

Reading Habits of Advocates in Kalaburagi City

¹Channankegowda & ²Dr. D.B. Patil

¹Research Scholar, Department Library and Information Science, Gulbarga University, Kalaburagi, Karnataka (India)

²Professor, Department Library and Information Science, Gulbarga University, Kalaburagi, Karnataka (India)

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Corresponding Author

Email: ckg2050[at]gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Reading habit helps to increase awareness and knowledge of various professionals including Advocates. Reading is essential for Advocates to study the latest developments in cases at different courts and also needed to know about the revision and amendments made to different Acts and legislations. Reading helps to gain knowledge about new Acts and Legislations passed by the Government. Hence, reading is essential for Advocates and for this purpose, many of the Advocates visit different libraries such as public libraries, Law School Libraries, University Libraries, Court Libraries, etc. To assess the reading habits of Advocates, the present study has been made in Kalaburagi city. Totally, 140 Advocates practicing in High Court and District Courts were surveyed using Questionnaires. It is found that, Advocates are experts to use various documents, still they are unaware of many documents especially, electronic resources. Hence, it is suggested to librarians to organize user education or information literacy programmes for Advocates.

1. Introduction

The libraries or information centers are regarded as knowledge centers, which increase knowledge of all the people. The libraries help to fulfill knowledge and information needs of students, women, professionals, teachers, academicians, researchers, self-employed, businessmen, industrialists, farmers and employed people. Many of the professionals are needed continuous reading due to increase and revision of knowledge constantly and continuously and such professionals include teachers, chartered accountants, lawyers, advocates, etc. Their profession is mainly based on latest information and knowledge and they can't able to get all the latest information and knowledge on their own from different agencies and publishers and hence, they have to depend on libraries and information centers for their information needs and requirements. Legal professionals like Advocates and Lawyers are such professionals, who are always in need of latest knowledge and information so as to achieve the progress in their profession.

Information in law is important not only in the advancement of a case but also important to prevent useless litigation. Proper information helps to convince client in bringing or resisting an action. Information support is of great importance in every profession and legal profession is no exception. The law is enduring. The lawyers are not always aware of all the pertinent rules and these rules have to be dug out in some way according to legal research methods. Besides this, the interpretation of statutory provision may yield one or more rules, and one rule is based on more than one legal source. Therefore, lawyer has to identify the relevant legal sources. However, there is no comprehensive single window open access online legal information system existing in India. Some initiatives have been taken by Government departments but these resources are not user-friendly and majority of these resources are incomplete. The high-quality open access legal information system can have considerable significance for the

legal profession in this digital age (Bhardwaj and Madhusudhan, 2013).

Reading is a powerful means of communication that can form part of an individual to the extent that it becomes a habit which once developed, become very difficult to break. Reading is one of the fundamental building blocks of learning, becoming a skilled and adaptable reader enhances the chances of success at school and beyond. Reading is not just for school; it is for life. Reading is an action of a person who reads and habit is a product of this action or learning. Like all other habits, the habit or reading in an individual develops during the course of time. The reading habit influences the promotion of one's personal development in particular and social progress in general. Regular and systematic reading sharpens the intellect, refines the emotions, elevates tastes and provides perspectives for one's living; and thereby prepares a person for an effective participation in the social, religious, cultural and political life. Reading fires the imagination of the person. It adds new sight to eyes and new wisdom to mind. It is principally through reading that people obtain knowledge. Reading habit is the use of reading as a regular activity. It is the cultivation of an attitude and possession of skills that make reading a pleasurable, regular and constant activity.

Possessing reading culture requires a process of building up positive reading attitude among students and children over a period. When an individual habitually and regularly read books and other information materials that are not necessarily required for him to advance in his profession or career, he is said to have a reading culture (Awoyemi and Yusuf, 2016).

The reading ability is recognized as an important factor that contributes to Advocates' knowledge proficiency and success in the cases dealt by them. Advocates who read frequently tend to become expert and successful advocates. Their reading skills support them in deeply understanding information and knowledge. The more time law professionals

spend on reading, the more skilful they become; and the better professionals are at reading, the more success they achieve success in the cases which they are pleading. Hence, reading habits are essentially required for advocates and such other law professionals and the different types of libraries are encouraging reading habits of law professionals. The advocates are already visiting to different libraries and reading the various types of documents. But it is essential to know whether the advocates are reading and using their information sources and documents for their information needs correctly or whether there is need to provide user education or information literacy to them. Hence, the present study is made to assess the reading habits of Advocates in Kalaburagi City of Karnataka.

2. Objectives of the Study

The present study is made:

- ❖ To know the visit of Advocates to different types of libraries to get information for their professional requirements.
- ❖ To study the reading habits of Advocates in use of different documents.
- ❖ To know whether the Advocates are aware about ICT based or web-based documents in law and using the same for their professional requirements.

3. Methodology and Limitations

As discussed above, the present study has taken in Kalaburagi city of Karnataka. The city has both High Court Bench and District Court and hence, more than 730 Advocates are practicing in these courts. As it is impossible to survey all the Advocates due to time limitations, a sample survey of 140 Advocates was made using questionnaire. The collected primary data through questionnaires is analyzed, interpreted and discussed as under.

4. Analysis, Interpretation and Discussion:

The collected primary data is analyzed, interpreted and discussed as under.

1. Frequency of Visit to Libraries

When the author visited to the offices of all the advocates, it is found that, many of them have small libraries at their own offices. Apart from their own collection at their offices, it is found that, all the advocates are visiting to different libraries to read on the legal documents including the books of laws, case studies, research journals on laws, etc, the advocates are visiting to the libraries. The information was collected from these advocates on the frequency of visit to libraries and presented in the following table.

Table No. 1. Frequency of Visit to Libraries

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	--	--
Weekly	18	12.86
Fortnightly	33	23.57
Monthly	20	14.29
Occasionally	26	18.57
As & When Needed	43	30.71

Never	--	--
Total	140	100

On the frequency of visits to libraries as stated by all the advocates covered under the study, 18 (12.86%) are visiting to libraries weekly, 33 (23.57%) are visiting to libraries fortnightly, 20 (14.29%) are visiting to libraries monthly, 26 (18.57%) are visiting to libraries occasionally and 43 (30.71%) are visiting to libraries as and when needed.

2. Nature of Libraries Visited:

The advocates are visiting different libraries to get the information, which they were needed for their cases. Generally, the exhaustive information on developments in subjects is available in Law College libraries, general trends in law are available in public libraries, the different case studies and developments in various cases and new legislations, etc are available in libraries that are attached in courts or Bar Association Offices. Apart from these, a few of them are also visiting to University libraries rarely. In this respect, the information furnished by advocates on the nature of libraries visited by them is tabulated as under.

Table No. 2. Nature of Libraries Visited

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Law College Libraries	29	20.71
Court Libraries/ Bar Association offices	52	37.14
Public Libraries	27	19.28
University Library	32	22.87
Any Other	--	--
Total	140	100

On the nature of libraries visited by the advocates, 29 (20.71%) are visiting to law college libraries, 52 (37.14%) are visiting court libraries and libraries attached to Bar Associations, 27 (19.28%) are visiting to public libraries and 32 (22.87%) are visiting to university libraries.

3. Nature of Information Need

The advocates are visiting to the different types of libraries based on their information needs. There are many types of information needs of advocates. The information need of these advocates may be just educational so as to study the overview of different legislations or exhaustive information on single case or legislation, latest update on different laws, etc. The collected primary data in this regard is as under.

Table No. 3. Nature of Information Need

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Exhaustive Information on Legislation	12	8.57
Latest Update on Different Laws & Case Histories	36	25.71
Educational Knowledge	15	10.71
Provisions of a Legislation/ Act	36	25.71
Any Other	--	--
All of the Above	41	29.29

Total	140	100
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The information needs of the advocates visiting to libraries shows that, only 12 (8.57%) of the Advocates are visiting to libraries to get exhaustive information on legislations passed by the Government, 36 (25.71%) are visiting to get latest update on different laws and case histories, 15 (10.71%) are visiting to these libraries to get educational knowledge, 36 (25.71%) are visiting to the libraries to get information on provisions of legislation or Acts and 41 (29.29%) of the advocates are visiting to libraries so as to get all of their information needs mentioned above.

4. Reading of Different Documents:

It has been revealed that, the advocates are visiting to libraries for their variety of purposes so as to get information as per their requirements. Based on the needs of Advocates, different types of documents or reading materials are published and advocate are using more than one or many documents in libraries so as to get the required knowledge and information. In this respect, the reading habits in terms of use of different types of documents or reading materials by the Advocates in library is collected and presented as under.

Table No. 4. Reading of Different Documents

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Books	23	16.43
Text Books	06	4.28
Reference Books	11	7.86
Research Journals	104	74.29
General Magazines & Newspapers	19	13.57
Directories	--	--
Biographies	--	--
Case Histories & Case Studies	140	100
Research Reports	38	27.14
Manuals on Different Acts & Legislations	112	80.00
Any Other	25	17.86
Web/ Online Pages	93	66.43
Total	140	100

Note: It is observed that, many of the advocates are reading and using many types of documents and reading materials and hence, the total number of frequencies is not considered.

As discussed above, the advocates surveyed are reading and referring many of the documents. Particularly, as stated by all the advocates, 23 (16.43%) are reading books, 06 (4.28%) are reading textbooks, 11 (7.86%) are reading reference books, 104 (74.29%) are reading research journals, 19 (13.57%) are reading General Magazines and Newspapers, all the advocates are referring and reading Case Histories and Case Studies, 38 (27.14%) are reading research reports, 112 (80.00%) are reading manuals on different acts and legislations, 25 (17.86%) are reading other documents and 93 (66.43%) of the advocates are reading and referring web or online pages of knowledge.

5. Major Information Sources Referred Online:

Many of the legislations and case studies are available online. Further, the Supreme Court and High Courts of different States are publishing their latest judgments online through the websites daily. The major information sources used by Advocates under the study are as under.

Table No. 5. Major Information Sources Referred Online

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Supreme Court Online	84	60.00
Karnataka Judiciary	140	100.00
Portals of Legal Advice Firms	55	39.29
Research Journals & Databases (Manupatra, All India Reporter, etc)	97	69.29
Any Other	63	45.00
Total	140	100

Note: It is found that, many of the advocates are reading and using many types of online documents and reading materials using internet and web and hence, the total number of frequencies is not considered.

As discussed above, many of the Advocates surveyed are using more than one or many of the web sites for their reading requirements. Specifically, among all the Advocates covered under the study, 84 (60.00%) are referring Supreme Court Online, all (100%) are referring Karnataka Judiciary Web site, 55 (39.29%) are using web portals of legal advice firms, 97 (69.29%) are using and reading research journals and online databases such as Manupatra, All India Reporter, etc and 63 (45.00%) are using other online legal information sources.

5. Suggestions from the Study

When the reading habits of the Advocates are analyzed, it is found that, they are unaware of many of the information sources and documents. As such, they are using and reading more printed documents of conventional types such as books. Hence, it is suggested to increase the knowledge of Advocates on use of different types of information sources such as legal databases, online case histories and case studies available through different web sites, the legal information published by different legal advice firms, research journals which publish latest developments on different laws and legislations passed by the Government, etc. For this purpose, user education and information literacy programmes are needed for them and the librarians working in different types of libraries can organize such programmes periodically for the benefit of Advocates. In this way, organizing of information literacy programmes and user education programmes achieve the aims of Five Laws of Library Science.

6. Conclusion

The Advocates are with full knowledge about different legislations and laws passed by the Government from time to time. Still, they are in need of specific provisions of different Acts and Laws. For this purpose, it is very essential for the Advocates to increase their reading habits continuously. For this purpose, it is suggested to Advocates to get advice and guidance from the librarians on different information sources and refer all the relevant sources to fulfill their information needs. In this way, the libraries are playing significant role in professional development of Advocates.

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