
INFORMATION NEEDS, PERCEPTIONS AND PURSUIT OF LAW STUDENTS IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT: A CASE STUDY OF DAMODARAM SANJIVAYYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY, VISAKHAPATNAM

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INTRODUCTION

Libraries play a very important role in supporting legal education and legal research. The past decade has brought about a sea of change in the relationship between library and user. Information technology enabled new products and services, and the availability of online information resources has changed the provision of services in legal academic institutions. In this context, library professionals working in a legal academic library are required to have a sound knowledge of the information needs, perceptions and information-seeking behaviour of legal academicians and users to ensure solid collection development, to provide effective library services and to satisfy the needs of library users. Librarians are professionally committed to update a core, qualitative and need-based collection for the optimum utilization of the resources for the greater satisfaction of the user community. The purpose of this study is to ascertain the Damodaram Sanjivayya National Law University Library users' (DSNLUL) information needs and seeking behaviour to provide library resources and services in a better way.

NEW TOOLS TO FIND LEGAL INFORMATION

Legal research is now often conducted in online commercial legal research databases such as Westlaw, Lexis India or other subject specific databases where access to the necessary documents and related analysis is often only a few clicks away. However, the value of online research platforms lies not only in having quick access to all this information, but also in the new means we have available to find and manipulate it. While indexes, tables of contents, and other key findings aids still exist on the more expensive online research platforms, the ability to search all this data is a powerful addition to research toolkits. And in some cases a tool that was powerful in print has been completely transformed in its online incarnation. Though the transition to online materials and the development of search capabilities have been the major technological advances in legal research of the last 2 decades, today new technologies and fields of study are being applied. New and old players in the legal research field are developing innovative tools using data analytics to find specific pieces of information in the ocean in a more cost efficient manner.

DAMODARAM SANJIVAYYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

DSNLU has provided necessary infrastructure to cater the needs of the user community. DSNLU Library is accessible to the Faculty members, students, Ph.D. and LL.D. Research Scholars & supporting staff. The University Library is also accessible to the students of the other institutions/ universities across India for reference and internship on due permission. DSNLU Library is fully air conditioned with seating arrangement for 200 users with Wi-Fi and is LAN enabled. Library will be open from 08:00 am to 09:00pm on all working days and from 09:00 am to 05:00 pm on Saturdays & Sundays. In addition, Library will be open from 08.00 am to 11.00 pm during Examinations, Moot courts, Parliament Debates, Quiz, etc.,

Sri G. Venkata Reddy senior advocate of Visakhapatnam Bar impressed by the infrastructure available in DSNLU library on his visit and has donated 2000 volumes of books with racks including All India Reporter (1917-2010), Supreme Court Yearly Digest & books relating to Law subjects. D.S.V. Gopala Krishna, Chartered Accountant, Visakhapatnam donated Tax Compendium for the benefit of the students & research scholars and Mr.Ch.V.Bhima Sankaram (Late), Advocate in District Court, Visakhapatnam has donated 400 volumes of books & journals related to Law subjects.

The following are the print and electronic resources available at Library:

1	Text/Reference Books	14,312 Volumes
2	Donated Books	2600 Volumes
3	Journals & Reports	44 & 12
4	Compendiums	4
5	Magazines & Periodicals	15 & 12
6	Online Resources(Annually Renewed) such as Weslaw, Hein, Manupatra, SSC, Lexis, Kluwer Competition law, Kluwer IP Law, Kluwer Arbitration Law, Taxmann, and JSTOR	10

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to examine the satisfaction levels on various legal electronic databases made by the students.

HYPOTHESIS

There would not be any significant differences in the level of satisfaction of various electronic databases for their requirements between the female and male students.

METHODOLOGY

A methodology used for collecting data was questionnaire based. All the questions were specifically prepared and closely related with the use and future expectations of electronic databases. These questionnaires were randomly distributed to the DSNLU students and were successfully retrieved from students. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed randomly to the DSNLU students, Out of which 225 were returned and used for data analysis. Out of the 225 students, 115 are female students, and 110 are male students.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

SATISFACTION OF ELECTRONIC DATABASES

To know the level of satisfaction of students with regard to electronic databases namely, “SSC online, Westlaw India, Kluwer Arbitration, Kluwer Competition Law, Kluwer IP Law, Hein online, Manupatra, Lexis India, Taxmann and JSTOR” is described in the following paragraphs.

SSC Online

The allocation of students according to their level of satisfaction with the ‘SSC Online database’ available in the library, in relation to gender is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Level of satisfaction with regard to ‘SSC Online’ database

Level of satisfaction	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Fully	18 (15.65)	18 (16.36)	36 (16.00)
Fairly	63 (54.78)	58 (52.73)	121 (53.78)
Partially	14 (12.18)	15 (13.64)	29 (12.89)
Not much	20 (17.39)	19 (17.27)	39 (17.33)
TOTAL	115 (100.00)	110 (100.00)	225 (100.00)
χ^2 (Female-Male) = 0.1557 TV: 7.815 DF: 3 Not Significant @ 0.05 Level			

(Note: Numbers indicated in parentheses are percentages)

Table 1 shows that 53.78 percent of the law students are fairly satisfied with the ‘SSC Online database’, 17.33 percent of them are not much satisfied, 16 percent of them are fully satisfied, and the remaining 12.89 percent of them are partially satisfied.

It is also obvious from Table 1 that there is no statistically noticeable variation in the level of satisfaction of ‘SSC online database’ between the female and male students. It is proved by the chi-square value, which is not significant at 0.05 level with three degrees of freedom.

Westlaw India

The allocation of students according to their level of satisfaction with the ‘Westlaw India database’ available in the library, in relation to gender is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Level of satisfaction with regard to ‘Westlaw India’ database

Level of satisfaction	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Fully	31 (26.96)	32 (29.09)	63 (28.00)
Fairly	66 (57.39)	65 (59.09)	131 (58.22)
Partially	11 (9.56)	7 (6.37)	18 (8.00)
Not much	7 (6.09)	6 (5.45)	13 (5.78)
TOTAL	115 (100.00)	110 (100.00)	225 (100.00)
χ^2 (Female-Male) = 0.8786 TV: 7.815 DF: 3 Not Significant @ 0.05 Level			

(Note: Numbers indicated in parentheses are percentages)

Table 2 shows that 58.22 percent of the law students are fairly satisfied with the ‘Westlaw India database’, 28 percent of them are fully satisfied, 8 percent of them are partially satisfied, and the remaining 5.78 percent of them are not much satisfied.

It is also obvious from Table 2 that there is no statistically noticeable variation in the level of satisfaction of ‘Westlaw India database’ between the female and male students. It is proved by the chi-square value, which is not significant at 0.05 level with three degrees of freedom.

Kluwer Arbitration

The allocation of students according to their level of satisfaction with the ‘Kluwer Arbitration database’ available in the library, in relation to gender is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Level of satisfaction with regard to ‘Kluwer Arbitration’ database

Level of satisfaction	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Fully	12 (10.43)	13 (11.82)	25 (11.11)
Fairly	51 (44.35)	46 (41.82)	97 (43.11)
Partially	32 (27.83)	32 (29.09)	64 (28.45)
Not much	20 (17.39)	19 (17.27)	39 (17.33)
TOTAL	115 (100.00)	110 (100.00)	225 (100.00)
χ^2 (Female-Male) = 0.2124 TV: 7.815 DF: 3 Not Significant @ 0.05 Level			

(Note: Numbers indicated in parentheses are percentages)

Table 3 shows that 43.11 percent of the law students are fairly satisfied with the ‘Kluwer Arbitration database’, 28.45 percent of them are partially satisfied, 17.33 percent of them are not much satisfied, and the remaining 11.11 percent of them are fully satisfied.

It is also obvious from Table 3 that there is no statistically noticeable variation in the level of satisfaction of ‘Kluwer Arbitration database’ between the female and male students. It is proved by the chi-square value, which is not significant at 0.05 level with three degrees of freedom.

Kluwer Competition Law

The allocation of students according to their level of satisfaction with the ‘Kluwer Competition Law database’ available in the library, in relation to gender is shown in Table 4.

Table 4 shows that 54.22 percent of the law students are fairly satisfied with the 'Kluwer Competition Law database', 18.22 percent of them are partially satisfied, 13.78 percent of them are not much satisfied, and the remaining 13.78 percent of them are fully satisfied.

Table 4: Level of satisfaction with regard to 'Kluwer Competition Law' database

Level of satisfaction	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Fully	16 (13.91)	15 (13.64)	31 (13.78)
Fairly	61 (53.05)	61 (55.45)	122 (54.22)
Partially	22 (19.13)	19 (17.27)	41 (18.22)
Not much	16 (13.91)	15 (13.64)	31 (13.78)
TOTAL	115 (100.00)	110 (100.00)	225 (100.00)
χ^2 (Female-Male) = 0.173 TV: 7.815 DF: 3 Not Significant @ 0.05 Level			

(Note: Numbers indicated in parentheses are percentages)

It is also obvious from Table 4 that there is no statistically noticeable variation in the level of satisfaction of 'Kluwer Competition Law database' between the female and male students. It is proved by the chi-square value, which is not significant at 0.05 level with three degrees of freedom.

Kluwer IP Law

The allocation of students according to their level of satisfaction with the 'Kluwer IP Law database' available in the library, in relation to gender is shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Level of satisfaction with regard to 'Kluwer IP Law' database

Level of satisfaction	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Fully	11 (9.57)	13 (11.82)	24 (10.67)
Fairly	58 (50.43)	53 (48.18)	111 (49.33)
Partially	27 (23.48)	26 (23.64)	53 (23.56)
Not much	19 (16.52)	18 (16.36)	37 (16.44)
TOTAL	115 (100.00)	110 (100.00)	225 (100.00)
χ^2 (Female-Male) = 0.3268 TV: 7.815 DF: 3 Not Significant @ 0.05 Level			

(Note: Numbers indicated in parentheses are percentages)

Table 5 shows that 49.33 percent of the law students are fairly satisfied with the 'Kluwer IP Law database', 23.56 percent of them are partially satisfied, 16.44 percent of them are not much satisfied, and the remaining 10.67 percent of them are fully satisfied.

It is also obvious from Table 5 that there is no statistically noticeable variation in the level of satisfaction of 'Kluwer IP Law database' between the female and male students. It is proved by the chi-square value, which is not significant at 0.05 level with three degrees of freedom.

Hein Online

The allocation of students according to their level of satisfaction with the 'Hein Online database' available in the library, in relation to gender is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Level of satisfaction with regard to 'Hein Online' database

Level of satisfaction	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Fully	24 (20.87)	23 (20.91)	47 (20.89)

Fairly	66 (57.39)	65 (59.09)	131 (58.22)
Partially	10 (8.70)	9 (8.18)	19 (8.44)
Not much	15 (13.04)	13 (11.82)	28 (12.45)
TOTAL	115 (100.00)	110 (100.00)	225 (100.00)
χ^2 (Female-Male) = 0.1133 TV: 7.815 DF: 3 Not Significant @ 0.05 Level			

(Note: Numbers indicated in parentheses are percentages)

Table 6 shows that 58.22 percent of the law students are fairly satisfied with the ‘Hein online database’, 2.89 percent of them are fully satisfied, 12.45 percent of them are not much satisfied, and the remaining 8.44 percent of them are partially satisfied.

It is also obvious from Table 6 that there is no statistically noticeable variation in the level of satisfaction of ‘Hein online database’ between the female and male students. It is proved by the chi-square value, which is not significant at 0.05 level with three degrees of freedom.

Manupatra

The allocation of students according to their level of satisfaction with the ‘Manupatra database’ available in the library, in relation to gender is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Level of satisfaction with regard to ‘Manupatra’ database

Level of satisfaction	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Fully	20 (17.39)	21 (19.10)	41 (18.22)
Fairly	66 (57.39)	61 (55.45)	127 (56.45)
Partially	10 (8.70)	9 (8.18)	19 (8.45)
Not much	19 (16.52)	19 (17.27)	38 (16.88)
TOTAL	115 (100.00)	110 (100.00)	225 (100.00)
χ^2 (Female-Male) = 0.1628 TV: 7.815 DF: 3 Not Significant @ 0.05 Level			

(Note: Numbers indicated in parentheses are percentages)

Table 7 shows that 56.45 percent of the law students are fairly satisfied with the ‘Manupatra database’, 16.88 percent of them are not much satisfied, 18.22 percent of them are fully satisfied, and the remaining 8.45 percent of them are partially satisfied.

It is also obvious from Table 7 that there is no statistically noticeable variation in the level of satisfaction of ‘Manupatra database’ between the female and male students. It is proved by the chi-square value, which is not significant at 0.05 level with three degrees of freedom.

Lexis India

The allocation of students according to their level of satisfaction with the ‘Lexis India database’ available in the library, in relation to gender is shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Level of satisfaction with regard to ‘Lexis India’ database

Level of satisfaction	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Fully	21 (18.26)	17 (15.45)	38 (16.89)
Fairly	56 (48.70)	58 (52.73)	114 (50.67)
Partially	21 (18.26)	21 (19.09)	42 (18.67)

Not much	17 (14.78)	14 (12.73)	31 (13.77)
TOTAL	115 (100.00)	110 (100.00)	225 (100.00)
χ^2 (Female-Male) = 0.6357 TV: 7.815 DF: 3 Not Significant @ 0.05 Level			

(Note: Numbers indicated in parentheses are percentages)

Table 8 shows that 50.67 percent of the law students are fairly satisfied with the 'Lexis India database', 16.89 percent of them are fully satisfied, 18.67 percent of them are partially satisfied, and the remaining 13.77 percent of them are not much satisfied.

It is also obvious from Table 8 that there is no statistically noticeable variation in the level of satisfaction of 'Lexis India database' between the female and male students. It is proved by the chi-square value, which is not significant at 0.05 level with three degrees of freedom.

Taxmann

The allocation of students according to their level of satisfaction with the 'Taxmann database' available in the library, in relation to gender is shown in Table 9.

Table 9 shows that 36.89 percent of the law students are fairly satisfied with the 'Taxmann database', 29.33 percent of them are partially satisfied, 24.45 percent of them are not much satisfied, and the remaining 9.33 percent of them are fully satisfied.

Table 9: Level of satisfaction with regard to 'Taxmann' database

Level of satisfaction	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Fully	12 (10.43)	9 (8.18)	21 (9.33)
Fairly	44 (38.26)	39 (35.46)	83 (36.89)
Partially	32 (27.83)	34 (30.91)	66 (29.33)
Not much	27 (23.48)	28 (25.45)	55 (24.45)
TOTAL	115 (100.00)	110 (100.00)	225 (100.00)
χ^2 (Female-Male) = 0.6978 TV: 7.815 DF: 3 Not Significant @ 0.05 Level			

(Note: Numbers indicated in parentheses are percentages)

It is also obvious from Table 9 that there is no statistically noticeable variation in the level of satisfaction of 'Taxmann database' between the female and male students. It is proved by the chi-square value, which is not significant at 0.05 level with three degrees of freedom.

JSTOR

The allocation of students according to their level of satisfaction with the 'JSTOR database' available in the library, in relation to gender is shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Level of satisfaction with regard to 'JSTOR' database

Level of satisfaction	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Fully	10 (8.70)	9 (8.18)	19 (8.44)
Fairly	38 (33.04)	39 (35.46)	77 (34.22)
Partially	38 (33.04)	33 (30.00)	71 (31.56)
Not much	29 (25.22)	29 (26.36)	58 (25.78)
TOTAL	115 (100.00)	110 (100.00)	225 (100.00)
χ^2 (Female-Male) = 0.3068 TV: 7.815 DF: 3 Not Significant @ 0.05 Level			

(Note: Numbers indicated in parentheses are percentages)

Table 10 shows that 34.22 percent of the law students are fairly satisfied with the 'JSTOR database', 31.56 percent of them are partially satisfied, 25.78 percent of them are not much satisfied, and the remaining 8.44 percent of them are fully satisfied.

It is also obvious from Table 10 that there is no statistically noticeable variation in the level of satisfaction of 'JSTOR database' between the female and male students. It is proved by the chi-square value, which is not significant at 0.05 level with three degrees of freedom.

CONCLUSION

The results of this research showed that law students used a range of legal electronic databases to pursue their preparation for assignments, examinations, gathering information for workshop/seminars, updated with latest domain knowledge, and conducting legal search information. The study also revealed that a number of respondents preferred to use Information and Communication Technology-based library resources. students are more satisfied with the 'Westlaw India' as compared to other electronic database, which is followed by Hein online, Manputra, Lexis India, SSC online, Kluwer competition law, Kluwer IP law, Kluwer arbitration, Taxmann, and JSTOR. The findings of this study will help library and information science practitioners working in academic law libraries to address the key factors which influence users' intention to seek information and to intensify their performance to meet user needs and perceptions. It will also be useful to them in collection development. The study is relevant and useful to those who are interested to know the trends of information needs and determine the information-seeking behaviour and users' perceptions for library resources of legal professionals. This study is also useful to librarians who are professionally committed to update a core, qualitative and need-based collection for the optimum utilization of the resources for the greater satisfaction of the user community.

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