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Exploring User Training Needs at Middle Temple Law Library

Abstract: This research, conducted by Erin Gow, aims to explore the information literacy and legal research training needs of users of the Middle Temple library.* In order to do this it focuses on the patterns of use of library resources by users, reasons for these patterns, previous training users have received, and general evidence of user training needs in law libraries. The research as a whole was generated in result of the recognition that many Middle Temple library users require further legal research skills training in order to confidently find and employ the extensive resources available through the library. Before such training could be developed, however, research needed to be conducted into the specific capabilities and needs of the unique user base at the library. As a result of the research the current habits of library users have been explored, their general training levels and needs identified, and recommendations made about how to structure training so as to address these needs and best serve users. It was discovered that Middle Temple library users generally visit the library frequently, and are already confident using certain materials such as textbooks. Despite confidence in using certain common materials, users struggle to take advantage of the full range of resources available, making training necessary. The difficulties many users currently face in the library stem from a general lack of information literacy and library skills training.

Keywords: surveys; training; legal research; user education; Middle Temple

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1. INTRODUCTION

There is a need within many law libraries for increased training for users regarding legal research and information seeking habits. Legal research is an essential part of every legal professional's career (Carroll et al. 2001; Kerins et al. 2004; Thomas & Knowles 2001; Williams 2010; Wilson & Kenny 2007), but it has been inadequately covered in many of their education which creates a need for training programmes in law libraries. It is often difficult for the staff of law libraries however, to ascertain what capabilities and knowledge the majority of their users already possess. In order to design a useful training programme, the gaps in users' information seeking knowledge and skills must first be identified (Carroll et al. 2001; Harvey 2003; Kerins et al. 2004; Williams 2010).

The research discussed below addresses the need for user training in a specific institution: Middle Temple

library. Middle Temple library is based in one of four Inns of Court, "which have the exclusive right to Call men and women to the Bar, ie to admit those who have fulfilled the necessary qualifications to the degree of Barrister-at-Law" (Middle Temple 2008). Although Middle Temple library is designed primarily for use by members of Middle Temple Inn, it is "used by the members of all four Inns of Court including judges, barristers, pupils, students and clerks" (Middle Temple). This means that users of the library include both previously and currently practicing legal professionals, support staff for practising professionals, and those still training in the legal field. Each of the four libraries associated with the Inns of Court specialise in certain areas of the law, and Middle Temple library's areas of specialism are European, Ecclesiastical and United States law. The American collection is particularly prized and provides a unique offering to users, since it is "one of the largest collections of US law outside of America" (Middle Temple).

The staff of Middle Temple library recognize that many users require further training in order to confidently find and employ the extensive resources available through the library. They therefore requested assistance

in designing a new research skills training programme and introductory session to the materials available through the library in order to further educate users. Although there are currently informational leaflets, tours for new members, web-based information and staff available at enquiry desks to assist users, staff at the library still feel that more could be done to prepare users to conduct successful research on their own. The idea of developing a training session entailed the recognition that research into current habits and capabilities of users of the library is necessary in order to design a programme that meets the needs of its unique audience.

With this context in mind, a research aim to explore the information literacy and legal research training needs of users of the Middle Temple library was generated.

This aim involved several objectives including:

1. To examine patterns of use of Middle Temple library and other legal resources by the majority of Middle Temple library users.
2. To explore user perceptions of legal resources and motivations for the use of specific materials.
3. To identify any previous legal research or materials training users have received, and assess the usefulness of this training.
4. To explore evidence of user training needs in law libraries.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to place the research into context, and provide an informed starting point for further research in the field, a thorough review of related literature in the legal information and information literacy fields was undertaken. The literature highlighted several key themes, which have been outlined below, that greatly informed and impacted the current research.

2.1. Literacy and library skills

The first theme that emerged from the literature was the extent to which information is central to the legal profession. It is recognized by many commentators in the legal field, that "those involved in the study and practice of law need to stay current with published legal literature relating to their area of study, or area of practice" (Kerins et al. 2004). The legal profession traditionally rests on a solid base of reading, which demands that practitioners have a complete familiarity with a wide range of materials (Wilson & Kenny 2007; Williams 2010; Kerins et al. 2004; Thomas & Knowles 2001; Leckie et al. 1996).

In order to find essential materials quickly and efficiently, the legal professional must learn to use both print and electronic resources confidently (Wilson & Kenny 2007; Williams 2010; Carritt 2007; Thomas & Knowles 2001). This consumption of information may require anything as detailed as the interpretation of a word (Thomas &

Knowles 2001, p. 138), a review of a law report regarding a particular case (Thomas & Knowles 2001, p. 25), or the broad study of an international law determined by the European Community (Thomas & Knowles 2001, p. 211). All these searches, and many more, fall into the scope of legal research, which generally refers to the "ongoing activities related to information retrieval and use" (Leckie et al. 1996, p. 173) and can also "refer to the task of ascertaining the precise state of the law on a particular topic" or the exploration at greater length of "some of the implications of the state of the law" (Williams 2010, pp. 207–8).

2.2. Complexity and scope

Legal research continues to be central to every legal professional partially because the law is such a rapidly changing and wide-ranging field. Professionals may be called upon to produce information regarding a range of topics, from regional environmental law to international human rights, for example. The advent of electronic information has only added to the scope of information available, by making it possible for many more cases to be reported than ever before (Williams 2010; Thomas & Knowles 2007; Wilson 2007; Kerins et al. 2004). The increase in the amount of legal information available, unfortunately also means an increase in the amount of unnecessary or inaccurate information that is available. As more cases become available directly from courts online (Thomas & Knowles 2001, p. 26), for example, the number of reported cases that "fail to add anything of value to the consideration of a legal issue" (Thomas & Knowles 2001, p. 42) also increases. The result of this growth in legal information means that there is an increasing amount of irrelevant material to sift through in the search for useful information.

Not only is the amount of legal information steadily increasing, but it is also becoming much more rapidly available, as reports are updated almost instantaneously in their electronic versions, as opposed to being held up by traditional printing time (Thomas & Knowles 2001). This means that the law can change almost daily, and a legal professional must keep on top of any relevant amendments.

It is not enough to simply search electronic sources for the most up-to-date legal information, however, since many indispensible older resources are simply not available except in print form (Wilson & Kenny 2007). This makes it "difficult to obtain an overall picture of who is providing what in the legal sphere" (Thomas & Knowles 2001) and necessitates switching between several resources in print and electronic formats. Circumstances such as these, mean that no single lawyer can know all relevant legal information without research (Williams 2010; Wilson & Kenny 2007; Leckie et al. 1996), so a good lawyer is necessarily defined as "one who knows where and how to look for the relevant law and is able

to understand and apply it" (Thomas & Knowles 2001, p. v) no matter the field or resource.

2.3. General information literacy skills

The responsibility of librarians to provide training and education in information literacy skills for their users has evolved along with the information landscape over the years. According to O'Connor, information literacy "has provided a framework for libraries' educational mission for nearly 25 years" (2009, p. 493) although the shape of the education provided often changes. After a great deal of upheaval in response to budget cuts, educational reform and new technologies, librarians have finally created a secure niche in the area of information literacy (O'Connor 2009; Notess 2006). Although this role is perhaps most clearly seen in libraries associated with educational institutions, most librarians are called upon to provide some information literacy skills training to their users at some point in their careers. The key to providing truly useful information literacy training is to assist the user to develop skills which are transferable and which can be used throughout their lives in their search for both personal and professional information (ACRL 2011; Millen & Roberts 2007; Notess 2006).

2.4. Need for library training

The value of information literacy skills is hardly under debate, but unfortunately at present many legal professionals simply do not possess these essential skills. Research has found, for example, that law students often have limited success finding information on legal databases, usually because they have difficulty in "working out which databases to use and which publications are on each database. For example, the fact that some case citations appear on Westlaw and others do not, is completely baffling" (Carritt 2007) to many students. By 1999 concern about the general lack of legal research skills of legal graduate trainees had grown to such an extent that the Law Society and Bar Council created "a joint statement requiring candidates for the qualifying law degree to demonstrate research, IT and team work skills by 2001" (Carritt 2007), and in the same year at Oxford University a legal research training programme was developed jointly by the Law Faculty and the Bodleian Law library (Carritt 2007) specifically to focus on and attempt to address this problem.

There are multiple reasons for legal professionals' lack of information seeking skills, although a lack of consistent library training in further and higher education is commonly identified as a problem (Williams 2010; Breivik 2005; Leckie et al. 1996). Kerins et al. (2004) identify several symptoms of a lack of adequate library training that can hamper a legal professional including poor information seeking skills learned from educators, "mis-perceptions of the role and value of libraries and information professionals", lack of awareness of available sources, and an inability to properly identify the most suitable information sources for a problem. These problems effectively hamper every stage of the legal research process.

2.5. Electronic information

Even for legal professionals who have received information literacy training in their education or careers, the rapidly changing nature of the information landscape presents new challenges for any whose training was not recent. The expansion of materials from traditional print resources into the electronic field has been a particular challenge for many legal professionals who are unused to searching for and working with the new formats (Harvey 2003; Thomas & Knowles 2001; Williams 2010; Millen & Roberts 2007). In the legal profession it has been suggested that this "proliferation of electronic resources and searching tools has heightened the legal profession's awareness of the importance of research skills for lawyers" (Carroll et al. 2001). In fact, research has shown that students are now often more comfortable using electronic rather than print resources due to their perceived convenience (Carritt 2007). Electronic research is inherently different from print-based research, which may be why there is such a trend for users to prefer the format with which they are most familiar and hesitate to employ alternative forms.

Online materials now supplement print materials in providing legal information, but they have not by any means replaced print (Williams 2010; Thomas & Knowles 2001). This means that it is essential that legal professionals are confident in searching for and using both print and electronic materials (Wilson 2007) as the circumstances may require. Understanding which type of resource to choose in any given situation is essential, and is followed by a string of choices about which materials are most trustworthy, how resources are structured, how to cite resources and so on, which generate a vast field of training needs.

2.6. Pre-training assessment

Although the literature makes it clear that gaps in the knowledge and skills of legal professionals exist and need to be addressed, the exact training needs of Middle Temple library users cannot be assumed. It is unlikely that all users will have exactly the same training needs, since "learner knowledge and experience levels vary widely even among individuals with very similar backgrounds" (Webb & Powis 2004, p. 62). The very idea that legal professionals possess similar backgrounds and information needs is questionable, since legal professionals generally focus on a particular area of the law and "it is commonly recognized that certain areas of the law (such as real property) do not require the same amount of

research or supporting documentation as other areas that are much more labor intensive … (such as taxation, litigation)" (Leckie et al. 1996, p. 173).

Producing an appropriate training programme is especially important when training time is limited as "it becomes more important to assess learner needs at the beginning to maximize the value that can be drawn from the event" (Webb & Powis 2004, p. 61). Research into user research competencies and training needs will provide "very useful information that will enable you to identify key training issues and decide how best to address them" (Poyner 2005, p. 25) in order to ensure that training attendees get the most out of the session and that no time or goodwill is wasted.

Research previously conducted in other sectors lacks necessary focus on the unique needs of the professional legal sphere. Certain common issues and areas of overlap may be identifiable, but in no case are all the segments of the user population at Middle Temple library, such as clerks, barristers, researchers, students and judges accounted for. Without a closer basis for comparison a complete picture of the library's varied users' training needs cannot be composed.

2.7. Engaging Users

Providing well-researched training, which is tailored to the needs of a library's users, will make it likely that the users who attend that training will be presented with useful information. The methods through which this information is presented, however, have been shown to have a massive impact on how much information is retained by attendees and how many attendees perceive the training session as useful. Individuals learn in very different ways and it is important to take these different learning styles into account when designing information literacy training (Donnelly & Craddock 2007; Gaunt et al. 2009).

The only way to reach the diverse learners in attendance at any training session is to incorporate factors relevant to as many styles and preferences of learning as possible. This will maximise the number of participants who will be reached through a particular session (Donnelly & Craddock 2007; Gaunt et al. 2009) and reinforce the information for all attendees.

In addition to catering to various learning styles and preferences, effective training should be as relevant to the attendees as possible. There is always a risk that learning will take on a sense of existing solely "'in an academic environment' which has a flavour all of its own; hence the existence of criticisms that university education does not respond adequately to the demands of the workplace" (Kuhn 2009, p. 53). In order to avoid this trap in information literacy training, the teaching and learning methods need to be clearly connected and made relevant to the 'real' or professional world. It is a good idea, for example, to base examples and demonstrations on information gathered beforehand

from actual library users (Pankl & Coleman 2009; Millen & Roberts 2007; Carroll et al. 2001; Price & Del-Pizzo 2007; Hinton 2007; Webber & Johnston 2000). It is not an overstatement, in fact, to say that the success of training may depend upon the meaningfulness of the questions and examples used to the attendees (Kopp & Olson-Kopp 2009). This integration of user experience is a key result of undertaking research before designing a training programme, since it is this research that provides a wealth of information on practical and relevant queries, problems and concerns of intended training attendees.

2.8. Value and Effect

Although it is possible to debate the precise effectiveness of training (Addison et al. 2010), it is largely undisputed that as long as the skills covered in a training session are used with some frequency afterward, the training will be worthwhile in terms of enhancing the knowledge and skills of attendees (Bell 2005; Borgman 1986; Donnelly & Craddock 2007; Haya et al. 2006; Carritt 2007; Webber & Johnston 2000; Daughtery & Russo 2011). Practicing the skills learned in a training session seems to "embed what has been learned" (Donnelly & Craddock 2007, p. 56) and is key to attendees retaining the information they learn in training. Without continued use any information literacy skills that have been learned rapidly decline as individuals forget what they were taught (Addison et al. 2010).

Research conducted into user perceptions of training shows that people who have had some sort of information literacy skills training generally feel that they learned something worthwhile in that training (Addison et al. 2010; Donnelly & Craddock 2007; Borgman 1986; Kuhn 2009). There is some evidence that users who attend training may become increasingly aware of the complexity of searching (Addison et al. 2010; Kuhn 2009), and therefore have a reduced confidence in their own searching ability. This sort of response has not been widely documented however, and where found there was no attempt to establish whether training improved the results found by attendees (Addison et al. 2010). In contrast, the advantages users find after attending training have been widely cited (Borgman 1986; Carroll et al. 2001; Carritt 2007; Daughtery & Russo 2011; Haya et al. 2007; Kuhn 2009), and range from learning information that makes searching more effective, insights that improve work flow and better quality results to searches (Donnelly & Craddock 2007, p. 64).

The goal in providing training is not to ensure that users will cease to need assistance in carrying out legal research, but rather to anticipate and proactively handle some of the most common problems encountered by library users. As Borgman put it, "research across all types of information-retrieval systems suggests that … some training is better than no training" (1986, p. 394).

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Approach

This research was conducted with a pragmatic approach, and as such was neither solely positivist nor interpretivist. The assumption of the researcher was that "neither position has all the answers" (Denscombe 2002, p. 23) and that the best approach would be to "use whatever philosophical or methodological approach works best for a particular research problem at issue" (Robson 2002, p. 43). This approach resulted in mixed methods research "that combines methods associated with quantitative and qualitative research" (Bryman 2008, p. 23). Quantitative and qualitative collection techniques were used to address different objectives as was most suitable to each. The use of multiple collection methods provided the additional benefit of allowing for triangulation of the data to ensure accuracy in the results. Comparing the results from differing collection tools and techniques decreased the likelihood that the data could be "artificially affected by the method used to gather them" (Denscombe 2002, p. 98), without that impact being noticed in comparison with data produced from the use of other methods.

As described in Chapter 2, a thorough review of relevant literature on the issues of information and training needs of library users was first undertaken. This encompassed literature regarding the law library setting, unique information needs of legal professionals and general information literacy training. The analysis of relevant literature was the first research method employed and continued throughout the research process. It functioned to ground the research in theory, ensure that the research proposed was unique, generated ideas to explore further through the other research methods and provided support and context for results evident in the research.

Following the literature review, a questionnaire was designed and distributed to users of Middle Temple library. This questionnaire gathered quantitative data regarding materials use, previous training and user interest in library training. It was developed specifically to gather information to address the first, second and third research objectives. As such, several questions on the questionnaire addressed patterns of materials use in the library, reasons for patterns of materials use and opinions of previous and potential future library training. Since the questionnaire was constructed around the objectives of the research "a precise focus on the right target" (Denscombe 2002, p. 98) was maintained from the outset, although this limited the scope of responses to information previously deemed necessary by the researcher and allowed for little spontaneous discovery of unexpected issues.

A total of 35 questionnaires were distributed to users who were physically present in the library between 14 and 28 July 2011. In total, 20 questionnaires were returned completed and responses were gathered from four of the six different segments that had been identified as part of the library's user base. The researcher recognized that drawing conclusions based solely on the limited results of the questionnaire was inadvisable if accuracy was to be maintained, so additional sources of information were considered in order to confirm the validity of results and add to the depth of information.

In order to supplement the limited data gathered through the questionnaire, previous quantitative surveys conducted by staff at Middle Temple library and related law libraries were considered. It must be noted that these results cannot reliably be compared directly to the questionnaire results, since they were conducted under different circumstances by many different people. They can, however, be used to lend support to trends that emerge and highlight possible inaccuracies in the data gathered through the questionnaires. Any such issues that were highlighted or conclusions that were dependent on the results of the supplemental data were investigated further by the researcher in the following interviews, in order to further examine and confirm or disprove the results.

The supplemental information came from three surveys conducted at three different law libraries, in order to provide a broad range of data to compare to the core data gathered in the questionnaires. One survey was distributed by Middle Temple library staff to student users in 2002. Another user survey was conducted by the closely associated Inner Temple library online between 11 April and 11 May 2011 and in the library itself on 12 and 13 April 2011. The final survey considered was distributed online in November 2010 to law students at City University who had completed a library training programme in the fall 2010 term. The 2002 Middle Temple survey resulted in 47 responses, the Inner Temple survey resulted in 231 responses online with a further 129 in print and the City University survey resulted in 112 responses. These are much larger sets of results than were gathered through the questionnaires distributed as part of this research, and provide much more comprehensive figures against which to compare trends and conclusions drawn from the smaller questionnaire results.

The quantitative data gathered from the questionnaires distributed by the researcher was compared to qualitative information gathered through interviews and observation. Observations conducted by the researcher at Middle Temple library during the same two weeks that the questionnaires were distributed allowed the researcher to see how the library was used on a daily basis. These observations supplemented the wealth of qualitative data gathered through seven interviews, which were conducted by the researcher with law librarians and Middle Temple library users between 18 August and 26 September 2011. The interviews were casual and conducted either in person or via email. The casual structure

allowed for relaxed conversational flow and the gathering of detailed information. This meant that the interview could naturally spread to unexpected issues, which had not been previously considered by the researcher and were outside the scope of information gathered in the highly structured questionnaire. Having an outline to follow in the interviews, however, ensured that the relevant material was covered, since some basic questions were asked of all interviewees (Beck & Manuel 2008, p. 74–5). The questions outlined in the interview schedule focused on the second, third and fourth research objectives, and as such were largely concerned with the provision of user training and the identification of resources users commonly struggle with.

Four Middle Temple library users and staff were interviewed, in order to obtain a complete perspective of the service and to further explore issues identified in the questionnaires. Interviews with staff at three other law libraries were also conducted, in order to gain further insight into user habits, needs and responses to training offered in similar environments. Under ideal circumstances interviewing would have continued until "no new information was being added to the inquiry via new samples" (Pickard 2007, p. 65), however, due to time constraints this was impossible. A limited number of interviews was also desirable simply due to the practicality that the researcher was inexperienced, and wished to avoid the trap of gathering more data than could meaningfully be analyzed under the conditions (Beck & Manuel 2008, p. 99) In order to accommodate the necessary constraints the researcher selected diverse interviewees, in order to maximize the amount of relevant and unique data gathered from each, and collated all results with data gathered earlier through questionnaires, surveys, observation and literature.

4. ANALYSIS

Analysis of the research data was undertaken in an iterative process. The results of each step influenced the generation of the following research tools; for example, issues identified in the initial stages, such as the extensive use of the library for certain print resources but not for their electronic counterparts, impacted on the development of the interview schedule in order to gather more detailed information on these issues. In order to ensure that the data gathered could be used in a practical way to design a training programme, it was important to seek "a big picture view of the data in order to see how it relates to the research problem" (Beck & Manuel 2008, p. 31). Methods of analysis were also employed in an attempt to ensure "honesty, healthy skepticisim, an avoidance of prejudice, and a willingness to abandon preconceived opinions" (Beck & Manuel 2008, p. 32) on the part of the researcher, in order to create results that are both accurate and valid.

The questionnaires were analysed first as a whole, to identify any patterns that emerged, and then question by

question, and related back to the motivating research objectives. Constant comparative analysis, meanwhile, was used in the analysis of the interviews, to ensure "that the creation of categories is driven by the raw data and not established a priori" (Pickard 2007, p. 241). As is consistent with this approach, prior research was used to identify some of the salient issues that formed a basis from which to begin formulating likely categories. In total, seven major categories were identified, although one functioned as a 'random' catch-all for off-topic comments. Three of the categories were broken down into further sub-categories in order to accommodate the details that emerged. The categories which appeared can be seen in the layout of section 4.2, and broadly included the use of Inn libraries, user difficulties, evidence or impact of lack of training, perceived usefulness of training, preferred or recommended training styles and general materials use.

4.1. Quantitative data

A review of the questionnaire results in conjunction with the supplementary surveys showed several trends and highlighted some interesting results. Some of the themes which appeared related to those that had been identified in the literature. These included responses that indicated difficulty in accessing some resources, overconfidence by users in their own abilities, users placing a high premium on their own time, positive responses to previous training, hesitancy to attend training and the presence of a wide range of user types with diverse needs. In cases where the results were inconclusive or seemed to bear further scrutiny they were incorporated into the later interviews, in order to gain further qualitative insight.

4.1.1. Frequency of Use
Half the users who responded to the questionnaire visit the library at least once a week or more, and eighteen out of twenty respondents visit at least once a month or more. This shows that there is an established base of users who would use any training they received with frequency. These figures are backed up by the 2002 survey which indicates that 29 out of 39 respondents use the library once a week or more, and by independent observation in which the researcher observed several users return to the library on multiple days.

Not only do individual users appear to frequently visit the library, but both researcher observation and the results of the 2002 survey show that the majority of users stay in the library for over an hour on each visit. Since continued use of skills learned in training has been identified in the literature as key to the further development and retention of these skills, the identification of a consistently returning user base confirms that a training programme would be worthwhile in providing training to users who would then be very likely to retain the skills learned through frequent use.

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4.1.2. Difficulties

Half the questionnaire respondents stated that they use the library at least once a week, and half also indicated that they "seldom" have difficulty in finding the information they need. Even more confidently, 35 out of 38 respondents to the 2002 survey said they found the material they wanted during their visit to the library. Perhaps the users' familiarity with the library, using it frequently and for extended periods of time, led these users to cite confidence in accessing the resources the library provides. Although this might indicate that further training for users is not needed, it is equally possible that users are in the habit of consulting only the resources with which they are most comfortable and know how to access quickly from repeated use. If this is the case, then information which might be gathered from more complex or less common materials is being missed by most users.

In any case, the high numbers of respondents citing little difficulty in finding the information they need are called into question by the comments in response to the questionnaire's question three. Two of the respondents who said they "seldom" struggled to find what they were looking for in response to question two, actually cited having difficulty finding "historical resources such as statutes no longer in force" and "textbooks". Other respondents cited difficulties with materials ranging from "quality textbooks on specific subject matter" to "non-textbooks", which effectively encompasses the entire library. The literature supported the responses to question three by suggesting that many legal professionals do have difficulty in effectively conducting legal research. This, in combination with the discrepancy between the results of the responses to questions two and three made this a subject which was deemed necessary to explore further through interviews with library staff and users.

4.1.3. Materials Use

The idea that users may be relying on a limited scope of familiar resources, rather than making use of the entire spectrum offered by the library, was hypothesised as a possible explanation for the contradictory responses regarding ability to find information which were gathered in the questionnaire in response to questions two and three. This theory is further supported by the fact that users predominately cite finding the information they need in only a handful of sources. In one case a respondent specifically cited the reasons for his choice of materials as "familiarity, speed", which indicates that these factors may be more highly valued than the appropriateness of the resource to the topic at hand.

Textbooks were the most commonly used library resources cited in response to the questionnaire, followed by electronic resources and law reports. These were also the materials users cited accessing most in both the 2002 survey and Inner Temple survey, which indicates a heavy reliance on only a fraction of the materials available at the library.

It is possible, however, that there are other explanations for the obvious user preference for particular resources at the library. Five questionnaire respondents specifically mentioned resources at other locations, such as their chambers, which indicate that some materials offered by the library may also be commonly available through other more convenient sources. This possibility was speculated upon by Inner Temple library staff, where an increase in use of some print materials was identified and accounted for by the fact that many chambers are reducing their own print collections in an effort to save money, which means that increasing numbers of members do not have other means of access to these materials except through the Inn library (Inner Temple library 2011, p. 6). Three of the questionnaire respondents, who had only used print materials while in the library, supported this conclusion by giving reasons for their choice of materials such as "They are not available to use elsewhere such as in Chambers", "I go to Inner for everything else as I am a member there" and "I have access to many law reports and other materials through my subscription to Butterworth (Lexis Nexis) and Justis". It appears likely that Middle Temple library is filling an information access niche by providing access to uncommon or difficult to access printed legal material, rather than providing for a widespread need for print materials above electronic ones. This conclusion was further supported by observation, in which it was noted that the majority of users consulted print materials, and by data gathered in the Inner Temple survey, which found that more than half the respondents who completed the survey in the library used superseded, and therefore not widely stocked, editions of print materials specifically to find non-current information (Inner Temple 2011, p. 4).

4.1.4. Training

If the majority of library users are consulting uncommon materials, the chance that they have received training on how to use these materials is likely to have decreased. A general lack of library training was identified through the questionnaire, as was expected according to the trends cited in the literature. A total of 16 respondents indicated that they had never received any library training in the past. Three of these respondents did at least indicate that they received some form of law library introduction elsewhere.

It is worth noting that all four of the respondents who said they had received library training in the past also said that training was useful. This positive response to training by those who have received it is supported by similar results cited in the literature, and in the City University survey in which 84.8% of the 112 respondents felt that they had learned "a great deal" about legal research. Despite the positive responses of people who undergo training, it is more difficult for users to

identify the potential benefits of training prior to receiving it.

Every respondent who answered the question regarding materials about which they would like further training, said that there were none. One of these respondents added a note indicating that she would in fact appreciate training on "ordering items", and five more mentioned specific items that they struggle to find in response to other questions. This indicates that library users may be aware of personal difficulty in accessing all the resources in the library in the most efficient manner possible, but simultaneously be either unwilling to admit or unaware that training might address these problems. This interpretation is strengthened by the fact that twice as many respondents said that they would not attend training if it was offered as those who said that they would. Eight of these respondents indicated that they did not feel they had any need for training, while another four simply stated that they would not have time to attend. This emphasis on time was expected from the literature, which had indicated that professionals in particular place a high premium on their own time, and was further commented upon in the interviews.

Although not all respondents indicated what type of training they would prefer, those who did respond were largely in favour of listening to an explanation, watching a demonstration or reading information. These training methods represent a range of learning styles, and reinforce the literature, which indicates that training must be carefully designed to address a wide range of learners. Once again the City University survey also supported these results, since 95.5% of respondents stated that they "liked the combination of taught lecture and practical hands-on sessions".

Also of interest was the diversity of respondents to the questionnaire undertaken at Middle Temple library. The respondents were largely made up of barristers, but the respondents also included three pupils, four students and a researcher. This underscores the previously identified need to design training that is suitable not only for a range of learning styles, but also for attendees with a range of skill levels, areas of focus and reasons for using the library.

Overall the questionnaire highlighted several interesting issues, including choice of materials, lack of training and a diverse audience. Some of these issues, such as the reasons for the rise in the use of print materials, were noted as necessary to follow up in interviews. Other topics, such as the diverse user base, although not directly addressed in the interview were so key to user concerns that they emerged naturally in the qualitative data as well.

4.2. Qualitative Data

The results of the interviews further brought into focus and clarified many of the issues identified in the questionnaires and surveys. There was additional insight into patterns of materials use, difficulties users face in accessing certain materials, the general lack of user training, the need for diverse styles of training and the struggle users face in employing both print and electronic resources appropriately. Additional qualitative information was also gathered that presented new issues and insights to consider.

4.2.1. Use of the Inn library

The quantitative data had begun to explore which materials were most and least used, with limited insight into why this might be. The qualitative data further expanded upon the underlying reasons for patterns of use in the library by highlighting the unique user base at the library and some of the unique resources that draw users there.

4.2.1.1. User Base.
One issue that became clear through the interviews, which had been less noticeable in the questionnaire responses but was referred to in the literature, is the unique user base at Middle Temple library. One librarian described this user base as independent, pointing out that "it's a very kind of independent kind of career path" in which one must be able to manage his or her own learning. This self-motivated approach to study was commented upon by Gillian Kerins in a study undertaken at University College Dublin, where it was noted that "Law students appear to work independently to develop their own information skills" (Kerins et al. 2004).

Not only are users of Middle Temple library highly educated and independent learners, but they are unique as a group because they are each a potentially long-term user of the library. This is a result of the structure of the Inns of Court, and the fact that individuals will remain a member of one Inn throughout their final stages of education and entire careers. As one librarian said; "when these people come in they're not there for three years, they're there for a lifetime, they're members", which means they can continue to the use the library for many years to come. Having a long-term user base means that training is a useful measure since librarians will continue to see the benefits of a highly trained user base over many years.

4.2.1.2. Special Collections.
Middle Temple library not only has a unique user base, it also has some very unique collections that create unusual pockets of use among the various resources the library has to offer. This is particularly clear in the case of the special collections at the library, which consist primarily of American and European legal materials. These foreign collections are comprehensive, but they present many new complications in terms of searching for even the most experienced of British legal researchers. One librarian pointed out that they must sometimes contact colleagues who are native to the collection being searched and another librarian cited the differences in levels of

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jurisdiction in foreign countries and the publication of materials such as new legislation and court decisions out of the order in which they occurred, as examples of common complications in searching for any information in the American and European collections.

When even the professionally trained library staff struggle to find information in special collections, it is obvious that an introductory training session, library tour or printed user guide, is unlikely to be enough to prepare users to confidently access materials in these collections. It is possible, however, that such training would pave the way for users to recognise when they need to ask for specialist help and know where to find that help. In a library with very unique and often complex collections, and a user base that is naturally independent, it may be that initial information literacy and legal research training should focus more on identifying when an individual's own skills, no matter how carefully honed, may not be enough and professional assistance should be sought.

4.2.1.3. Asking for Help.

The conclusion that there is a need for training to instil confidence in users to ask librarians for help in complicated research appeared quite clearly in the interviews with law library staff. It was viewed as a key component of in-person training, which gave that style an advantage over impersonal styles, such as the provision of user guides or online tutorials. Users will always need to ask for help in the search for legal information, since it is far too broad a field with too many specialist sub-sections for a single person to know how to research flawlessly, but librarians fear that users may be too hesitant to ask for help. As one librarian said, users will "save themselves a lot of time and trouble by coming to us", but as another pointed out many do not do so, possibly because they do not realize that librarians are there to help and worry that they are "bothering" them. One librarian also suggested that users may not approach librarians for help because "they don't realise that we know stuff", and hopes that providing training would be an opportunity to "show people from the beginning that you have this specialist knowledge and you are able to impart it to them." Librarians are one of the unique resources available at the library, after all, just as much as any of the print or electronic materials which users commonly access. If users are unaware of the assistance librarians can offer, or hesitant to seek that assistance, they are inevitably missing a resource that could be vital to their successful search for legal information.

4.2.2. Difficulties

Although users appear confident in using some library resources, and may not recognize that they need assistance in their research, there was evidence in both the quantitative and qualitative data that this confidence was sometimes misplaced. Besides the special collections which librarians frequently see users struggling to

understand, interviewees also cited user difficulties in effectively using keywords to complete searches, using multi-volume materials, employing indexes, accessing parliamentary materials and making use of print journals. Some difficulties were quite specific; one Middle Temple library user cited struggling to find print materials when the online catalogue was inaccessible, for example, while others were more general. A law librarian at a University stated that law students often struggle with hard copy and multi-volume sources "mainly because your average first year undergrad has rarely even used an index in a book." Meanwhile, one barrister pointed out that new members of the Bar often seem to have "no idea how to set about either finding a case in the library or when they've found it how to deal with it, and how to cite it to a court". Clearly issues such as these are basic information literacy deficiencies, which need to be addressed before users can be expected to independently utilize the more complex resources in the library.

4.2.3. Lack of Training

A general lack of information literacy skills and library user training has led to the user difficulties outlined in the previous section. Although most users of Middle Temple library can to a great extent be expected to be able to assimilate knowledge for themselves, a lack of basic information literacy and legal research training means that many users are left with no idea of where to start. As one user said in an interview, it can be frustrating to be expected to undertake research without a librarian's help and without any former training on the subject. Although the responses in the questionnaires were mixed, one interviewee made it very clear that she felt her library training was lacking and that she would go to some effort to attend any training that was offered. Interviewees confirmed the literature, by pointing out that library training has often been removed from the coursework at Universities and that this lapse is viewed as "a scandal".

4.2.4. Usefulness of Training

One goal of training, as previously discussed, is to inform users about librarians' knowledge of the materials, and encourage them to ask for help when facing difficulties. A related goal was suggested by an interviewee who said that the key result of training presently provided at her library "is a real respect for materials and the services we subscribe to. They [attendees] do get a real feel for how important the type of material they use actually is." A general lack of understanding about which resources to use, or even what resources provide access to particular types of information, was highlighted in the literature, and may contribute to the data gathered in the questionnaire which suggest that users may be relying heavily on only a limited number of resources.

In addition to increased respect and understanding of the resources available through the library, interviewees

also hoped that training would provide users with more confidence and ability in searching the library for themselves. One librarian described it as a desire to provide users with "a better starting point. Whereas now they just come in and they just throw their hands up … but I want them to be more confident from the beginning and make sure as well that they've covered every aspect from A to Z rather than just kind of cherry picking, which is what a lot of people end up doing." Responses such as these in interviews highlight the need for training to address user confusion by increasing their awareness, familiarity and appreciation of the whole range of library resources while providing them with the confidence and ability to undertake thorough research.

4.2.5. Training Structure

The interviewees clearly favoured library training as a useful, necessary and thus far, sadly neglected service, which should be provided to library users. Further insight gathered through the interviews into preferred methods in which to provide training, was very much in line with the suggestions found in the literature and the quantitative data.

4.2.5.1. Styles.

In other organizations training has been developed to fit the needs of users and the environment in which the library functions. One University, for example, includes library training as part of the "Legal Method module" in the form of lectures, workshops and student presentations throughout the school term. This type of training, however, needs a much larger time commitment than is likely to be possible for either Middle Temple library users or staff. Another library attached to the Inns of Court approaches the situation differently, by providing a range of printed informational guides to resources, a current awareness blog and an online gateway to 'authoritative' legal sites vetted by librarians. All these information services are developed and maintained by staff at the library, and are admittedly time-consuming. Middle Temple library has a relatively small staff, which must be taken into account when considering what type of training can feasibly be undertaken. A law library attached to a public library, meanwhile, offers a much more limited training programme in the form of printed user guides to various resources and tours upon request. Similar training is currently offered at Middle Temple library, however, and has already been deemed inadequate to users' current needs.

The methods used by different law libraries, although not entirely suitable to Middle Temple library's unique user needs and environment, still offer useful insights into what styles and subjects are deemed important and useful in similar contexts. A library and Legal Research Guide (Middle Temple 2011(a)) has recently been developed and distributed by Middle Temple library, and a tour of the premises is offered to new members each year.

These measures are quite similar to those seen at the public law library, but as already observed they are considered insufficient by library staff to meet users' needs. Librarians and users at Middle Temple library suggested in interviews, ideas for furthering the training programme. One suggestion was to include a walk around the library with the printed library and Legal Research Guide and "be shown, physically, what it's all about, so it's not just an academic exercise". Another suggestion was to provide an introductory lecture session with visual aids held once a term to provide "a general induction, that is a how to do very, very basic legal general research, and how to find that research in your library, and then sort of perhaps mention the more specialist things, and then also try to instil in them [users] the confidence to come and ask for help." In both cases the key aspect seems to be the opportunity for users to spend some time with a librarian and be shown very explicitly some basics about the library itself and some skills essential to legal research.

4.2.5.2. User Guides.

User guides in varying forms were quite common in all the libraries where staff or users were interviewed. These guides certainly address the desire expressed by users in the questionnaires for informative printed material, but guides only address one learning style and are difficult to make as interactive, and therefore effective, as an in-person session. In addition to these limitations in effectiveness, at least one librarian sees user guides as "reinventing the wheel" since most databases come with user guides which the highly educated and independent user base is perfectly able to comprehend. The limitations of user guides were well recognized in all the libraries that employ them, since in no case are they the only form of training on offer. One librarian's suggestion during an interview that more adaptable and library-specific training is preferable mirrors the advice in the literature that training should be relevant to users and not simply generic.

4.2.6. Materials Use

A sufficient amount of information was gathered in the quantitative data to see trends in materials use. The preference for electronic versus print materials was somewhat unexpected however, and was therefore further explored in the interviews. The interviews also introduced an entirely unexpected commentary on the importance of journals as a resource, which had not appeared in the previous research methods.

4.2.6.1. Electronic v Print.

The interviews reinforced the issue, which had been identified in the quantitative data and literature, of a dichotomy between print and electronic resources and the struggle users face in consulting both forms confidently and appropriately. One member of Middle Temple, who is both a library user and involved in developing training at the library,

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identified an age difference indicating that "almost everybody over fifty prefers to use print, but anybody under that always goes to the databases first." Although this interviewee recognized the importance of both print and electronic materials, saying that, "you can't just rely on the printed page and you can't just rely on the internet, you have to do both," he worried that younger users "are weaned on computers, they use them all the time at school, they probably over-rely on them."

The perceived inability of users to confidently consult print resources which may result in an over-reliance on electronic materials, may appear contradictory to the quantitative data and interview comments that suggest that many users access more print than electronic resources at the library. One law librarian, for example, said that "People do still seem to like hard copy. You can tell from the amount of shelving we do", although she also commented on a decrease in the amount of copying that is done in the library, possibly due to the ability to print documents directly from electronic resources. One must also remember that many users make use of resources outside the library environment, and that electronic resources are more likely than print resources to be easily accessible from remote locations. As one user said in an interview, convenience is key, and going in to the library is generally a last resource, since "you tend to use the Inn library when you're in practice, when you can't get what you want in chambers or on the internet or for some specialist reason."

It must also be remembered that the legal profession itself constrains some of the natural tendencies and personal materials preferences of users, since research will often be used in a court of law where there are strict guidelines dictating what is acceptable. One barrister alluded to "a sort of scale of acceptability, and printouts of cases off a database which are not to be found anywhere else are at the bottom, judges get rather testy if they are swamped with them". Practical considerations such as these are another unique factor influencing the user base of a law library and a compelling reason for users to ensure that they thoroughly understand how to access and properly employ a range of resources in various formats.

4.2.6.2. Journals.

As mentioned briefly earlier, journals played a larger role in responses to interviews than was expected based on the questionnaire responses or literature. Journals are a secondary source of information in the law, and though Middle Temple library subscribes to several, in order to access the vast majority of journals users need to search for them online. A staff member at the library suggested that journals are not a key resource when they came up in an interview. Journals were mentioned specifically, however, in an interview with a library user as a material she struggles to find and employ effectively and would particularly like training on. At another law library where there is limited security a

librarian mentioned that key journals and textbooks are kept behind the staff desk, since these items frequently go missing. Textbooks, another secondary source of legal information, were highlighted in the questionnaire responses as a very popular resource that many library users access and in some cases struggle with. It appears that journals could have a similar role for users, and one librarian who works with law students pointed out that journals "as a source are also difficult, they've [students] not usually come across them so it takes a while to understand their significance within academic law." For library users who did not have adequate library training as students, journals may continue to be a difficult and underused resource, which if properly understood could further expand the relevant information gathered in legal research.

5. RESULTS

The research described above generated a great deal of useful information about the training needs of Middle Temple library users. The analysis of this data and the insight it provides into user needs should guide and influence the design of any library training that is developed, in order to ensure that it is appropriately relevant. The key issues that are likely to influence the design of training are highlighted below.

Most users visit the library frequently, which means that they are already confident using certain materials such as textbooks. Despite confidence in using some common resources, users struggle to take advantage of the full range of resources available at the library. They may be overlooking some complicated materials, such as those in the American or European collections, because they are not confident either in accessing these materials and/or are not confident in asking for help. Finally, users may also be overlooking less common materials, such as journals, because they do not fully understand the value of the information available in certain types of resources.

Frequent visits not only mean that many users are already confident accessing some materials, it also means that training attendees would be likely to retain any new skills they learn in the training session, since they would practice their new skills through frequent use. It is important to remember that many resources, such as electronic databases, are likely to be used outside the library, where they are available from more easily accessible locations. This does not mean that users may not still need training on how to use these conveniently accessible electronic resources effectively, however, or that they may not need assistance in deciphering when to seek print, which is likely to mean library-based, alternatives. The option of using electronic resources from convenient locations does, however, offer further scope for training attendees to practice and hone any new skills they gain through training in other locations. In this way, users'

ability to continue to practice the skills learned in the training session is virtually guaranteed, and the chances of training attendees retaining what they have learned are high.

The difficulties many users currently face in the library, and the subsequent restrictions on which materials they can confidently access, stem from a general lack of information literacy and legal research training. The independent learning style and high education levels of the users must be considered, of course, and balanced against their concurrent lack of basic information literacy training, so as to ensure that the training is developed at the correct level. Training offered by the library would undoubtedly be useful in addressing some of users' legal research shortcomings, but users are likely to resist attending a training session, either because they do not realize they need training or because they feel they do not have time to attend. The benefits that training would provide to users in terms of the time they will save in searching for information and the increase in their ability to find the best or most up-to-date information available would certainly outweigh the time each user would have to devote to attending a training session. Attending training may even highlight areas in which a particular user is not as efficient or thorough in his or her legal research as he or she thought. Should users be convinced to attend training they are likely to find it useful, especially if it is delivered in a varied style including explanation, demonstration and reading materials.

Not only must user need and preferences be taken into account in developing training, but the needs of the library and the staff must also be considered. The fact that Middle Temple library has a small staff, for example, means that certain types of time intensive training are unsuitable. Luckily, time intensive training also happens to be unsuitable for the library users, who place a premium upon their own time and are largely independent and likely to feel stifled by excessive guidance by staff. Other practical considerations influenced by the library itself include availability of staff and space for training. These will affect issues such as when the training can be offered, and must be considered in conjunction with the availability of potential attendees.

The goal of a training session developed according to these requirements and considerations would be to provide library users with the ability to conduct legal research for themselves, as well as the confidence to ask librarians for further assistance when they run into a problem in their research. This goal is most likely to be achieved through a training session which incorporates methods suitable to several learning styles, and gives users the chance to spend some time with a librarian who can provide them with a thorough overview of the resources available in the library. This sort of training should increase users' understanding of the resources in the library and how to make use of them appropriately.

6. CONCLUSION

Throughout this research the aim has been to explore the information literacy and legal research training needs of users of the Middle Temple library in order to allow staff at that library to design a training programme that would provide maximum benefit to their users. In order to achieve this aim four objectives needed to be researched, and through analysis of the data gathered, conclusions have been generated about each area.

1. To examine patterns of use of Middle Temple library and other legal resources by the majority of Middle Temple library users.
   - There is an established base of users who visit the library frequently and/or stay for long periods of time during each visit.
   - Users predominately cite finding the information they need in only a handful of sources.
   - Textbooks were the most commonly used library resources, followed by electronic resources and law reports.
   - There is a clear need to employ both electronic and print resources, but users struggle to consult both forms confidently and appropriately.
   - There appears to be a possibility of expanding the current usage of the journal collection.

2. To explore user perceptions of legal resources and motivations for the use of specific materials.
   - Users often choose materials that they are familiar with and can access quickly.
   - Difficulties such as effectively using keywords to complete searches, accessing multi-volume materials, using indexes, locating parliamentary materials and print journals are likely to deter users from those resources.
   - Younger users are most familiar with electronic materials and may employ them even when a print resource is more appropriate.
   - Convenience is essential, and going to the library is generally a last resort when information is unavailable electronically or through local resources.
   - Users generally prefer to work independently, without the guidance of a librarian unless they need specific help.

3. To identify any previous legal research or materials training users have received, and assess the usefulness of this training.
   - There was an overwhelmingly positive response to training by those who have received it.

- Training provides an increased respect and understanding of the resources available through the library

- There was a preference for a mixed training style, incorporating the opportunity to listen to an explanation, watch a demonstration, read information and learn in diverse ways.

4. To explore evidence of user training needs in law libraries.

- A general lack of library training in legal education and professional experience was identified.

- library users have a range of difficulties stemming from a lack of information literacy and legal research skills, which hampers their ability to efficiently access the resources in the library.

- The current level of training provided through user guides and tours is inadequate, because it does not provide the opportunity for users to spend time with a librarian and be shown basics about information literacy and legal research skills.

Consideration of these conclusions as a whole leads to a fuller understanding of Middle Temple library users' information literacy and legal research training needs. Only once these training needs have been clearly identified can they be addressed through the creation of appropriate training. Staff at Middle Temple library can now use this information to move forward in providing a highly relevant information service to their users, which addresses the gaps in their users' knowledge and abilities in conducting legal research.

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Biography

Erin Gow is a library Assistant at the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn. She has an MA in Information Studies from the University of Brighton, and a BA in Secondary English Education from the University of Kentucky.