

Importance Of Legal Information to Legal Education and Legal Research Through Academic Law Libraries

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how legal information impacts legal education and legal research in Indian academic law libraries. Legal resources can play a major role in creating awareness of legal research need. Once a library has a good collection, library users need to be educated about the different types of resources available and how to find it. It contends that legal education is essential for a democratic society and that the establishment of law colleges and National Law Universities has been a critical step toward its revitalization. Today, most of the law libraries are using computers for information storage and retrieval. Several international and National legal databases are available to explore legal information. Legal research is an art and requires proper guidance to explore legal information resources. It also underlines the importance of academic law libraries, which library vast collections of both print and digital resources that are important for doing good legal research. The study suggests that in the digital era, law libraries must provide a state- of- art of information services, with librarians serving as crucial necessary information give to users. The study concludes that in the digital era, law libraries must provide a digital information services.

Key words: 1. Legal Education, 2. Legal Research, 3. Role of law libraries.

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I. Introduction

Legal education is a broad and comprehensive concept¹. Former justice Dada Dharmadhikari has rightly stated that legal education makes lawyers an expert who pleads for all like the economist who plan for all². The importance of legal education cannot exaggerate in a democratic society. It is mandatory duty of everyone to know the law of the state as you cannot ignorance the law. Hence, legal education not only provides sufficient lawyers but also influences the citizens to know their rights and duties. Legal education in India is going through a very vital phase. India has the largest population of lawyers in the world. The new generation law school plays a supreme role maintain the level of legal education in India. Hence, the structure of legal education is becoming more and more particular as was imagined by the well-wishers of the legal profession.³ The introduction of the concept of national law schools/universities in 1989 by Prof. N.R. Madhava Menon was a great step towards the rejuvenation of legal education in India. But, the motive behind this concept is not fully fulfilled and there is a long way to go to attain the goals that were set up by the pioneers of legal education in our nation. As aptly remarked by then Chief Justice, K.G. Balakrishnan, demands it and people deserve a highly independent and professionally competent Bar at all levels of the system.⁴ It is the legal education and legal research that plays an important role in providing social justice. The Judiciary has also played a key role in increase of the standards of legal education through its timely interventions.⁵ Dr. Manmohan Singh, put it that despite having a few dynamic and outstanding law colleges they are still Islands of excellence in a sea of mediocrity that has been institutionalize over time. ⁶ The aim of legal education, side the Gajendragadkar Committee, would be to make

¹ S. Gupta History of legal education, 18th (1sted, 2006)

² Dada Dharmadhikari (1978) Lawyers role in social change, AIR, Vol. 3 105

³ Madhavi.R, G. Manoharrao and K Srinivasa Rao (eds) (2007) legal education India Challenges prospective (2 nd Ed), Asia Law House , Hyderabad

⁴ Balakrishnan K.G Justice , law day 8 SCC (Journal) P. 10, (2007).

⁵ Legal education in India : Issues & Challenges , Anakha K Vijay , Lap Lambert Academic publishing , Kalpesh kumar L. Gupta, (edited) 2017.

⁶ Dr. Manmohan Singh prime minster of India inaugural address of at the conference of

the students of law good lawyers who have absorbed and mastered the theory of law, its philosophy, its functions and its role in a democratic society⁷. Legal education has to address the multifaceted growth of law. Education is moving into the digital age. It is the legal education and legal research that plays an important role in providing social justice. Legal education and research is exceptionally important as it will mold the quality of the rule of law. The valuable experiences and excellence in legal education and research can offer to future lawyers are several. The legal research plays foundational role in both legal education and professional legal practice, equipping students and practitioners with essential tools to understand, interpret, and apply the law effectively. It is not only an academic requirement but also practical necessity that shapes the functioning of legal systems⁸. Academic law Libraries are vast repositories containing statutes case law, academic periodicals, legislative histories, constitutions and other legal resources both print and digital resources⁹.

Legal Education

Legal education and its importance to establish rule of law in society to impart justice does not receive serious priority through one can early study history of modern times which shows that lawyers are social engineers. Legal education is an indispensable link in the Indian legal system, particularly when Indian has pledged to govern the country by the rule of law. The object of the legal education is not restricted only with producing legal practitioners who are experts in litigation oriented skills, but also to play a vital role in which the lawyers are equipped with divergent skills, prospective and tools with a view to making them policy makers' administrators and social engineers.¹⁰ Legal education should be considered as professional education. It is also to be remembered that law is not purely a professional skill confined to courts and litigants, but it is a social science reflecting the social culture. It may be really being termed as an art which enjoys the capacity to make a lawyer the best pleader for the public at large."¹¹ Therefore Legal Education is to be imparted on a scientific basis in law schools, which will be of great value to the country and exercise a very beneficial influence on the practice of law as an art. To be truer, it is an investment, which if wisely made, will surely produce most beneficial results for the nation and accelerates the pace of national development.¹² Present scenario of legal education has seen that the emergence of subjects which transcend territorial and national jurisdictions. This makes the legal education to the global level. In the context of liberalization, privatization and globalization, we have to keep pace with international standards; the aim of the legal education is to attain social justice and to provide a fair, effective, competent, and accessible legal system to the citizens. Besides that, the aim of legal education should be to create lawyers who are comfortable and skilled in dealing with the distinguished legal system and cultures that make up our global community while remaining strong in one's own National legal system.

Vision of the Legal education

The vision of legal education is to provide justice oriented education necessary to the realization of values enshrined in our constitution of India ¹³. In keeping with this vision, legal education must aim at preparing legal professional who will play decisive roles, not only as advocates practicing in courts, but also as academicians, society activities, legislators, judges, policy makers, public officials, civil society activities as well as legal counsel in the private sector, maintain the highest standards of professional ethics and a spirit of public service. Presently, Legal education system should also prepare professionals equipped to meet the new challenges and dimensions of internationalization, where the nature and organization of law and legal practice are undergoing a paradigm shift and there is need for original and path-breaking legal research to create new legal knowledge and thoughts that will meet these challenges in an approach responsive to the needs of the country and the ideas and goals our constitution.

national consultation for second generation reforms in legal education on May 1, 2010.

⁷Nirmal. B C ,(2012) Legal education in India: Problems and Challenges , IIUM law journal, vol. 20 Issue No1, 147

⁸ Brown, Henry t. foundations of legal research and education, New York: Legal Eagle Press, 2013 p.146

⁹ Johnson, Claire, Legal research Techniques: Oxford : Law library publishing, 2017

¹⁰ Bhatia K.L (2006) Legal justice education vision playing for legal schools, , deep and deep publications PVT.Ltd., New Delhi

¹¹ Dada Darmadhikari. (1978). Lawyers role in social change, AIR Journal, Vol (3). 105.

¹² All India seminar on Legal Education "Journal of Indian law Institute" Vol. 14 (1972).75

¹³Dr.Justice A.S Anand ,(1998 Legal education in India , past, present and future Supreme court cases Journal, Vol.11, issue issue 3, p. 154-159

Inter Disciplinary Legal Education

Legal education to support the legal system in meeting its goals and objectives in the era of globalization, the legal profession requires crucial research inputs from the law schools. Legal education must seek to serve distinct inter disciplinary knowledge domains law and society, law, science and technology law, economics, commerce and management. To that extent, certain new subjects should be introduced in the 5 year course of LLB in the first and 2nd years. As Dr. N.R. Madhava Menon (a modern jurist in India) points out, the legal education should be interring disciplinary. Apart from BA, LLB and BALLB there should be B Com LL.B, B.Sc LL.B, and BCA LL.B etc. the purpose is that students should not force to study subject in which they do not have any interest. Through that way the legal education can be an interesting one. Moreover, for specialization in different fields it is very important. As example a lawyer specialized in accounting can be a good manager and a Lawyer specialized in computer application can be an efficient cyber law expert. Likewise, the legal education can be molded effectively.

Academic Law Libraries in Legal Research

The context of legal research today presents an increase of information, improved by an inflation of legal issues. Legal research is essential to have changes in law for socialization and betterment of the people and society. Now-a-days, legal research is not limited only on the analyzing of criminal behavior, activities of public, court, public prosecutors, legal practitioners etc. but it also includes the protection of environment of all creatures in the world and the development as well. As a result, legal research plays crucial role for the welfare of the humankind and is more important than others to bring positive changes in our society and at the end in the whole humankind. The objective of legal research, therefore, is to suggest suitable measures to eliminate them. there is an area for which there is no law at all the objective of legal Research would be to suggest suitable legislation for that area; but if does not work, its aim would be to suggest reform in the existing law be it enacted, customary or judicial. Legal research is the branch of knowledge which deals with the principles of Law and Legal Institution. Legal education and legal research plays a vital role in providing social justice. Legal research is one of the aspects of study of human behaviour, their interactions, and attitudes pertaining to any law under the research studies. Legal research inevitably involves the use of the books, pamphlets, periodicals and documentary materials in libraries. General source materials have to be consulted for the necessary background knowledge of the problem to be investigated. Knowledge of the previous findings in similar cases is also required by the legal researchers. All these source materials are numerous available in a library¹⁴.

Objective of Academic Law Libraries

Academic law libraries are vital hubs for legal education and research, supporting students, faculty, and legal fraternity. The law library extensive of legal resources, including books, law reports, and law journals and provide access to digital information. (E-Books, E-Journals and legal databases).¹⁵ The primary goal is to support the curriculum and research needs of faculty and students. The main aim of the law library is to provide a state-of-art information storage, retrieval and dissemination service and to provide online legal information service by various ways on the web online legal information to all law students, research scholars and faculty members.

Academic Law Libraries in Legal Education

Law Libraries have a rich tradition in India. The relation between law libraries and legal information has its roots in our common law legal system. The academic law library exists to meet the research and teaching needs of students and faculty and in some instances members of the public; but the primary patrons are students and faculty¹⁶. Legal information service could therefore be referred to as legal literature such as print, computer assisted legal research, and e-resource collections of laws in force, session laws, government documents, reference materials, superseded laws, foreign and international laws and other research resources. The law library has skilled people to classify and arrange the books in an orderly manner. A law library need not stock books on law and law alone. It has to stock authoritative books from allied branches like philosophy, political science, public administration; economics etc¹⁷. It must also stock language dictionaries, dictionaries of law, judicial dictionary and thesaurus. Law Libraries to help it develop the educational programs and services needed by law librarians interested in preservation, Libraries are designing their services and space to accommodate the

¹⁴Swathi Deva (2010) Law and inequalities 298, 1 st ed.

¹⁵Mallika, Soumen and B.K. Senb. (2008). "Information sources in academic law libraries in India," *Annals of Library and Information Studies*: Vol. 55, pp. 196-203.

¹⁶ Smith, John . Legal Research and law libarries ,Bosten:, law Press, 2010

¹⁷ Gandhi, M. k" Legal method and Legal Research" Allahabad Law Agency, Faridabad, 1992 Pp.3-7.

changing needs and the demands for technology.¹⁸ Library and Information Services in Institutional law libraries generally include lending, literature search, newspaper clippings, information retrieval by intranet, current awareness search in one form or the other and case law retrieval by databases using internet as an effective tool for providing the desired information to the users. Law and libraries the next generation of technology, the role of planning for the future development¹⁹. Information technology plays very important role in the planning process, particularly in the quick and accurate gathering and processing and development of data and to provide support for decision making. It is considered to be a tool which helps in economic development of nation.

Collection of Resources in Academic Law Libraries

Legal resources are migrating rapidly from print to e-resource format, or a hybrid of both. A formal collection development policy should be adopted to give the librarian a structure for planning purchases to meet the information needs of the academic legal Universities. A sound collection development policy prepares the library for making hard choices while ensuring that patterns have access to the resources they need. The law libraries provide access to the information through computer networks which have broken down space and time barriers. Therefore, the change is from librarianship model of information profession to the model of access to information. E- resources and services in Law University libraries electronic information resources offer unique benefits: compact storage, quick retrieval and delivery interactivity and flexibility in information transfer. In India, law libraries play a crucial role in legal education, practice, and legal research. These libraries contain primary and secondary collection of Books, Periodicals (Journals, magazines, newspapers), Indian statutes, case law, commentaries, constitutional debates, legal encyclopedias, legal dictionaries and other legal resources.

Legal Journals and Periodicals

Legal journals and periodicals are essential secondary sources that provide in depth analysis of current legal issues, academic discussions and emerging trends. Legal journals and periodicals play a key role in legal research by offering current analysis, commentary and debates on legal issues. They provide insights into evolving topics, emerging trends, and academic discussions that may not yet be reflected in statutory or case law.

Online Legal E-Books and E-Journals

A Library of International standards is liable to provide information services to legal researchers through online databases, e-books, e-journals and print books and print journals as well. Law libraries are still changed with finding information even if the format has changed. Legal research helps to understand Law with specifically. Legal research serves the legislature and such the judiciary by analyzing, critically evaluating the impact of the assessment of the laws and the inferences or interpretations of the laws by the court. Legal research is an art and requires proper guidance to explore legal information and the resources (print and e-resources)²⁰. The legal databases, e-books and e-journals for the benefit of the students and schools and academia, i.e, Hein online databases, Oxford legal research Library, J-Gate, JSTOR, Kluwer arbitration law, Lexis advance, Bar and Bench, Live, Manupatra, Westlaw, SCC, JUSMUNDI, Lexis Advance, EBC Reader E-Books, Cambridge university press, Economic and political weekly, ICSID Review, etc.

Online Legal Reach Databases

Indian and International legal research increasingly relies on specialized legal databases that provide access to e-resources. An e-resource is collection of digital content delivered to the user via the internet. The type of content included in e-resources include full text, images, primary research material and data in sound and film. E-resources also encompass abstract and indexing databases. In addition to traditional print resources, there are many online legal reach databases that provide access to case law, statutes and other legal materials. These databases allow researchers to search for cases by keyword, citation or party name, . some popular online legal databases include Westlaw, Manupatra, SCC Online, LexisNexis, Hein Online, Jostel, JUDIS etc.,

ICT in legal education and legal research

¹⁸Tewari, HN Legal Research Methodology (4th ed), Central Law Agency, Allahabad, 1997

¹⁹ Sunil Kumar. (2001) Academic Library Automation: An Immediate need, Library Herald, Vol.39. No.1 & 2, 50-55.

²⁰Shrivastava, Rakesh K. (2008). "Law Librarianship in India with Special Reference to the Judicial Library System," International Journal of Legal Information, Vol. 36, Issue 2, pp. 272-290.

Now a day the information communication Technology (ICT) is vital role in every academic field. The main objective of any law libraries is to provide access to Internet materials which are users need oriented and help in satisfactory their information requirements. Information and communication technology (ICT) has fundamentally reshaped legal education and legal research in India by revolutionizing how legal information is created, preserved and retrieval. Law libraries are at the forefront of this change transitioning from traditional repositories of physical books to ICT centers they blend print collections with a vast collection of digital resources.

Role of the Law Librarian

Every librarian is a teacher. Librarians constantly educate one on one, in class, and in training sessions. The legal law librarian teaches both the basics and specialized tools of legal research.²¹ The law librarian should be able to identify the different categories of users who are the using the collection and the library space. The librarian's position and library infrastructure must be critically evaluated to ensure that they continue to support teaching, learning, and research. Legal information is the foundation of legal education and Legal Research, allowing students, academics, and practitioners to get a comprehensive grasp of the law and its application. Academic law libraries are essential resources and access points for this knowledge, providing curated collections of primary and secondary legal texts, research tools, and digital resources. librarians help to curriculum creation by working with faculty to include legal research training into legal education. Today's law librarians are more than just custodians of printed legal papers; they facilitate access to an ever-expanding universe of legal knowledge, both in print and digital versions.

II. Conclusion

Law Libraries to help it develop the educational programs and services needed by law librarians interested in preservation, Libraries are designing their services and space to accommodate the changing needs and the demands for technology. Today, legal education became a trend in India. No doubt knowledge of law is essential for all the citizens of the country. But, a race to enter in a legal profession is not considered as good in any sense. Academic law libraries also need usage data to determine the best section of databases to meet the research needs of heir students and faculty. Present in digital era law libraries role can be classified as gatekeeper of both print and digital information. Law libraries must provide training and guidance to users on how to access and utilize library. The issue related to by Indian legal education system are not only taught and researched in India but also in many other parts of the world. Growing number of Indian Lawyers and scholars are involved in this effort. The changing role of academic law libraries in developing professional skills among the legal professional has been emphasized in the literature. While concluding, it may be stated that legal information is available in large quantities in a variety of forms and formats from different sources. There is a dive need to provide effective legal information services in support of legal education and legal research. There is need to have a global focus in hiring faculty for Indian law colleges and universities. With the development web based research and other online research tools and database, there has been a remarkable transformation in the development of comparative and international law research. It is important for law colleges and universities to have or provide access to legal material form jurisdictions all over the world. In today's technology driven world, law library patrons require that libraries use technology effectively to provide the best service possible.

²¹Esti Shay. (2008) "Ask a Librarian – We're at your service" The Colorado Lawyer, December, Vol.37, No.12.