



Saskatchewan Access to Legal Information Data Collection Pilot Project 2.0 Report

May 2019



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Introduction

The objective of the Saskatchewan Access to Legal Information Project (the SALI Project) is to increase access to legal information for Saskatchewan residents. The SALI Project aims to provide library staff with the skills needed to help members of the public find legal information and relevant resources for their legal situation.

The purpose of the SALI Data Collection Pilot Project 2.0 was to examine the instances and types of legal-related questions asked by public library patrons, as well as whether public library staff are sufficiently able to assist library patrons with their legal issues and questions.

Methodology

The SALI Data Collection Pilot Project 2.0 was developed in collaboration with representatives from two public libraries. One of these was the Saskatoon Public Library, which has nine branches in Saskatoon. The other was the Wheatland Regional Library, which has 45 branch locations in small centres around Saskatoon and in the West Central part of the province; some of these locations offer very limited hours of service. The two libraries were chosen because of their different geographic and demographic characteristics, in order to provide some insight into the range of legal information needs and the capacity to respond of librarians operating in different settings.

Four surveys were administered to collect data to inform this study, including (1) library demographics; (2) public librarians' experiences with legal-related questions; (3) types of legal information requested; and (4) a tally of all law-related materials circulated in the province.

More specifically, the first survey asked about the library demographics, such as the library name, location, hours of operation, total population served by this library, number of in-person visits per day, print size collection, and circulation of law-related materials. In total, 10 library staff members in Saskatchewan completed this survey.

The second survey asked public librarians about their experience with SALI and how comfortable they felt assisting members of the public with their legal requests. Participants were also asked how they responded to legal-related questions about what could be done to increase their confidence in responding to legal questions. Overall, 43 participants completed this survey.

The third survey asked specific information about the date they received the legal-related question, how much time they spent on the legal-related request, and the legal topic the



request would fall under (i.e. criminal law, family law, etc.). Twelve participants completed this survey.

The final survey provided a circulation sheet, which displays a tally of all law-related materials circulated in Saskatchewan.

Findings from the survey are summarized and results are presented in tables and graphs as appropriate throughout this report. Information about the Social Sciences Research Laboratories, University of Saskatchewan, is located in Appendix A.

Findings

1) Library Demographics Survey

First, the library demographics survey saw 10 participants complete this survey. Table 1 presents the name of the libraries that participated and their respective locations. The libraries were generally in the West Central area of the province, with two libraries in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Table 1. Library Name

Library Name	Location
Aberdeen Branch Library	Aberdeen, SK
Beechy Branch Library	Beechy, SK
Cliff Wright Branch	Saskatoon, SK
Conquest Branch Library	Conquest, SK
Doddsland Branch Library	Doddsland, SK
J. S. Wood Library	Saskatoon, SK
Kindersley Branch Library	Kindersley, SK
Nokomis Branch Library	Nokomis, SK
Wilkie Branch Library	Wilkie, SK
Young Branch Library	Young, SK

Hours of Operation

Participants were asked about their library’s hours of operation over a three-month timespan. Most libraries indicated that they were in operation between 100 to 300 hours over a three-month period. Hours of operation ranged from 72 to 810 hours over three months, with an average of 291 hours.



Respondents were also asked how many hours they worked over a three-month timespan. Most participants worked between 100 to 300 hours over three months. Hours worked ranged from 4 to 348, with an average of 162 hours.

Responses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Library Hours of Operation over a Three-Month Period

Library Hours of Operation	Hours Worked by Library Staff
72	72
132	132
144	144
144	144
144	144
186	186
228	228
348	348
702	4
810	217.5

Library Population and Visits Per Day

Following, participants were asked about the approximate population being served by the library, with responses ranging from 160 individuals to 45,000 individuals. The average number of patrons served by these libraries was 8,303.

Respondents were also asked how many visits they received per day from members of the public, with responses ranging from 4 to 700. The average number of visits per day was 120.

Responses are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Population Utilizing the Library

Population Served by Library	Number of Visits per Day
45,000	700
30,363	375
4,571	31
1,219	24
622	16
404	12
244	6
228	18
215	9
160	4

Print Size Collection

The print size collection ranged from 3,561 to 380,424, with an average of 46,993. Results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Print Size Collection

Print Size Collection
380,424
42,677
11,257
6,965
6,506
6,029
4,684
4,110
3,721
3,561

Circulation of Law-Related Materials

Finally, the Library Demographics and Circulation Record of Law-Related Materials Survey asked to provide an indication of circulation of law-related materials during November 14, 2018 to December 14, 2018, from circulation records routinely collected by a library. In turn, only two participants of ten responded to this question. One participant indicated that they had 14 circulations of law-related materials and a second participant stated that they had 23 circulations of law-related materials.

2) SALI Experience Survey

The SALI Experience Survey was administered in Phase 2 of the project and aimed to gain an understanding of public library staff members' experience in responding to inquiries for legal information during the month of November, 2018. The findings of this survey are presented below.

Job Title

Participants were first asked about their job title, with most participants reporting being a Library Service Associate ($n = 12$) or a Librarian ($n = 9$). Participants also reported being a Central Service Associate ($n = 2$), working in a causal position, or working as a page. Participants' responses are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Job Title

Job Title	Frequency
Library Service Associate/LSA	10
Librarian/Community Librarian	9
Central Service Associate/CSA	2
Casual	2
Page	1

Questions about Legal Issues from Patrons

Overall, 13 out of the 43 participants reported that they received questions about legal issues from patrons (30.2%) from November 14, 2018 to December 14, 2018. Meanwhile, 29 respondents indicated that they did not receive any questions about legal issues from patrons and 1 respondent did not respond to the question.

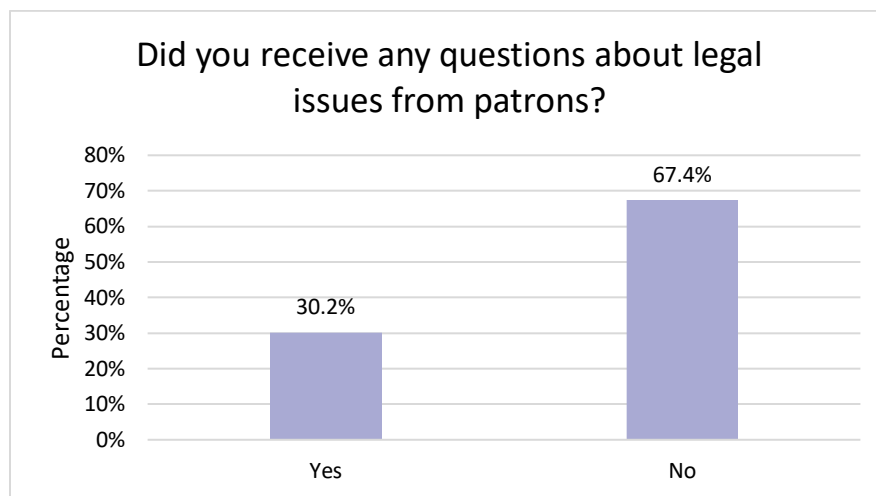


Figure 1. Questions about Legal Issues

When asked, most participants indicated that they were neither comfortable nor uncomfortable (50%; $n = 16$) with answering these questions, with 38% ($n = 12$) of participants being somewhat to very comfortable. Meanwhile, 11 respondents had missing data for this question. The responses are presented in Figure 2.

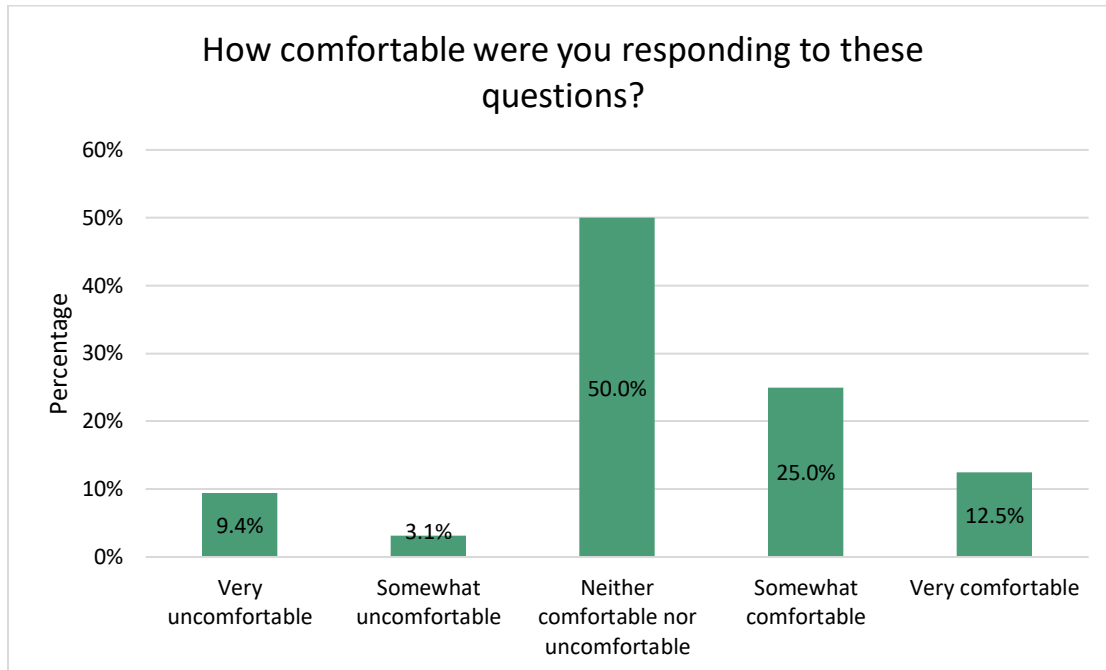


Figure 2. Comfortable Answering Legal Questions

When honing in on the level of comfort of the respondents that received questions about legal issues from patrons during Phase 2, it was found that 69.2% was somewhat to very comfortable with responding to these questions ($n = 9$); 15.4% was neither comfortable nor uncomfortable ($n = 2$); and 15% was somewhat to very uncomfortable ($n = 2$).

Participants were then asked how they responded to these law-related queries, with responses presented in Figure 3. Librarians were most likely to direct patrons to library books or materials (23%; $n = 10$), refer them to a community organization (19%; $n = 8$), or refer them to a government agency (14%; $n = 6$). Three participants indicated “other” for this question. When asked to specify their response, one participant also stated that they have PLEA pamphlets available should anyone need them; one participant stated that the library was located in a small town and no one would feel comfortable asking; and the last participant indicated that they needed help with exporting a conversation from the mobile application, WhatsApp, to be used for a legal matter and the library staff was able to help.

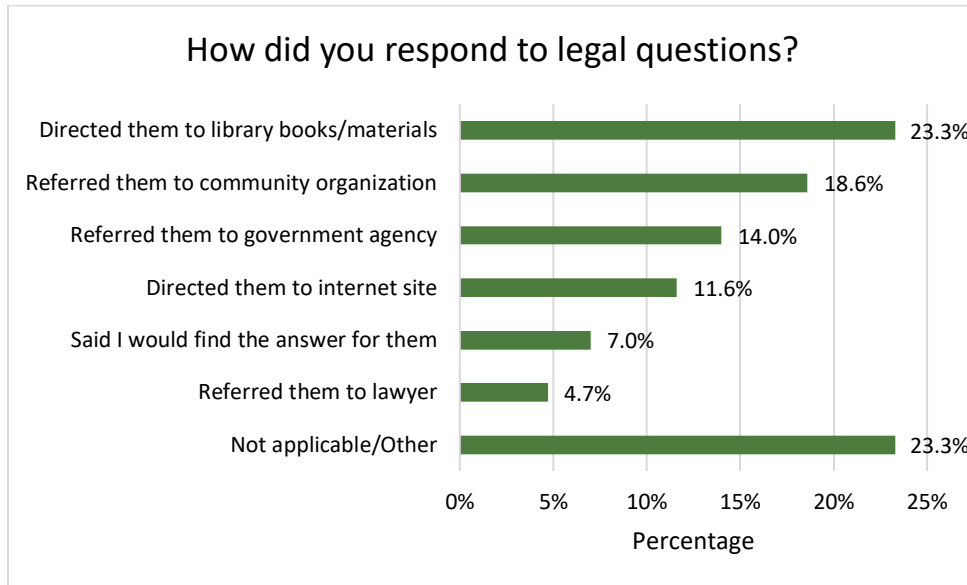


Figure 3. Responding to Legal Questions

The survey asked if participants ever had a problem deciding on whether the question asked was about a legal issue. In turn, 32 of 43 participants responded to the question and it was found the majority of participants (68.8%; $n = 22$) had no problems deciding on whether the question was about a legal issue, while approximately one-third of participants did have a problem deciding whether the question was about a legal issue ($n = 10$).

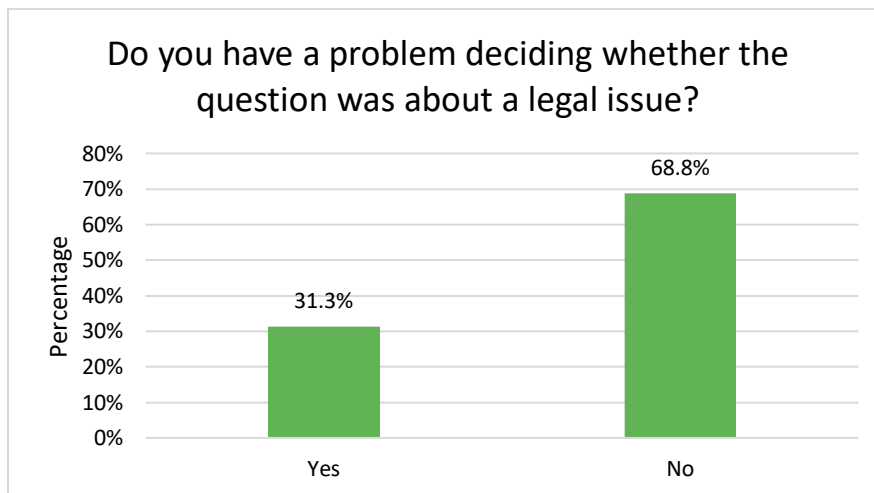


Figure 4. Deciding whether Question is about a Legal Issue

Additionally, participants were asked if they ever had a problem knowing what kind of law the question was about. Of the 43 respondents, 31 responded to the question. It was found that 58.1% of respondents ($n = 18$) did not have a problem knowing what kind of law the question



was about. Meanwhile, 42% of respondents indicated that they did have a problem knowing what kind of law the question was about.

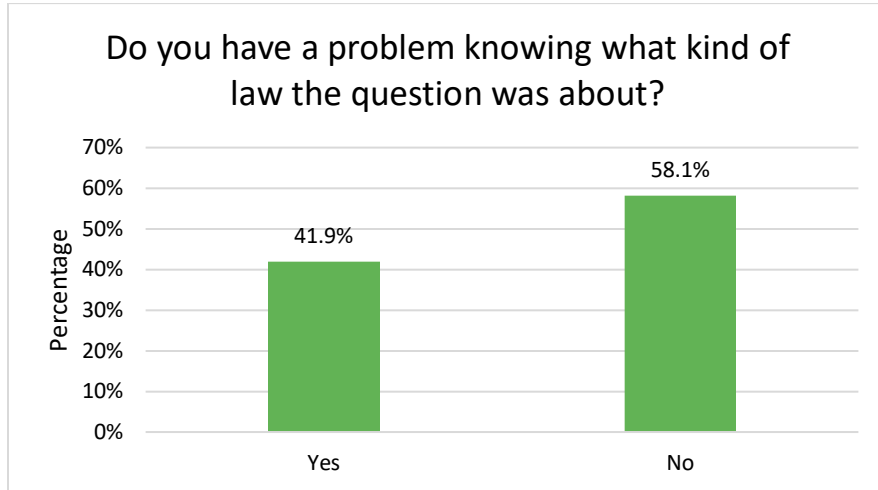


Figure 5. Knowing What Kind of Law

Increase Confidence in Answering Legal Questions

Participants were also asked what would make them feel more confident in answering questions about legal issues. Responses are presented in Figure 6. Respondents were most likely to request training about who they should refer patrons to (65%; n = 28), online reference material for patrons (42%; n = 18), and training about identifying legal issues (40%; n = 17).

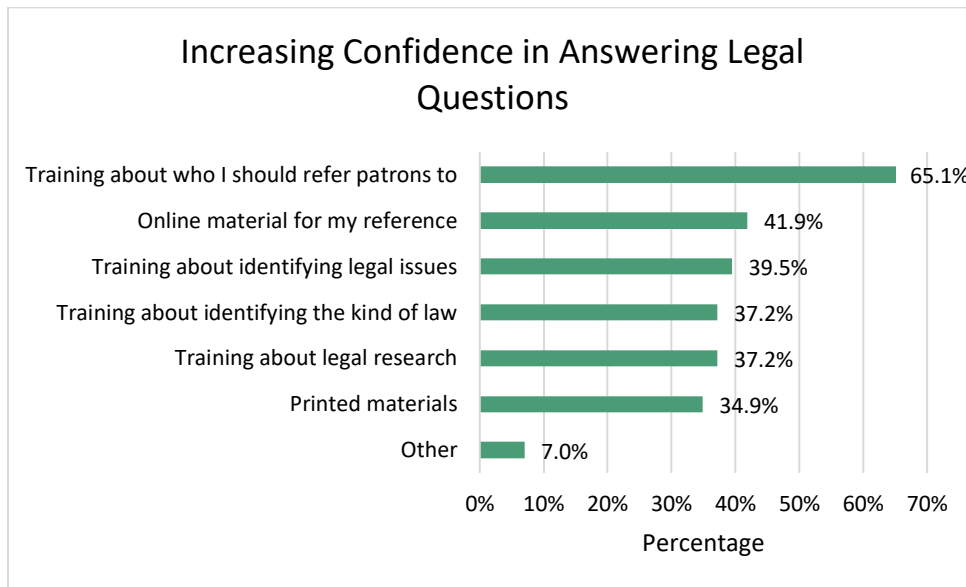


Figure 6. Increasing Confidence in Answering Legal Questions



3 participants selected the “other” option and their responses to what other approaches could make them feel more confident in answering questions about legal issues are presented below:

“As a page, I don't believe I'm in any way qualified to answer legal questions for patrons. I haven't been asked about it before, but I'd either refer them to the section of the library dedicated to law or recommend professional legal service.”

“I would just point them towards a site they could feel confident in.”

“Never had any questions.”

3) SALI Legal Information Request Form Findings

The SALI legal information request form was completed by library staff once per legal information-related question from a patron during the data collection period (November 15, 2018 to December 15, 2018). Below are the findings from the form.

Library Name

Participants were first asked about which library they worked at, with four participants working at the Dr. Freda Ahenakew Library, two participants working at the MF Library, and the remaining six participants working at the Saskatoon Public Library, of which four participants were working at the Frances Morrison Central Library. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Library Name

Library Name	Frequency
Dr. Freda Ahenakew Library	4
Frances Morrison Central Library	4
MF	2
Saskatoon Public Library	2

Job Title

Participants were also asked about their job title, with three participants working as Senior Library Service Associates and two working as Reference Librarians.

Date of Request

Respondents provided information on when they were asked about legal information. The date of requests are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Date of Request

Date of Request
November 15 th , 2018
November 19 th , 2018
November 19 th , 2018
November 20 th , 2018
November 21 st , 2018
November 21 st , 2018
November 23 rd , 2018
November 25 th , 2018
December 3 rd , 2018
December 3 rd , 2018
December 6 th , 2018
December 9 th , 2018

Time Spent on Request

Participants were also asked how long they spent on the legal request, with most participants spending between one to fifteen minutes on each request (75%; $n = 9$). Only one participant spent more than one hour on a legal request. The results are presented in Figure 7.

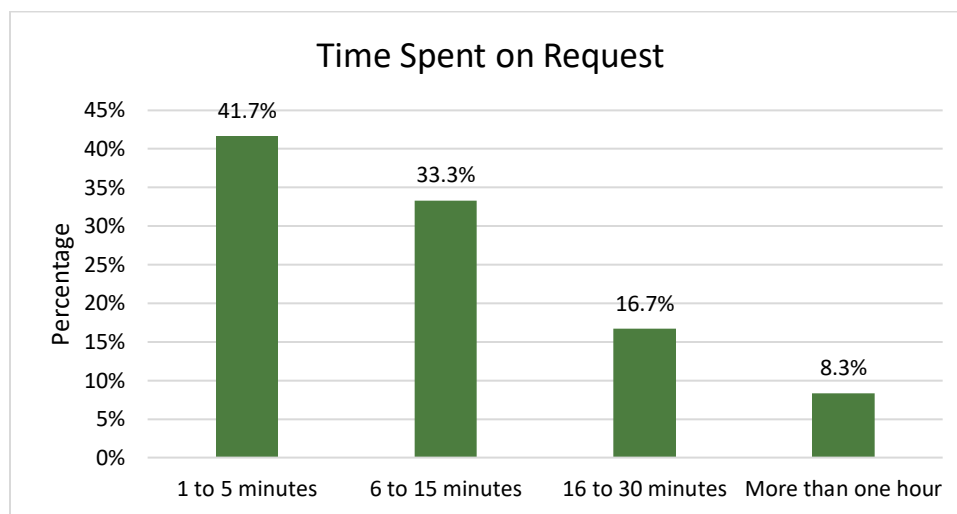


Figure 7. Time Spent on Request

Topic of Legal Information

Following, participants were asked about the legal topic the library patron asked about, with responses presented in Figure 8. Respondents were allowed to select all that applied from the following list:



- Criminal
- Consumer
- Building Codes
- Debt
- Family (circle as applicable) – Pre-nuptial agreements – Divorce – Child Custody and Support – Other
- Finding a law and other legislation
- Going to Court
- Government Agency
- Health
- Human Rights
- Immigration/Refugee
- Real Estate
- Renting (landlord/tenant)
- Small Claims
- Taxes
- Wills & Estates & Power of Attorney
- Working/Employment/Labour
- Other

In turn, library staff indicated that library patrons were most likely to ask about criminal law (25%; $n = 3$), government agency (25%; $n = 3$), power of attorney (17%; $n = 2$), other family law related topics (17%; $n = 2$), or other law topics (17%; $n = 2$).

Two participants indicated that the law-related request pertained to a different topic than those available on the list above. These other topics included: (1) Succession planning for a small business and (2) Separation agreements.

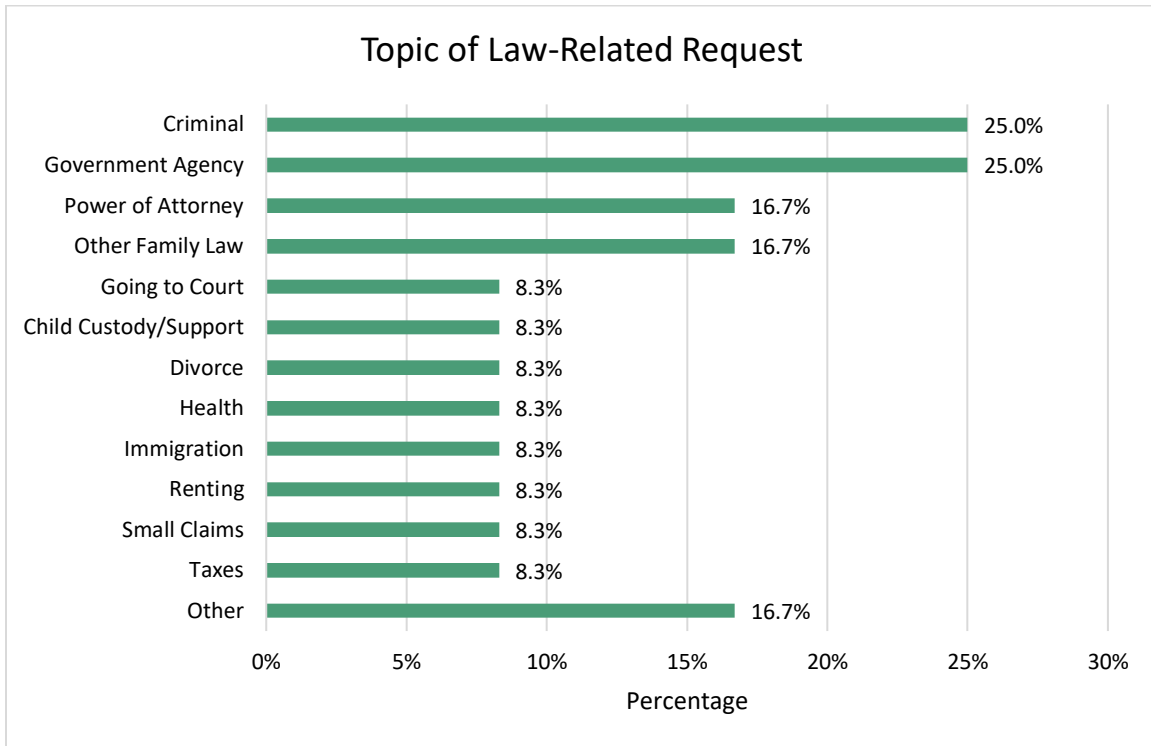


Figure 8. Topic of Law-Related Request

Participants were also presented with an opportunity to elaborate on the legal information requested. Four open-ended responses were received and they are presented below:

“Patron had been evicted by her landlords. She was curious to know what her rights were as she believes that she was wrongly evicted. We directed her to the "Office of Residential Tenancies".”

“Patron indicated that he had been having issues with SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) believing they were tracking his information incorrectly/inappropriately. We directed him to the Corporate Contact information for SGI and told him that we could help him get set up on the computer or help him find a phone number of someone he could speak to.”

“Wanted information on "consent", wanted to handle banking for her sister in hospital.”

“Wanted a copy of the Criminal Code of Canada for a class.”



4) Circulation Sheet

Law-Related Materials Circulated in Saskatchewan

Table 8 displays the circulation of law-related materials at each library branch between November 14, 2018 to December 14, 2018. The Francis Morrison Central Library (FMCL) had the highest number of circulations at 97.

Table 8. Legal-Related Circulation

Library Branch	Dewey Number	Total Circulations	Circulations by Collection Non-Fiction
FMCL	340s	97	97
CW	340s	23	23
RP	340s	22	22
AT	340s	21	21
JSW	340s	14	14
CK	340s	11	11
MF	340s	11	11
RM	340s	11	11
CS	340s	7	7
FMCL- CH	340s	2	2
PAC	340s	2	2
DFA	340s	1	1
FMCL - FPA	340s	0	0

Conclusion

The purpose of these four questionnaires was to gain an understanding of the first phases of the Saskatchewan Access to Legal Information project from multiple data points. The four surveys provided information on library demographics; public librarians' experiences with legal-related questions; the types of legal information requested by patrons; and the tally of all law-related materials circulated in the province.

The first survey collected aggregate data on library demographics and saw 10 librarians complete the survey. The libraries were generally located in the West Central area of Saskatchewan, with most in or near Saskatoon. Among these libraries, hours of operation ranged from 72 to 810 hours over three months, with an average of 291 hours. The number of hours worked over three months ranged from 4 to 348, with an average of 162 hours. The number of visitors per day ranged from 4 to 700, with an average of 120 visitors. The libraries' print size collections ranged from 3,561 to 380,424, with an average of 46,993. And lastly, two



participants reported on the circulation of law-related materials, with one stating they had 14 circulations and another stating they had 23 circulations.

The second survey collected data on librarians' experience with SALI and patrons asking law-related questions, with 43 participants completing this survey. Most participants were either library service associates or librarians and approximately 30% of these participants had received a law-related question from a patron ($n = 13$). Of all respondents, half felt neither comfortable nor uncomfortable with responding to law-related questions. Of the 13 respondents that received a question about legal issues during the project, 69% were found to be somewhat to very comfortable with responding to these questions. Over 50% of respondents further indicated that they did not have a problem deciding whether patron questions was about a legal issue and knowing what kind of law the question was about. In order to address these queries, librarians were most likely to direct patrons to library books or materials (23%; $n = 10$), refer them to a community organization (19%; $n = 8$), or refer them to a government agency (14%; $n = 6$). Participants were also asked what would make them feel more confident in answering questions about legal issues, with most participants requesting training about who they should refer patrons to (65%; $n = 28$), online reference material for patrons (42%; $n = 18$), and training about identifying legal issues (40%; $n = 17$).

The third survey asked specific information about the patron's legal-related query, with 12 participants completing this survey. Most librarians reported spending fifteen minutes or less on each law-related request (75%; $n = 9$). Furthermore, the legal topics generally involved criminal law (25%; $n = 3$), government agency (25%; $n = 3$), power of attorney (17%; $n = 2$), or other family law related topics (17%; $n = 2$).

The fourth dataset displays the law-related materials circulated in Saskatchewan, with the highest number of circulations at the Francis Morrison Central Library (FMCL).



Appendix A – About the Social Sciences Research Laboratories

The Social Sciences Research Laboratories (SSRL) is a unique and leading network of nine research laboratories made possible by the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the Government of Saskatchewan, and the University of Saskatchewan, including many of its colleges, schools and administrative units. As a research support unit, the SSRL assists faculty, staff and students undertaking research in the social sciences by providing access to specialized research infrastructure (computers, software and equipment) and research space (specific and multi-purpose), and providing access to research supports in the form of specialists with backgrounds and training in specific social science research methodologies (quantitative research; qualitative research; experimental research; surveys; GIS and cartography; social network analysis; among many others).

Our mission:

To provide shared research infrastructure and technical administrative support to faculty, staff and students at the University of Saskatchewan and beyond, to facilitate the design, delivery and dissemination of cutting-edge social science research.

The SSRL currently consists of the following laboratories:

- *Community-Based Observation Laboratory (COL)*
- *Experimental Decision Laboratory (EDL)*
- *EEG Hyperscanning Laboratory (EHL)*
- *Mixed Methods Research Laboratory (MMRL)*
- *Qualitative Research Laboratory (QRL)*
- *Survey and Group Analysis Laboratory (SGAL)*
- *Social Network Laboratory (SNL)*
- *The Spatial Laboratory (TSL)*
- *Video Therapy Analysis Laboratory (ViTAL)*

The SSRL has three objectives:

- To provide researchers access to shared research infrastructure and technical and administrative support.
- To enable hands-on research training opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students in the social sciences.
- To enable and support investigator-driven and community-engaged research.

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