

INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR OF LAW PRACTITIONERS IN MYSORE DISTRICT:A SURVEY



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ABSTRACT:

Adequate knowledge about the information seeking behaviour of users is vital for developing library collections, services and facilities to meet their information needs effectively. The purpose of this study is to identify the information sources used by the junior Lawyers of Mysore court. A questionnaire was distributed to 535 advocates of Mysore court and 470 filled in questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 87.85%. It was found that majority of the practitioners respondents (28.08%). The junior advocate respondents occupy the second position in their overall satisfaction on all legal information.

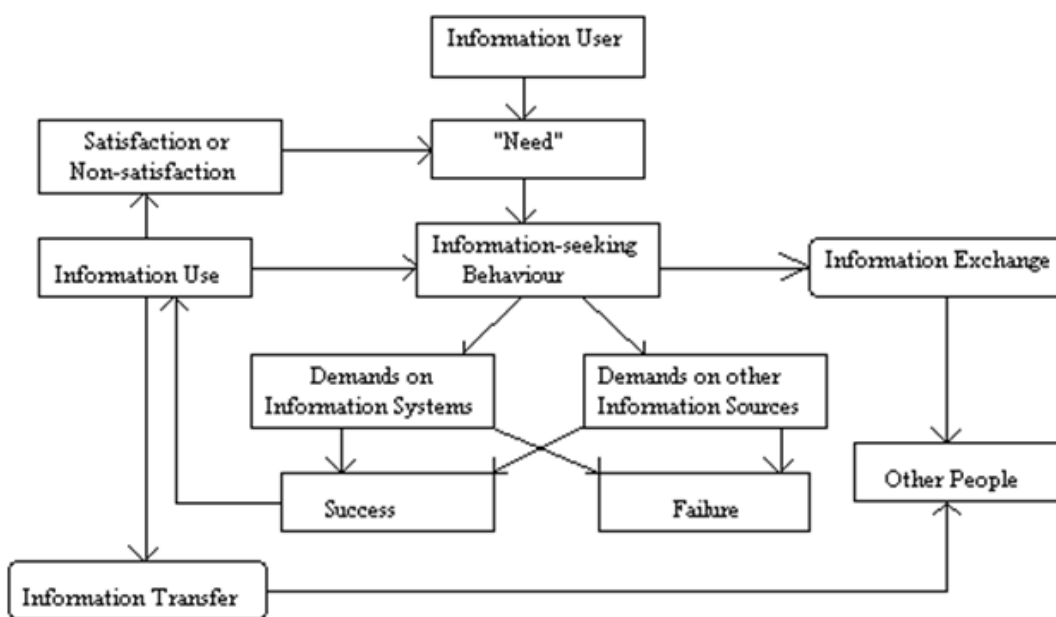
KEYWORDS

Library resources; services; District Court; Practitioners; User studies.

INTRODUCTION :

Bruce (2005) states that, "information plays a significant role in our daily professional and personal lives and we are constantly challenged to take charge of the information that we need for work, fun and everyday decisions and tasks." In the digital era, research on information-seeking behavior has taken on even more importance worldwide. In 2000, Wilson described information behaviour as the totality of human behaviour in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information-seeking, and information use. Understanding of information needs and information-seeking behavior of various professional groups is essential as it helps in the planning, implementation and operation of information system and services in the given work settings (Devadason & Lingam, 1997). Legal information is basic to all, both lawyers and non-lawyers. The law is supposed to be understood and used by each and every citizen (Otike, 1997). Lawyers are individuals who have a wide range of responsibilities and duties when it comes to their profession. Their role in society is even more important as they are acting as a voice for others (Exforsys, 2010). In today's world, legal issues spring up almost always on a regular basis. Most probably, one does not have the time to handle all of them. Having a lawyer to take care of one's legal affair is very much required and it is one sure way to get free from unnecessary headaches (Hood, 2006). Lawyers are the protectors of the people. They play a very important role in maintaining order in one place. In addition, a number of positions in the government are being held by lawyers. Thus, they contribute in providing and regulating peace in the community (Buzzle, 2010).

Information seeking behavior model



Objectives of the study

The present study has the following objectives:

- 1.To identify the frequency of use, purpose , place of access, and journals,

- 2.To find out the age, sex, and specialization, information need consultation of various types of information resources, and
- 3.To find out the websites, statues, by the lawyers.

Methodology, Scope and limitation

This study was adopted questionnaire method, observation method and interview schedule, Stratified random sampling techniques was used, Mysore district court and Taluk wise geographical cover under the study, total 535 questionnaires was distributed among Taluk wise 87.85% respondents, Mean, Standard deviation, and chi-square test was used in tabulated MS-EXCEL, and SPSS software packages both format.

Table-1: Geographical Wise respondents of Law practitioner

| Geographical area | Distributed | Responses | % | Rank |
|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Mysore | 136 | 118 | 25.11 | 1 |
| Hunsur | 95 | 81 | 17.23 | 2 |
| H.D.Kote | 83 | 72 | 15.32 | 3 |
| T.N.Pura | 79 | 71 | 15.11 | 3 |
| Periya Patna | 73 | 66 | 14.04 | 4 |
| Nanjana Gudu | 69 | 62 | 13.19 | 5 |
| Total | 535 | 470 | 100.00 | |

This table shows the Geographical area wise distribution and respondents of the Lawyers which as rank 1 Mysore city court lawyers majority of the respondents 118(25.11%) followed by Hunsur 81(17.23%), H.D. Kote72(15.32%) , T N Pura 71(15.11%) Periya Patna 66(14.04%) and Nanjanagudu and K.R. Nagara 62(13.19%) of respondents of the Lawyers

Table-2: Qualification wise respondents

| Qualification | Respondents | Percentage | Rank |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Intigrated LLB | 47 | 10.00 | 7 |
| B.A. LLB | 92 | 19.57 | 1 |
| B.Com.LLB | 72 | 15.31 | 2 |
| B.Sc LLB | 61 | 12.97 | 4 |
| M.A.LLB | 65 | 13.82 | 3 |
| M.com.LLB | 53 | 11.27 | 6 |
| M.Sc. LLB | 56 | 11.91 | 5 |
| Others | 24 | 05.10 | 8 |
| Total | 470 | 100.00 | |
| $X^2 = 7.44265E-08, Df = 7, T \text{ value} = 14.067$ Insignificant | | | |

Table 2 depicts that qualification wise respondents of the Lawyers Majority of the respondents B.A LLB 1st rank 92(19.57%) used the seeking of information followed by B.Com LLB 2nd rank 72(15.31%) MA LLB 65 3rd rank (13.82%) BSc LLB 61 4th rank (12.97%) seeking information for legal action, MSc LLB 5th rank 56(11.91%) of Lawyers seek the information Mcom LLB 6th rank 53(11.27%) of Lawyers seek the

information, Integrated LLB 7th rank 47((10%) where as only others is 8th rank 24(05.10%) of Lawyers seeking the information

Table-3: Age wise distribution of Respondents

| Age in years | Respondents | Percentage | Rank |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|-------|
| Below 30 years | 85 | 18.08 | 1 |
| 31to 35 years | 77 | 16.38 | 2 |
| 36 to 40 years | 72 | 15.31 | 3 |
| 41 to 45 years | 61 | 12.97 | 5 |
| 46 to 50 years | 49 | 10.42 | 6 |
| 51 to 55 years | 62 | 13.19 | 4 |
| 56 to 60 years | 28 | 05.95 | 8 |
| above 60 years | 36 | 07.65 | 7 |
| Total | 470 | 100.00 | Total |
| $X^2 = 4.69614E-08$, Df= 7, Tvalue =14.067, Insignificant | | | |

The age-wise distribution of Law practitioners is shown in tale-3. It may be observed from the table that nearly 18.08% of the respondents belong to 'Below 30 years', age. This is followed by the users who are in the range of '31 to 35 years', with 16.38%. All the respondents who are between '36 to 40 years', of the range account for 15.31% and only 05.95 of users belong to the age group of '56 to 60 years'.

Table-5: Gender * Statues Crosstabulation

| Statues | Male | Female | Total | Mean | SD |
|--------------------------------|------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| Dependent Practitioners | 132 | -- | 132 | 1.0000 | .00000 |
| Seniors' | 82 | -- | 82 | 1.0000 | .00000 |
| Juniours | 92 | -- | 92 | 1.0000 | .00000 |
| Independents | 22 | 43 | 65 | 1.0000 | .47687 |
| Govt.Advocate | -- | 42 | 42 | 2.0000 | .00000 |
| Panel advocate | -- | 29 | 29 | 2.0000 | .00000 |
| Notary | -- | 28 | 29 | 2.0000 | .00000 |
| Total | 328 | 142 | 470 | 1.0000 | .45967 |
| $X^2 = 400.974$, df=6, P=.000 | | | | | |

The status wise respondents of the users are shows in Table -5. It may be observed from the table that nearly 28.08% of the respondents belong to 'Dependent Practitioners'. This is followed by 19.57 % of respondents from juniors, 17.44% of respondents from seniors, 13.82% respondents from Independents and only 05.95% respondents from Notary law practitioners seeking the information. The X^2 - test conducted for d.f.at the 5% level significance shows that there is a significant relationship between statues and gender $X^2 = 400.974$, df=6, P=.000 Hence, the research Hypothesis supported.

Table-6: Specialization wise respondents

| Specialization | Respondents | Percentage | Mean | SD |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|--------|----------|
| Civil Law | 128 | 27.23 | 1.0000 | .00000 |
| Family Law | 95 | 20.21 | 1.0000 | .00000 |
| Criminal Law | 91 | 19.36 | 1.0000 | .00000 |
| Labour Law | 83 | 17.65 | 1.8313 | .37674 |
| Banking Law | 73 | 15.53 | 2.0000 | .00000 |
| Total | 470 | 100.00 | 1.3021 | 0.459670 |
| X²=18.383, df=4, P=.001 | | | | |

The specialization wise respondents of the users are shown in Table -6. It may be observed from the table that nearly 27.23% of responders specialized from Civil Law. This is followed by 20.21% respondents specialized from Family Law, 19.36% of respondents from Criminal Law, 17.65% of respondents from Labor Law and only 15.53% of respondents from Banking Law specialized in law practitioners. The X²- test conducted for d.f.at the 5% level significance shows that there is a significant relationship between specialization and respondents X²=18.383, df=4, P=.001 Hence, the research Hypothesis supported.

Table-7 : Use of Law Journals

| Law Journals | Excellent | Very Good | Good | Average | Poor | Total | X ² | P=Value |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------|---------|------|-------|----------------|---------|
| All India Reporter(AIR) | 37 | 18 | 25 | 42 | 3 | 125 | 37.200 | .000 |
| Supreme Court Cases | 30 | 12 | 7 | 10 | 0 | 59 | 21.881 | .000 |
| Supreme Court Cases (Criminal) | 11 | 10 | 14 | 19 | 10 | 64 | 4.594 | .332 |
| Labour Law journal | 38 | 19 | 13 | 13 | 11 | 94 | 26.426 | .000 |
| Current Karnataka Cases | 26 | 14 | 12 | 7 | 9 | 68 | 16.265 | .003 |
| Any other | 3 | 30 | 10 | 11 | 6 | 60 | 37.167 | .000 |

The journals wise respondents of the users are shown in Table -7. It may be observed from the table-7 that nearly X² value is 37.200 P value is .000 by All India Reporter(AIR) followed by X² value is 37.167 P value is .000. Significant by Any other journal and X² value is 4.594 P value is .332 not significant.

Table-8: Place of Access to Information Resources

| Sources of Acquiring Information Resources | Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| District Bar Library | 155 | 32.97 |
| Senior lawyers Collections | 85 | 18.08 |
| Purchase/personal collection | 170 | 36.17 |
| Decided cases from judicial record room | 54 | 11.48 |
| Other Libraries | 39 | 08.29 |

The Place of Access to Information Resources respondents of the users are shows in Table -8. It may be observed from the table that nearly 170(36.17%) of practitioners place of Access to Information Resources from Purchase/personal collection followed by 155(32.97%) place of Access to Information Resources from District Bar Library, 85(18.08%) place of Access to Information Resources from Senior lawyers, 54(11.48%) place of Access to Information Resources from Decided cases from judicial record room, and 39(08.29%) place of Access to Information Resources from other Libraries.

Table-9: Purpose of Use of Information resources

| Purposes | Respondents | Percentage | =Log |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------|------------|----------|
| Case preparation | 231 | 49.14 | 2.363612 |
| For research work | 5 | 01.06 | 0.69897 |
| Attending seminar/workshop presentation | 26 | 05.53 | 1.414973 |
| For improving personal knowledge | 54 | 11.48 | 1.732394 |
| Administrative activities | 145 | 30.85 | 2.161368 |
| Professional Needs | 69 | 14.68 | 1.838849 |
| Leisure Needs fro writing book/article | 5 | 01.06 | 0.69897 |
| Entertainment | 22 | 04.68 | 1.342423 |
| Internet | 36 | 07.65 | 1.556303 |
| General Knowledge | 67 | 14.25 | 1.826075 |
| Carrier information | 69 | 14.68 | 1.838849 |

The Purpose of Use of Information resources respondents of the users are shows in Table -9. It may be observed from the table-9 that nearly 231(49.14%) for the purpose of use of Case preparation, followed by 145(30.85%) of Administrative activities, 69(14.68%) of Carrier information, 67(14.25%) of General Knowledge and so on.

Frequency of Use of Internet

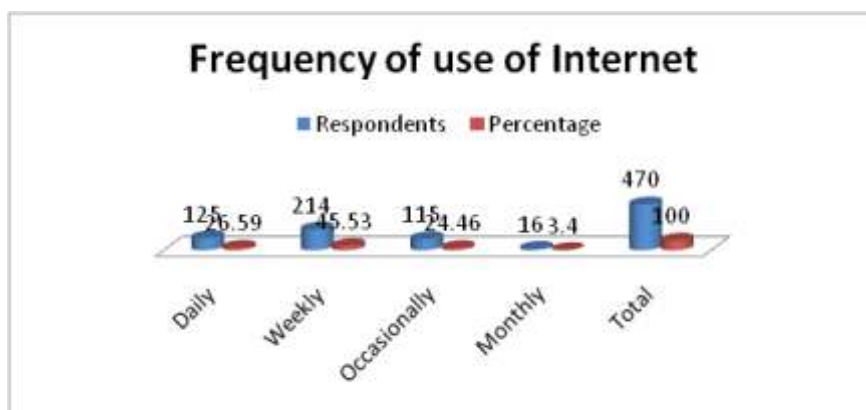


Figure-1 depicts that frequency of use of internet by law practitioners nearly 214(45.53%) Weekly, followed by 125(26.59%) of Daily, 115(24.46%) of occasionally, and 16(03.40%) monthly frequency of use of internet.

Table-11: Visit the websites

| Websites | Respondents | Percentage |
|---------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| www.supremecourtfindia.nic.in | 51 | 10.85 |
| www.hcmadras.tn.nic | 45 | 09.57 |
| www.judis.nic.in | 26 | 05.53 |
| www.legalserviceindia.com | 41 | 08.72 |
| www.scjudgments.com | 34 | 07.23 |
| www.lawadiv.com | 44 | 09.36 |
| www.allindiareporter.com | 41 | 08.72 |
| www.judgments-online.com | 44 | 09.36 |
| www.commonlii.org/in/cases/INSC | 42 | 08.93 |
| www.courtnic.nic.in | 26 | 05.53 |
| www.indialawsite.com | 48 | 10.21 |
| http://lawmin.nic.in/ | 28 | 05.95 |
| Total | 470 | 100.00 |

Table-11 depicts that law practitioners visit the web sites for the purpose of seeking the information from different types of web sites, nearly 51(10.85%) visit the websites from www.supremecourtfindia.nic.in, followed by 45(09.57%) of www.hcmadras.tn.nic, 41(08.72%) of www.legalserviceindia.com and www.allindiareporter.com, 48(10.21%) from www.indialawsite.com and only 26(05.53%) of visit the web sites from www.judis.nic.in. for the seeking the information related to laws.

Major findings of the study

- About 19.57% of Law practitioners qualified from BA. LLB qualification
- About 18.08% of practitioners Below 30 years age respondents
- Majority 69.78% of Male practitioners seeking the information compared to female practitioners
- Majority 28.08% dependent practitioners seeking the information
- Majority 27.23% Civil Law specializations compared with others law practitioners for the seeking the information
- Majority of the practitioners preferred by All India Reporter (AIR) journals with mean value of 25.00 and SD 15.54027
- About 36.17% of practitioners have own library collections of the information
- About 49.14% for the case preparation and 10.85 % law practitioners visit the www.supremecourtfindia.nic.in websites.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is therefore recommended that law court libraries should develop their services and sources

and adopt new technology. Decision makers in legal sectors should encourage their legal staff to use IT applications in law such as the available legal databases. They should also provide them with the necessary training. Legal academic institutions should teach and train their on legal informatics and the use of The government should also encourage the use of library resources through the provision of substantial funds to enable library managers acquire the necessary law databases required in law libraries. The law libraries should generally be made more attractive and be fully equipped with current materials on legal matters, in terms of the electronic materials and law books.

CONCLUSION

The study investigated the information Seeking Behavior of Layers in Mysore District. It was found that respondents used a variety of information sources for legal practicing. Books, law reports and statues were considered more important. It is interesting to note that, although respondents perceived the Bar library as effective in meeting their information needs, they preferred to first consult their personal library. It is clear from the study that library resources are useful to legal professionals in District Court Bar libraries. The study revealed that the respondents used IT-based library sources and facilities less frequently compared with printed sources. It might be due to the lack of awareness about their availability, improper selection of materials or unfamiliarity with these products. Therefore, still there is a vast scope of future research.

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