Research on strategies to improve the information literacy of law students in the intelligent era

Xin Zhu Gu[1,2], Zheng Hua Li[2]

1.Suzhou City University, Suzhou 215104, China
2.Sehan University, Southkorea 58447, Republic of Korea

Abstract: In the context of the continuous penetration of intelligent technology into the education field, improving the information literacy of law students has become a core link in promoting students' professional capacity building and academic innovation. At present, law students are facing multiple difficulties such as information screening, tool application, normative awareness and platform adaptation, which greatly restricts the career development of law students in the digital rule of law era. Focusing on the development characteristics of the intelligent era, based on the actual needs of law professional talent training, this article proposes four strategies such as constructing a text recognition mechanism and strengthening data tool training, systematically incorporating academic norms and optimizing platform course guidance, providing a feasible path and theoretical support for the reform of information literacy teaching in law education.

Keywords: Intelligent Era; Legal Education; Information Literacy; Teaching Strategies

Introduction

The rapid development of information technology is profoundly reshaping the ecology of higher education. Especially for law students who focus on accurate argumentation and data interpretation, information literacy is not only a basic skill but also related to future legal professional competence[1]. Faced with the explosive growth of legal information and the accelerated use of intelligent tools, law students' ability to obtain, process and express information urgently needs to be systematically improved[2]. However, the actual situation is that the screening is disordered, the means are backward and the norms are weakened. From the perspective of the intelligent era, this article systematically analyzes the core problems faced by information literacy and puts forward countermeasures and suggestions with practical teaching and technology integration.

1 Overview of information literacy of law students

The information literacy of law students refers to the comprehensive ability of students to identify, obtain, analyze, integrate, evaluate and properly use legal information in the process of learning and studying law, relying on the information technology environment. This literacy involves not only accurately understanding and judging legal texts, but also requires the ability to use technical means such as databases, intelligent retrieval systems and data analysis tools to deal with complex legal information. In particular, legal information in the context of intelligence has shown characteristics such as fragmentation, dataization, and platformization. The traditional model based on textbooks and paper laws has been difficult to adapt to the needs of professional growth. Information literacy is directly related to the depth of students' legal reasoning, their ability to follow academic norms, and their comprehensive competitiveness in the future legal profession[3]. Therefore, its cultivation must be deeply integrated with the content, methods, and technical environment of legal education.

2 Dilemma of Improving Information Literacy of Law Students

2.1 The fuzzy information screening standards lead to deviations in the use of legal materials

The first dilemma currently faced by law students is that the information screening standards are unclear, and it is difficult to effectively distinguish whether legal materials are authoritative and applicable in a complex information environment. In the intelligent era, a large number of legal texts, case databases, policy documents, and media reports are highly intertwined. Beginners usually cannot judge what kind of information can be used for serious academic writing or legal reasoning[4]. This fuzzy screening state has led some students to one-sidedly pursue information sources such as Baidu, Zhihu, and WeChat public accounts, while ignoring information sources such as legal databases,

official laws, and authoritative journals, resulting in distortions in students' literature citations and opinion construction.

2.2 The ability to apply legal data tools weakens the effectiveness of technical integration

In today's world where legal information platforms and AI-assisted search tools are prevalent, systems such as Peking University Law Treasure, HowNet Legal Database, Alpha, etc. have become important auxiliary tools in professional learning. However, some students find it difficult to effectively master the use and function expansion of such tools[5]. Many law courses are still mainly taught by teachers, while neglecting the systematic cultivation of data retrieval, semantic search and classification indexing capabilities, resulting in students' lack of structured research capabilities when encountering complex cases. This lack of application capabilities makes it difficult to horizontally integrate information from multiple databases or judge the internal relationship between data, which in turn weakens the scope and depth of legal analysis[6].

2.3 Weak awareness of academic norms leads to the misuse of legal information

In the process of legal education, some law students lack sufficient understanding of academic norms, which is specifically manifested in the messy citation format, unclear data sources, and frequent abuse of online information and even plagiarism. On the one hand, this reflects that the legal courses do not cover the use of literature and academic norms, and lack systematic explanation and training on the format of legal documents (such as GB/T 7714 standard, blue book citation format, etc.). On the other hand, students themselves do not pay enough attention to the legal use of information, and ignore the significance of citing authoritative legal documents and reviewing the source of information[7].

2.4 The slow adaptation of intelligent platforms restricts the ability to obtain multiple resources

In the context of the rapid development of intelligent education environment, massive legal resources are migrating from paper media to digital platforms and intelligent tools, such as China Judgment Documents Network, LexisNexis, and AI-assisted compliance review system. However, the actual situation is that some students are still at the primary stage of understanding and using these intelligent platforms, which is specifically manifested in low login frequency, messy search paths, and low function utilization. This slow adaptation is due to the lack of intelligent platform operation training in the university course structure, and is also closely related to the lack of students' digital literacy and technology transfer capabilities. As a result, students are unable to fully mobilize multi-source information such as legal practice, cutting-edge research, and case data, which affects their understanding of legal issues from multiple perspectives and the broadening of their research horizons[8].

3 Strategies for Improving Information Literacy for Law Students in the Intelligent Era

3.1 Constructing a Legal Text Identification Mechanism to Strengthen Information Screening Standards

In order to address the bias in the use of legal materials due to the ambiguity of information screening standards, it is necessary to construct a systematic legal text identification mechanism in the teaching practice. This mechanism should involve not only the identification training of various text types such as laws, judicial interpretations, precedents, legislative drafts, and academic documents, but also guide students to identify the authority level, timeliness, and applicable scenarios of legal information[9]. Teachers should use the "case-driven plus comparative analysis" teaching method to display legal texts from multiple sources (for example, official laws and online reprinted versions) side by side, and guide students to analyze their differences in wording, citation sources, version updates, and legality, so as to establish a basic framework for judging the reliability of materials. Course design should include practical training in legal information screening. Through simulated topic research, students can access and screen legally relevant materials from multiple platforms within a limited timeframe. Teachers can then provide feedback through a standardized evaluation system, helping them develop a sound understanding of the logic behind information screening.

3.2 Strengthening Data Tool Embedded Training to Enhance Legal Integration

Given the limited technical skills of law students in the use of data tools, practical training in specialized tools should be integrated into the teaching process, shifting the use of legal data platforms from a "supportive" role to a core component of the course. During the teaching process, a "task-driven plus tool-based" teaching model can be adopted to guide students in applying Peking University Law Treasure, the subject databases of CNKI Law, the Faxin system, and other databases to conduct legal research, summarize similar cases, and track literature in real-world legal scenarios. For example, for the topic "Evolution of Marriage and Family Law," a research task was designed covering the evolution of legal provisions, judicial precedents, and academic disputes. Students were then asked to utilize information tools in three databases to complete the development of relevant modules, ultimately producing a clearly structured and well-integrated report. In teaching, the application skills of each platform should be clarified, mainly including keyword optimization, Boolean logic operation and semantic search path setting. At the same time, AI auxiliary functions such as legal comparison and case recommendation should be used as guidance to help students grasp the process from "data retrieval" to "legal theory integration".

3.3 Systematically integrate legal research norms to improve academic expression level

In view of the problems of weak academic norms awareness and the misuse of legal information, it is necessary for legal education to integrate research norms education as a systematic content into the entire process of course teaching and writing training, thereby promoting the professionalism and compliance of students' information expression and academic citations[10]. Teachers can incorporate "micro-courses on legal academic norms" into the basic course structure, focusing on legal citation formats (such as GB/T 7714 or blue book specifications), citation logic, reference management, and special training to avoid academic misconduct. In classroom practice, "literature adoption scoring standards" should be formulated in combination with actual paper writing tasks. The scoring standards are composed of three dimensions: the authority of the information source, the accuracy of the citation format, and the normativeness of the analysis logic. Giving students feedback on each item will encourage them to actively internalize the normative awareness. At the same time, it is recommended to use document management software (such as NoteExpress, Endnote, and Zotero) for practical instruction, so that students can develop standardized academic habits in information management.

3.4 Optimizing Intelligent Platform Course Guidance to Expand Information Access

Given students' slow adaptation to intelligent platforms and limited resource access, the teaching guidance mechanism for intelligent platforms in law courses should be systematically optimized to expand from tool use to knowledge system construction. First, course design should focus on "platform-task integrated teaching," integrating platform utilization with the core course content. For example, in a constitutional law course, students could be guided to search for cases related to "the protection of citizens' basic rights" through the China Judgments Online website, analyze foreign comparative case law using LexisNexis, and compare legal regulations using Faxin. During instruction, teachers should clearly define the core functions and scope of application of each platform and avoid fragmented and ineffective platform use. Secondly, "information navigation task packages, etc." should be introduced in practical teaching. Teachers should preset thematic tasks (such as "judging the compliance with data privacy" and "judging data privacy compliance issues") to guide students to retrieve, integrate and analyze information on multiple platforms in stages, and develop cross-platform and cross-dimensional research capabilities.

Conclusion

Improving legal information literacy has become a key topic in the transformation of legal education in the intelligent era. Only by accurately identifying the weak links in students' abilities and making full efforts in text identification, tool application, platform guidance and normative cultivation, can legal information literacy be truly improved. Higher legal education should deepen reforms in terms of curriculum system, teaching model and evaluation standards, actively connect with the trend of technological change, and guide students to grasp diverse and normative knowledge, critical information capabilities, etc., in order to cultivate legal talents with compound literacy for the construction of a digital rule of law society.

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