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Usage of electronic Information resources among the lawyers of Delhi High Court Bar Association

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Abstract

Purpose - The purpose of this study was to know the use of electronic information resources among the lawyers of Delhi High Court Bar Association.

Design/methodology - A survey, based on a questionnaire was conducted by the researcher and received data was used for the study.

Findings - It is found that the most frequently used among the e-resource is journals with a percentage of 84.69. To keep updating knowledge is the main purpose of using the electronic information resources i.e.38.27%. The users of the library give preferences to e-resources for keeping them up-to-date with subject knowledge and to keep abreast with current information for consulting documents. The main purpose of using e-resources is to find relevant information in the area of specialization. The main problems faced by the library users in accessing the e-resources is lack of knowledge.

Research limitations/implications - Only a Bar Association of Delhi High Court was surveyed; thus, the outcomes can't be summed up for the whole Bar Association of the country.

Practical implications - The findings will help the library administration to perceive what the prime areas of concern are so far as the search instruction and access to electronic information resources are concerned.

Originality/value - Such a survey has been not accompanied in the Delhi High Bar Court Association till date.

Keywords: Delhi High Court, Delhi High Court Bar Association, electronic resources, law library, court library.

Paper type: Research Paper

Introduction

The High Court of Delhi was established on 31st October 1966. Initially, the High Court of Judicature at Lahore, which was established by a Letters Patent dated 21st March 1919, exercised jurisdiction over the then provinces of the Punjab and Delhi. This position continued till the Indian Independence Act, 1947 when the dominions of India and Pakistan were created. Delhi High Court has two libraries; one is Delhi High Court Judges' Library (DHCJL) and second Delhi High Court Bar Association Library (DHCBAL). Delhi High Court Bar Association library consists of five libraries. First, the main library has all the journals, second, Bar Room no. Eighteen have company cases/ Income tax related material; third, second-floor library have English Reports and also used as an electronic library. Fourth, Extension Block library is known as a criminal library and fifth is Consultation Room have AIR, SCC and AIR Manuals (High Court of Delhi, 2010).

Problem

Libraries have started to add electronic information resources among their collection, but court libraries are in the initial point in adding these resources. Information Technology (IT) plays a major role in every field of life and world has become like a village. Within a second a person may contact any person sitting in any corner of the world. Libraries are also affected by the IT, due it libraries have transferred from storehouse to knowledge house i.e. a person may access any library in the world if its resources are digitised and accessible. IT has transformed

traditional libraries into the electronic library, virtual library, hybrid library, automated library, digital library, electronic library, and modern library. Court libraries are special libraries and users of these libraries are also special, so, they need information without wasting a minute. So, electronic resources are very important for these libraries.

The libraries should take the most extreme consideration of its users by helping them to pick up the abilities vital for identification of most proper search platform/tools to begin their search and utilise the advanced search methods to find and retrieve information of their most extreme importance. All things considered, the libraries must be undertaking to distinguish the search strategy commonly accepted by their users to search the electronic information resources and lay endeavors to assess their capability in utilizing the search tools and methods. It is additionally vital to measure the intensity of variety among different classes of users with the goal that suitable measures could be taken to address their particular problems. The study close by is an exertion in this direction with DHCBAL as a field of study.

Literature review

Bar-Ilan, Peritz, and Wolman (2003) conducted a survey at Israeli Universities to examine the use of electronic databases and electronic journals accessed through the Web. The survey revealed that 76.6% make use of either electronic databases or e-journals. A very significant number of the respondents i.e. 85.2% feel that they master the use of electronic information services either completely or reasonably. Ali (2005) found that 60 percent of users face difficulties while browsing e-information. 34 percent of users give the first rank to study and research purposes, while 20 and 15 percent gave this purpose as a second and third preference, respectively. Similarly, 25 percent of respondents gave the first rank to keeping abreast of new development in their own discipline, with 23 percent giving this second rank. According to Tahir, Mahmood and Shafique (2010) that the internet search engines were highly used Mean

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3.22, followed by the web pages and electronic/online journals with Mean scores 2.96 and 2.91 respectively. Electronic mail and audiovisual and multimedia collections were ranked as fourth and fifth Mean 2.85 and 2.71. Online databases were ranked as sixth with the Mean score 2.68. Adeniyi Aderibigbe, & Adebimpe Ajiboye (2013) affirmed that the user education program of Nimbe Adedipe Library is not adequate; the library provides more library orientation than bibliographic instruction and information literacy skills. The use of EIR has a great impact on the respondents' academic activities, as reflected in their responses, where the students agreed that their academic work would suffer without the use of EIR. Sampath Kumar & Kumar (2010) mentioned that a majority of the academic community uses electronic information sources for their academic-related work, most of them prefer print to electronic information sources. The majority of respondents indicated they had problems with accessing suitable software i.e. 45 percent, lack of information about how to use electronic information resources 36 percent. Madhusudhan (2010) stated that 90% of research scholars use e-journals, followed by web sites 48%, search engines 38%, and online databases 30%. The most common problem is that of slow access speed of 62%. 88% of the respondents feel that in comparison to conventional documents, e-resources are time-saving, 78% said that e-resources are easy to use, 66 percent of the respondents admit that these are more informative, 54% state that these are more useful, and 50% advocate that e-resources are more preferred. Borrego, Anglada, Barrios and Comellas conducted a survey to see the use and users of electronic journals in Catalan Universities. The result showed that 95% of users have awareness of the collection of electronic titles among teaching and research staff. Respondents who use electronic journals less show a lack of awareness of the collections rather than a resistance to change. By age groups, respondents under the age of forty use mainly electronic journals, whereas respondents over the age of fifty-one use exclusively or mainly printed journals. Egberongbe (2011) found that most users accessed e-journals and search engines to get required information at Unilag library

39.6% lecturers and 47% research scholars preferred to use e-journals whereas 45% Lecturers and 33% scholars made use of search engines to get desired materials, online database were also very popular among research scholars as 14(20%) of them preferred to use them. E-books were used less by both lecturers and scholars in comparison to other online resources. Kayaoglu explored the reason to use of electronic journals by faculty at Istanbul University, Turkey and found that the responses given for the options for always 67.5% of the respondents used e-journals for research, 49.2% used them for keeping him/herself updated on the subject field, 28.5% for browsing core journals, and 16.9% for teaching. Kindilchie and Samarraie illustrated that e-resources have become a significant substitute for printed materials in meeting their personal information needs but this is not in the case of the College of Sharia. 69% of faculty members also indicated that they believed that the students have problems in using the Internet.

Objectives

This study was done in light of the following objectives

- to know the frequency to visits the library;

- to know the use of electronic information resources;

- to know the purpose of using e-resources;

- to know if the desired information finds while searching electronic resources; and

- to know the problems faced during access e-resources.

Scope

Delhi High Court (DHC) is the scope of the study. DHC comprises of two libraries, i.e. Delhi High Court Judges' Library (DHCJL) and Delhi High Court Bar Association Library (DHCBAL). Just a single library, i.e. "Delhi High Court Bar Association Library" was taken as a sample. The population under study included only lawyers. The Delhi High Court Bar Association has 8,182 bonafide members.

Methodology

For this study, a set of questionnaire was set up by the researcher and gave over to the respondents who utilise the bar library. Keeping in view the objectives and scope of the study, in the questionnaire, the closed-ended questions asked the respondents to express their ideas and their experience of utilizing the court library. The information gathered amid 2017 and the information gathered from respondents have been sorted out, compared, analysed, tabulated, combined and interpreted by utilizing Statistical Method and Measurement have been made for their appropriate use to touch base at the findings of the study. From that point forward, a proper practical idea and proposal have been propounded for the lawyers and legal professionals that may assist them with using the library more proficiently.

Findings

The collected data was analysed and interpreted with the help of MS Excel. The finding is exhibited here in tables and figures.
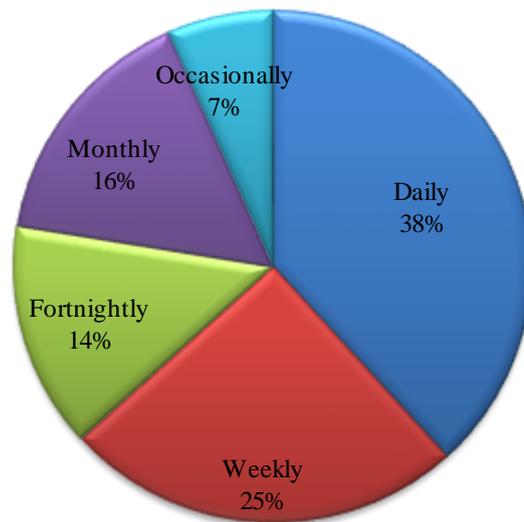
Frequency to visits the library

Husain and Abalkhail (2013) state that the frequencies of the visit to the library are one list to survey the users' need and fulfillment of the library resources and services. The users who usually visit the library can be supposed that they utilise the library at the most extreme level when contrasted with those users who visit the library sometimes.

Table 1 and Figure 1 illustrated that 75 (38.26%) of the users visit the library daily, however, 49 (25%) users visit the library weekly, followed by 28 (14.28%) fortnightly, 31 (15.81%) monthly and 13 (6.63%). A high percentage of users, as shown in Table 2 consult the library resources either on a daily basis or once in a week, it shows that the library has a good collection.

Table: 1 - Frequency of library visits

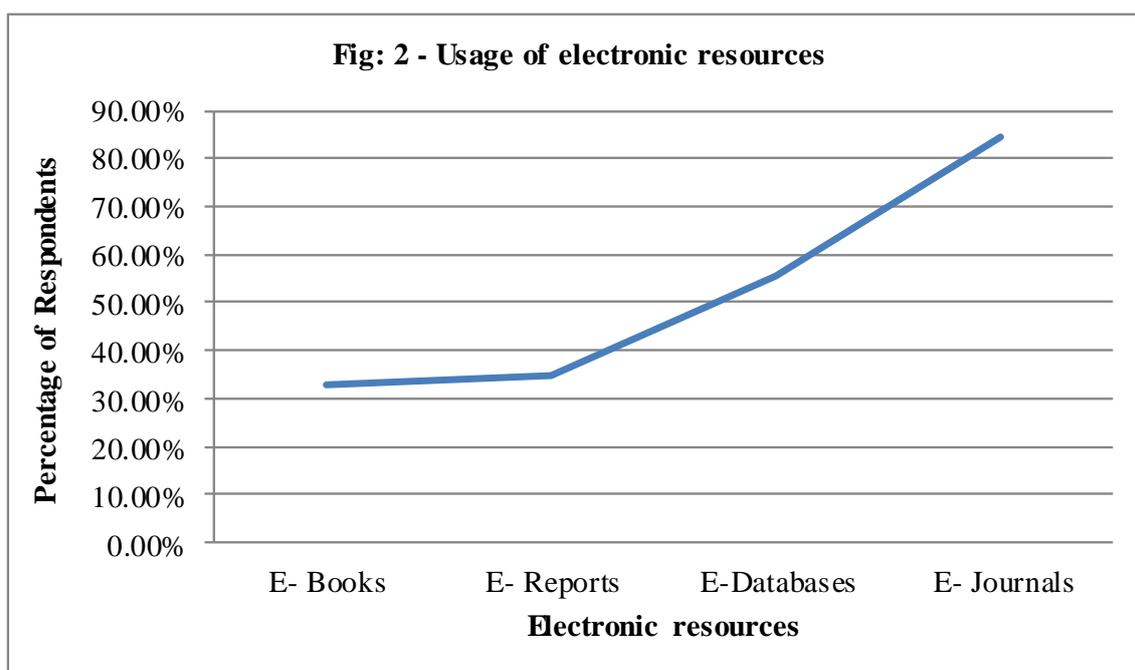| Frequency	DHCBAL
Daily	75 (38.26%)
Weekly	49 (25%)
Fortnightly	28 (14.28%)
Monthly	31 (15.81%)
Occasionally	13 (6.63%)

Fig: 1 - Frequency of library visit

Use of electronic information resources

Table 2 and Figure 2 reflect the use of Electronic Information resources (EIR) among the courts' library users. It may be noted that e-journals, the most frequently used e-resource, with a number and percentage value of 166 (84.69%) among the bar library users. Then the most frequently used e-resources are e-databases 109 (55.61%) succeeded by e-reports 68 (34.69%) and e-books 64 (32.65%).

The electronic journals are the most frequently used among the respondents. Electronic journals provide efficient access to information comparatively. Many law journals are open access that can be accessed by anyone and anywhere, so users prefer to use them without any delay. The e-resources are being mostly used in DHCBAL because the subscriptions of e-resources are sufficient. It was realised from the following study that a very small percentage of users of the court libraries were using e-books.

Table: 2 - Use of electronic information resources

E-resources	Respondents
E- Journals	166 (84.69%)
E-Databases	109 (55.61%)
E- Reports	68 (34.69%)
E- Books	64 (32.65%)

Fig: 2 - Usage of electronic resources
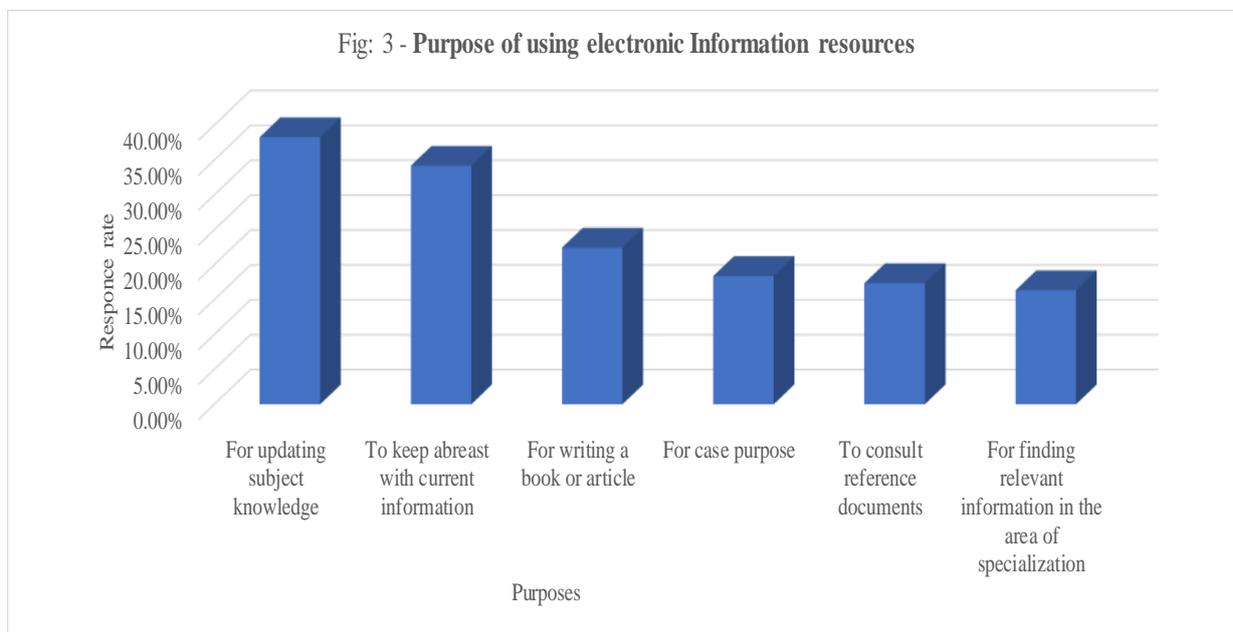
Purpose of using e-resources

The purpose of using e-resources varies from one user to another. The court library users were asked about the purpose of using e-resources. Although the purposes are numerous, the core ones and the replies of the respondents are presented in Table 3 and Figure 3. It presents that in DHCBAL to keep updating knowledge is the main purpose of using the 75 (38.27%). To keep abreast with current information is the second highest purpose to use e-resources i.e. 67 (34.18%), followed by 44 (22.45%) for writing book or article, 36 (18.37%) for case purpose, 34 (17.35%) to consult reference documents and 32 (16.33%) for finding relevant information in the area of specialization.

It is fairly normal that users of the library give preferences to e-resources for keeping them up-to-date with subject knowledge and to keep abreast with current information for consulting documents. The cause may be that users can access significant and updated information quickly through the electronic format in comparison to any other source of information. One important point of preference of electronic format is that this available round the clock. As far as the purpose to find relevant information in the area of specialization and to consult reference documents are concerned the lowest purpose, this is owing to the fact that almost most of the information available in printed documents which are already in users' possession.

Table: 3 - Purpose of using electronic Information resources

Purpose	Response rate
For updating subject knowledge	75 (38.27%)
To keep abreast with current information	67 (34.18%)
For writing a book or article	44 (22.45%)
For case purpose	36 (18.37%)

To consult reference documents	34 (17.35%)
For finding relevant information in the area of specialization	32 (16.33%)

Fig: 3 - **Purpose of using electronic Information resources**

Desired information while searching electronic Information resources

The greater achievement of search is connected to the relevance of information retrieved by the users. For this, it is very important to know if the users are getting desired information while they are searching electronic Information resources. Table 4 shows that most of the information got by the users 56 (28.72%) is always relevant followed by 39 (20%) sometimes relevant and sometimes irrelevant, 8 (4.1%) always irrelevant and 14 (7.18%) cannot say. Its mean electronic format is very useful for court library users. These differences can be due to the effective computational skills of users in surfing information available on the related electronic Information resources.

Table: 4 - Desired information while searching electronic Information resources

Categories	Response rate
Always relevant	56 (28.72%)

Sometimes relevant and sometimes irrelevant	39 (20%)
Always irrelevant	8 (4.1%)
Cannot say	14 (7.18%)

Problems faced during access e-resources

The study helped us to discover the problems faced by the users. Table 5 reveals the main problems faced by the Bar library users in accessing the e-resources. As regards problems faced during access of e-resources it has been found that 60% of users are facing a lack of knowledge in using the e-resources as the analysis shows. 19.89% are facing Inadequate ICT infrastructure facilities, followed by a lack of relevant information and lack of time i.e. 14.28% and 11.22% respectively.

These results discusses above suggesting the limited skills of information literacy among the users. Insufficient information literacy skills can specially bound users to use electronic resources such as databases, journals, books, etc. Individual problems faced by the respondents during e-resources access may be the absence of users training, old staff, lack of suitable IT knowledge, lack of proficiency to use computer and paucity of search skills are the key problems while using e-resources. Further the age may affect the capability to use and access electronic resources. Todays' younger is using e-resources more than the elders.

Table: 5 - Problems faced during access e-resources

Problems	DHCBAL
Lack of knowledge to use	73 (37.24%)
Inadequate ICT Infrastructure facilities	39 (19.89%)
Lack of Relevant Information	28 (14.28%)
Others (lack of time etc.)	22 (11.22%)

Discussion

38.26% of users visit the library daily; however, 25% of users weekly. The most frequently used among the e-resource, with a percentage of 84.69 is e-journals. Egberongbe (2011) also confirmed that the majority of lecturers 90.6% and research scholars 80% prefer to use e-journals. To keep updating knowledge is the main purpose of using electronic information resources i.e. 38.27% of users. This point to be noted, that users of the library give preferences to e-resources for keeping them up-to-date with subject knowledge and to keep abreast with current information for consulting documents. Madhusudhan (2009) also stated that 42 per cent of the respondents uses e-resources for keeping themselves up-to-date in their subject field and getting current information. As far as the purpose to find relevant information in the area of specialization and to consult reference documents are concerned the lowest purpose. Relevancy of information among the DHCBAL's users is 49%. The main problems faced by 60% of the Bar library's users in accessing the e-resources is lack of knowledge to use them.

Conclusion

The most frequently used e-resources is e-journals and least uses of e-books, its main cause is that the most relevant information that is needed by the lawyers found in the journals. Further, it is clear from the question about their purpose to use e-resources; the main purpose of the user was to keep updating knowledge, and this is possible in the journals. However, some users are also facing problem during access to the e-resources.

Suggestions

The Delhi Bar Association Library must guarantee access to e-resources from any place of the court premises (office chambers, fields, waiting rooms and so on). There should be an organization of users' education programme to convey skills among library's users towards

proficient utilization of e-resources and upgrade their awareness about the e-resources that are available in the library.

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