

Awareness and Use of Electronic Resources in National Law University Libraries in India: A study

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Abstract:

The main purpose of this paper is to describe the Awareness and use of e-resources in selected National Law University Libraries. In the present study, two National Law University Library Users of State of Karnataka and State of Telangana in India are covered. Present days, electronic environment is prevailing in all sectors and playing a major role including information sector and especially in academic institutions. In this regard, electronic resources and services are very needful to any Law academic institutions like Law schools and Law Universities in India for achieving quality of Legal education and research. This paper describes the usage of various types of electronic resources by the students, researchers and faculty members. The present study concentrated on the use of Electronic Information Resources in the National Law School of India University (NLSIU) Library, Bangalore, and NALSAR (The National Academy of Legal Studies and Research) Library Hyderabad.

Keywords: Legal Education, Online resources, National Law Universities, Digital Environment, NLSIU, NALSAR.

1. Introduction:

Today we are living in the digital age and many changes have become part of routine activities in the day-to-day life. In this aspect, digital law libraries are very useful to the prospective Lawyers and faculty members. Legal education is foundation and an essential element preparation for practicing the Law. Legal knowledge is a foundation on which the contemporary society flourishes. To promote security, social, political and economic welfare, it being pertinent to set parameter of the ethos that have been established in the society either as a result of the customs, practices or the laws that nature has formulated. The traditional Universities, specialized Law Universities, and Law schools offer legal education in India. Law is not only an instrument to provide social, political or economic justice but it is a tool that paves the way to ameliorate socio

economic condition of the people by peaceful means to follow and to be aware of the laws prevailing in the land, awareness and education plays a prominent role. Legal research is an essential part of Legal studies in India. In the present scenario, many law libraries are providing electronic resources for the academic community.

2. E-Resources:

The information in a record that can be saved as electronic signals, typically on a computer, is referred to as an electronic resource. Students are motivated by electronic information because it gives them the chance to send, gather, or download and share information on a topic of their interest.

3. E-Resources in Law Libraries:

Like in conventional university libraries, the libraries of law universities too have more or less similar kinds of electronic resources in the subjects of Law and related areas besides print materials. The e-resources includes, e-books, e-journals, e-magazines, and open access on line databases, e-Thesis and dissertations, CD, DVD etc. It is evident from the review of literature. That the libraries attached to law universities and institutions are mostly using online databases.

The following databases are available in National Law Universities:

- Manupatra,
- SCC online,
- West law India/International,
- Hein Online, LexisNexis,
- Kluwer Arbitration Law,
- Kluwer Competition Law, Kluwer IP Law, JSTOR.

4. Review of Literature:

Jonathan and Udo (2015), conferred accessibility and awareness of electronic information resources between the users of South East Nigerian Federal Universities. The theme of study was to determine electronic information resources and to ascertain awareness on electronic information resources. Categories of electronic information resources are listed as federated search, virtual reference, digital institutional repositories, online databases, digital library, virtual libraries and open access repositories. Two levels of complimentary questionnaires were designed to collect primary data from respondents. Out of the four universities were studied, the

University of Nigeria, Nsukka imported more electronic information resources. The awareness on availability of e-resources is quite satisfactory. Based on the findings the author suggested for development of ICT infrastructure, information literacy programs and pro activeness of library staff.

Sushma (2015) studied the access, awareness and use of electronic resources by post graduate students in Gulbarga University. The terms used in this study are well explained. This study was carried out to assess the current usage of electronic resources, to find out awareness of electronic resources, purpose of using e-resources, frequency of using e-resources, level of satisfaction of e-resources and suggestions for further development. The data was collected from 50 post graduate students of various aspects and analyzed on time spent for using e-resources, place of access, preference of e-resources, regularity of using e-resources, reasons for using e-resources and problems while using e-resources. Based on the analysis, the author studied the improvement of internet facility, awareness of availability of new e-resources, conducting orientation-training programs to encourage using e-resources etc. Suitable ICT infrastructure should be made available for accessing and use of electronic resources.

5. Profiles of the National Law Universities:

5.1 National Law School of India University (NLSIU)

The National Law School of India University (NLSIU) is situated in the city of Bangalore and is school of excellence in the field of law that imparts legal education to the undergraduate as well as graduate students. The Legislative Assembly of the State of Karnataka passed a statute establishing NLSIU Bangalore as the nation's first National Law School of its kind to offer undergraduates a five-year integrated law degree in 1988. The institution is also actively engaged in the discipline of socio economic research to cater the needs of the ever-evolving society. The library of NLSIU, Shri Narayan Rao Melgiri National Law Library is the best Law Library in the country. The institute has itself been ranked to number one for several years consecutively. The research produced by the institute is considered by the Government at the State as well as Central level in various policy formulation.

The NLSIU was founded after the efforts of the two decades on the part of the legal luminaries such as Prof. Madhava Menon Rao, Ram Jethmalani, then Chief Justice of India M. Hidayatullah and Prof. Upendra Baxi. The Bar Council of India's Legal Education Committee sought to create a national law school along the lines of Harvard Law School. When the

Government of Karnataka and Bar Council of India agreed to establish the first National Law University in Bangalore, the efforts paid off.

The NLSIU act lays down that the Chief Justice of India serves as the chancellor of the school. The Vice Chancellor manages the administration of the University. NLSIU has 80 seats for the undergraduate law programme, 40 for Master of Law and 50 for its, recently introduced, Master of Public Policy. The undergraduate program B.A. LL.B. spans for the period of 5 years where approximately 50 subjects in the discipline of politics, history, sociology, economics and law are taught. Upon successful completion of the program, the student qualifies to sit for the bar to practice law in India. The graduate program LL.M. is a one-year course program where specialized study and research pertaining to the disciplines such as Constitutional Law, Corporate Law, and Public Policy is conducted.

5.2 National Academy of Legal Studies and Research (NALSAR)

National Academy of Legal Studies and Research (NALSAR), or NALSAR University of Law was founded on the same lines as that of NLSIU Bangalore in the state of Andhra Pradesh. This was second law university to be founded in India after NLSIU Bangalore in the year 1998 by an Act passed in the State Legislative Assembly (Act 34 of 1998) of Andhra Pradesh. The objective of the Institution is to provide excellent legal education, produce socially relevant and professionally competent lawyers by ensuring all around development of the students. Over the last 20 years the Institute as the school of excellence in law and has been consistently ranked amongst the top two law universities of India.

Like NLSIU, Bangalore the University offers the post graduate as well as undergraduate program in law, but it also offers post graduate degree in the business administration. The university offers undergraduate and postgraduate programs in law and postgraduate programs in business administration with four major specializations - Financial Services & Capital Markets, Court Management, Corporate Governance and Capital Markets and Sustainability & Innovation Management. Masters course is also offered to IRS probationers of National Academy of Direct Taxes (NADT), Nagpur in Business and Taxation Laws. The University also offers M. Phil and Ph.D. Degree programs and also several Diploma Programs.⁴ The admission to the programs of law is done based on rank scored in the National exam known as Common Law Admission Test.

The University has active research centers such as Centre for Air and Space Law, Centre for Environment Law, Centre for Intellectual Property Rights etc. with the aim to provide and

address social and emerging issues in the concerned areas of law through participation, deliberative dialogue, discussions, workshops and conferences. NALSAR Law Library is the Centre of the library and research activities, which has been established to achieve research and academic objective of the University, and offers rich collection of primary and secondary legal resources. The e-resources can be access through Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) from any terminal inside as well as outside campus.

6. Objectives of the study:

- To study the availability of electronic resources in Law university libraries.
- To study the awareness of users of electronic resources in Law university libraries.
- To study the use of electronic resources in Law university libraries.

7. Methodology:

To elicit the needful information from the respondents in the present study, it is decided to apply one of the popular research method- survey method. In view of the objectives of present study, it is meaning full to collect the needed information from the Library users of selected Law Universities in India.

8. Sample Coverage:

The total respondents covered for the study is 355, of whom 186 are from NALSAR University and 169 are from NLSIU .Questionnaires were used for collection of primary data from the faculty members, Research Scholars, LLM and B.A.LLB students of Law Universities identified for the survey.

9. Data Analysis:

9.1 Level of Awareness of different LAW Databases

Information on the level of awareness of respondents about different Law Databases is shown in Table-1 (Fig.1).

Table-1: Level of Awareness of different Law Databases

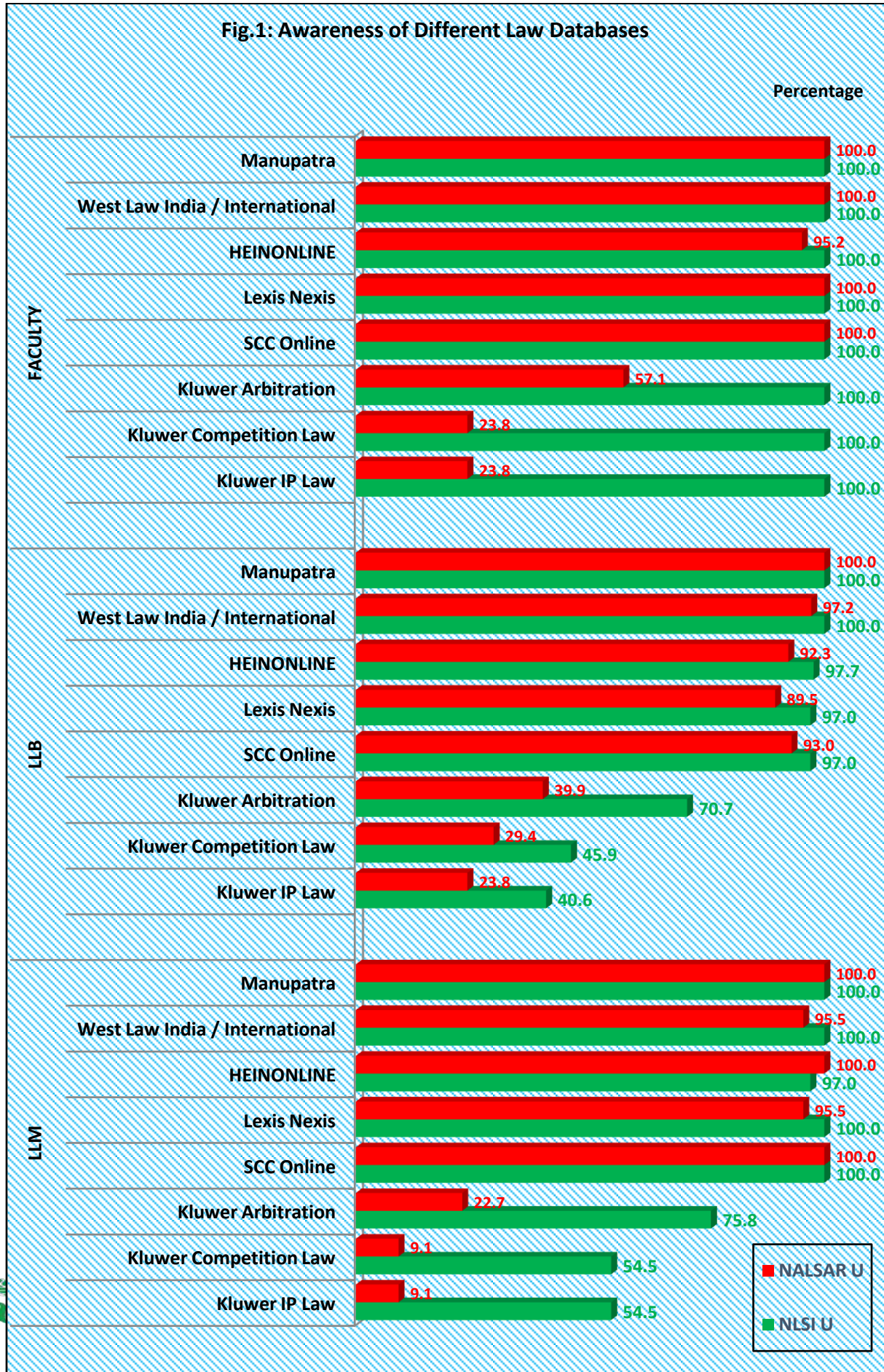
E-Database	Faculty		X2	LLB Students		X2	LLM Students		X2
	NALSARU	NLSIU	(d.f.=1)	NALSARU	NLSIU	(d.f.=1)	NALSARU	NLSIU	(d.f.=1)
	n=21	n=3		n=143	n=133		n=22	n=33	
AWARENESS									
Manupatra	100.0	100.0	--	100.0	100.0	--	100.0	100.0	--

West Law India / International	100.0	100.0	--	97.2	100.0	3.775	95.5	100.0	1.528
HEINONLINE	95.2	100.0	0.149	92.3	97.7	4.230*	100.0	97.0	0.679
Lexis Nexis	100.0	100.0	--	89.5	97.0	6.018*	95.5	100.0	1.528
SCC Online	100.0	100.0	--	93.0	97.0	2.273	100.0	100.0	--
Kluwer Arbitration	57.1	100.0	2.057	39.9	70.7	26.411*	22.7	75.8	14.972*
Kluwer Competition Law	23.8	100.0	6.857*	29.4	45.9	8.014*	9.1	54.5	11.786*
Kluwer IP Law	23.8	100.0	6.857*	23.8	40.6	8.982*	9.1	54.5	11.786*
* Value Significant @ 5% level									

It is quite welcoming to notice that almost all the respondents of the present study are aware of the different Law databases. Of the listed eight databases, 3 are a little lesser known – Kluwer arbitration, Kluwer competition law and Kluwer IP Law.

In the faculty group, all the three members from NLSI U are aware of all eight listed databases. On the other hand, all the members from NALSAR U are aware of ‘Manupatra’, ‘West Law India /International’, ‘Lexis Nexis’ and ‘SCC Online’ and awareness of ‘HEINONLINE’ is reported by 95 percent. About 57 percent are aware of ‘Kluwer arbitration’ and about 24 percent each are aware of ‘Kluwer competition law’ and ‘Kluwer IP Law’.

Fig.1: Awareness of Different Law Databases



Among the LLB students, significant differences are noticed in the level of awareness, about 5 of the 8 listed databases between the two universities (Heinonline, LexisNexis, Kluwer arbitration, Kluwer competition law and Kluwer IP Law). All the LLB students from both universities are aware of Manupatra. All from NLSI U and 97 percent from NALSAR U are aware of West Law India /International. About 98 percent from NLSI U and 92 percent from NALSAR U reported awareness about Heinonline, 97 percent from NLSI U and 90 percent from NALSAR U about LexisNexis and 97 percent from NLSI U and 93 percent from NALSAR U about SCC Online. Awareness about Kluwer arbitration is reported by 71 percent from NLSI U and only 40 percent from NALSAR U are aware of it. Kluwer competition law is known to 46 percent from NLSI U and 29 percent from NALSAR U while 41 percent from NLSI U and 24 percent from NALSAR U are aware of Kluwer IP Law. It should be mentioned here that 15 students from NALSAR U have also reported awareness about other databases like Brill, Elsevier, JSTOR, Cambridge Online and UN depository.

Coming to the LLM students, statistically significant difference in the level of awareness between the two universities are observed with regard to the three Kluwer databases (Kluwer arbitration, Kluwer competition law and Kluwer IP Law). The level of awareness of all listed databases is better in NLSI U than in NALSAR U. All respondents from the two universities are aware of Manupatra and SCC Online. All from NLSI U and 96 percent from NALSAR U are aware of West Law India / International and all from NALSAR U and 97 percent from NLSI U are aware of Heinonline. Awareness of LexisNexis is reported by 96 percent from NALSAR U and all from NLSI U. Awareness about Kluwer Arbitration is reported by 71 percent from NLSI U while only 29 percent from NALSAR U are aware of it. About 55 percent, each from NLSI U and 9 percent each from NALSAR U reported awareness about Kluwer Competition Law and Kluwer IP Law.

9.2 Most Used Law Databases

The respondents were asked to mention the databases that are mostly used by them and the details are shown in Table-2 (Fig.2). Although they use more than one database, the one, which is mostly used, is considered here.

It appears that in total, Manupatra is the most used database of all in all the three groups. About 67 percent in faculty group, 64 percent of LLM students and 61 percent of LLB students reported that they mostly use Manupatra. West Law India/International is used mostly by 17 percent of

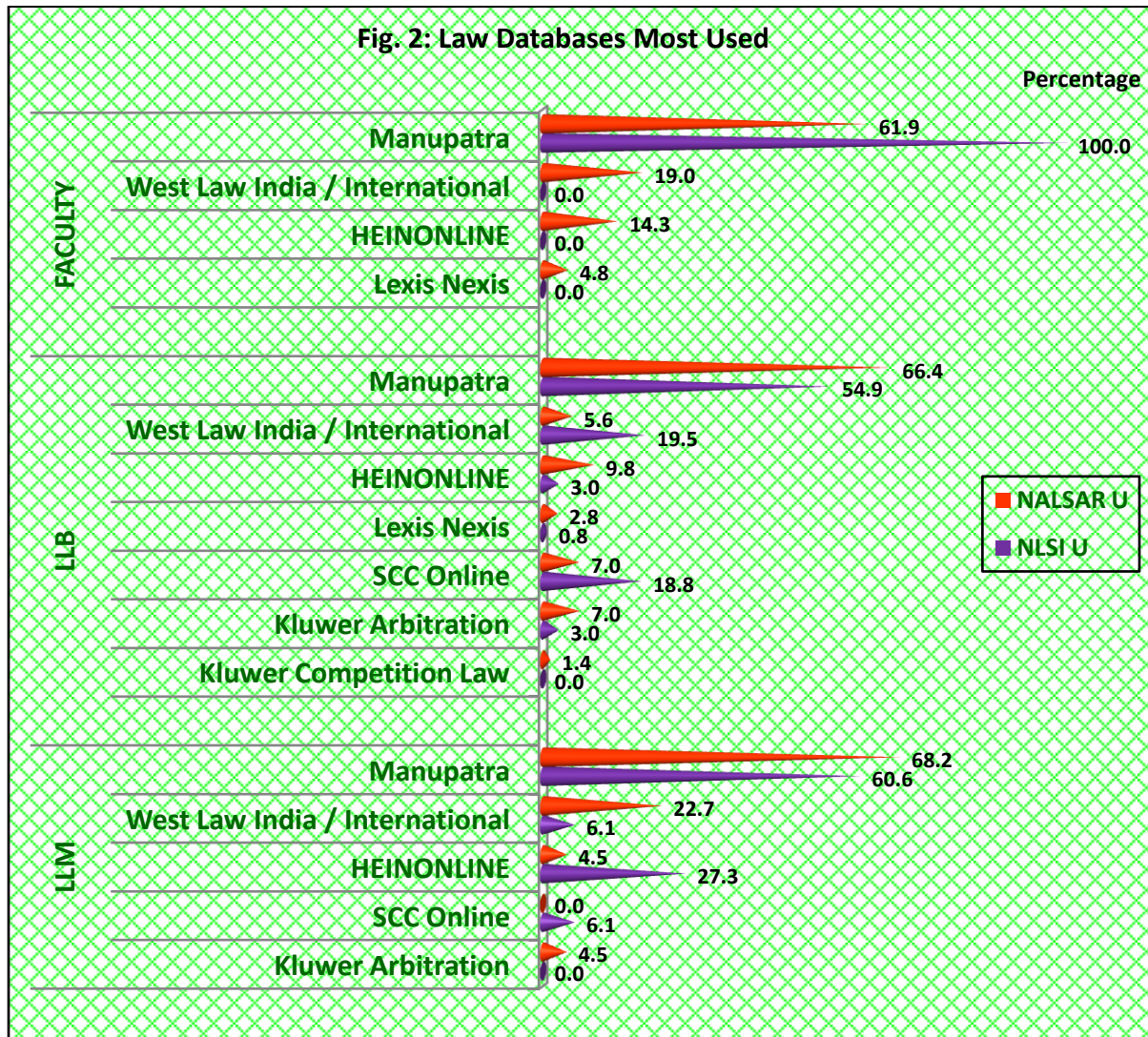
faculty group, 12 percent of LLB students and 13 percent of LLM students. Heinonline is used mostly by 13 percent of faculty group, 7 percent of LLB students and 18 percent of LLM students. SCC Online is used most by 13 percent of LLB and 4 percent of LLM students. Lexis Nexis is used most by 4 percent faculty group and 2 percent LLB students. Most use of Kluwer arbitration is reported by 5 percent LLB and 2 percent LLM students.

Table-2: Most Used Law Databases

User Groups	Database	TOTAL (n=355)		NALSAR U (n=186)		NLSI U (n=169)	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
Faculty (n=24)	Manupatra	16	66.7	13	61.9	3	100.0
	West Law India / International	4	16.7	4	19.0	0	0.0
	HEINONLINE	3	12.5	3	14.3	0	0.0
	Lexis Nexis	1	4.2	1	4.8	0	0.0
	SCC Online	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Kluwer Arbitration	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Kluwer Competition Law	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Kluwer IP Law	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	LLB Students (n=276)	Manupatra	168	60.9	95	66.4	73
West Law India / International		34	12.3	8	5.6	26	19.5
HEINONLINE		18	6.5	14	9.8	4	3.0
Lexis Nexis		5	1.8	4	2.8	1	0.8
SCC Online		35	12.7	10	7.0	25	18.8
Kluwer Arbitration		14	5.1	10	7.0	4	3.0
Kluwer Competition Law		2	0.7	2	1.4	0	0.0
Kluwer IP Law		0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

LLM Students (n=55)	Manupatra	35	63.6	15	68.2	20	60.6
	West Law India / International	7	12.7	5	22.7	2	6.1
	HEINONLINE	10	18.2	1	4.5	9	27.3
	Lexis Nexis	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	SCC Online	2	3.6	0	0.0	2	6.1
	Kluwer Arbitration	1	1.8	1	4.5	0	0.0
	Kluwer Competition Law	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Kluwer IP Law	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

In the faculty group, most use of Manupatra is reported by all three members from NLSI U and 62 percent from NALSAR U. Among the remaining from NALSAR U, 19 percent use mostly West Law India / International, 14 percent use Heinonline and 5 percent mostly use LexisNexis.



Among the LLB students, 66 percent from NALSAR U and 55 percent from NLSI U reported most use of Manupatra and most use of West Law India / International is reported by 20 percent from NLSI U and 6 percent from NALSAR U. About 10 percent from NALSAR and 3 percent from NLSI U reported most use of Heinonline. Most use of SCC Online is reported by 19 percent from NLSI U and 3 percent from NALSAR U. Kluwer Arbitration is mostly used by 7 percent from NALSAR U and 3 percent from NLSI U. Most use of Lexis Nexis is reported by 3 percent from NALSAR U and less than one percent from NLSI U. About one percent from NALSAR U mentioned that they mostly use Kluwer Competition Law.

Among the LLM students, about 68 percent from NALSAR U and 61 percent from NLSI U said that they mostly use Manupatra while 23 percent from NALSAR U and 6 percent from

NLSIU are mostly using West Law India / International. About 27 percent from NLSIU and 5 percent from NALSARU are using mostly Heinonline. About 6 percent from NLSIU are mainly using SCC Online and most of use of Kluwer Arbitration is reported by 5 percent from NALSARU.

Suggestions and Conclusion:

1. It is suggested to offer latest advanced skills of internet use periodically, since most of them have basic skills on internet use.
2. It is suggested to offer training programme on use of e-resources at the beginning of academic year for fresh entrants.
3. It is suggested to conduct information literacy programmes on use of full text contents from available e-resources in Libraries.
4. It is suggested to conduct training programme on e-audio video lectures and e-thesis for student users particularly. It is suggested to conduct training programmes user group wise, on technical problems while accessing e-resources.
5. It is suggested to conduct orientation programmes on information Literacy to all users in both the Universities are priority basis in a phased manner.

Information is a key resource for law user's various reasons. Due to developments taking place in information and communication technology, information is available in various formats. The growth of electronic resources in legal subjects is significant. The technological development gives a chance to use these electronic resources easily and uninterruptedly. The Bar Council of India suggests and recommends to having a variety of electronic resources in Law Libraries. Accordingly, the Law Libraries, particularly University Libraries subscribe the e-resources. The professionals of Law Libraries should have training on management and use of e-resources. Consequently, they can help the users of Law Libraries, while accessing the e-resources. It is necessary to conduct information literacy programmes in Law Libraries from time to time to encourage the users to use electronic resources successfully.

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