

Use of Library by Lawyers in Bangalore City: Is Gender a Barrier?

¹Rohini T & ²P G Tadasad

¹Documentation Assistant, ShriNarayanRaoMelgiriMemorial National Law Library, National Law School of India University, Bengaluru-560072(India)

²Professor Library and Information Science and Registrar (Evaluation), Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women's University, Vijayapura 586105

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Corresponding Author

Email:rohinishree[at]gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Libraries are playing a vital role in legal education. Lawyers are usually getting information from the library. It's become lifeblood of legal profession. The purpose of this study is to understand the gender barriers in use of library by lawyers in Bangalore city. To draw an attention on the use of library by lawyers examining the gender barriers like male lawyers and female lawyers. The study revealed that what are the problems faced by the lawyers based on the gender. Methods used for getting the needed information and their library use. The questionnaire was used as data collection tool and was distributed randomly among 50 lawyers and collected the responses from 50 lawyers also equally both male lawyers and female lawyers. 32% of the lawyers are between 31-40 age group, 48% of the lawyers having less than 5 years of experience. 34.56% of the lawyers totally dependent on Civil Court Library, 70% of the lawyers are using open access of information. 36% of the lawyer's frequency of the visiting to the library is twice a week. 60% of the lawyers are spending their time in the library is 1-2 hours. Most of the lawyer's purpose of the visiting to the library is to read the reference sources i.e. 20.51%. 6.57% of the lawyer's frequency of visit to the library for specific purpose is for study purpose and they are less using the library for other purposes.

1. Introduction

Information is one of the valuable resources in this digital environment society. Information seekers are different from one another. It will affect the information seeking behavior of an individual i.e. purpose of information channels and sources of information barriers to information and it will affect to the gender barriers.

A law library is a library usually used by lawyers, judges, academicians, researchers etc.

Lawyers: The law dictionary defines the lawyer as "a person learned in the law as a Counselor Solicitor". In this research lawyer is the main user of this study practicing legal matters in High Court of Karnataka, Bangalore city.

2. Objectives

1. To know the frequency of visit by lawyers to the High Court Library and time spent by them for getting useful information.
2. To find out the purpose for which lawyers need information.
3. To find out the gender barrier using of library by lawyers.
4. To suggest how best they can utilize the library without facing any problems.

3. Methodology

The study examines the use of library by lawyers in Bangalore city. Totally 50 male and female lawyers were selected from the population on random sampling basis. The researcher prepared a well-structured questionnaire for collecting the data from the lawyers. The researcher was personally requested to fill up the questionnaire in front of the

researcher itself. Question raised by lawyers were promptly clarified by the researcher. Some of the lawyers asked many questions in depth of the questionnaire, these also clarified by the researcher. Researcher also visited to the High Court hall, Bar Association hall, Women Bar Associations, High Court Library and High Court premises, City Civil Court, Mayo Hall etc. for collecting the data from the lawyers.

4. Limitations

This study is only applicable to the lawyers practicing in Bangalore city only.

5. Gender Barrier

Generally, men use tasks as a means to connect with others. The differences between the two approaches effectively establish a gender barrier between men and women in how they communicate. Female lawyers still suffer significant bias at work according to a new study.

6. Gender Bias in legal profession

Assertiveness and self-promotion are often needed to succeed in the legal field; women often feel that they must walk a tightrope. If they are too assertive, then they are criticized for not behaving in a ladylike fashion. If they are not assertive enough, then they are often seen as lacking the confidence needed to succeed.

Over the last 30 years, the entry of large numbers of women into law schools has dramatically altered the gender and racial composition of the legal profession in Canada and the United States (Catalyst, 2001; Glater, 2001; Hull & Nelson, 2000; Komhauser&Revesz, 1995; Wilson, 1993). In Canada during the 1970s, women made up less than 10% of law school students, and it was not until the mid-1980s that women

began to constitute a significant proportion, accounting for approximately 30% of law students in most provinces (Wilson, 1993). By 1993, Wilson's report on gender equality in the legal profession found that women were not only equally represented in some provinces but actually outnumbered men. In recent years, this pattern has continued as the number of women admitted to law schools in Universities across Canada and the United States is equal to or surpasses the number of men who are admitted (Collins, 2001; Glater, 2001; Macaulay, 2001).

However, despite their advances in gaining admittance to law school, women continue to face gender-based barriers once they enter the profession, and partly as a result, they are leaving the profession at significantly higher rates than their male peers are leaving it (Brockman, 2001; Catalyst, 2001; Wilson, 1993).

7. Review of Literature

Makri et al. (2006) examined that academic lawyers faced many difficulties of finding the required information, using digital libraries. Authors attributed this to the difficulty arising from hazy and incomplete knowledge of the digital library system rather than from poor general information seeking. It was suggested that students and lawyers need to understand more about the digital library systems that they use within-systems knowledge and library profession should orient the lawyers' use of digital library in an appropriate way. Al-Daihani (2003) found that majority of legal academics (80.7%) seek information so as to prepare for research and for publication, while 64.0% of legal practitioners sought information for preparation of a defense. Similarities were found between academics and practitioners in terms of their legal information needs for court decisions. Differences were found between academics and practitioners with respect to their information needs for legal and non-legal information. Ann Wilkinson (2001) conducted a study to examine the information sources used by lawyers in problem-solving in the Canadian province of Ontario. Study revealed that while seeking information, 68% of the total 154 respondents preferred informal sources of information. About 62% lawyers preferred sources of information internal to their organizations. No significant difference was found in gender and size of the firm and size of the centre in which lawyer practiced and type of information sources used.

Kadli, Jayadev H. & Hanchinal, Veeresh (2015) study examined that information seeking behavior of two law college students of Mumbai. This study mainly focused on frequency of visit to the library, computer knowledge of law students, how time spent in the library, for what purpose they visited the library and what are problem faced in seeking information. Findings of the study reveal that students were preferred to use the library books regularly. Both the college students faced problem of using of electronic resources available in the library. Study recommends that library orientation and training programs are required to organize from library professionals for utilizing of library information resources and services for fulfilling their requirements.

Srivastava, Vishnu & Tiwari, Vijay Raghav (2016) study revealed that need of law students of law libraries and behaviour of information seeking. Information collection, services and facilities of law libraries are very much necessary for lawyers, law students and law faculties. Study examined the awareness of legal e-resources and information seeking behavior amongst of law students in National Law Universities. It's mainly focuses on legal information needs of law students, awareness of legal information resources, using of digital legal resources, problems faced by law students in the digital environment.

Jasimudeen, S; Rajan, Maghesh and P.R. Hima (2013) conducted study on the services offered by the law libraries in higher education especially in legal education and research. University Libraries and Law Libraries are providing full-fledged legal education by using the information sources and services effectively. According to this study it describes the various services offered by the University libraries and suggested that should be adopt new technologies in the law libraries in an effective manner.

Ramachandrapa, K (2017) study revealed that practicing lawyers were totally dependent on District Bar Library for fulfilling their information needs. Majority of lawyers were not satisfied with the overall library resources and services of the district court bar association libraries. They prefer the library for case preparation, professional needs and leisure needs for writing books or articles.

8. Data analysis and interpretation

Table-1: Gender-wise respondents:

Sl.No.	Gender	Total
1	Male	25 50%
2	Female	25 50%
Total		50 100%

It proves from table 1 that 50 lawyers, 25 (50%) respondents are male and 25 (50%) are female. It shows the comparative representation of the male lawyers and female lawyers.

Table-2: Distribution of respondents according to their age:

Sl. No	Age	Male	Female	Total
1	18-25	3 12%	6 24%	9 18%
2	26-30	6 24%	8 32%	14 28%
3	31-40	9 36%	7 28%	16 32%
4	41-50	4 16%	1 4%	5 10%
5	51 & above	3 12%	3 12%	6 12%
Total		25 50%	25 50%	50 100%

It proves from table 2 that out of 50 lawyers, 9 (18%) respondents are between 18-25 years, 14 (28%) are between 26-30 years, 16 (32%) are between 31-40 years, 5 (10%) are

between 41-50 years and 6 (12%) are 51 and above years old. This table reveals that majority of the lawyers in this age group pertaining to 31 and 40 years old.

Table-3: Respondents according to their years of experience:

SI.No	Year of experience	Male	Female	Total
1	Less than 5 Years	11 22%	13 26%	24 48%
2	6-10 Years	5 10%	6 12%	11 22%
3	11-20 Years	6 12%	3 6%	9 18%
4	20 Years & Above	3 6%	3 6%	6 12%
Total		25 50%	25 50%	50 100%

It proves from table 3 that out of 50 lawyers 24 (48%) have less than 5 years of experience, 11 (22%) have 6-10 years of experience, 9 (18%) have 11-20 years of experience, 6 (12%)

are have 20 years and above experience. In this table reveals that majority of the lawyers are having less than 5 years of experience.

Table-4: Respondents according to the member of the library:(Multiple Choices)

SI.No	Member of the library	Male	Female	Total
1	College/University Library	3 6.81%	14 37.83%	17 20.98%
2	Civil Court Library	21 47.72%	7 18.91%	28 34.56%
3	High Court Library	8 18.18%	6 16.21%	14 17.28%
4	VidhanaSoudha Library	1 2.27%	0	1 1.23%
5	Public Library	0	3 8.10%	3 3.70%
6	Bar Association Library	10 22.72%	7 18.91%	17 20.98%
7	Any other library	1 2.27%	0	1 1.23%
Total		44 54.32%	37 45.67%	81 100%

It proves from table 4 that 17 (20.98%) lawyers are member of college/university library, 28 (34.56%) are members of civil court library, 14 (17.28%) are members of high court library, 1 (1.23%) is member of VidhanaSoudha library, 3

(3.70%) are member of public library, 17 (20.98%) are member of Bar Association Library and 1 (1.23%) are member of other library. Most of the lawyers are member of the Civil Court Library.

Table-5: Respondents according to the type of Access:

SI.No	Type of Access	Male	Female	Total
1	Open Access	20 80%	15 60%	35 70%
2	Closed Access	0	3 12%	3 6%
3	Mixed Access	5 20%	7 28%	12 24%
Total		25 50%	25 50%	50 100%

It is understand from table 5 that majority of the lawyers are referring open access of information available in the library, 35 (70%) of the lawyers are using open access and only 3

(6%) of the lawyers using closed access and 12 (24%) of the lawyers' group are using mixed access of information.

Table-6: Respondents according to the frequency of visit to the library:

SI.No	Frequency of visit	Male	Female	Total
1	Daily	11 44%	3 12%	14 28%
2	Twice a week	8 32%	10 40%	18 36%
3	Once in a month	0	0	0
4	Occasionally	6 24%	11 44%	17 34%
5	Never	0	1 4%	1 2%
Total		25 50%	25 50%	50 100%

Table 6 illustrates the frequency of visit to the library of lawyers that 14 (28%) of the lawyers visiting the library daily, 18 (36%) of the lawyers are visiting the library twice a week, 17 (34%) of the lawyers visiting the library occasionally and only 1

(2%) of the lawyers are never visiting the library. Majority of the lawyers highly frequency of visiting the library is twice in a week.

Table-7: Respondents according to the time spent in the library:

SI.No	Time spent in the library	Male	Female	Total
1	Less than one Hour	7 28%	8 32%	15 30%
2	1-2 Hour	17 68%	13 52%	30 60%
3	More than 3 Hour	1 4%	4 16%	5 10%
Total		25 50%	25 50%	50 100%

It is made clear in table 7 that 30 (60%) majority of the lawyers are spending their time in the library is 1 to 2 hours every day, 15 (30%) of the lawyers spending their time less

than one hour in the library and 5 (10%) of the lawyers are spending their time more than 3 hours in the library.

Table-8: Respondents according to the purpose of visit to the library:(Multiple Choices)

SI. No	Usage of Information Sources	Male	Female	Number
1	To borrow of book/s	11 9.24%	8 10.52%	19 9.74%
2	To return or renew the book/s	7 5.88%	4 5.26%	11 5.64%
3	To read the reference sources	20 16.80%	20 26.31%	40 20.51%
4	To read the Newspapers and magazines	15 12.60%	7 9.21%	22 11.28%
5	To prepare case notes	20 16.80%	14 18.42%	34 17.43%
6	To write research papers for journals/conference etc.,	9 7.56%	9 11.84%	18 9.23%
7	To browse internet	10 8.40%	3 3.94%	13 6.66%
8	Spend leisure time	15 12.60%	4 5.26%	19 9.74%
9	To discuss about cases	12 10.08%	4 5.26%	16 8.20%
10	Any other please specify	0	3 3.94%	3 1.53%
Total		119 61.02%	76 38.97%	195 100%

It is understood from table 8 that the purpose of visit to the library most of the lawyers 40 (20.51%) visiting the library to read the reference sources, 19 (9.74%) of the lawyers visiting the library to borrow of books, 11 (5.64%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to return or renew the books, 22 (11.28%) of

the lawyers visiting the library to read the newspapers and magazines, 34 (17.43%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to prepare case notes, 18 (9.23%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to write research papers for journals/conference etc., 13 (6.66%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to browse

internet, 19 (9.74%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to spend their leisure time, 16 (8.20%) of the lawyers are visiting

the library to discuss about cases and 3 (1.53%) of the lawyers are visiting the library for other purposes also.

Table-9: Respondents according to the frequency of visit to the library for the specific purpose:

Sl. No	Purpose of visiting the library	Male	Female	Total
1	To study	21 6.28%	14 7.07%	35 6.57%
2	To prepare for case discussion	18 5.38%	13 6.56%	31 5.82%
3	To borrow books	14 4.19%	10 5.05%	24 4.51%
4	To update knowledge	17 5.08%	13 6.56%	30 5.63%
5	To search literature	15 4.49%	6 3.03%	21 3.94%
6	To consult reference sources	16 4.79%	14 7.07%	30 5.63%
7	To write search articles	14 4.19%	8 4.04%	22 4.13%
8	To read materials in specific subject	16 4.79%	13 6.56%	29 5.45%
9	To read newspapers and magazines	15 4.49%	5 2.52%	20 3.75%
10	To know the latest new arrivals in the library	14 4.19%	6 3.03%	20 3.75%
11	To prepare seminar/assignments	12 3.59%	7 3.53%	19 3.57%
12	To prepare for competitive examinations	14 4.19%	7 3.53%	21 3.94%
13	To use computers	11 3.29%	7 3.53%	18 3.38%
14	To access CD	9 2.69%	5 2.52%	14 2.63%
15	To use Internet	11 3.29%	7 3.53%	18 3.38%
16	To use searching for career development	12 3.59%	6 3.03%	18 3.38%
17	To gain current and general information	17 5.08%	6 3.03%	23 4.32%
18	For leisure reading	12 3.59%	8 4.04%	20 3.75%
19	For discussion with friends/colleagues	11 3.29%	8 4.04%	19 3.57%
20	For getting photocopy	12 3.39%	8 4.04%	20 3.75%
21	For self-improvement	15 4.49%	7 3.53%	22 4.13%
22	For self-fulfillment	14 4.19%	6 3.03%	20 3.75%
23	For recreation	12 3.59%	7 3.53%	19 3.57%
24	To use social network sites	12 3.59%	4 2.02%	16 3.00%
25	Any other		3 1.51%	3 0.56%
Total		334 62.78%	198 37.21%	532 100%

It is evident from table 9 that frequency of visiting the library 35 (6.57%) of lawyers main purpose of visiting the library to study, 31 (5.82%) are visiting the library to prepare for case discussion, 24 (4.51%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to borrow books, 30 (5.63%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to update knowledge, 21 (3.94%) of lawyers are visiting the library to search literature, 30 (5.63%) of lawyers

are visiting the library to consult reference sources, 22 (4.13%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to write search articles, 29 (5.45%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to read materials in specific subject, 20 (3.75%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to read newspapers and magazines, 20 (3.75%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to know the latest new arrivals in the library, 19 (3.57%) of the lawyers are visiting the library

to prepare seminar/assignments, 21 (3.94%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to prepare for competitive examinations, 18 (3.38%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to use computers, 14 (2.63%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to access CD, 18 (3.38%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to use Internet, 18 (3.38%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to use searching for career development, 23 (4.32%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to gain current and general information, 20 (3.75%) of the lawyers are visiting the library for leisure reading, 19 (3.57%) of the lawyers are visiting the library for discussion with friends/colleagues, 20 (3.75%) of the lawyers are visiting the library for getting photocopy, 22 (4.13%) of the lawyers are visiting the library for self-improvement, 20 (3.75%) of the lawyers are visiting the library for self-fulfillment, 19 (3.57%) of the lawyers are visiting the

library for recreation, 16 (3.00%) of the lawyers are visiting the library to use social network sites, 3 (0.56%) of the lawyers are visiting the library for other purposes.

9. Suggestions

1. High court libraries must increase the collection of resources and services in order to satisfy the needs of the lawyers.
2. High court libraries must have access to the Internet services and updated legal information.
3. Library orientation must be given to legal profession for use of the library facilities and services.
4. Libraries must overcome from the gender barrier.

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