

# Research on the Education of Legal Information Literacy in Libraries of Colleges and Universities\*

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**Abstract**—Under the advocacy of promoting the idea of governing the country according to law in an all-round way, university library plays an important role in the position of cultivating higher quality legal talents. In the face of the stratification of the object of legal information literacy education, the individualization of legal information demand and the diversification of user' means of obtaining legal information, this paper introduces "5W1H" (six analysis method) to sort out the work of legal information literacy education, clarifies the fundamental purpose of legal information literacy education, and puts forward the construction of omni-directional, multi-level and three-dimensional mode of legal information literacy education.

**Keywords**—legal information literacy; 5W1H analysis method; libraries of colleges and universities

## I. INTRODUCTION

Under ubiquitous information society, the research on information literacy or information quality has always been a hot topic in the library field. In February 2015, ACRL, the American Association of universities and research libraries, adopted the framework of information literacy in higher education, which gave new connotation to information literacy. It holds that "information literacy refers to the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is generated and evaluated, and a comprehensive set of capabilities that use information to create new knowledge and participate reasonably in the learning community" [1]. The new concept advocated by the new framework has a profound impact on the theoretical research and practice of information literacy education in China. As the base of information literacy education, the university library needs to change its thinking, reform the education mode of traditional curriculum education and extensive lectures, combine the "student-oriented concept" with practice, and actively research and explore the subject and professional information literacy education. Law science is a discipline with strong practicality. For law learners and researchers, law retrieval is not only an indispensable means and tool for law knowledge learning and theoretical research,

but also an essential skill for law profession in the future. Therefore, the current situation of legal information literacy education should be sorted out and analyzed, and the needs of education objects should be detailed in different levels. The development of legal information literacy education should be combined with the characteristics of the law discipline, closely linked with judicial practice, and explore the education mode with strong discipline adaptability.

## II. ANALYSIS ON THE CURRENT SITUATION OF LEGAL INFORMATION LITERACY EDUCATION IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN CHINA

Some scholars divide the research of information literacy education into three stages in the past 20 years. 1995-2001 is the preliminary stage of information literacy education, 2002-2010 is the deepening stage of information literacy education. Conducting information literacy education at the theoretical and practical levels since 2010, the introduction of embedded information literacy education has become a hot spot at present. [2] At present, as the subject embodiment of information literacy education, there are not many related research results of legal information literacy education. For example, Cheng Fang proposed "improving the subject information literacy education of college and university Library from three aspects: establishing the concept of user and discipline as the center, adopting the active and independent service mode, and constructing the knowledge base platform". [3] Li Meiyang thinks that law librarians should carry out the teaching work such as the course of law literature retrieval. Taking the library of East China University of political science and law as an example, this paper expounds the responsibilities of the subject librarians of the reform library, including the construction of professional database websites, literature information retrieval and push services, legal literature retrieval training and lectures, the compilation of Chinese and foreign legal literature retrieval textbooks and strengthen communication with the department.[4] Zhang Hong proposed that the teaching reform of the course of law literature retrieval should be carried out in different stages in terms of the teaching content, case teaching is introduced in teaching methods, online assisted teaching is carried out, and internship links are strengthened.[5] The research of these scholars mainly focuses on the subject information literacy, the subject librarian of the legal library, the teaching of the

\*Fund: This paper is one of the phased achievements of the research project "Research on the current situation of information technology use and information literacy of Mongolian College Students". (Project No.: NJTZ1706) of Inner Mongolia Department of education.

Classification number: G252

legal document inspection course and so on, which involves part of the content of the legal information literacy education. However, there is a lack of systematic elaboration and comprehensive &in-depth summary on the object, content and means of the legal information literacy education.

In practice, the development of information literacy education in Colleges and universities is affected by the imbalance of regional development, showing obvious regional differences. There are various ways and means to carry out legal information literacy education in developed areas, political and law colleges & universities, as well as university libraries with branches of disciplines. However, libraries in underdeveloped areas in central and Western China, especially those in non-political and law colleges and universities, are restricted by the limited human and resources, which mainly rely on the librarian to carry out through the curriculum education and the generalization type lecture, in the content specialized, interesting, individuation to the means way flexibility and so on aspect has the obvious gap compared with the former. In short, the practical education of legal information literacy is making slow progress in the central and western regions.

### III. THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF LEGAL INFORMATION LITERACY EDUCATION WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF "5W1H"

5W1H analytical method, also known as Liuhe analytical method, is a method of investigation, research and thinking based on the "Lasswell formula" (5W) proposed by American political scientist Harold Lasswell in 1932. This method is a thinking procedure to raise questions and make thinking and decision from six aspects: why, who, what, when, where and how. By clarifying the work purpose, work content, executors, working time, working space and working methods, which can help people to think about problems in an all-round way, improve work Efficiency and effectiveness.

Legal information literacy is a discipline or professional information literacy, which can refer to the ability indicators of information literacy developed by ACRL. As far as legal information literacy education is concerned, it is the fundamental purpose and significance ("why") for colleges and universities to carry out legal information literacy education to inspire legal information awareness, spread legal information knowledge, improve legal information retrieval ability, and enhance information morality and legal concept of college students.

The "who" in legal information literacy education activities can be regarded as "participants", which needs to be analyzed from two aspects. One is the leading executor, that is, the undertaker of legal information literacy education, mainly for university librarians, the other is the audience of education activities, that is, the object of legal information literacy education, including students, teachers and researchers. However, with the development of embedded subject services, the cooperation between subject librarians and professional teachers has deepened. Teaching and research personnel with good information literacy can also

become the undertaker of legal information literacy education.

As the training base of legal professionals, colleges and universities pay more attention to the legal research and practical ability of law students, while the legal information literacy of other students is not paid attention to. According to the principles and standards of legal research ability adopted by the Executive Committee of the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) in 2013, legal research ability includes five aspects: (1) basic knowledge of legal system and legal information sources; (2) information collection through effective and efficient research strategies; (3) critical evaluation of information; (4) effective use of information to solve specific problems or needs; (5) identify the ethical and unethical use of information, and understand how to discover, use or apply information related to legal issues. [6] how to obtain the required legal information, improve the search efficiency, judge the authority and reliability of information sources, organize relevant information for research and practice, etc. According to the characteristics and needs of the education object, the above standard content can be taken as the main content ("what") of legal information literacy education at different levels according to the requirements of item number and degree.

With the rapid development of Internet information technology and mobile communication technology, the rise of flipped classroom and MOOC education, the classroom teaching and face-to-face training of information literacy education mode bound by fixed time and place are facing reform and innovation. The concept of "Ubiquitous Library" is not only the embodiment of library information service everywhere, but also the direction of breaking the time and space barriers for information literacy education. Carry out ubiquitous legal information literacy education, and adapt to the needs of educational objects with more flexible and convenient time ("When") and space ("Where"), and increase the interest of learning legal information knowledge and skills by means of experiential, game and interactive communication ("how"), so as to improve the quality of legal information literacy education.

### IV. BASED ON "5W1H" TO BUILD A COMPREHENSIVE AND MULTI-LEVEL THREE-DIMENSIONAL LEGAL INFORMATION LITERACY EDUCATION MODEL

"5W1H" analysis method is applied in different disciplines and industries with different priorities. When it comes to legal information literacy education, education objectives, content, time, place and means should be designed closely around different levels of education objects.

#### A. *Focusing on the Needs of Education Objects, and Clarifying the "What" and "What" of Legal Information Literacy Education*

The object of legal information literacy education is divided from different angles, and the demand is subdivided. Students who are not majoring in law focus on popularizing basic legal knowledge and improving the ability to distinguish new criminal facts such as "network fraud" and

"campus loan" as the main content of legal information literacy education. The content of education focuses on the basic knowledge of laws and regulations as well as the fresh cases closely related to students' study and life. Through the general education of information literacy such as the retrieval of library resources, network resources and professional databases, the awareness and habits of students' active access to legal information are cultivated, and the ability to distinguish the authenticity of information and enhance the ability of self-protection of rights is improved.

Compared with the students of other subjects, law students have higher requirements in the study of legal professional knowledge, legal qualification examination, thesis writing, subject research, foreign language academic information collection and acquisition, and law students of different grades and levels also have different requirements on the professional depth, breadth and retrieval skill difficulty of legal information sources, law students should be satisfied as much as possible in terms of legal professional information access, search skills, subject analysis, and paper writing. Law students at the undergraduate stage should be familiar with and master the basic legal information retrieval tools, as well as the main contents of education and training are legal literature retrieval, full-text acquisition of documents, and document writing. For postgraduate law students, the purpose of carrying out legal information literacy education is to cultivate their ability to find legal information, control and use legal resources, and pay attention to their training on legal research thinking. Therefore, the use of a variety of legal information retrieval tools, the comprehensive use of retrieval skills, and the cultivation of legal information analysis and processing ability are the key points of information literacy education for law graduates, which will help them to further improve their ability to solve practical legal problems.

In addition, according to the author's research, teachers and researchers of law school have potential needs in "retrieval and download of frontier or innovative information", "selection of subject or research direction", "Application of project subject", "thesis polishing and contribution", "acquisition of relevant teaching resources", etc. The library can carry out the information tracking service in the field of research on the subject of law, such as frontier hotspots, relevant researchers, research institutions, research new trending and so on, which can provide professional, multi-angle, high value, timeliness and targeted legal subject information services in the form of subject reference and analysis reports and so on.

As another important participant of legal information literacy education, that is, one of the undertakers of information literacy education, depending on the rich information resources and personal professional literacy of the library, the librarian of law discipline should distinguish different education objects, make personalized education programs, and actively cooperate with teachers and student groups of law school, so as to improve the framework of legal information literacy education. At present, the content of legal information literacy education carried out by subject librarians is mainly reflected in the teaching of basic legal

retrieval knowledge, such as information retrieval theory, methods and strategies, legal resources and retrieval methods, ignoring the different needs of different levels of objects for literature information, and lacking the teaching of effective screening, analysis, evaluation and other legal empirical research content and methods. Therefore, it is necessary to form a legal information literacy education plan from popularization to expansion & in-depth and layer-by-layer advancement.

#### *B. Ubiquitous Legal Information Literacy Education Is Carried Out to Break the Limitations of Time and Space ("When" and "Where")*

With the development of 4G and 5G mobile technology, legal information is everywhere all the time, which has gradually integrated and gradually changed people's traditional habits of obtaining legal information. It is required to carry out ubiquitous legal information literacy education, take users as the center to carry out legal information literacy education anytime and anywhere, so that it can obtain the required legal information more efficiently. First of all, pay attention to the construction of ubiquitous legal information sources. First of all, pay attention to the construction of ubiquitous legal information sources. Libraries of colleges & university can seek to cooperate with database providers to provide systematic and comprehensive legal information resources services around legal hot spots, focus issues and scientific research & teaching focuses by aggregating a large amount of legal information, based on legal discipline navigation services. For example, in the process of doing legal empirical research, there are many problems such as the difficulty of open data collection, variable design, data processing, data analysis and continuous tracking. Cooperative research and development of empirical analysis platform is not only a necessary tool for legal empirical research, but also a necessary supplement to legal information sources. Secondly, strengthen ubiquitous publicity of legal information service. According to the research results of the author, more than 80% of the service items carried out by the library have been accepted less than 30%. It can be seen that the service objects have a low understanding and acceptance of the information services carried out by the library, which need to publicize the legal information resources and services through various ways and means, so as to improve the utilization rate of information resources and the acceptance of information services.

In addition, in recent years, the academic and scientific service advocated by the library community is a value-added service based on the discipline, with the subject information service personnel as the core, relying on the physical resources and network virtual resources of the library collection, with the user demand as the driving goal, facing the knowledge content, integrating into the user decision-making process and helping the user to find or form the problem-solving solution. [7] Legal literacy education is one of the important contents of information service of law discipline. Subject librarians should "embed" the legal information literacy education into the study, work and life of the object, provide the urgently needed subject

information resources at the right time, guide them to discover and excavate their potential legal information needs through communication and exchange, so as to continuously improve the content of information literacy education.

*C. Multi-level and Three-dimensional Legal Information Literacy Education Is Carried Out by Various Means ("How")*

Domestic colleges and universities have set up the course of Ideological & moral cultivation and legal basis and the public elective courses related to law, which are the current universal legal information literacy education mode for college students, with the purpose and main content of popularizing basic legal knowledge. As for the contents of information retrieval knowledge, retrieval tools, methods and skills are mainly completed by library entrance education, literature retrieval courses and various database lecture training. In addition, most political and legal colleges and universities offer legal literature retrieval courses in the form of compulsory courses or elective courses for law students. It can be seen that the current legal information literacy education means mainly adopts the curriculum model of literature retrieval education, which is the subject evolution of the curriculum content of information retrieval, and this model can no longer meet the personalized needs of all levels of education objects. In view of this, it is necessary to innovate the means and methods of legal information literacy education.

First of all, the traditional teaching model of legal information literacy education, can be used in the form of micro class, MOOC, flipped classroom, integration of group discussion, one-to-one "consultation" and other ways, breaking the shackles of the fixed teaching site, making the time and place for the educational object to receive relevant knowledge more flexible, It is conducive to timely and effective communication between the educator and the educational object. Secondly, in addition to carrying out various activities of general legal information literacy education, information literacy education can also be embedded in the process of law major curriculum learning, legal document writing, simulated court practice, subject novelty search and research. Learn from the information literacy education experience of foreign law libraries, integrate research services, carry out research project guidance, carry out targeted high-level and in-depth information literacy services of law disciplines, and further improve the legal research ability of service objects. [8] For example, the Harvard Law School Library provides users with information literacy services such as case study and empirical legal studies to help users master professional information literacy skills in legal case study and in the six key links of research. [9] In addition, legal information literacy education activities should be carried out in an attractive and diversified way. For example, collecting and sorting legal information legally & authoritatively and pushing it by Wechat soft text can make the education object obtain the required information anytime and anywhere; Regularly hold "legal reality library" to invite great figures in the field of law to guide and cultivate the legal practice

thinking of education objects with fresh judicial cases; Design legal knowledge game, carry out legal information retrieval competition, make fun of teaching and enhance the interaction and interest of legal information literacy education; also, carry out "legal professional role-playing" activities in combination with student associations, bring legal information retrieval knowledge into the role, and let education objects exercise legal information retrieval skills in "experience way".

In a word, according to different educational objects in different stages of their information needs, regardless of the fixed time and place, adopt all kinds of flexible means and means, choose the key content and the obvious educational means to stick to the long-term development, create an innovative legal information literacy education activity brand.

## V. CONCLUSION

With the hot research and development of "embedded" subject service in domestic universities, subject information literacy education has become one of the important contents of subject service. Introduce "5W1H" (six he analysis method), carry out legal information literacy education at different stages for different levels of education objects, and upgrade legal information literacy from a basic skill to the ability that the subject should have to evaluate and effectively use legal resources and handle legal information, and solve practical legal problems, so as to enhance the ability of legal knowledge research and innovation. Taking the information literacy education of law subject as the template, this multi-level, three-dimensional and sustainable information literacy education model is constructed still needs to be deeply studied and tested in practice, further research and practical testing are needed.

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