# Survey On Open Access To Legal Information System

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*Abstract:* This article identifies various open access resources that are popular among legal community in India. The findings of the study reveal that majority of respondents are aware of open access resources. The main purpose of using these resources are for case law searching. This paper analyses the benefits involved in providing free public online access to the "public legal information" of the Indian legal system.

*Keywords:* **Legal Information Resources, Open access, Case study**.

## I.Introduction:

Information in law is not only important 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, lawyers have 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. Basically, legal material consists of statutory law, and reports of decided cases. Both these types of legal materials relate to the "authority" and "precedent" respectively. The broader legal fraternity may need different types of information such as case laws, statutory provisions, rules framed under any act, object and reasons of any bill, amendment of any act, notifications issued under any particular statute, debates in Parliament at the time of enactment of any particular act, or academic articles on a given topic in different situations.
In the process of searching of open access legal information resources, the students can only judge the Legal professionals depend on varied information sources to satisfy their information needs in daily routine work. The information needs of academic and practicing legal professionals are different because of the nature of their work. Both academic and practicing lawyers require assistance in gathering, filtering, scanning, navigating and evaluating legal documents. Moreover, both academic and practicing lawyers need to apply their minds prior to starting the search for legal information. It is very cumbersome and expensive for the common man to get legal information.

Online Legal Information System is an initiative to design a model online legal information system for indian enviornment. It is designed after need assessment survey conducted on 397 academic and practicing lawyers in National Capital Region - Delhi. In view of the need assessment survey design of OLIS was started and several collection have been built up. Online Legal Information System contains case laws of Supreme Court, High Courts, Trial courts and Tribunals in India. The coverage of contents are very wide. It has included number of resources such as: case law, central and state acts, Parliamentray bills, rules and regulations, notifications, legal news, trade notices, press release, debates of Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha, video-audio contents, circulars, treaties, commentaries etc.No open access online legal information system available in India, which could help the legal professionals to perform legal research with variety of features to retrieve the desired results from database. Moreover, the value additions of legal contents are required to suit the information requirements of legal fraternity. search forms are designed keeping in mind the problems being faced by them in accessing the legal information. Search mechanism is designed in such a way that users can get the information expeditiouly in single search. Online Legal Information System has integrated the web 2.0 tools and number of help features. In order to make it more robust and systematic feel free to express your views related to the proposed system.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Legal information is significant for both academic and practicing lawyers for the success of the legal system. Practicing lawyers may fail to support the case of their clientele because of the lack of reliable information. Similarly, academic lawyers cannot do research without understanding previous research done in the area. Therefore, it is imperative to comprehend the diff-erences in the perception of academic and practicing lawyers.

We have done a survey on lawyers websites where clients can connect to lawyers from anywhere at any time . It consists of a web application which is designed for a specific lawyer, and has main goal to dematerialize the heavy work of my client who often gets lost while searching in the huge amount of paper they has for a specific client's case. The societal implications of this project consist of the fact that it will be a first step towards the generalization of the idea of dematerializing the work of the numerous lawyers all over the countries around the world, which will have a positive impact on the society as it will allow lawyers to process clients' cases faster and thus resolve their problems in a more efficient way. As for its ethical implication, this web application preserves the privacy of clients' data. Indeed, we'll make sure to strengthen the security features of the software so that clients' data is never compromised or divulged to any non-approved third party.

A survey investigating clients behavior towards law firms has shown that 71% prefer to deal with lawyers online and try to keep cost minimum and to hide their personal details. Many of the peoples are also comfortable with the idea of law firm using artificial intelligence(AI) to answer their query. In contrast with the desire to communicate online, just over half of those surveyed (40%) want face-to-face contact with lawyers while less than (31%) are comfortable over telephone communication.
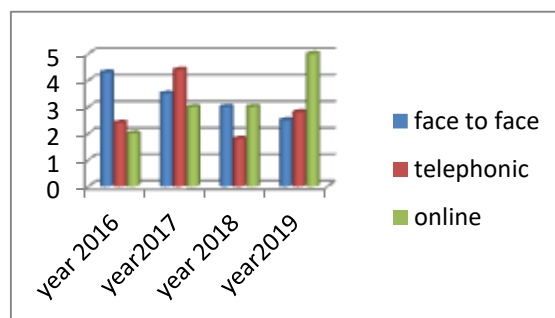


**fig: yearly ratio**

The above chart shows that from year 2016 to 2019 the peoples behaviors towards online firm increased as year passed. The percentage of clients in year 2017 were more as compared to in year 2016 and in year 2019 the percentage was more as compared to year 2018.

Olorunfemi (2014)[2] undertook a study to investigate the information behavior of law students in Nigerian university law libraries. The study adopted a survey research design. The study targeted all the law students in Nigerian universities. Out of 30 universities offering law as a course of study in Nigeria, a total of 12 universities were chosen for the study. From the 12 chosen universities, 1,534 law students were randomly selected; this represents the sample for the study. Data was collected using a questionnaire, an interview and observation methods. The findings revealed that the surveyed law students generally exhibited a positive attitude towards patronage of law libraries, and that printed information sources are the main information sources utilized by respondents in law libraries. The Internet facilities provided in the law library where only used

Leenes[6] in his study found that legal knowledge based systems have long been surrounded by   much optimism, but despite the efforts over the last  20 years, the number of practical applications actually in use is still less. Komlodi and Soerge[7] also focused on information use and re-use, specifically on legal information seekers and the use of their memory and externally recorded search histories to inform their later searches.

Marshall, et al.[8]found that many of the users' information-seeking strategies followed links rather than conducting explicit searches, and highlighted the use of electronic resources for case evaluation. It was observed that students began their moot court research by identifying case law, and described this as a 'launching pad' or 'looking for a thread to pull!'.  The students then continued to use citations as a point of departure, either as obvious links to a precedent  if they came across the citation several times or  as a way of determining whether the cases were still 'good law'.

Thanuskodi[9] conducted a study at Supreme Court of India and found that senior advocate respondents ranked first position with respect to their overall purpose of gathering e-resources, panel advocates have found second and Government and junior advocate the last in this aspect. Greenleaf et al1 observed that developing a free access legal information system for India involves more complex, technical and organizational issues compared to other countries. Constitutional principle has not yet been developed in relation to legal information to require governments to meet the needs of the ordinary citizens to access legal information for free or to international standards of quality.

Padma and Ramasamy (2017)[10] analyzed digital information seeking behavior of lawyers of Madurai District Court Library, Madurai. Questionnaire method was used to collect data from 152 lawyers. The study reveals that: 137 (90.13%) respondents are male lawyers. Majority of the respondents i.e. 71 (46.71%) lawyers belong to above 40 age group. 97 (63.82 %) respondents have three year B.L degrees and 52 respondents (34.21%) have five year B.L degrees. Majority of lawyers i.e. 46.09% (70) of the respondents are specialized in handling Civil Cases and 40.79% (62) of the lawyers are specialized in handling Criminal Cases. 63 (41.45%) respondents are Junior Lawyers and 43 (28.29%) respondents are Senior Lawyers. 19 (12.50%) respondents have 16 to 20 years of experience. 125 (51.02 %) respondents get necessary information for their case references from the Bar Association library. 75 (49.34%) lawyers visit the library daily and 46 (30.26%) lawyers visit the library once a week. 84 (55.26%) respondents fully depend on library services for their professional work. 125 (82.24 %) lawyers visit the library for their Case preparation and 84 (55.26 %) lawyers visit the library for improving their personal knowledge. 135 (88.82 %) respondents seek information to get to know / clarify their doubts on various Legal and judicial procedures. Law Books available in the Bar Association library are adequate for 98 (64.47%) respondents. 'Tamil' is the preferred language for reading legal information sources among 68.42 % (104) of the lawyers. 45 (29.61%) respondents suggest for the

availability of more current legal materials. 112 (73.68%) respondents are satisfied with the quantity and quality of print information sources available in the Bar Association library.

## III.CONCLUSION

Open access legal information resources are useful for the legal community as well as  lawyers. They need integrated legal information system with federated search facility. Development of an open access legal information system in India could attempt to serve legal community as well as common mass. Commercial resources are systematically organized, and are very helpful for legal community to start legal research from scratch. However, open access legal resources are lagging behind in advance search techniques, particularly federated search techniques. It is need of the hour that Indian technologist and legal experts should collaborate to make these resources more user-friendly, properly organized, and up-to-date as per the international standards for facilitate efficient and effective use.

Specifically, it sought to find out if there is an existing right of public access to legal information; and if the right is found to exist, to determine whether it qualifies for universal recognition as a human right, which would strengthen it to improve national and global access to legal information. The right of public access to legal information is a legal right that exists under the general right of access to public information because every government holds such information in trust for the people who are the rightful owners.

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