

Collection and Organization of Legal Information Resources in Advocate Libraries of the Bar Association

U. L. Jagtap* Sarika Sawant **

* Research Scholar

SHPT School of Library Science,
SNDT Women's University,
Mumbai, Maharashtra
India.

** Assistant Professor

SHPT School of Library Science,
SNDT Women's University,
Mumbai, Maharashtra
India.

QR Code



Abstract: - *The main goal of the Judicial /Court libraries isto serve the Honorable Judges, Advocates, legal professionals and to support the justice system by providing them accurate legal information efficiently as per their requirement of information. The objective of the present research was to study legal information resources available in Advocate libraries. It explored the organization of information resources in advocate libraries.*

Keywords: Advocate libraries, legal information resources, organization of information resources.

Introduction

In the present information age there is tremendous need and demand for access to legal information. Due to the information explosion and globalization in law field, information management, organisation of resources, systematic arrangement of print resources and documentation of literature has become an essential requirement to ensure sustainable access.

Advocate Libraries of Bar Association:

There are Bar Associations in every state high court and these Bar Associations have libraries for lawyers/advocates. Advocate libraries are located in the high court premises. These libraries function under the Bar Association. The associations are taking initiatives to propose the library budget as per requirement, procurement of books and e-resources and other matter related to the library etc.

Bar Associations provide the funds to the advocate library for procurement of books, e-resources and other infrastructure. The main objective of the library is to provide the library services to the lawyers who are the members of such Bar Association of that particular high court.

The advocate libraries have the collection of law commentaries, law reports, digests, bare acts (Central and States) and general law books and manuals. Library collections are measured not only in terms of numbers, but also in terms of their value and utility to the clientele. Organization of information resources involves types of collection, storage, organization /arrangement of various print resources and making it accessible to users.

Review of Literature:

Shafi and Khan(2015) studied the growth in the collections of the High Court libraries. They highlighted that, collection development policies alone are not sufficient in building collection, but allocation of finance to the library is also essential.

Narayan (2007) provided an insight to Indian legal information sources and methods of publication of legislation.

Shrivastava (2008) focused on librarianship in judicial library system in India. He also outlined the legal literature and types of court libraries in India. He felt the need of consistency and

uniformity relating human resources and computer infrastructure in the library.

Chander (1998) described the important international legal databases, legal information systems, court libraries and computerization.

Bhardwaj and Madhusudhan (2013) identified the various open access legal information sources and methods of training for optimum utilization of open access of legal information resources by law students.

Objectives:

1. To understand the acquisition process of the library.
2. To find out the existing legal information resources available in Advocate Libraries.
3. To understand the organization of print legal information resources of Advocate Libraries.

Research Methodology:

This research applied was quantitative method approach with a survey. The techniques for data collection included a questionnaire. To collect data related to the objective, websites of Government of India, Supreme Court of India, High Courts of India, Ministry of Law and Justice are scanned to gather the online information.

Population and Sample

There are in all four Advocate Libraries of the Bar Association in Maharashtra State. To collect exhaustive data, from Advocate Library of BAR

Association Bombay, Aurangabad, Nagpur and Goa (Panji), a structured questionnaire was prepared with multiple choices. Questionnaires were distributed to all these four libraries and 100%responses were received.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

The findings of the study are summarized and presented here with tables and graphs.

Users of the library:

Lawyers/Advocate, legal Practitioners are the users of the advocate libraries. All the members (Lawyers) of Bar Association can avail of the library facility.

Annual Budget:

Bar Association collects the contribution/subscription from the lawyers to generate the funds. Libraries receive the funds from Bar Association as per the requirement of the library resources and other reading materials.

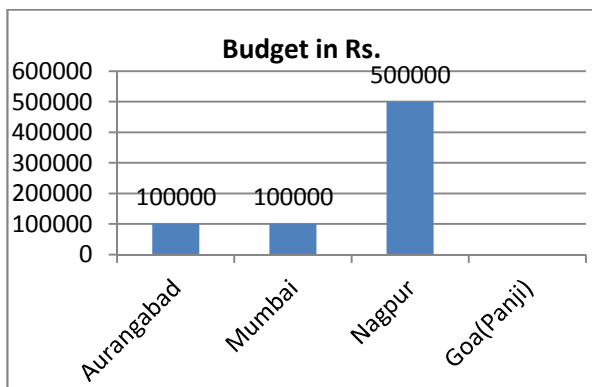


Fig. no. 1

It was observed that the budget allotted to the library of Nagpur Bar association was highest, but the remaining three libraries got approximately an average annual budget of Rs. 1 lakh or below Rs.

1 lakh for the procurement of resources and other library expenditure.

Total Collection of the library

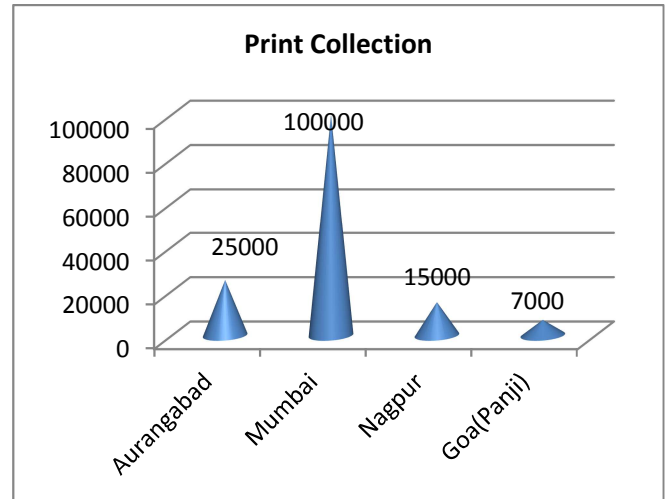


Fig. No. 2

It was revealed that libraries hold adequate print collection to fulfill their users' needs. Advocate Library of Mumbai had the highest collection. It was seen that the library of Goa (Panji) showed the least print collection. Advocate library of Bombay Bar Association is the oldest library of Maharashtra of Bar Association libraries (established 1862).

Types of print collection available in the libraries:

Judicial libraries have variety in their collection such as law commentaries, law reports, digests and legislative information sources i.e. Parliamentary bills, Government gazettes, current Indian statues Bare Acts(Central and States) along with law books and manuals.

Types of print collection:

Type of print collection	No. of Libraries	Percentage
Law Commentaries	04	100%
Law Reports	04	100%
Law Commission Reports	--	--
Law Dictionaries	02	50%
Encyclopedias	02	50%
Bare Acts- Central & States	02	50%
News papers	01	25%
Manuals and general law books	04	100%
Digests	01	25%
Legislative information sources		
a) Parliamentary Bills	01	25%
b) Acts of Parliament	01	25%
c) Government Gazettes	01	25%
d) Current Indian Statues	02	50%

Table No. 1

It was perceived that advocate libraries of Mumbai and Nagpur had variety of resources in their collection holdings. Law Commentaries, Law Reports and Manuals and general law books are available in all libraries.

Print Journals subscribed by the library:

Only two libraries had subscribed to print journals, out of which the library of Bombay Bar Association subscribed to both National and International print journals, whereas the library of

Nagpur Bar Association subscribed only to National print journals.

Audio-visual materials:

Collections of the audio-video materials were not available in any library.

Existing E-resources subscribed:

E-Resources	No. of Libraries	Percentage
SCC Case Finder CD ROM with English law	03	75%
SCC Online	04	100%
Manupatra Online	01	25%
ExCus CD ROM	--	--
ITR Online	--	--
West Laws Online	--	--
Hein Online	--	--
Law Weekly CD ROM	--	--
All India Reporter CD ROM	04	100%
Lexis-Nexis	--	--
E-Books	--	--

Table No. 2

It was noted that the important e- resources like SCC online and All India Reporter were subscribed by all advocate libraries. SCC online is a legal database that has enormous legal material of Indian as well as foreign countries. It covers Indian case law of Supreme Court of India, Privy Council, Indian High Courts, Tribunals and commissions, Indian Statutory Law including central statues, circulars, notifications, rules and

regulations, etc. All India Reporter (AIR) is a law report and contains Supreme Court and High Court judgments.

Acquisition process:

It was seen that the libraries have followed the standard acquisition procedure to acquire the legal information resources (both print and e-resources). Two librarians felt that the online legal sources i.e. websites of publishers were useful source to acquire the legal documents and resources. One librarian said that notifications of government departments were useful whereas another librarian mentioned that publisher’s catalogue was suitable in procurement of the books and other reading materials.

To acquire the resources, all the libraries follow the standard method of collection development such as standing order, obtaining books on approval, placing order with the vendor/ supplier, recommendation etc. It was noticed that three libraries obtained the books on approval. Two libraries placed the orders with book suppliers. One library acquired the legislative information sources i.e. bare acts, gazettes etc. by placing the standing order with the publisher.

Organisation of print resources:

The question was asked to the libraries regarding the system adopted for organisation of print resources; in response to this question all libraries mentioned that they follow some system to organize the resources.

Respondent	No. of libraries	Percentage
Advocate libraries	04	100%
Total	04	100%

Table No 3

Organisation of resources and documents mainly consists of two technical process i.e. classification and cataloguing. Systematic arrangement and organisation eliminate the useless search through large number of volumes; it saves the time of users as well as increases the effective use of the resources.

Classification-

It was noticed that these libraries do not use any classification scheme such as Universal Decimal Classification, Dewey Decimal Classification or Colon Classification System to organize and arrange the print resources. It was observed that the collection of the libraries needed different arrangement to retrieve the information quickly and efficiently, especially for legislative information resources e.g. gazettes and bare acts. All libraries (100%) followed the year wise arrangement for the law reports, government gazettes. Two libraries adopted alphabetical arrangement for bare acts (central and state). Three libraries follow subject-wise arrangement for print resources.

Cataloguing-

Catalogue is one of the important search tools to retrieve the information quickly from the library

holdings. It was observed that maximum three libraries did not maintain any catalogue in the library. Only one library maintained the card catalogue and web OPAC.

Conclusion:

Advocate library is one of the useful and important institutions in the legal profession/ law field. It is a support system which provides information services to the strongest lawyer community to fulfill their information needs. Advocate libraries did not apply standard format for organizing the information resources. It was also observed that the advocate libraries are not getting sufficient funds for the collection development, staff and resources of library. It is concluded that if these libraries get sufficient funds they will provide more qualitative services to their users.

References

1. Bhardwaj, R. K. and Madhusudhan, M.(2013). Open access legal information sources and their use by students of National Law University,60,314-319.
2. Chander, S. (1998).Access to legal information in India. *DESIDOC Bulletin of Information Technology*, 18(4), 21-28.
3. Narayan, U.(2007). Sources of Indian Legal Information, 7,133-139 retrieved from www.cambridge.org/core/terms doi:10.1017/51472669606001204

4. Shafi, S.M. and Khan, K. (2015). Collection in High Court Libraries of India: A survey(2005 to 2009),16,1-3.
5. Shrivastava, R.K. (2008), Law librarianship in India with special reference to the judicial library system. *International Journal of Legal Information*, 36(2), 275-299.
6. Singh, R. eds. et al(2010). Digital library- Legal Education and Research. Delhi: National Law University.
7. <http://www.jgu.edu.in/library/content/sc-online>
8. <http://www.supremecourtindia.nic.in>
9. <http://lawmin.nic.in>