

Open Access Information Resources In Law: Advantages For E-Learners

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Abstract:

The present study “Open access information Resources in Law: advantages for e-learners” is focused on providing the information about legal educational databases and websites. The study is also focused on theoretical aspects legal information resources which are available in online platform. Total twelve web portals included in this study.

Keywords: library, electronic resources, portals, legal service, Internet, web resources, law libraries, open access.

1. Introduction:

The primary objective of the library is to provide resources to enrich and support the educational program of an institution and also to promote meaningful resource-based and process-based activities and inquiry that will enable students to become “effective users of ideas and information” (Information Power, 1998) and responsible lifelong learners.

Library resources are those materials, both print and non-print, which support curricular and personal information needs. Print items include books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, microfiche or microfilm. Non-print items include films, disc records, filmstrips, slides, audiotapes, videotapes, compact discs, databases and computer software’s (Hadley Public School)¹.

Law library treated as a special library because of its unique collection of legal resources such as Constitutions, Case laws, Legislations, Reporting Journals, Legal Articles, Parliamentary Proceedings, Legal Monographs, Treaties, Judicial and Administrative, decisions and other legal resources related to national and international resources in the form of print and electronic format as well. These resources are used by the particular class of patrons such as Law students, research scholars in law, Magistrates, Advocates, Law Faculties, Parliamentarians and other legal professionals(Reddy & Kumar, 2013)².

In advent of electronic resources occupying the space in all discipline and provides need based information to academic users and general public. Present study is lightening on open access legal information resources in the field of law. Here is some of the important law portals discussed below.

2. Open access legal information resources:

2.1 Legal Services India: <http://www.legalservicesindia.com>

A Premier leading Indian portal legal service India focused on law and government. It provides access to a wide-ranging and first growing online library of free legal resources for use by legal professionals, students, consumers and business. The mission is to provide extensive and easy to find on the Internet. The visitors to legal service India.com will find a wide range of feature that include lawyers directory, Discussion forum, legal advice, codes and cases, Web search utilities mailing lists, Articles and more(Govt. of India)³.

2.2 DoJ - Judgment Search Portal:<https://doj.gov.in/judgment-search-portal/>

A new 'Judgment & Order Search' portal has been inaugurated for the convenience of its stakeholders in searching judgments easily. The new portal for judgments search is set to provide a repository for Judgments and Final Orders of the High Courts. The 'Judgment Search' segment could be reached at <https://judgments.ecourts.gov.in>, which encapsulates the features such as search by Bench, Case Type, Case Number, Year, Petitioner/ Respondent Name, Judge Name, Act, Section, Decision: From Date, To Date and Full Text Search. The most important feature of this portal is using a free text search engine, which finds out judgments based on a given keyword or combination of keywords⁴.

2.3 Supreme court of India: <http://supremecourtindia.nic.in/>

It gives access to the judgments of Supreme Court and consists detail information about Supreme Court of India⁵.

2.4 CommonLII: <http://www.commonlii.org>

The Commonwealth Legal Information Institute (CommonLII) aims to provide one central Internet location from which it is possible to search - for free - core legal information from all Commonwealth countries. CommonLII will provide a common technical platform through which all Commonwealth countries can cooperatively provide access to their laws. CommonLII will assist the development of a genuinely international common law. It will support the rule of law throughout the Commonwealth, by making each country's legal system more transparent. This transparency will also support international trade and investment. Legal database consist of five modules like., Legislation databases, Case Law Databases, highest courts, journal databases and Law reform databases. The database facilitate advanced search facility to users and help option

will guide how to use and how to search different information to the users(Australian Legal Information Institute)⁶.

2.5 Ministry of Law and Justice:<http://lawmin.gov.in>

The database provides the information about the management of the legal affairs, legislative activities and administration of justice in India through its three departments namely the Legislative Department and the Department of Legal Affairs and Department of Justice respectively. The Department of Legal Affairs is concerned with advising the various Ministries of the Central Government while the Legislative Department is concerned with drafting of principal legislation for the Central Government. The ministry is headed by a cabinet rank minister appointed by the President of India on the recommendation of the Prime minister of India(Ministry of Law and Justice)⁷.

2.6 Indian Kanoon:<https://indiankanoon.org/>

Indian Kanoon is started to achieve them by breaking law documents into smallest possible clause and by integrating law /statutes with court Judgments. A tight integration of court judgments with laws and with themselves allows automatic determination of the most relevant clauses and court judgments. Hence Indian Kanoon helps to search for Indian Laws and their interpretations⁸.

2.7 Global Legal Information Network Foundation:<https://glinf.org/>

The Global Legal Information Network (GLIN) is a public domain database, which provides information on official texts of laws, judicial decisions, regulations, and other complementary legal sources contributed by the governmental agencies and international organizations. The foundation members contribute the texts of their published documents to the database with their original languages. The database made provision to access all the summaries and full texts to the public(GLIN)⁹.

2.8 Find Law: <https://www.findlaw.com/>

FindLaw.com is launched on January, 1996, it soon offered a mix of cases, statutes, legal news, a lawyer directory, an online career centre and community oriented tools such as mailing lists and message boards. The web site developed rapidly into the leading legal information site on Internet¹⁰.

2.9 Legal Information Institutes: <http://www.worldlii.org>

The World Legal Information Institute aims to provide free, independent and non-profit access to worldwide law. World LII is a joint initiative of the University based legal Information Institutes¹¹.

2.10 India Code: <http://indiacode.nic.in/>

It consists of all the Central Acts of Parliament as on date right from 1836 onwards. It provides access to; Act Year, Act Number, Short Title, Act Objective and Full Act Text (India Code). It

also gives links to judgments of Supreme Court, 16 High Courts and Allahabad, Chandigarh and Delhi District Courts and Central Administrative Tribunal¹².

2.11 Advocate Khoj: <http://www.advocatekhoj.com/>

This portal is established in early 2008. The Law Library module of AdvocateKhoj is a single point source for accessing diverse Indian Laws. It provides access to Legal Tips, Agreements, Forms, Areas of Law which gives information on specific legal areas on 110 legal categories, Supreme Court Judgments with case numbers, parties name, judges' names and head notes, Bare Acts, Major 55 rules are available with free access to the full-text & Glossary presents over 2300 entries¹³.

2.12 Indian Legal Info: <http://indianlegal.info>

Indian Legal Info, it is an initiative inspired by 'free access to law' movement. It is a group of web portals on Indian law and taxation. It consists of a main portal and inter linked to micro-sites. The portal provides daily updates of Indian legal system and tax developments. A first-of-its-kind web cluster makes available the full original text of selected Indian legal and tax developments – judgments, news, rulings, legislation, regulatory guidelines and circulars, events, books and articles etc¹⁴.

3. Conclusion:

Legal information literature is an indispensable tool of legal education. Legal information resources are useful for the legal community as well as publics. The Librarian and legal experts should collaborate to make these resources more user-friendly, properly organized and up-to-date as per the international standards to facilitate efficient and effective use of information with effective services. Electronic legal information resources are very much helpful in dissemination of information to the end users via internet through World Wide Web in real time without consuming much time as compared to earlier traditional methods of dissemination of information.

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