

# PRESENT SCENARIO OF DIGITAL AND INTERNET-BASED INFORMATION SERVICES IN PRIVATE LAW COLLEGE LIBRARIES, ANDHRA UNIVERSITY REGION, VISAKHAPATNAM, ANDHRA PRADESH

Dr. Burra Manikya Rao<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Durga Prasad Inturu<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Srikantalahari Sagi<sup>3</sup>  
G Meenakshi<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Library Staff, Damodaram Sanjivayya National Law University,  
Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India.

<sup>2</sup>Faculty (Teaching Associate), Damodaram Sanjivayya National Law University, Sabbavaram,  
Visakhapatnam, Anakapalli, Andhra Pradesh, India.

<sup>3</sup>Principal, Department of Commerce and Management, Avinash College of Commerce,  
Secunderabad, Telangana, India.

<sup>4</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, BV Raju College, Vishnupur, Bhimavaram,  
West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh, India.

## Abstract

Private law colleges have played a pivotal role in shaping the present system of legal education in India. Understanding the growth and evolving trends in this sector is crucial to appreciating how legal education has adapted to modern demands. In today's era, computers and digital technologies have become indispensable tools in both legal education and research, transforming the way legal information is accessed, processed, and utilized. The primary objective of private law college libraries is to provide students and researchers with access to Internet-based resources that are relevant, need-oriented, and supportive of their academic and research requirements.

This study focuses on examining the use of the Internet and electronic resources (e-resources) in private law college libraries affiliated with Andhra University, located in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. The research adopts a survey method, utilizing a structured questionnaire as the main instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data from the student user community. A total of 215 questionnaires were distributed among law students to assess the availability and utilization of e-resources and e-services in their respective college libraries. From six private law colleges, 120 completed responses were received (approximately 20 from each institution), while the remaining students did not participate or show interest in providing information about their college e-resources.

The collected data were analyzed using simple statistical tools such as percentages, averages, and graphical representations to interpret the results. Additionally, qualitative observations were incorporated to complement the statistical findings. Overall, the study highlights the importance of e-resources including e-books, e-journals, and e-databases and evaluates the existing digital infrastructure and services available in the private law colleges under the Andhra University region.

**Key Words:** *Internet Benefits, E-Resources, E-Databases*

## I. Introduction

Legal education serves a dual purpose; it acts as a powerful instrument for social transformation while also functioning as a tool for social control. Private law colleges have played a significant role in shaping the modern legal education system in India. Their primary

10.48047/jocaaa.2024.33.07.52

objective is to deliver high-quality, multidisciplinary education in legal studies that meets the demands of the global economy and addresses the needs of domestic society.

Law libraries hold a long-standing and rich tradition in India. Academic law libraries are designed to provide essential legal resources that support students, faculty members, and research scholars in their academic pursuits. Libraries are recognized as one of the key pillars of open access to information, which is vital for the growth of a democratic and informed society.

The rapid advancement of information technology (IT) has revolutionized the everyday functioning of libraries, emphasizing the need for automation and the integration of digital tools in library services. Law college libraries now offer various forms of information services beyond conventional ones, catering to the dynamic needs of the legal academic community. Digital libraries, in this context, are online repositories of digital content that may include texts, audio, video, and multimedia resources. These platforms enable users to search, retrieve, and utilize a vast array of information efficiently. Within legal education, digital libraries include statutes, case law, legal commentaries, research papers, law journals, and other academic materials.

By offering access to e-books, e-journals, and online databases, digital libraries play a crucial role in enhancing the quality and reach of legal education. Many private law colleges have subscribed to specialized legal databases such as SCC Online, Manupatra, AIR Online, Westlaw, and LexisNexis to ensure that students and researchers can access comprehensive and up-to-date legal information conveniently.

### **I.II Internet**

legal professionals and others with vital information. In the present era, it is essential to understand how to navigate the wide range of resources available through modern information technology. The Internet has evolved into an indispensable medium for researching and fulfilling the legal information needs of legal professionals. The Internet, as a powerful medium of mass communication, has reached a level of growth and societal influence that necessitates state intervention through the establishment of laws governing its functioning and future advancement..

### **I.III Internet & Legal Research**

Research helps find solutions to problems and discover new ideas and technologies. The Internet connects computers worldwide, making it easy to share information. Legal research is now moving online because the Internet is widely accessible and reasonable. In the present era and future, most lawyers they will trust on it as their main source of legal information.

### **I.IV Information Technology**

Legal information is essential for all individuals both lawyers and non-lawyers alike, as every citizen should have a basic understanding of the law and be able to apply it in their daily lives. The Internet is the most prevalent way to communicate and share information. Respondents were asked to offer their thoughts on whether Internet access benefits their educational, cultural, and socio-political growth. Information technology has arisen as a distinct field as a result of the merger of data processing and online communication; the former allows for the storing and retrieval processing of information, while the latter provides a way of communicating it.

10.48047/jocaaa.2024.33.07.52

Computerization has significantly impacted legal research. Online databases offer quick access to legal information, undermining traditional law library services. Electronic legal information systems are becoming more popular in India and around the world, although many libraries continue to use traditional techniques due to a lack of funds, expertise, and adequate facilities. To improve services, libraries require stronger infrastructure, skilled staff, and the utilization of cutting-edge technology.

### **I.V Impact of Information Technology on Academic Law Libraries in India**

The information technology of academic law libraries is crucial for effective planning. These libraries deliver high-quality legal information to their user community. We are able to learn, and to teach, without leaving our current location, except in a virtual sense. For law students, access to many useful internet databases is just a mouse click away.<sup>3</sup> Academic law libraries differ in terms of collection size and content, staffing curriculum, the extent of services provided, and the additional library users they serve. In Andhra Pradesh, academic law libraries at private colleges are more likely than those in rural areas to serve the law students and faculty.

Library automation systems are intricately constructed computer applications that necessitate extensive programming abilities as well as a thorough understanding of libraries' functional requirements and the precise standards that these systems follow. However, while technology-based information storage solutions and retrieve ongoing developments in legal information access and retrieval provide legal access to knowledge, they also call into question the conservative concept and future relevance of the library as a physical environment.

### **I.VI Development of Information and Communication Technology**

Advancements in information and communication technology (ICT), particularly in data storage, processing, and retrieval, have led to the creation of several innovative information technology tools. As a result, numerous online legal databases and digital legal portals have been developed and are now extensively utilized by law libraries across India. Among the most commonly used legal research databases in academic institutions are SCC Online, AIR Online, Manupatra, Westlaw, and LexisNexis, which provide comprehensive access to legal resources and judgments.

## **II. Need of the Study**

The main objective of any law college libraries is to provide access to Internet materials which are use oriented and help in satisfactory their information requirements. The study on private law colleges affiliated with Andhra University libraries' internet and automated e-resource use is critical in today's digital environment. The study is significant because it examines the use of the internet and e-resources in private law college libraries affiliated with Andhra University in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, as well as the internet's role as an educational tool and how effectively it serves in the legal educational system. They also look at how satisfied customers are with the internet facilities provided by private law colleges associated with Andhra University, Visakhapatnam. The findings will help to improve law library e-resources and increase students' and faculty's access to legal material.

## **III. Review of Literature**

The present study seeks to examine the use of electronic resources and information services in the National Law Universities (NLUs) of India. According to Archana Dubey (2019), the primary objective of the research was to assess the availability, accessibility, and utilization

10.48047/jocaaa.2024.33.07.52

of electronic resources, services, and facilities in NLU libraries across the country. The study also aimed to analyze the frequency and purpose of e-resource usage, as well as the adequacy of print and digital legal materials available to students and faculty.

Similarly, another research study conducted by Rashmi Rekha Gohain (2020) focused on evaluating the use of digital information services in law college libraries affiliated with the University of Mumbai. Data were collected through structured questionnaires, yielding 358 responses from library users and 34 responses from librarians. The findings revealed that a majority of users actively utilize various digital information services available in their libraries.

However, the study also highlighted several challenges, including a limited number of subscribed databases, which restricts users' access to essential academic materials. Furthermore, librarians identified major obstacles such as a shortage of skilled personnel, inadequate financial support, and limited resources for maintaining and expanding digital services.

To address these issues, the study recommended regular training programs to enhance the technical competence of library staff, increased funding to expand electronic resource collections, and active promotion of digital information services to ensure better utilization and accessibility within law college libraries.

#### **IV. Objective of the study**

1. To find out availability of internet facility and how many online resources are available in Andhra University area of Public Libraries
2. To Find out what type of online legal databases has been subscribed and services in AU private law colleges
3. To identify the frequency and purpose of using e-resources by students and faculty members.
4. To analyze the problems faced by library professionals and users in accessing digital information services.
5. To suggest measures for improving digital and internet-based library services.

#### **V. Hypothesis**

Most of the private law colleges in the state of Andhra Pradesh are affiliated with different universities. The libraries of these colleges provide various resources, including both print and electronic materials, to serve their user communities. Internet becomes crucial source of information in the contemporary environment. In the present era, electronic resources play a major role in the field of information and communication technology. Law college libraries are also offering e-resources such as e-books, e-journals, and legal databases. In this context, several private law colleges affiliated with Andhra University have started providing legal e-databases and other electronic resources to their users. However, most private law college libraries in the Andhra University region still lack adequate e-resources and facilities for law students.

#### **VI. Research Methodology**

The present study titled "*Present Scenario of Digital and Internet-Based Information Services in Private Law College Libraries, Andhra University Region, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh*" is part of the research study and is descriptive and analytical. The study aims to assess the accessibility, use, and effectiveness of digital and internet-based information services in private law college libraries to user communities affiliated with

10.48047/jocaaa.2024.33.07.52

Andhra University. The study is limited to private law colleges (to be six) affiliated with Andhra University, located in and around Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. i.e., All Saints Christian Law College, MRVR (G) Raju Law College, NBM Law College, NVP Law College, Sri Shirdi Sai Law College, and Visakha Law College. It emphasizes primarily digital and internet-based resources such as e-books, e-journals, legal databases, online public access catalogs (OPAC), and other information communication technology services to the users.

A purposive random sampling method was adopted to select the student user community from among the private law colleges affiliated with Andhra University. The sample consisted exclusively of law students from each of the selected colleges. The study follows a survey method using a questionnaire as the primary data collection tool. The questionnaire is designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from the student's user community. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires and personal interviews conducted with law students from selected private law colleges affiliated with Andhra University. Secondary data were obtained from books, research articles, reports, university records, and websites related to library automation and digital information services.

A total of 215 questionnaires were distributed among law students to gather information regarding the availability and use of e-resources and e-services in their respective college libraries. A random sample was collected from six private law colleges, with 20 questionnaires completed by respondents from each college, making a total of 120 responses for the study. Out of these, 120 students responded, while the remaining students did not show interest in providing information about the e-resources available in their colleges. Collected data have been analyzed using simple statistical tools such as percentages, averages, and charts to interpret the findings. Qualitative observations have been used to support the quantitative analysis. The study is limited to private law colleges affiliated with Andhra University and does not include government or autonomous law colleges and university law libraries. Due to lack of sufficient funds, time, and resources, constraints may also affect the extent of data collection.

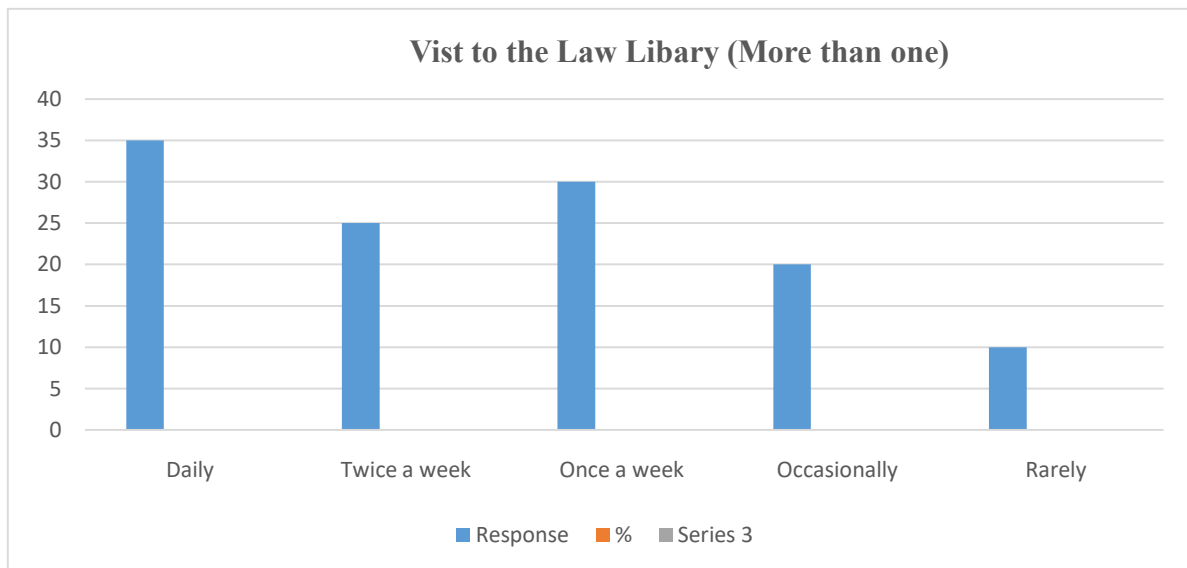
## VII. Analysis of the study

### Frequency of visit to the library

To understand the usage pattern of private law college libraries, students were asked how frequently they visit the law library. The responses indicate the level of user visit and the importance of library resources in their academic activities.

Table No.1. visit to the library (More than one)

S No.	Frequency of Visit	No. of Respondents	Total %
1	Daily	35	29.2
2	Twice a week	25	20.8
3	Once a week	30	25.0
4	Occasionally	20	16.7
5	Rarely	10	8.3
	Total	120	100



The table indicated that a majority of students (around 75%) visit the library regularly, i.e, daily 29.2%, twice a week 20.8% , and once a week 25% indicating an active use of library resources. However, a small amount (about 16.7%) visit only occasionally only 8.3% of user visit the law library rarely,

#### Availability of Internet facility in the library

The impact of internet and related web Technologies on the delivery of library services of evident in the first decade of this century. the modern academic community constitutes students and faculty members are more oriented towards web generated or online information resources.

To assess the availability of internet access in private law college libraries, students were asked whether their college library provides internet and other e-facilities for academic and research purposes. The responses are shown below in table.

Table No.2 Availability of Internet facility in the library

S No.	Response	No. of Respondents	Total %
1	Yes	50	41.7
2	No	70	58.3
	Total	120	100

The data reveal that a majority of students (58.3%) reported the availability of internet facilities in their college libraries, while 41.7% stated that such facilities are not available.

#### Benefits of the Internet

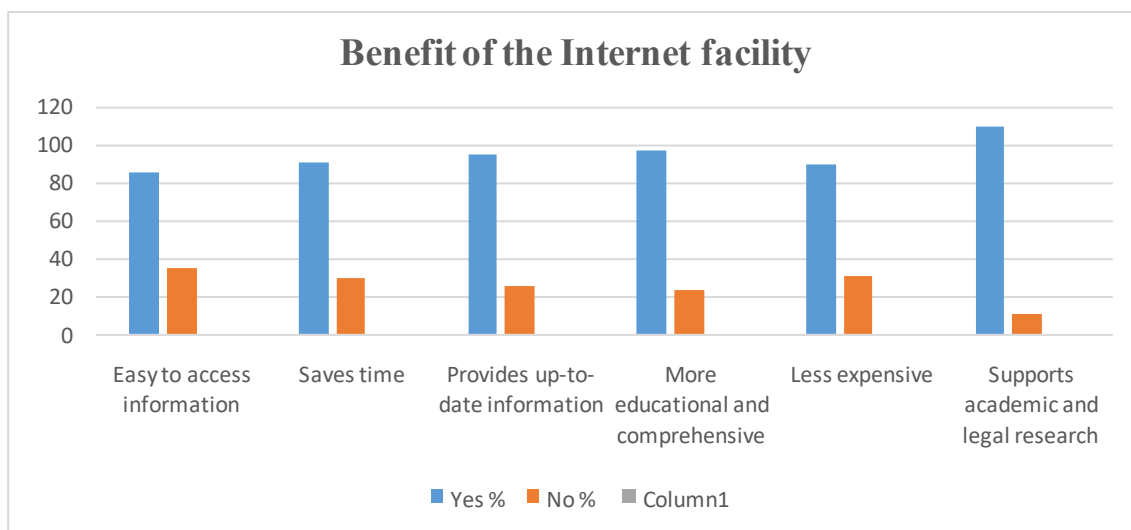
- The Internet is an important source of legal information, providing access to a vast range of resources worldwide.
- It not only stores a large amount of information but also offers convenient access to numerous online legal databases and e-resources i.e, E- Books and E-journals and services.

10.48047/jocaaa.2024.33.07.52

- The use of the internet in legal research offers several benefits it is time-saving, easy to use, highly informative, less expensive, and more efficient for users seeking up-to-date legal information.

Table No.3. Benefit of the Internet facility (more than one)

S. No.	Response	Yes % (Respondents 120)	No % (Respondents 120)	Total %
1	Easy to access information	85 70.83	35 29.17	120 100.00
2	Saves time	91 75.83	29 24.17	120 100.00
3	Provides up-to-date information	95 79.16	25 20.83	120 100.00
4	More educational and comprehensive	97 80.83	23 19.17	120 100.00
5	Less expensive	89 74.17	31 25.83	120 100.00
6	Supports academic and legal research	110 91.67	10 8.33	120 100.00



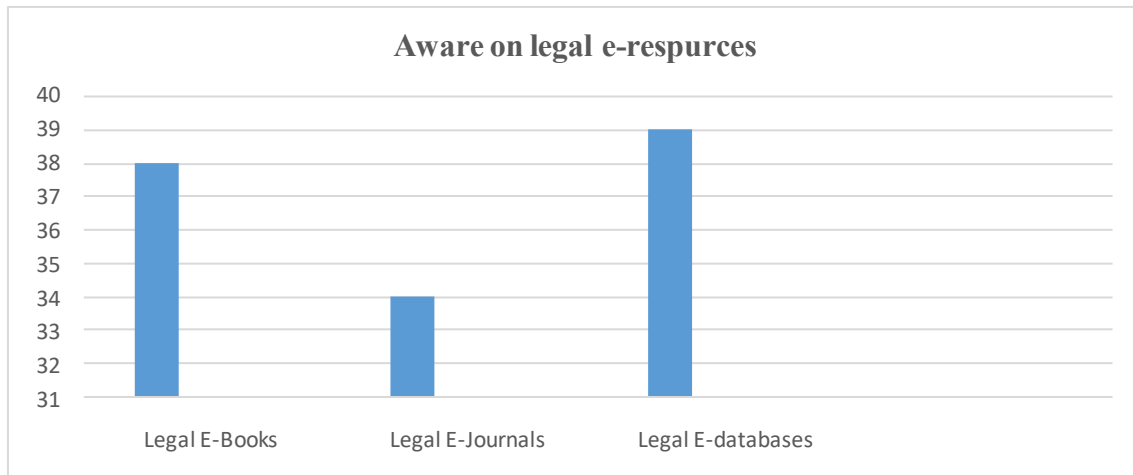
The above table indicated the opinions of 120 respondents regarding the various benefits of using the internet facility for academic and legal information purposes, and the highest number of respondents 91.67% agreed that the internet supports academic and legal research. About 80.83% of respondents stated that the internet is more educational and comprehensive, and 79.16% believed that it provides up-to-date information. Furthermore, 75.83% of respondents mentioned that the internet saves time, and 74.17% and 70.83% found it to be less expensive and easy to access information compared to traditional sources of information, respectively.

### Do you aware on following legal E-resources?

In the contemporary information society Internet plays a very important role as a e-resource of legal information. It opens doors to global information available in covering wide areas of universe of knowledge.

Table No. 4 **Aware on Legal E-resources (more than one)**

S. No.	Response	Yes % (Respondents 120)	No % (Respondents 120)	Total %
1	Legal E-Books	38 31.67	82 68.34	120 100.00
2	Legal E-Journals	34 28.33	86 71.67	120 100.00
3	Legal E-databases	39 32.05	81 67.95	120 100.00



The data reveal that the availability of legal e-resources in private law college libraries is still limited. Only 31.67% of respondents stated that their libraries provide legal e-books, while 28.33% confirmed access to legal e-journals. A slightly higher percentage (32.05%) reported the availability of legal e-databases.

#### **Did you aware on National and International legal databases**

In legal education system a number of online databases covering in legal education information mode available to user community. Databases describes a set of structured data kept in a computer. A database is a collection of data that has been organized, so that a computer can search and retrieve it. A database is an organized collection of data processing system may rapidly access and change a specific purpose for the benefit of the users.

Table No.5 **Aware on National and international legal databases**

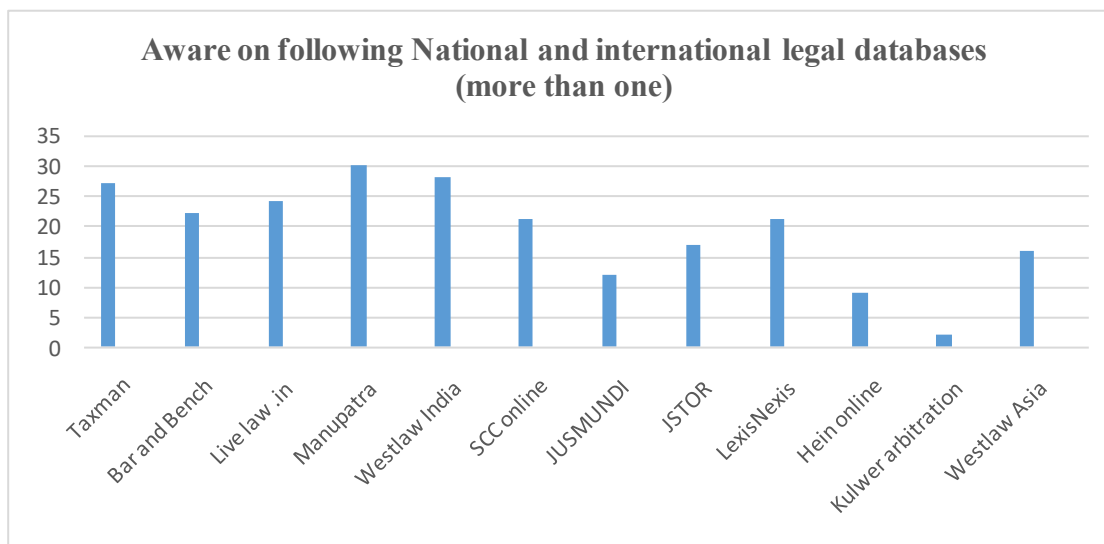
S No.	Response	No. of Respondents (120)	Total %
1	Yes	35	29.17
2	No	85	70.83
	Total	120	100

The table presents the responses of 120 law students regarding their awareness of national and international legal databases. Out of the total respondents, 35 students (29.17%) showed that they are aware of such databases, while a majority of 85 students (70.83%) stated that they are not aware of them on National and International legal databases.

10.48047/jocaaa.2024.33.07.52

**Table No. 6. If Aware on following National and International legal databases (more than one)**

S. No.	Response	Yes % (Respondents 35)	No % (Respondents 35)	Total %
1	Taxman	27 77.14	8 22.86	35 100.00
2	Bar and Bench	22 62.85	13 37.15	35 100.00
3	Live law .in	24 68.57	11 31.43	35 100.00
4	Manupatra	30 85.71	5 14.29	35 100.00
5	Westlaw India	28 80.00	7 20.00	35 100.00
6	SCC online	21 60.00	14 40.00	35 100.00
7	JUSMUNDI	12 34.29	23 65.71	35 100.00
8	JSTOR	17 48.57	18 51.43	35 100.00
9	LexisNexis	21 60.00	14 40.00	35 100.00
10	Hein online	9 7.5	26 92.5	35 100.00
11	Kulwer arbitration	2 1.66	33 98.34	35 100.00
12	Westlaw Asia	16 13.34	19 86.66	35 100.00



The study shows that students are more familiar with national legal databases than international ones. Among national databases, Manupatra (85.71%), Westlaw India (80%), and Taxman (77.14%) are the most known, followed by LiveLaw.in (68.57%) and Bar & Bench (62.85%). Awareness of international databases is very low only (48.57%) knew about JSTOR, (34.29%) about JUSMUNDI, and very few were aware of HeinOnline (7.5%) and Kluwer Arbitration (1.66%) respectively. Overall, the results indicate that students rely

mainly on National legal databases, while international resources are underutilized due to limited access and lack of training.

### **VIII. Major Findings of Data**

This shows that while some progress has been made toward digital access, a significant number of private law college libraries affiliated with Andhra University still lack adequate internet infrastructure. Only some law colleges provide e-facilities and internet connectivity. This facility providing sufficient computer terminals could significantly enhance students' access to e-resources and online legal databases. Overall, the findings show a clear gap between national and international database awareness among law students. While National legal databases are relatively well known, international databases remain underutilized due to limited exposure, lack of qualified library staff, lack of subscriptions, and inadequate user training in private law college libraries. To bridge this gap, it is recommended that law colleges subscribe to international databases, conduct training and orientation programs, and promote digital legal research to strengthen students' global legal knowledge and research capabilities.

The results reveal that less than one-third of the respondents are aware of legal e-resources such as e-books, e-journals, and e-databases. This data highlights the need for improved awareness and training programs on the use of e-resources, as well as improved access facilities in law colleges to promote the effective utilization of digital legal resources. Most of private law college libraries have not yet taken adequate steps to increase the use of e-resources. Therefore, law libraries should organize regular awareness and training programs to encourage and improve e-resource usage among students and faculty.

Overall, the results show that a majority of libraries (over 65%) do not provide adequate e-resources. This highlights the need for improving digital infrastructure, subscribing to more legal databases, and promoting the use of e-resources among law students in private law colleges. Many colleges do not provide e-resources or subscribe to e-books and e-journals due to insufficient funds and a lack of awareness about the importance of legal e-resources in academic and research activities.

### **IX. Conclusion and suggestions**

The Internet is an ideal medium through which knowledge and information can be disseminated very effectively to every nook and cranny of the world. The electronic resources pave the way for better information services, as these resources can be accessed, manipulated, and managed easily. Nowadays, information communication technology (ICT) plays a vital role in every academic field as well as legal education. With technical breakthroughs and the invention of the Internet, books are gradually being supplanted by online resources that provide stored knowledge on any subject. Effective information collection, organization, retrieval, and sharing need the use of knowledge. The internet, particularly the World Wide Web, provides fast access to global information. Libraries also require scanners and printers for duplicating, preservation, and printing purposes. The infrastructure and facilities of law libraries have been assessed to determine their current issues.

E-resources and services in law college libraries' electronic information resources offer unique benefits: compact storage, quick retrieval and delivery, interactivity, and flexibility in information transfer. Nowadays, computers are considered valuable tools in law teaching and legal research. The rapid development of information technology has transformed the routine functioning of libraries. Most private law college libraries in the Andhra University area

10.48047/jocaaa.2024.33.07.52

require improved automation infrastructure to effectively manage their operations. Although some colleges have library automation software, the use of computers and the internet for daily library activities is still at an early stage. Moreover, several colleges do not provide internet access or automation facilities for library users.

In this era of rapid information development, colleges should strengthen their automation systems for the benefit of students and faculty members. Many institutions lack adequate computer systems and internet facilities, and most law colleges still do not provide proper automation services to their user community. Furthermore, only a few law colleges subscribe to legal databases, which are essential sources of current legal information. The absence of such subscriptions limits students' and researchers' access to up-to-date legal resources.

### **X. Suggestions**

1. Private law college libraries should enhance their internet facilities to promote the effective use of digital resources. A greater number of computer terminals should be provided, and printers should be installed in the internet section for user convenience.
2. Library and information services preferences have also shifted from print sources to e-resources. So, law college libraries should establish separate computer laboratories equipped with internet access exclusively for students and faculty members.
3. Law libraries should provide access to legal databases, e-books, and e-journals to support academic and research needs of the user community.
4. E-resources and services in the law college library electronic information resources offer unique benefits: concept storage, quick retrieval and delivery, interactivity, and flexibility in information transfer. So, private law college libraries should improve the e-resource and service to the library user community.
5. Libraries should provide access to the information through computer networks.
6. Need to enhance awareness and improve access to digital and internet-based information services to attract more library users.

### **References**

1. Ranbhir singh and others (ed.) (2010) Digital Library legal education and Research, national Law University press, 1 ed., New Delhi, p. iv.
2. Alive (1997) Legal Information needs of the general public, library review 46 (1) pp. 28-33
3. Yadugiri.M.A. English for Law, Foundation Books Pvt.Ltd.1<sup>st</sup>.ed.( 2005), 170 -171.
4. Archana Dubey (2019)A Study on Use of Electronic Resources and Information in National Law University of India, published in Journal of Advances and Scholarly Volume 16, Issue No. 5, Apr 2019, Pages 1960 - 1965 (6) Researches in Allied Education, E-ISSN: 2230-7540
5. Gohain, Rashmi Rekha (2020) "Exploring users' experiences with digital information services in the Law College libraries affiliated to University of Mumbai, Maharashtra". Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal). 4204.