



IMPACT OF LIBRARY INFORMATION SERVICES IN LAW INSTITUTIONAL LIBRARIES IN INDIA

Dr. B. Manikya Rao

Library Incharge

Damodara Sanjeevaiah National
Law University
Visakhapatnam

P. Sanjeeva Rao

Research Scholar

Dept of Library and Information
Science, Andhra University
Visakhapatnam

Introduction

As court of law is a temple of justice, a law library is a temple of learning and such library service is playing and has to play an effective and efficient role in legal profession. as law is developing in a fast track mode it has its impact on every aspect in the changing society needs a bridge between multiplication of legal literature and legal professionals by the effective means of documentation techniques and standards, these techniques can be inculcated to the user by the librarian by orienting and educate the user community and use of law library and its holdings at an early stage.

Mr. Hemant Batra, Secretary General, SAARCLAW. He said that 'Information' is as crucial as 'oxygen'; therefore, law librarians are at a vital position to regulate flow of information and its services.

Justice. Gita Mittal, a keynote speaker, put the spotlight on the dynamic nature of legal education system. Mittal J. observed that legal education system was rapidly changing and the legal information system was also not too far behind either. Therefore, the onus from the teachers in the educational system has been shifted to the law librarians who need to keep up with the pace of both and strive to provide better services. (*International conference on access to legal information and research in digital age at National Law University at Delhi 29-02-2012 to 02-03-2012*).

Like any other library a law library is a trinity of men, material and building. It has been aptly remarked about a law library that "the law library is truly a vital factor in the administration of justice, an institution of extraordinary social significance in a free society. Inspiring is the example of men and women of vision who devote their talents to the creation and perpetuation of law libraries whose benefits reach out far and beyond the personal interests of the original creators. In addition, the law library



is a “community trust”, which Gilbert Stephenson defined as “an ocean liner receiving its cargo in part from living trusts, which are private ships and carrying it over into successive generations as to a distant port, there to be distributed for the common good.

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The law library has skilled people to classify and arrange the books in an orderly manner. A law library need not stock books on law and law alone. It has to stock authoritative books from allied branches like philosophy, political science, public administration; economics etc. It must also stock language dictionaries, dictionaries of law, judicial dictionary and thesaurus (Gandhi, M. 1992).

Legal education has developed around the law library as the centre of the students’ legal study. Still heavily reliant on developing legal reasoning skills through the Socratic method, legal education renders the law library a research laboratory where students must perform the “experiments” of identifying the building blocks of successful legal analogies (Ruth Levor, 2006).

Law Libraries to help it develop the educational programs and services needed by law librarians interested in preservation, Libraries are designing their services and space to accommodate the changing needs and the demands for technology. One model for providing integrated technology and information resources is the Information Commons. A law library is not merely a collection of books. It is a collection of legal literature properly housed, and organizes for services.

Library and Information Services in famous law schools in India

The quality of service provided and the satisfaction of the user depends a great deal up on the kind of collection made available. The primary mission of the law school library’s to meet the information needs of the faculty and students of the institution it supports. In addition to their role in educating future lawyers, law schools are the major producers of scholarly literature in and rely on Institutional law libraries to provide



the resources and support needed for research and publication. Beyond support for the core functions of legal education and research, the specific missions of law school libraries vary depending on the size and missions of law schools of different types. Differences among law schools result in differences among their libraries in collection size and composition, staffing and services offered, and additional clientele served, some of the facilities provided by the law schools such as NALSAR making OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue) accessible to the students, NLSIU providing world's best e-library among all law schools in India. National and international journals were also being provided by the law schools of India.

In response to changes affecting all law librarians, the role of the collection development librarian in Institutional law libraries is evolving in various ways. The changes driving this evolution include new definitions of "collections," new issues introduced by electronic resources, increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary research, and an ever-growing service orientation in Institutional law libraries (Connie Lenz, 2004).

Library and Information Services in Institutional law libraries that lending, literature search, newspaper clippings, information retrieval by intranet, current awareness search in one form or the other and case law retrieval by CD-ROM databases are provided by most of the Institutional law libraries in India. It is gratifying to note that most of the Institutional law libraries using computers for providing information to their users through various IT products such as CD-ROM databases, e-journals, e-books etc. and are also using internet as an effective tool for providing the desired information to the users. Law and libraries the next generation of technology, the role of planning for the future development

Traditionally, highly skilled and specialized law library professionals provide law faculty with the utmost in customized research support for their teaching and scholarship, a level of research support that is unavailable in general Institutional libraries.

It is built around social networking, collaboration, and sharing among Users. It takes advantage of the Collective intelligence with always evolving interface. A few major applications include wikis, Blogs, RSS, Wikipedia, Flickr shared pictures, you tube online video platform; my space social network, customized personal pages, aggregates emails, and collaborative search enquires. These technologies present



interesting solution to information overload and alternative information delivery mechanisms. They can be used to improve library services or to create new services to reach users in new ways.

General Competencies

Although these general competencies are required by librarians employed in all types of libraries, library instruction must also include and emphasize the components of these areas that are specific to law librarianship. Areas of general competency include:

- Ø Reference and Research Services;
- Ø Library Management;
- Ø Collection Management;
- Ø Organization and Classification.

Reference and Research Services

Law librarians provide reference and research services that meet the requirements of their organizations in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible. An essential component of law library service includes teaching users how to identify and use sources for legal research. Because legal materials are the tools of the trade for lawyers and law students, effective law librarians are sophisticated users and finders of legal information. Further, law librarians are required to fulfill the non-legal information needs of their organization.

Research and reference may include, but are not limited to: a) provision of information to meet specific needs; b) selective dissemination of information; c) analysis and evaluation of sources and information; d) development and delivery of new services as needed by the organization; e) advice on the design and development of commercial information products and services; and f) expert use of all information media used for storage and retrieval of information. Education for law librarianship must teach research strategies and methods that are based on sound analytic and problem-solving skills.

Library Management

Principles of management and organizational behavior must be part of all graduate library school programs. Specifically, law librarians must learn techniques



for managing library personnel and resources, measuring and evaluating library services and implementing technology-based solutions to library management problems. Library education must emphasize communication skills, human resources, strategic planning, budgeting, marketing strategies, productivity, innovation and sound fiscal management, including cost recovery and profit-making.

Collection Management

Law librarians make decisions regarding the identification, selection and acquisition of the legal and non-legal resources needed by their organizations. In order to support the needs of their organizations, they must assess the strengths and weaknesses of their collections, develop appropriate collection policies, and employ the best methods to improve the power and scope of their collections, including resource sharing and interlibrary cooperation as appropriate. Knowledge of subject-specific selection tools and of acquisition procedures is essential.

Legal materials are increasingly created, stored, and retrieved in full-text electronic databases. Whole systems of national and state case law as well as statutory and regulatory materials have been published in full-text in online systems. Selection policy and purchasing decisions require not only critical evaluation of subject matter, but also consideration of the efficacy of particular formats (e.g., print, online, CD-ROM, microform, etc.), space limitations, user access, cost and other relevant factors. Knowledge and use of cost-benefit analysis techniques are essential to the collection management process.

Organization and Classification

All law libraries contain basic primary and secondary legal materials in a variety of formats which must be easily identified by and accessible to users. Methods and reasons for classification and organization of a library collection may differ from one law library to another because of size, organizational needs, and emphasis of the collection. Knowledge of cataloging and classification theory, serial publication patterns, government documents, database design and construction, and indexing and abstracting is essential, with the ability to apply this knowledge in context of organizational needs and national standards.

Subject Competencies

An understanding of the origins, development and present state of Anglo/



American law and legal literature is crucial to the work of the law librarian. Graduate library education for law librarianship must, at a minimum, provide basic competencies in: 1) the Legal System; 2) the Legal Profession and Its Terminology; 3) Literature of the Law; 4) Law and Ethics. In-depth knowledge of the law is outside of the realm of library education.

The Legal System

In order to locate pertinent materials and recognize their relative importance to the user, a law librarian must have a working knowledge of the judicial, executive, and legislative branches of the national and state governments. Knowledge of the legislative history of statutes is also essential. The interplay of common law, precedent, statutes, regulations, and constitutions significantly affects the use of legal materials. Therefore, all law librarians need a thorough understanding of the processes by which law is created.

The Legal Profession and its Terminology

Law librarians must possess knowledge about the legal profession in order to understand the forces that drive its information needs. Specifically, law librarians need to know about the institutions and professional organizations of the legal profession and law librarianship. Legal terminology is the professional language of those who are directly or indirectly involved in the legal profession. Thus, it is essential that law librarians have a working knowledge of legal vocabulary, including legal abbreviations and citation systems.

Users of the Law Library

The regular users of Institutional Law are graduate research scholars, teaching staff and students: Students of the LLB 5years and 3 years LLB, Teaching staff, Non-Teaching staff, Advocates, Research scholars, Judges and legal interested persons.

Library Information Services

One of the most important function of a library is the dissemination of information to keep its readers well informed and up-to date in their own and related subject. the Institutional law libraries the main services consists of reference service, reprographic service, selective dissemination information service, current awareness service, user education and orientation service documentation service , research service,



Internet and e-mail service.

The rapid development information technology has changed the routine functioning of libraries. This emphasized the need for automation, which has made an impact on all libraries services. The Institutional Law libraries provide the following information service in addition to the regular library services to its users.

Reference Service

Dr .S.R Rangnathan said that the true work of librarian is the rendering reference service. He has stated that a reference service is an integral part of the college library for teaching and students and mostly for research scholars. It is the one of the means of self education because of the scientific advancement and exploitation of knowledge depends more on efforts and exports higher standards of performance not only from the students but also from the library. They want more material and more reference service. The reference can be arranged in three ways.

- Ø Arrangement of reader's convenience
- Ø Efficient staff
- Ø Subject wise shelving

Current Awareness Service

The users should have complete awareness of day-to-day problems and the acts, rules, amendments, ordinances, etc. which are being formatted recently or modified. In order to make themselves aware of the past, present and changing laws, they ultimately depend upon law libraries and information centres. We can find good collections of bare acts, commentaries, digests, and back volumes of essential journals like All India Reporters, etc.

Document Delivery Service

No library today, can hope to hold every item required to meet the needs of its users because of the resource crunch. Hence, sharing of resources using computer networks has become necessity. It is with this goal in mind that INFLIBNET has initiated the document delivery service. The role of INFLIBNET here is mainly to act as a catalyst in promoting this service to the Institutional and research community in India.



Selective Dissemination of Information Service

A new method of current awareness service has been provided by taking into consideration the individual user interest. It is a personal service to keep the reader informed of the masseur thought relevant to his interest.

Reprographic Service

Reprography plays vital role in the knowledge explosion. Reprography enables an information scientist to place at the disposal of scholar literati on to accurate to his subject from numerous sources right at his desk.

Inter Library Loan

Inter library loan is the process by which specific library material or a copy there of is made available by one library to another library upon request, it is based up on the principle of reciprocity and standard procedures .Borrowing Libraries are required to make every effort to do in their resources before requesting material from another library. Inter library loan is a very important service in their special library the most useful service to those who are under research work and scholars students teaching facility. It is a most effective service, which is rendered by the staff.

The user would mostly need fact and background type of information. Most often they would be able to collect information on their own. It is important that a librarian should devise means to bring additions to the library, to the notice of students and teachers. In practice, Indian college Libraries usually provide lending services and other services are often found missing to a large extent as for as orientation of a fresh man is concerned .College Libraries have not been able to do it successfully beyond conducting a tool of library. Most of the college students don't know how to make an effective use of a college library. The major problem is how to provide instruction to students, so that they succeed in using the library effectively. May be that the students do not think bibliographic instruction to be of much importance to their practical needs. Bibliographic instruction will become important i.e. method of teaching and examinations are changed so that students are required using the library resources.

Bibliographic Service

Provision of bibliographic service includes the preparation on bibliographic on



specific subjects or simple list of references or list of references with the object of combination of more than one of the above items Such types of service are offered on demand.

User Education Training /Orientation programme

Besides materials collection and offering services, it is the responsibility of the library to orient, educate and train the users to create awareness about and develop skills in the use of latest information sources and facilities available in the library other wise, best use of library resources and services may not be possible.

Internet and E-mail

The internet is undoubtedly an effective medium between the information professional and information. In present time, it is necessary to know how to access the facilities available through this new technology. The internet has become an expert too far, in searching to satisfy the user's needs.

Internet is the global information infrastructure which enables the professionals to access the information and communicate the users easily and cost effectively through a variety of media such as text graphics, voice etc, i.e. multimedia.

Internet & Legal Research

The future of legal research is migrating to the internet, primarily because of the universality of internet access. Computing lawyers, law librarians, and many other net citizens are salivating over the possibilities of a system of citation and research freely usable by any citizen of the internet, and it is certain that future lawyers will use the internet as a primary source for legal research. These developments bode well for the solo and small firm practitioner, and for the general public. There is a great unmet need for inexpensive online legal research. Continued development of such inexpensive web based legal research resources and tools are clearly inevitable.

Library web services as marketing tools

In addition to turning to the physical library, the law library's constituency relies on the scholarship, expertise, and resources displayed on its web site. Law libraries have capitalized on the power of the Internet by using their web sites to publicize their services to the campus community, to colleagues, and to the community at large. Without even visiting the physical library, the community can take a virtual



tour of the facility; browse special library collections; search the library catalog; initiate borrowing and delivery of materials; get information any time of day or night from a virtual reference service; acquire bibliographies, research guides, and interactive tutorials; and discover previously unimagined library features and services. As alumni and other members of the community find themselves increasingly reliant on this convenient access to the library's special services, a new avenue is opened to fortify the law school's outreach and development efforts.

CD-ROM – Search Service

CD-ROM data base is the best powerful and cost effective tools for information storage and retrieval, information that can be of different forms. Viz, textual audio still, images, digital video and animation. Some of the salient features of CD-ROM searches are: search can be made quickly and efficiently in free text mode and by using field qualifiers namely author, keyword, journal titles, publisher, year of publication, etc,

The need for training of librarians to meet the challenges, particularly in information access in the changed environment, the library staff should perform the following activities:

1. Dissemination of digital information rather than the custodian of information.
2. Expert in information technology rather than a passive learner.
3. Research in information technology.
4. Master of contents of world resources rather than a librarian of a single library.

Conclusion

The impact of electronic information revolution can be seen in many places of the world. The western countries, due the effects of legal institutions and commercial enterprises, legal information system were designed and developed and made accessible to wider clientele using state of art technologies. Even in India, the information has been made by commercial publishers like publishers of Supreme Court Cases. Moreover, because of the country's liberalized economic policies, international leading publishers like M/S Butterworth have started publishing Indian Legal Commentaries. Because of the effects of Law Commission of India, the Supreme and National Informatics Centers (NIC) have made a remarkable beginning in the field of electronic informatics of legal information services on the whole. In addition to traditional services, the library



should provide services by using computers and other electronic gadgets. The physical facilities of libraries also play a key role in functioning of the library. To provide electronic information services, the librarians should be trained in these lines thoroughly. Information Communication Technology (ICT) , its importance and the inclusion of Wifi, virtual classroom, web cast, video conferencing and e-sources into the curriculum of the modern day law student and research scholars have raised the benchmark of quality legal education in conclusion, the law librarians to master all these techniques to survive and excel in the profession.

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