

## **Use of Online Legal information Resources by Law Professionals of the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad: A Survey**

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### **Abstract**

Information and communication technology has covered all the field of knowledge in the world. Due to its advancement, information has been captured, manipulates and communicated within the fraction of time. It is also affected the human being along with accessing power of desired information from anywhere at any time. The online information are available for the subscription of the libraries which can be accessed through internet form the remote server. This paper describe the concept of online legal information resources and results related to use of online information resources by Law professionals as well as students of the legal studies. It is also explored the awareness, preferred online resource, user-friendliness, satisfaction level, and problems faced by law professionals related to online legal information resources.

**Key words:** Online, Law, Resources, Information, professionals.

### **Introduction**

Law and its enforcement is a backbone to establish peace and security in the world. But it concept will be true, when information will be obtain in exhaustive and expedite way. Internet and web technology provided various tools and techniques to access online information resource in the variety of files and formats. Online legal information resources consists various types of documents with special features. Few of these resources also provides the decisions of the Supreme Court of India, decisions of the various High Courts included Tribunals. These online information resources are available

in the free of cost or subscription based. Many databases are available based on subscription like Manupatra, SCC online, Westlaw etc., whereas some are available free of cost namely Indian kanoon, Judis, and various scholarly information resources. Majority of users are utilizing, freely available web resources/domain resources compared to commercial, because everybody wants to get information without any subscription charges. Online legal information resources are very helpful to law professionals to find out the desired information including decisions of the various High Courts, decisions of the Supreme Court of India and amended rules, regulations etc.

### **Online legal information resources**

Online legal information resources are as a part of e-resources which are available on the internet. Libraries are subscribing online resources for their users. Online legal information resources have been basically designed for those users, who want to get information about legal field. Online legal information resources can be divided into two major categories i.e. online commercial legal databases and online freely available web resources/domain resources. Online commercial legal databases namely Manupatra, SCC online, Westlaw etc. are available on the basis of subscription charges, whereas freely available web resources/domain resources namely Indian kanoon, Judis, etc. are available without any subscription charges. Online legal information resources have been generally used by law professionals including Advocates and other legal officers. After subscribing any commercial legal databases, password will be obtained and after filling this obtained password, user of this database can enjoy the all features of commercial database. Libraries are investing huge amount for subscription of online database and hence it is necessary to evaluate the use of these resources.

### **Review of Literatures**

Review of literature provides background information about the research topic and help to the researcher to perform the research. On the basis of earlier research work of the related studies, present researcher can determine our path to do new research which has been left in the earlier research. For this purpose we have consulted many articles and research work to related fields.

**Patel & Singh (2008)** states that some of the most used legal database by Court libraries in India are: SCC Online, AIR Online, Manupatra. **Rao & Rao (2012)** depict that most of the institutional law libraries use inter and computer to provide access of e-resources. **Soumen Mallik & B.K. Sen.(2008)** states that many Law Institute and University provide online legal database such as Manupatra, SCC Online, Westlaw, Ejurix, JSTOR etc. **Satish Chander (1996)** states that when computerization process has been started in the Supreme court of India in 1992, Supreme Court's Judges library has introduced new technology for information system such as SUPLIS (Supreme Court Library Information System), JUDIS(Judgment Information System) etc. **Priya Rai (2012)** suggested that the electronic database should be designed more comprehensively and especially considering the need and requirement of all stakeholders of law. Indian Government should support

Montreal declaration on free access to law as a fundamental right for democratization of information.

### Objectives of the Study

- To find out the awareness of law professionals towards online legal information resources.
- To study the most used legal information resource among law professionals.
- To investigate the satisfaction level of law professionals about online legal information resources.
- To explore the problem faced by the law professionals during the searching of online legal information.
- To discover the purpose of law professionals to use online legal information resources.

### Research Methodology

Research methodology defines the method which is required to do research. There are various types of research methods such as Survey, Case study, Historical, Experimental, Descriptive, exploratory etc. In these methods, the researcher has adopted survey method to perform the study. To execute the survey, questionnaire technique has been used for data collection. Researcher met personally to respondents with well-designed questionnaire which consist open and closed ended questions. The researchers has distributed 30 questionnaires to Law Clerks (Trainee) working judges library of the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad and got response 20. In the same way, 200 questionnaires were distributed and 100 filled questionnaires were received from those Advocates, who visits the Bar's Library of the High Court. After collection of the data, the codification, classification, tabulation have been done for the data analysis.

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Figure 1 Response of the Respondents**

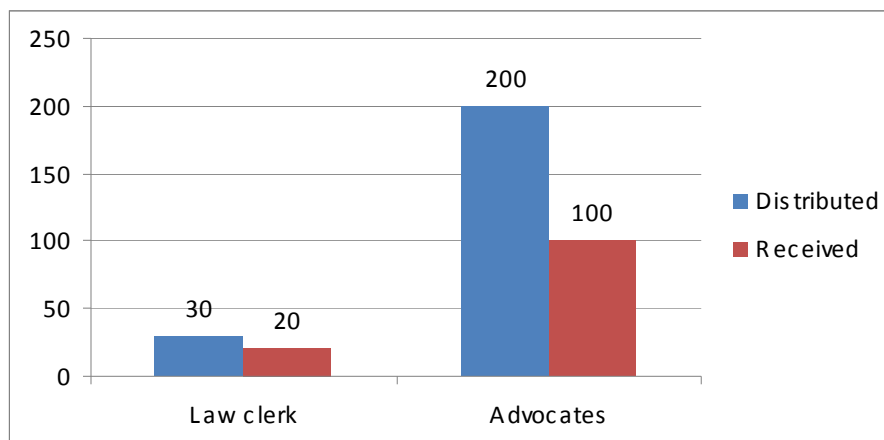


Figure .1 shows that, researcher has distributed 30 questionnaires to Law Clerks and received 20. In the same way, the researcher has also distributed 200 questionnaires to Advocates and got response 100. In other words, the researcher has got 60.6% response of Law Clerks and 50% response of Advocates. It means that the researcher has got 52.17% response of total law professionals.

**Figure 2 Awareness of law professionals towards online legal information Resources.**



Figure 2 shows that, 99% law professionals of the High Court, Allahabad are aware about online legal information resources.

**Figure 3 preference of the format by law professionals**

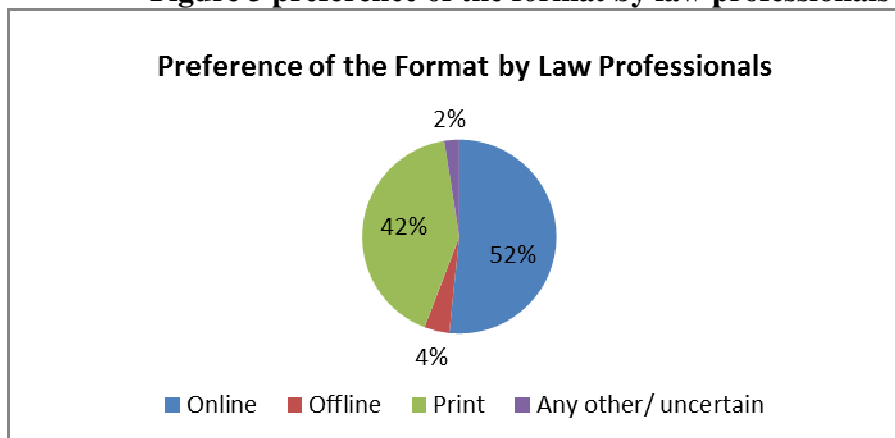


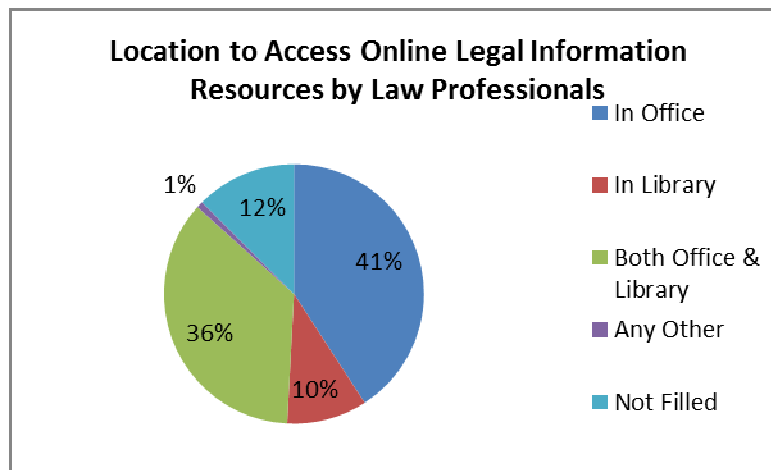
Figure 3 indicates that, 52% law professionals give preference to online form of information, whereas 42% give preference to print form. Apart it, 4% give preference to Offline and 2% are uncertain about this question.

**Figure 4 Use of online legal information resources by law professionals**



Figure 4 informs that, 87% law professionals use online legal information resources, whereas 13% do not use.

**Figure 5 Location to access resources**



Above figure indicates that, 41% law professionals access online legal information resources in their office, whereas 10% in library. Like this, 36% law professionals' access

at office and library both, while 12% did not give any response. 1% law professionals access at any other place.

**Figure 6 Use of various types of online resources**

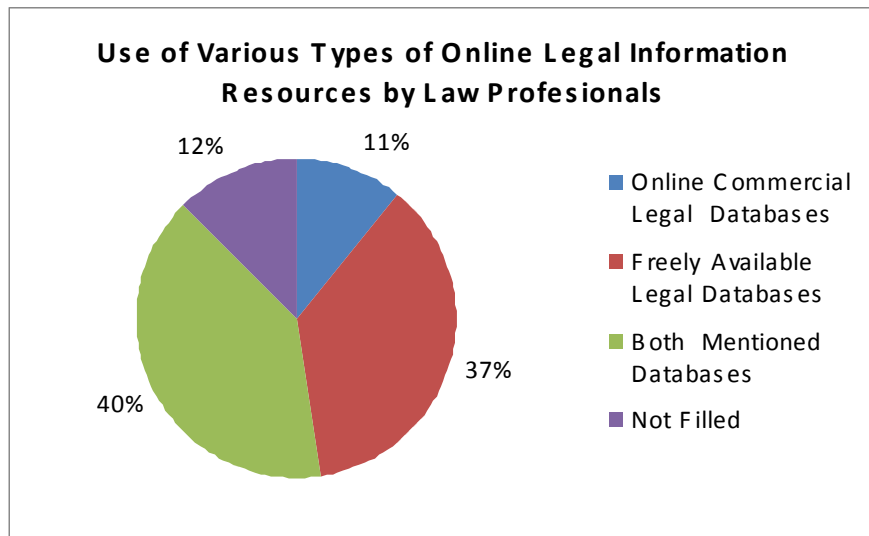


Figure 6 describes that, 40% law professionals use online commercial and freely available legal databases both, whereas 37% use only freely available legal databases. In the same sequence, 11% law professionals use online commercial databases, while 12% have not filled answer about this question.

**Figure 11 Preferred online commercial database by law professionals**

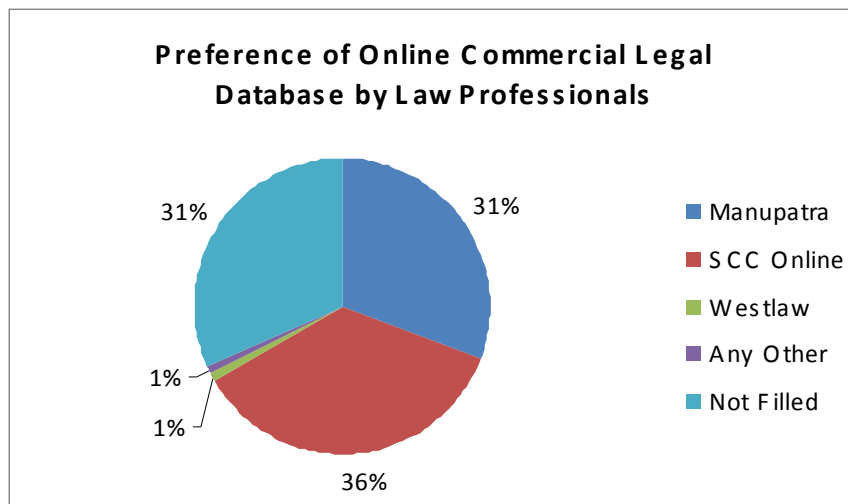
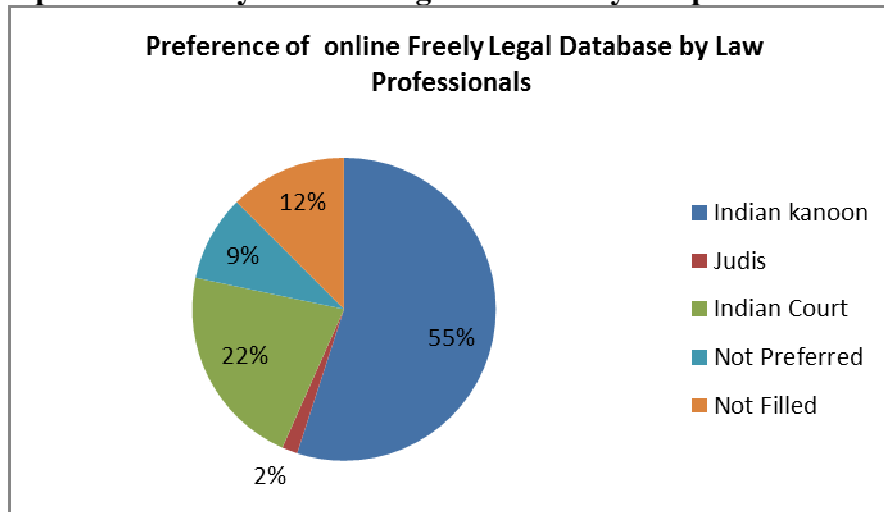


Figure 11 informs that, 36% law professionals have given preference to SCC online, 31% to Manupatra, 31% did not give any response, 1% preferred to Westlaw and 1% to prefer to any other.

**Figure12 preferred freely available legal database by law professionals**



Above figure describes that, 55% law professionals have preferred to Indian Kanoon , 22% to Indian Court, 12% did not give any response about this query, 9% did not prefer any database and 2% have preferred to Judis.

**Figure 13 Problem faced by law professionals**

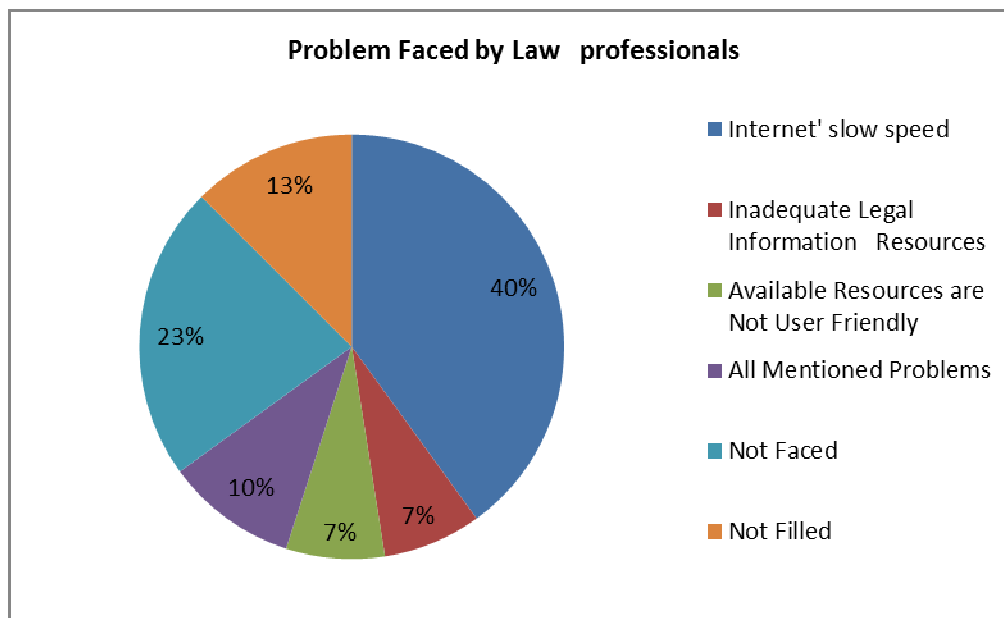


Figure 13 shows that, 40% law professionals face internet slow' speed problem during the searching of online legal information, 23% do not face any problem, 13% did not give any response about this query, 10% face all mentioned problem, 7% face problem of inadequate legal information resources and 7% face problem of available resources are not user friendly.

**Figure 14 Satisfaction levels of law professionals Figure**

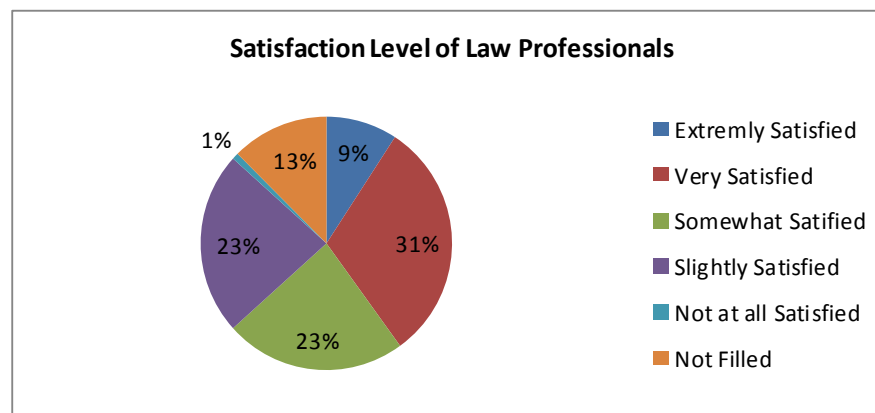


Figure 14 indicates that, 31% law professionals are very much satisfied about online legal information resources, 23% are somewhat satisfied, 23% are slightly satisfied, 9% are extremely satisfied, 1% are not at all satisfied and 13% did not give any response about this query.



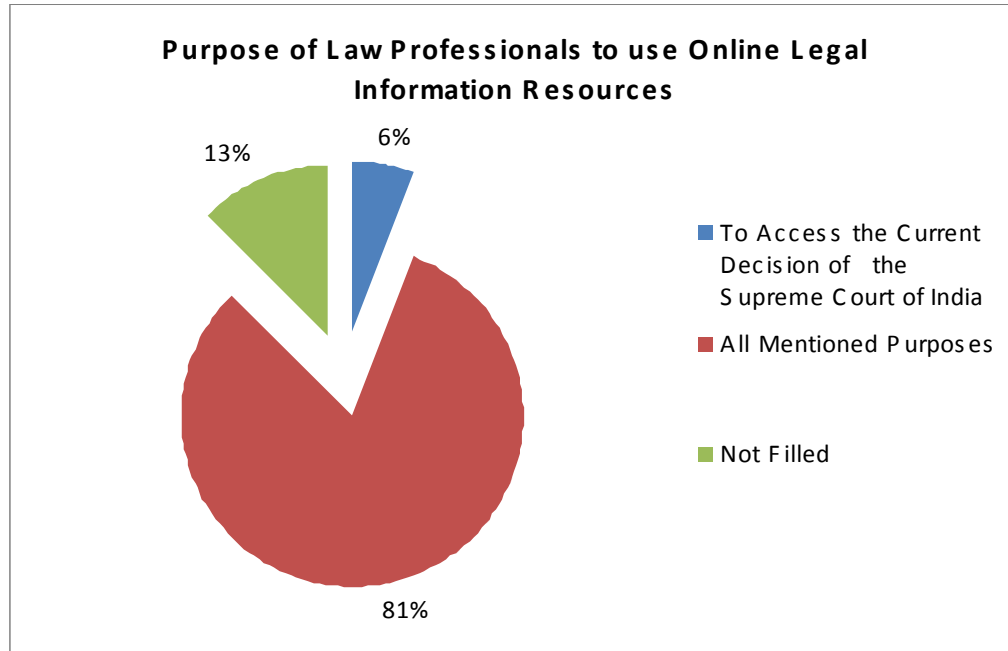
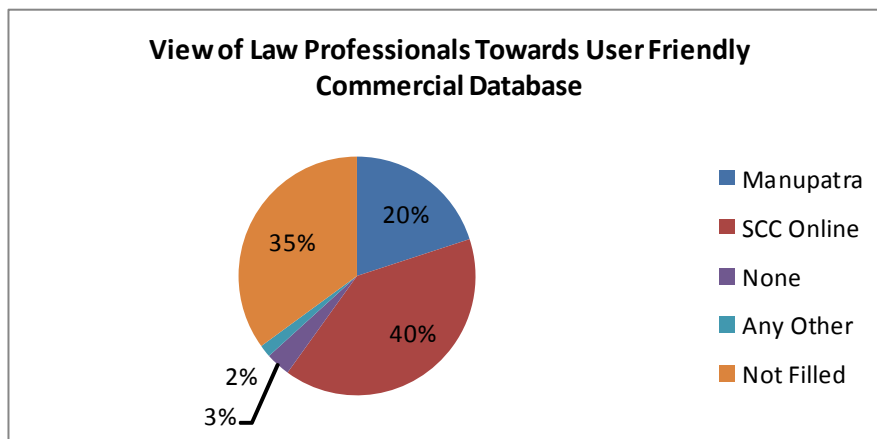
**Figure 15 Purposes of law professionals to use online resources**

Figure 15 explores that, 82% law professionals use online legal information resources for all mentioned purposes (i.e. current decision of high courts and supreme courts of India, rules and statutes) in this only 6% user are accessing the current decisions of the Supreme Court of India. But 12% law professionals have not given any response.

**Figure 16 View of law professionals towards user friendly online commercial database**

Above figure explores that, 40% law professionals say that SCC online is user friendly,

20% say that Manupatra is user friendly, 3% say that none of these is user friendly and 2% say that any other commercial database is user friendly. But 35% law professionals have not given any response.

### **Findings and conclusion**

The study reveals that, 99% law professionals of the High Court, Allahabad are aware about online legal information resources and 87% law professionals use online legal information resources, whereas 13% do not use. It also highlights that 36% law professionals have given preference to SCC online, 31% to Manupatra, 1% preferred to Westlaw and 1% to prefer to any other. The results of the study also describes that, 40% law professionals face problems related to 'internet slow' speed during the searching of online legal information, 23% do not face any problem and other emphasises on inadequate resources, user-friendly, etc.

The Major finding indicates that, 31% law professionals are very much satisfied about online legal information resources, 23% are somewhat satisfied, 23% are slightly satisfied, 9% are extremely satisfied, 1% are not at all satisfied and 13% did not give any response about this query. It also reveals that 82% law professionals use online legal information resources for all mentioned purposes, 6% for accessing the current decisions of the Supreme Court of India.

In view of the above, we came to the conclusion that majority of law professionals are utilising online legal information resources for various purpose. And library professional should come forward for the better organisation of these resources and provide user-friendly single platform for the all subscribed resources which save time and provide pinpointed exhaustive information to their users.

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