interest in part time business and other assignments. The other categories are scattered in following other jobs apart from their advocacy.

The Analysis of the Respondents' Sources of personal collection lights on the findings that Books, Journals and digests are owned highly among all the category of respondents yet online databases are found neglected by them. CD-ROM databases are possessed by senior lawyers, Notary advocates at maximum level.

The Analysis of the frequency of visit to libraries by the respondents reveals the facts that majority of the respondents make visit to all the libraries at regular intervals, even though a slight shortfall found in the frequency of visit made to State Central, and other libraries.

The Analysis of frequency of using document sources by the respondents deduct the inference that the Current Central Legislation, Karnataka Cases, Labour law journal and All India Reports are highly used document sources by the respondents. The least used document sources by the respondents are General Legal Text, All India Cases of Food and Adulteration Cases and Consumer Protection Judgment. Majority of (42.61%) of respondents are found using document sources regularly. Yet 7.61 percentages of respondents never made use of any type of document sources

The analysis of extent of time spent in libraries by the respondents infers the outcome that the majority of legal professionals spend less than an hour in different libraries for collecting the information. The time spent in personal library is found higher compared to other libraries. Yet the respondents spend maximum hours in High Court library, subordinate libraries and Bar Council libraries. It explains the fact that when span of time in using resources increases the number of respondents in using the resources decreases and vice versa.

The Analysis of type of information required by the respondents sheds on the fact that highly used information among the respondents are Banking Laws, Constitutional law and Company law. The moderately used information is Civil and Criminal law, Labour/Service law. The information about Family law and succession, Public Interest Litigation and Intellectual Property Rights are occasionally used by the respondents. The rarely used information found among the users are Cyber law and Property law.

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