

Full Length Research Paper

Enhancing access to e-resource materials for lawyers at Madras High Court

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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 channels used by the junior lawyers of Madras high court. A questionnaire was distributed to 1000 advocates of Madras high court and 710 filled in questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 71%. It was found that majority of the junior advocate respondents (40.57%) make library visit thrice a week. The junior advocate respondents occupy the fifth position in their overall satisfaction on all legal information networks and fee based e-resources. The junior advocate respondents top the position with respect to their overall problems in accessing e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.94 on a 5 point rating scale.

Key words: Library services, Madras high court, advocates, e-resources, CD-ROM database.

INTRODUCTION

Information is inevitable to almost all jobs and professions. The need to become informed and knowledgeable leads individuals to the process of "identifying information needs". However, this process alone cannot work without knowing the ways individuals articulate, seek, evaluate, select and finally use the required information, which is commonly known as "information-seeking behavior". According to Devadason and Lingam (1997), the understanding of information needs and information-seeking behaviour of various professional groups is essential as it helps in the planning, implementation and operation of the information system and services in the given work settings. Therefore, the working environment and type of task performed by individuals shape their information needs and the ways they acquire, select and use this information. Several studies have shown a relationship between task complexity and information needs. Leckie et al. (1996), note that "work roles and tasks largely determine information needs, while a number of factors ultimately affect the sources and types of information used in a given situation".

Law is a highly knowledge-intensive domain and obtaining accurate and up-to-date legal information which mean the difference between winning or losing cases. The information work carried out by lawyers can be complex, often involving finding and working with a

wealth of different types of information. This 'wealth' of legal information spans different types of documents (e.g. law reports/legal cases, legislation, commentary articles, forms and precedents etc.), a wide range of legal topic areas and a range of jurisdictions.

Ajuwon (2006) has conducted a study of the physicians' use of the internet for health information for patient care at the University College Hospital (UCH) Ibadan, Nigeria. The findings revealed that 98% of the respondents have used the internet. Majority of 76% access the internet at cyber cafes. Ninety percent have reported that they had obtained information from the internet for patient care, of this number, 76.2% have searched the database.

Biradar et al. (2008) reports the results of a study exploring University students' and teachers' use of search engines for retrieval of scholarly information. The main objectives are to examine the use of search engines, use of popular search engines, factors influenced on search engines' use, use of search strategy for information retrieval and also to know the methods of learning search strategy by students and faculties in the university environment. Results of the present study show that 100% of the students and 97.91% of faculties use search engines for retrieval of information on the internet. Goggle and Yahoo receive the highest overall ratings. The study reveals that majority of the respondents take help from their friends and use help

messages of search engines to learn the search strategy. Kannappanavar and Rajanikanta (2008) paper highlights the use of e-learning resources in medical colleges. The study has found that Medical education popularized only after the independence of the country. It is found that, majority of the colleges under the study area have e-information resources, e-databases. Almost all colleges under study are also becoming members of a consortium. As far as the infrastructure facilities are concerned, almost all colleges under study have provided very good infrastructure facilities to their libraries to serve their clients effectively.

Kumar and Kaur (2006) report on the results of a survey of internet use, which also provides information about the benefits of internet vs. print documents. Panda and Sahu (2003) have conducted a study of the engineering colleges of Orissa. The study reveals that a majority of the colleges use the internet to provide online demonstrations. Jagboro (2003) has conducted a case study of internet usage in Nigeria with a particular reference to Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. The study reveals that the respondents use the internet to access research materials and for e-mail. The study concludes that the use of internet for academic activities would improve significantly with more access in departments. Igun (2005) examines levels of Internet skill, and how the internet has its influence on research. The study finds that, the internet skills are low and that the internet has no significant influence because the university does not have a functional and comprehensive internet in the university-wide information system.

Lohar and Roopashree (2006) have analyzed the collected data to cover the use of electronic resources and how the electronic resources have improved the academic career of the faculty and also the problems that are faced in using the electronic resources. They conclude that the main intention of the use of electronic resources has been the academic interest of the users.

Umesh and Rajesh (2009) have studied the use of internet by the scientists and research fellows of Central Arid Zone Research Institute, Jodhpur (Rajasthan) was assessed on the basis of the results of a questionnaire survey in CAZRI, Jodhpur. Further, it also attempts to assess the frequency of use, location where used search engine accessed; purpose of use etc. The study revealed that the respondents accessed Google search frequently (100%) followed by Yahoo (85.29%). It is also observed that equally (97.06%) respondents use the internet for education and research. The strong desire of respondents is that, the library initiates various functions and services like e-portals, on-line information and abstracts retrieval along with internet.

Varatharajan and Chandrashekara (2007) have found that digital libraries and digitization play an important role in preserving and disseminating knowledge in art and culture, education, science and technology, literature and humanities, media and entertainment, cultural heritage,

and history. In India, a substantial number of libraries and information centres have initiated digital library activities. Indian society has created and preserved the resources of traditional and cultural heritage in various forms; however, thousands of ancient books and manuscripts that remain in perishable palm leaves urgently need digitization. This article describes some of the digital libraries and institutional repositories of India.

Objectives

The following objectives are evolved for the purpose of the present study:

- 1.) To examine the respondents' duration and quantum of time utilization in search of legal information.
- 2.) To identify the respondents' extent of requiring various legal information.
- 3.) To study the respondents' frequency of utilizing legal information.
- 4.) To analyze the respondents' extent of access to e-resources.
- 5.) To examine the respondents' purpose of gathering e-resources.
- 6.) To study the respondents' e-resource uses, pattern and extent of usage in their profession.
- 7.) To study the respondents' satisfaction and problems in utilizing the e-resources.

METHODOLOGY

The study aims at analyzing the availability, accessibility and utility of e-resources and services by the lawyers of Madras high court. The effectiveness of availability and accessibility of e-resources and services can be assessed from the point of view of user respondents. The first part of the study relates to assessment of existing electronic resource and service facilities in the high court library and its electronic resources. The study primarily aims at identifying the existing facilities and access to electronic resources of lawyers of Madras high court that comes under the exploratory research framework. The second part of the study relates to the effectiveness of e-resources access and utilization. Here the respondents' age is correlated with their pattern of utilization of e-resources and extent of utilization of legal e-resources from the point of view of lawyers and it comes under the analytical part of the study. Thus, the study is partly exploratory and partly analytical in nature.

There are 21 High courts in the country. Out of them, the researcher has selected only one, that is, the Madras high court. It is a very old high court. First, the list of the practicing lawyers of the Madras high court has been collected from the two bars of Madras high court located in Chennai and Madurai in order to determine the total population of practicing lawyers (which constitutes 2067) to be included under the study. The researcher has employed a well structured questionnaire for collecting the data from the advocates of Madras high court and its Madurai bench. The questionnaire has been prepared in such a way that the respondents could easily understand the items. A total number of 1000 questionnaires were distributed among the practicing advocates, who reside in and around Chennai and Madurai. They

Table 1. Age wise distribution of respondents.

Percentage	
	12.11
	14.23
	15.77
	28.31
	12.25
	17.32
	100.00
Age	No. of respondents
Below 36	86
36-40	101
41-45	112
Percentage	
	16.06
	40.42
	7.75
	5.92
	29.86
	100.00
46-50	201
51-55	87
Above 55	123
Total	710

Table 2. Gender wise distribution of respondents.

Status	No. of respondents
Independent Advocates	114
Senior Advocates	287
Panel Advocates	55
Government Advocates	42
Junior Advocates	212
Total	710

stratification method has been adopted with a view to give relative weight age to the respondents of different categories.

Distribution of respondents by age

Data in Table 1 indicates the age wise distribution of respondents. It could be noted that, out of the total 710 respondents, 12.11% of them belong to the age group of below 36 years and 14.23% of them come under the age group of 36 - 40 years. In this study, 15.77% of the respondents' age is in the range of 41 - 45 years and 28.31% of them are found in the age group of 46 - 50 years. It is observed that 12.25% of the respondents belong to the age group 51 - 55 years and the rest 17.32% of them belong to the age

Table 3. Status wise distribution of respondents.

Status	No. of respondents	Percentage
Independent Advocates	114	16.06
Senior advocates	287	40.42
Panel advocates	55	7.75
Government Advocates	42	5.92
Junior advocates	212	29.86
Total	710	100.00

Table 4. Education wise distribution of respondents.

Education	No. of respondents	Percentage
Three year law degree	438	61.69
Five year law degree	216	30.42
Post Graduate law degree	56	7.89
Total	710	100.00

are personally requested to fill up the questionnaire at their earliest convenience in order to help the investigator to collect the same during his next visit. The investigator has to make second, third and fourth visits to the bars for collecting the filled-in-questionnaires from the practicing advocates. During these visits, the investigator could collect questionnaires from only 710 out of 1000 advocates among whom the questionnaires were distributed. This constitutes 71% (710/1000) of the total response. While selecting sample,

group of above 55 years. It is concluded from the above table that majority of the respondents are found to be with the age group of 46 - 50.

Distribution of respondents by gender

Data in Table 2 indicates the gender distribution of respondents. It could be noted that out of the total 710 respondents, more than two thirds of the respondents (66.90%) belong to the male group and the rest one third of them (33.10%) are females. It is concluded that male advocates constitute more in number than female advocates, indicating the presence of male domination in legal profession in Tamil Nadu.

Distribution of respondents by status

The legal professionals have been asked to indicate their status. Different types of status were listed in the questionnaire, viz, Independent advocates, senior advocates, panel advocates, government advocates and junior advocates.

Data in Table 3 indicates the status wise distribution of respondents. It could be noted that out of the total 710 respondents, 16.06% of them are independent advocates and 40.42% of them are senior advocates. In this study, 7.75% of the respondents are panel advocates and 5.92% of them are government advocates. It is observed that 29.86% of the respondents are junior advocates. It is concluded that more senior advocates followed by junior advocates are respondents in the study.

Distribution of respondents by education

Data in Table 4 indicates the education wise distribution of respondents. It could be noted that, out of the total 710 respondents, 61.69% of them have three year law degree education and 30.42% of them possess five year law degree education. In this study, 7.89% of the respondents have post graduate law degree. It is concluded that majority of the advocates have three year law degree education.

Distribution of respondents by income

Data in Table 5 indicates the Income wise distribution of respondents. It could be noted that, out of the total 710 respondents, 35.35% of them belong to the income group below Rs.15,000 and 20% of them come under the income group of Rs.15,000 - 25,000. In this study, 14.79% of the respondents are found in the income group of Rs.25,001 - 35,000 and 12.54% of them are noted in the income group Rs.35,001 - 45,000. It is observed that 9.44% of the respondents belong to the income group Rs.45,001 - 55,000 and the rest 7.89% of them belong to the income group of above Rs. 55,000. It is concluded that, more than

Table 5. Income wise distribution of respondents.

Income	No. of respondents	Percentage
Below 15,000	251	35.35
15000 - 25,000	142	20.00
25,001- 35,000	105	14.79
35,001- 45,000	89	12.54
45,001- 55,000	67	9.44
Above 55,000	56	7.89
Total	710	100

Table 6. Status wise respondents' field of specialization.

Status	Civil and constitutional law	Criminal law	Property law and family law	Company law and labour law	Taxation, consumer disputes and IPR	Total
Independent advocates	22 (19.30)	40 (35.09)	21 (18.42)	26 (22.81)	5 (4.39)	114
Senior advocates	42 (14.63)	90 (31.36)	67 (23.34)	78 (27.18)	10 (3.48)	287
Panel advocates	15 (27.27)	5 (9.09)	6 (10.91)	9 (16.36)	20 (36.36)	55
Government advocates	6 (14.29)	8 (19.05)	9 (21.43)	11 (26.19)	8 (19.05)	42
Junior advocates	77 (36.32)	41 (19.34)	51 (24.06)	12 (5.66)	31 (14.62)	212
Total	162 (22.82)	184 (25.92)	154 (21.69)	136 (19.15)	74 (10.42)	710

Source computed.

Figures in parentheses denote percentages.

an half of the respondents belong to the income group below Rs.25,000.

Field of specialization

Data presented in Table 6, indicate the status wise respondents' field of law specialization. It could be noted that majority of the junior advocate respondents (36.32%) have specialized themselves in civil and constitutional law. In this study majority of the independent advocate respondents (35.09%) and senior advocate respondents (31.36%) have specialized themselves in criminal law. Majority of the government advocate respondents (26.19%) have specialized themselves in company law and labor law. Majority of the panel advocate respondents (36.36%) have specialized in taxation, consumer disputes and IPR laws. It could be seen clearly from the above discussion that Independent and senior advocates have specialized themselves in criminal law.

Internet access

The use of e- resources partially depends on the extent of internet access. Most of electronic information resources are accessible through internet. The advocates have been asked to indicate the frequency of access to Internet. Data presented in Table 7, indicate the status wise respondents' frequency of access to internet. It

could be noted that majority of the junior advocate respondents (33.49%) have below 2% of access to internet. Majority of the independent advocate respondents (40.35%) and government advocates (23.81%) have 4 - 5 h of access to internet. Around one third of the senior advocate respondents (36.93%) have 3 - 4 h of access to internet.

Majority of the panel advocate respondents (47.27%) have above 5 h of access to internet. It could be seen clearly from the above discussion that 3-4 h of access to internet is quite common among the respondents of government advocates and junior advocates.

Frequency of library visits

The frequency of library visits by the user is usually influenced by factors such as collection, organization, and maintenance of the library resources along with the library resources, facilities and the library services. Data presented in Table 8 indicate the status wise respondents' frequency of library visits. It could be noted that majority of the junior advocate respondents (40.57%) make library visit thrice a week. Majority of the independent advocate respondents (42.98%) make library visit once in a week. A considerable number of panel advocate respondents (36.36%) make library visit as when required and so also the government advocates (26.19%). It could be seen clearly from the above discussion, that independent advocate respondents mainly make library visit once in a week and junior advocate respondents make

Table 7. Status wise respondents' duration of access to internet.

Status	Less than 2 h	2 - 3 h	3 - 4 h	4 - 5 h	Above 5 h	Total
Independent advocates	14 (12.28)	14 (12.28)	22 (19.30)	46 (40.35)	18 (15.79)	114
Senior advocates	21 (07.32)	36 (12.54)	106 (36.93)	66 (23.00)	58 (20.21)	287
Panel advocates	5 (9.09)	6 (10.91)	7 (12.73)	11 (20.00)	26 (47.27)	55
Government advocates	9 (21.43)	8 (19.05)	6 (14.29)	10 (23.81)	9 (21.43)	42
Junior advocates	71 (33.49)	62 (29.25)	32 (15.09)	26 (12.26)	21 (9.91)	212
Total	120 (16.90)	126 (17.75)	173 (24.37)	159 (22.39)	132 (18.59)	710

Source Computed

Figures in parentheses denote percentages.

Table 8. Status wise respondents' frequency of library visits.

Status	Daily	Thrice a week	Twice a week	Once in a week	Once in a fortnight	As and when required	Total
Independent advocates	11 (9.65)	21 (18.42)	14 (12.28)	49 (42.98)	10 (8.77)	9 (7.89)	114
Senior advocates	26 (9.06)	31 (10.80)	67 (23.34)	67 (23.34)	48 (16.72)	48 (16.72)	287
Panel advocates	5 (9.09)	6 (10.91)	7 (12.73)	8 (14.55)	9 (16.36)	20 (36.36)	55
Government advocates	7 (16.67)	5 (11.90)	6 (14.29)	6 (14.29)	7 (16.67)	11 (26.19)	42
Junior advocates	10 (4.72)	86 (40.57)	72 (33.96)	26 (12.26)	6 (2.83)	12 (5.66)	212
Total	59 (8.31)	149 (20.99)	166 (23.38)	156 (21.97)	80 (11.27)	100 (14.08)	710

Source Computed

Figures in parentheses denote percentages.

high level of library visit at thrice a week.

Extent of satisfaction on legal information networks

Information on the web is increasingly becoming popular day-by-day. Various types of data and opportunities to explore are made available. Discussion groups, relay chatting, software packages, biographical notes, daily news, various high court judgments, research communication, institutional publications, government programmes and policies are accessible. The fact is that, the amount of information / services hosted on the web is very vast but consumers spend considerable amount of time in browsing and getting hold of relevant information in a precise form.

Data in Table 9 indicates the status wise respondents' satisfaction on legal information networks. The status wise analysis examines the following facts. The independent advocate

respondents occupy the first position with respect to their overall satisfaction on all legal information networks as their secured mean score is 3.95 on a 5 point rating scale. The senior advocate respondents take the second position in their overall satisfaction on all legal information networks as their secured mean score is 3.87 on a 5 point rating scale. The panel advocate respondents rank in the third position in their overall satisfaction on all legal information networks as their secured mean score is 3.39 on a 5 point rating scale. The government advocates take the fourth position in their overall satisfaction on all legal information networks as their secured mean score is 3.32 on a 5 point rating scale. The junior advocate respondents occupy the fifth position in their overall satisfaction on all legal information networks as their secured mean score is 3.18 on a 5 point rating scale. It could be seen clearly from the above discussion that independent advocate respondents take the first position in their overall satisfaction on utilization of legal information networks, senior advocate respondents the second,

Table 9. Status wise respondents' satisfaction on legal information networks.

Legal websites	Status					Total
	Independent advocates	Senior advocates	Panel advocates	Government advocates	Junior advocates	
www.supremecourtindia.nic.in	4.41	4.09	3.90	3.52	3.30	4.02
www.hcmadras.tn.nic	4.51	4.11	3.52	3.11	2.98	3.75
www.judis.nic.in	4.18	4.10	3.80	3.26	2.26	3.65
www.legalserviceindia.com	4.30	4.16	4.10	3.79	3.79	4.10
www.scjudgments.com	4.51	4.36	4.16	3.90	3.90	4.23
www.lawadiv.com	3.60	3.66	2.66	2.65	2.89	2.99
www.allindiareporter.com	3.44	3.42	2.42	2.28	2.79	2.90
www.judgments-online.com	4.10	3.49	3.67	3.96	3.89	3.81
www.commonlii.org/in/cases/INSC	2.65	3.88	2.90	3.11	2.52	3.04
www.courtnic.nic.in	4.05	4.15	3.16	3.78	3.52	3.77
www.indialawsite.com	4.21	3.33	3.78	4.01	3.79	4.15
http://lawmin.nic.in/	3.42	3.69	2.56	2.52	2.56	2.40
Total	3.95	3.87	3.39	3.32	3.18	3.57

Table 10. Status wise respondents' preference to legal cd-rom database.

CD-ROM	Status					Total
	Independent advocate	Senior advocate	Panel advocate	Government advocate	Junior advocate	
Supreme court cases	4.30	4.44	4.11	3.72	3.49	4.15
All India reporter (AIR)	3.77	3.88	3.32	2.51	2.22	3.37
Manupatra case locator	3.37	3.87	4.10	4.26	4.36	7.44
Patent and trade marks cases	2.52	2.42	2.56	3.79	3.82	3.77
National acts	4.11	4.31	3.71	3.72	3.52	3.96
Consumer cases judgments	3.42	3.51	2.35	2.36	2.26	2.75
Arbitration judgments	4.20	4.32	3.82	3.85	3.89	3.90
Rent judgments	3.39	3.42	3.51	2.36	2.44	2.80
Company cases	4.10	4.16	3.89	3.79	3.76	4.00
State acts	2.95	2.79	2.12	2.89	2.59	2.45
Total	3.81	3.88	3.35	3.16	2.99	3.46

panel advocate respondents the third, government advocates the fourth and junior advocates the last.

CD-ROM database on legal information

From the typographical age, the world now moves to the electronic era. CD – ROM collection is growing in the high court libraries. Indexing and abstracting CDs and directories on CDs are increasing on one hand, and the legal information CDs on Supreme Court and various high courts are growing on the other. Libraries find them to be economical when compared to hard copies and also they occupy very less space. The advocates have been asked to indicate the preference on Legal CD-ROM database used for their present study. Different legal CD-ROM database have been listed in the questionnaire, viz, supreme court cases, All India reporter [AIR], Manupatra case locator etc.

Data in Table 10 indicates the status wise respondents'

preference to legal CD- ROM database. The status wise analysis examines the following facts. The senior advocate respondents occupy the first position with respect to their overall preference to all CD-ROM databases as their secured mean score is 3.88 on a 5 point rating scale. The independent advocate respondents take the second position in their overall preference to all CD-ROM databases as their secured mean score is 3.81 on a 5 point rating scale. The panel advocate respondents rank in the third position in their overall preference to all CD-ROM databases as their secured mean score is 3.35 on a 5 point rating scale.

The government advocates take the fourth position in their overall preference to all CD-ROM databases as their secured mean score is 3.16 on a 5 point rating scale. The junior advocate respondents occupy the fifth position in their overall preference to all CD-ROM databases as their secured mean score is 2.99 on a 5 point rating scale. It could be seen clearly from the above discussion that senior advocate respondents rank in the first position with respect to their overall preference to legal CD-ROM

Table 11. Status wise respondents' satisfaction on fee based e-resources.

Online database	Status					Total
	Independent advocate	Senior advocate	Panel advocate	Government advocate	Junior advocate	
Indlaw-online	4.11	3.96	3.81	2.96	2.52	4.01
Manupatra online	4.12	4.10	4.11	3.14	2.96	3.90
SCC-online	3.90	3.76	3.77	2.56	2.26	3.51
Lexis-nexis	3.44	3.52	2.77	3.15	3.11	3.16
Westlaw	2.90	2.44	3.52	2.85	3.15	2.96
Hein online	3.71	2.52	2.81	3.81	3.52	3.18
World bank resources online	2.36	3.36	3.85	4.11	3.79	3.85
WTO online	3.65	2.12	2.36	3.36	2.96	2.52
Total	3.52	3.22	3.38	3.24	3.03	3.39

databases, independent advocate respondents the second, panel advocates the third, government advocates the fourth and junior advocates the last.

Satisfaction on fee based e-resources

Today there are various fee based e-resources catering needs of advocates and litigating parties. The advocates have been requested to indicate the satisfaction on fee based e-resources. Different types of fee based e-resources have been listed in the questionnaire, viz, Indlaw-Online, Manupatra-Online, SCC-Online and Lexis Nexis etc. Data in Table 11 indicates the status wise respondents' satisfaction on fee based e-resources. The independent advocate respondents occupy the first position with respect to their overall satisfaction on all fee based e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.52 on a 5 point rating scale. The panel advocate respondents take the second position in their overall satisfaction on all fee based e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.38 on a 5 point rating scale. The government advocates rank in the third position in their overall satisfaction on fee based all e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.24 on a 5 point rating scale. The senior advocate respondents take the fourth position in their overall satisfaction on all fee based e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.22 on a 5 point rating scale. The junior advocate respondents occupy the fifth position in their overall satisfaction on fee based all e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.03 on a 5 point rating scale. It could be seen clearly from the above discussion that independent advocate respondents occupy the first position with respect to their overall satisfaction on all fee based e-resources, panel advocates the second, government advocates the third, senior advocates the fourth and junior advocates the last.

Purpose of using e-resources

In order to find out reasons for using the e-resources, respondents have been asked to indicate their major purpose of use on e-resources. Our data shows that there are different purposes for which the users use e-resources. They use to access the current decisions of the supreme court of India, to access the current decisions of the high courts of India and so on. Data in Table 12 indicates the status wise respondents' purpose of gathering e-resources. The status wise analysis examines the following facts.

The independent advocate respondents top the position with respect to their overall purpose of e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.85 on a 5 point rating scale. The senior advocate respondents take the second position in their overall purpose of gathering e-resources as their secured mean score is 3 on a 5 point rating scale. The panel advocate respondents rank in the third position in their overall purpose of gathering e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.16 on a 5 point rating scale. The government advocate respondents took the fourth position in their overall purpose of gathering e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.09 on a 5 point rating scale. The junior advocate respondents occupied the fifth position in their overall purpose of gathering e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.00 on a 5 point rating scale. It could be seen clearly from the above discussion, that independent advocate respondents took the first position with respect to their overall purpose of gathering e-resources, senior advocate respondents the second, panel advocates the third, government advocates the fourth and junior advocates the last.

Problems faced while accessing e-resources

The advocates have been asked to indicate the problems faced while using electronic resources. Different types of problems are listed in the questionnaire. Data in Table 13 indicates the status wise respondents' problems in accessing e-resources. The status wise analysis examines the following facts. The junior advocate respondents top the position with respect to their overall problems in accessing e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.94 on a 5 point rating scale. The government advocate respondents took the second position in their overall problems in accessing e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.85 on a 5 point rating scale. The panel advocate respondents rank in the third position in their overall problems in accessing e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.44 on a 5 point rating scale. The senior advocate respondents took the fourth position in their overall problems in accessing e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.11 on a 5 point rating scale. The government advocate respondents occupy the fifth position in their overall problems in accessing e-resources as their secured mean score is 3.02 on a 5 point rating scale. It could be seen clearly from the above discussion that junior advocate respondents take the first position with respect to their overall problems in accessing e-resources, government advocate respondents the second, panel advocates the third, senior advocates the fourth and independent advocates the last.

Table 12. Status wise respondents' purpose of gathering e-resources

Purpose for using e-resources	Status					Total
	Independent advocate	Senior advocate	Panel advocate	Government advocate	Junior advocate	
To access the current decisions of the supreme court of India	4.32	4.21	4.10	3.49	3.11	4.15
To access the current decisions of the High Courts of India	4.10	3.95	3.95	3.66	3.22	4.08
To access most national statutes and amendments	3.55	3.14	2.76	3.01	2.96	3.09
To access state statutes and amendments	3.48	3.65	2.53	2.42	2.14	3.23
To access national acts	3.99	3.49	3.72	3.89	3.59	3.80
For research	3.36	3.42	2.18	2.26	3.26	2.92
For getting relevant information in the area of specialization	4.21	3.11	3.85	3.14	2.96	4.02
For improving legal knowledge	4.14	4.21	3.55	3.26	3.12	3.90
E-journals	4.10	4.05	3.62	3.56	3.44	3.85
E-books	3.79	4.09	2.79	3.14	3.12	3.12
Career Information	3.80	3.16	2.86	2.56	2.42	3.20
General Information	3.52	3.10	2.36	2.49	2.16	2.78
Sending and receiving e-mail	4.21	4.21	3.81	3.78	3.57	4.00
Entertainment	3.33	2.42	2.21	2.56	2.89	2.65
Total	3.85	3.59	3.16	3.09	3.00	3.49

Table 13. Status wise respondents' problems in accessing e-resources

Problems	Status					Total
	Independent advocates	Senior advocates	Panel advocates	Government advocates	Junior advocates	
Difficulty in finding relevant information	3.55	2.98	3.44	4.02	3.98	3.55
Longtime to view	2.42	2.79	3.21	4.01	4.11	3.20
Slow accessibility	2.49	2.39	2.99	3.65	3.96	2.90
Difficulty in using digital resources due to lack of IT knowledge	3.36	3.56	4.01	3.98	4.12	3.75
Too much information retrieved	2.65	3.16	3.10	3.41	3.52	2.75
Limited access to computers	3.34	3.52	3.96	4.10	4.05	3.65
Lack of time	2.26	2.79	3.10	3.50	3.62	2.80
Virus	4.05	3.66	3.69	4.11	4.16	4.00
Total	3.02	3.11	3.44	3.85	3.94	3.33

SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions are put forward to improve the use of the e-resources among the legal professionals of the Madras high court:

i. Legal education curricula should be revised at the national level to accommodate the integration of information literacy and the use of e-library, either as embedded or standalone courses. This is in recognition of the changes in technology, especially, in managing

legal information.

ii. The Madras high court library and its bar library should urgently develop its e-library project by procuring all necessary facilities and also open the planned internet café for advocates to access the e-library and make effective use of its resources. The library of bar association and high court should subscribe for more e-journals and e-databases. There should be specific budget for new e-resources and the renewal of existing e-resources.

iii. Awareness should be generated on the online journals

to obtain current legal information. More computer terminals should be installed in the bar library for easy access to advocates. The problems of slow access speed can be overcome by increasing the bandwidth.

iv. Compared to the total number of advocates, the number of users using the e-resource is small. Further, those who do use the e-resource do not have adequate knowledge of the above mentioned resources. Therefore, it is recommended that the qualified IT staff should be appointed to provide the expert guidance to users about e-resources and internet.

v. There should be complete campus-wide networking with the internet browsing facility connecting the advocate chambers. Some orientation training programmes should be organized by the bar association at regular intervals so that the maximum users can improve their excellence or proficiency in the use of the e-resources for their professional purposes.

vi. All the legal information news should be provided at the high court website and it should be regularly updated. Such websites depicting services will help the lawyers to explore relevant information.

Electronic based legal services should be provided to users on payment basis as the legal professionals are in favour of fee based library services, so that there will be no financial constraints for the libraries to provide better electronic resource services to its users.

vii. A quality assessment team (QAT) should be developed in Madras high court library and its bar library to assess the quality of library service.

- Better user education programmes should be conducted by the bar libraries as the practicing lawyers depend heavily on the library staff to get their required information. This will reduce the dependence of the lawyers on the library staff that can devote more time in other activities of the library

viii. A corpus fund should be created for the lawyers to finance them for attending different conferences and seminars on their area of specialization.

Library and information centres are playing a crucial role in the growth and development of the nation directly/indirectly by providing better services to the members of the society. Law is a powerful weapon in providing justice in any system/organization. In fact, in the absence of proper implementation of law, the Library and information centres can not function in proper manner. Lawyers have been respected for their role models, setting the tone and lifting the quality of public life by the professional and personal integrity, penetrating intellect, dedication to

public causes, philanthropic disposition and commitment to public service. Electronic resources have become the vital part of human life in the 21st century. High court libraries and their bar libraries are rapidly transforming into digital libraries. It is important that Madras high court library and its bar library maintain the E-library with all necessary technology, for the effective use of legal information. A large portion of legal professionals in the Madras high court is aware about the e-resources, but they do not know all its techniques and applications. Further, a few legal professionals of the Madras High Court still have no knowledge about the e-resources and related applications. For this purpose, there is need for effective user education, to develop awareness and knowledge of the legal professionals. More efforts by librarians at Madras high court and its bar are needed to educate users to effectively use the e-resources and its techniques and applications. Findings of this study, its hoped would help the authorities and administration of the Madras high court to reconsider its objectives and to design the services taking into consideration of the technological developments, so as to meet the challenges of the legal professionals of the 21st century.

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