IMPORTANCE OF INTERNET FACILITY IN SUPPORT OF LEGAL EDUCATION AND LEGAL RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

Legal education is branch of knowledge which cannot be compartmentalized as subjects are human beings with functional brains and not static machines. In the globalized digital age of today where press of button adjusted to codes can alter the course of action, 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. The internet and various digitalization initiatives have opened up immediate access to legal materials such as statutes, bills, bare acts, law reports, etc. Information is a key factor in day to day life. It can be considered as the lifeblood of communication and interaction. This paper discussed on importance of Internet facility in legal education and legal research, and importance of the e- resources present era.

Keywords: Internet, Legal Education, Legal Research

INTRODUCTION

Education or awareness of laws, characterize the lawyers as 'Social engineers'. "….man is inwardly a soul and a conscious power of the Divine and that the evolution of this real man within is the right object of education and indeed of all human life."

As we approach a new millennium, the internet is revolutionizing our society, our economy and our technological system, no one knows for certain how far, or in what direction, the internet will evolve. But, no one should underestimate its importance. In the new information age, we are learning to magnify brainpower by putting the power of computation wherever we resources are infinitely flexible tools; networked together, they allow us to generate exchange, share and manipulate information in an uncountable number of ways. The internet, as an integrating force, has melded the technology of communications and computing to provide instant connectivity and global information services to all its users at very low cost[1].

Internet is the vast collection of computer networks which form and act a single huge networks for transport of data and messages across distances which can be anywhere from the same office to anywhere in the world.

The basic function performed by the internet is extremely simple it transports digital information for one computer to another, and nothing more. In other words, at the functional level the internet is no more than a communications technology. The meaning of the information communication via the intent is completely irrelevant to its transport, that meaning is determined by the software which receives the information. Any type of information which can be translated to digital form can be transported the most common types of information are text, numerical data, images, sounds and video. Any additional functions which are effected via the internet itself. They are services which are provided by one or more of the players involved. All these services are performed by the exchange of digital information[2].

As legal education enters the twenty first century, the law school library, like other institutions faces a variety of challenges from the impacts of technology and globalization, as well as from the rapid rate of continuous change on all fronts. In many ways, the law library's long standing mission remains similar to what it has been, while the means to accomplishing that mission have changed. The responses of academic law libraries to a changing environment can be seen both in the increased attention given to building stronger collections in foreign and international law and in non-law materials, and in efforts to improve access to digital information through electronic publication projects and development of domestic mirror sites for legal information held outside the. In addition, many academic law librarians have taken leadership roles for general technology development and implementation within their law schools.

The emerging trends in science, and the rapidly shifting terrain of globalization of business and the ensuing legal provisions necessitate the legal fraternity to understand and adapt to the consequences of development in science and technology and thus enforce strategic planning of legal framework on par with the international standards.

Legal education is a branch of knowledge which cannot be compartmentalized as subjects are human beings with functional brains and not static machines. In the globalized digital age of today where press of a button adjusted to codes can alter the course of action, legal education has to address the multifaceted growth of law. It has to equip the building lawyers with the clinical digital techniques in contrast to traditional deliverance. The future age is an electronic era and law has to be updated to handle the challenges as well as new laws have to be drafted to find procedural and investigative tools to educate them to find solution in the jurisprudence sea of legal education. A lawyer with a multi- disciplined, multi process education would be able to contribution to national development and social change in a constructive way[3].

The Law Commission of India defines legal education as a science which imparts to students knowledge of certain principles and provisions of law to enable them to enter the legal profession. Legal Education is the process which equips the future lawyer, judge, administrator, counselor and legal scientists to know how legislative, executive, judicial organs of the government, are designed and how they operates. Legal Education is a

technique, arena and platform for rational, orderly and non-violent settlement of disputes and handling of conflicts[4].

Mr. Jeroen Vervliet, Director, Peace Palace Library, The Hague, Netherlands, gave an interesting talk about the rise of relevancy between knowledge and technology. Mr. Vervliet, noted the paradigm shift in the approach of the students and teachers towards technical education and the urge that drives students to research into hitherto unexplored areas. Information Communication Technology (ICT), its importance and the inclusion of Wifi, virtual classroom, web cast, video conferencing and e-sources into the curriculum of the modern day law student and research scholars have raised the benchmark of quality legal education. In conclusion, Mr. Vervliet, urged the law librarians to master all these techniques to survive and excel in the profession[5].

Legal research is the process of identifying and retrieving information necessary to support to legal decision making. In its broadest sense, legal research includes each steps of a course of action that begins with an analysis of the facts of a problem and concludes with the application and communication of the results of the investigation[6].

The process of legal research varies according to the country and the legal system involved. However, legal research generally involves tasks such as: finding primary source of law, or primary authority, in a given jurisdiction, searching secondary authority for background information about a legal topic and searching non legal sources for investigative or supporting information. Legal research is performed by anyone with a need for legal information, including lawyers, law librarians, and paralegals. Source of legal information range from printed books, to free legal research websites Internet and information portals to fee databases vendors.

Role of Internet in Legal Education and Legal Research

Internet is the treasure and ocean of worldwide information. It has changed the way of people to access information, exchange ideas and socialize with one another. Any information can be gathered from internet. The digitalization can improve efficiency in legal service and administration of justice. Statutes and judgments can be electrically stored and accessed through internet. With online information service forming everyday in every field of human activity, full impact on the Indian legal information has got to be fully known.

Internet is facilitative tool for more broad based legal education and legal research[7] It facilitates access to knowledge and research in a more cost effective way. However, students and academics in elite institutions of the country may rely too much on internet source for legal information and legal education.

The internet as means of mass communication has achieved a stage of development and influence in society that requires state involvement through the adoption of laws requiring its operation and further development. Internet is easily accessible. Internet is incredibly decentralized. It was originally meant to operate without control. It was not dependent on a set of broadcasting towers or satellites.

Legal academia and researchers in India have largely remained on the margins of the legal system. They can play a much more important role in coming future in which the internet can play a crucial role. Internet is major source for information. Access to material at a

relatively cheaper cost and with lesser time and effort is helping in the quality of education and research. Internet has become the most important source for communication. Ideas and views can be debated; laws and policies can be critiqued and discussed with a wider public rather than only legal academics. Internet also becomes an effective tool for empirical research to some extent as questionnaires are being sent across via electronic mail and information and views can be collected at lesser cost, time and effect. Therefore, cyber world is a boon to legal research and academic influence as it provides greater access to information from around the world, provide cheaper more effective means of communication within the country and across the border, thereby brigs people closer which facilities public discourse and discussion. Internet, in this way becomes an effective means of communication in the sphere.[8]

One of the revolutions in the recent times of computer history has been that of networking. A worldwide network of networks today is what has manifested as the Internet. Internet may thus be envisaged as "a large storage network of networks that may work as a worldwide channel of communication, a large storage of information, an information super highway and much more. The introduction of the technology prerequisite for development of open and democratic society, based on the right of citizens to free and operative access to information through the internet.

Internet and Globalization

Two key forces having a deep impact on society are uniformly recognized as being the Internet, leading to the digital revolution, and the globalization, with its deep impact on legal information. These two forces can be studied separately, but they are basically interwoven into the work of law librarians and access to legal information. The internet and digital revolution have led both to an information overload, with information coming from many different directions, and the simultaneous increased speed of information, where almost instantaneous response are expected from the easy flow of information. The context of legal research today presents us with inflation to information, augmented by an inflation of legal issues. Law reflects societal concerns and new areas of regulation have appeared, as well as new substantive law areas. Environmental law, bio ethics, information technology and internet related issues are just a few. These new areas appear in a domestic context[9]

Academic law libraries are valuable for imparting legal education. Legal education is a human science which furnishes beyond techniques, skills and competencies and the basic philosophies, ideologies, critiques, and instrumentalities all addressed to the creation and maintenance of society. Academic Law Library is a vital organ of any law colleges and Universities imparting legal education. It plays an important role in all academic, activities keeping in view the aims and objectives of the college and Universities. It is expected to meet the information needs of the faculty and students of the institutions. In addition to support their role in educating future lawyers, law colleges and Universities are the major producers of scholarly literature in law and rely on academic law libraries for both the primary and secondary materials need for research and publication.

The word Internet exactly means network of networks. The Internet consists of thousands of smaller regional network spread throughout the world. The Internet is referred as physical part of the global network; it is a giant collection of cables and computers, a global

communication network that allows computers worldwide to connect and exchange information.

Advantage of Internet

There are various sources of Information on Internet, may be free access of information or subscribed one, but it is evident from existing practices as has been established by various research that the Wikipedia, is one of the main source of information for the researcher. The Internet used mainly for communication, to gather information, education, entertainment, current affairs, online learning, commerce, publishing etc.

Benefits of Internet to Legal Education

- The Internet is data and information loaded, including a range of medium

- The search engines that are available online are, fast and powerful.

- The Internet is easy to use

- Students can become researchers because of easier access to data

- Students are motivated to share their work online with the world

- The Internet appeals to different learning styles

- Unlike paper the web can present dynamic data sources which change over time

- The characters in an e-mail don't get transposed or mixed up when they are sent over long distances

- Students can access libraries around the world

The Internet is a very big storeroom of learning legal material. As a result, it significantly expands the legal resources available to students beyond the standard print materials found in colleges/ universities students can access the latest reports on government bare acts statutes, gazettes, notifications, latest case laws legal articles and non- government websites, including research results, scientific and artistic resources in museums and art galleries, and other organizations with information applicable to student learning.

As Internet is a powerful resource for learning, and is an efficient means of communication, it is very useful in education and provides a number of learning benefits. It includes the development of independent learning and research and legal research skills, by improving access to specific subject learning across a wide range of learning areas, as well as in integrated or cross curricular studies and communication and collaboration, such as the ability to use learning technologies to access resources, create resources and communicative with others[10].

A world wide communication system that links millions of computers has been developed. Such a network is called the Information Super Highway of Cyber Space, most popularly known as the Internet. The Internet permits two way speeches which allow millions of people to communicate by either sending messages through their computers or receiving messages from their computers all over the world[11].

Online Legal Information Resources

All but the poorest or most technologically disadvantage Libraries have by now had at least some opportunity to experience the blessings and the challenges of the digitization of information. New means of electronic delivery have resulted in a revolutionary change in the way. That information needs are being met. Library patrons now enjoy convenient and rapid access to large amount of full text resources, being delivered via a common transmission vehicle and user interface, thanks to the widespread use of the World Wide Web (www). Improvements in remote access and authentication features have made distributed access possible to those new Databases outside the walls of the library, day and night. Library managers are also enjoying the freedom from tedious and repetitive manual jobs of Cataloguing Acquisition and other processing works with the use of computers and www the blessings technological revolution span over all most the entire information cycle and are discussed in following section[12].

Electronic Books

E-books are nothing but the electronic version of printed books. In addition to textual matters, the e-books consist of hyperlinks, search facilities and multimedia capabilities. E-books compilers compile also the source files into an easy one to distribute life format like HTML, PDF and RTF files. In other words, an e-book has electronic text and that text is showed to the readers visually. The electronic text is saved into a floppy disk, transferred into a CD-ROM, downloaded from the Internet or built into a palm sized digital reader project. Using e-publishing language on Internet like SGML (Standard Generalised Mark-up Language) and HTML (Hypertext Mark-up Language) can be represented and published attractively with multimedia effects especially for year books and encyclopedias.

Electronic Journals

The definition of an e-journal is elusive because there are so many variations. Some social science and law journals appear in the electronic form only. Others particularly those offered by traditional publishers are exact replicas of the print publication. There are projects, such as JSTOR, that digitize archival copies of journals. The Journal of Information Law and Technology (JILT), the journal of Law and social justice and global development (LGT), and the entertainment and spots Law journal are the examples of electronic law journals available free in the Internet.[13]

In this age of information technology, the internet has opened up a breathtaking in road into the field of legal research and it is also a cheap alternative to the use of commercial databases[14]

Legal Data Bases

Electronic fee-based databases

- Lexis & Nexis is one of the leading providers of comprehensive information and business solutions to professionals in a variety of areas legal, risk management, corporate, government, law enforcement, accounting and academic. The database provides access to 5 billion searchable documents from more than 32,000 legal, news and business sources.

- Westlaw is Thompson West's online legal research service. It provides quick, easy access to a collection of statutes, case law materials, public records, and other legal resources, journals and law reviews published from all around the world. The primary legal materials are available on jurisdictions of UK, USA and Commonwealth countries.

- Manupatra is an Indian legal information database comprising legal and business module. It includes case updates from the Supreme Court and all High courts, orders of tribunals, 1100 Central Acts with all amendments incorporated, notification circulars of 36 Government of India ministries including SEBI and RBI updated daily, full-text of Bills in Parliament and ordinances, agreements and drafts, committee reports, stamp duty, court fees, court rules, etc.

- INDLAW is an Internet provider of research modules relating to Indian legal, tax, business and regulatory issues. Indlaw is part of the Indian law online project which was launched in April 1997 as a collaborative exercise between professionals and academicians based in U.K, and in India to build an electronic legal library to enable solicitors, advocates, students and clients to have access to information on various primary and secondary legal documents like the constitutional texts, parliamentary debates, case law, parliamentary and state enactments and delegated legislation in both India and the U.K.

- E-Jurix is a collection of law information in India covering more than 2, 5,000 full-text judgments. It covers all Supreme Court, High Court and Tribunal decisions reported till now for the modules covered.

- Hein Online is an image-based collection of legal periodicals. Each volume starts from volume one. Most of the titles are from USA and UK. Legal Pundits is an Internet-based legal and regulatory information services

World Bank Resource Online-World Bank e-Library is an electronic portal of the World Bank's full-text collection of books, reports and other documents on social and economic development[15]

Internet and E-mail

The internet is undoubtedly an effective medium between the information professional and information .In present time, it is necessary to know how to access the facilities available through this new technology. The internet has become an expert too far, in searching to satisfy the user's needs.

Internet is the global information infrastructure which enables the professionals to access the information and communicate the users easily and cost effectively through a variety of media such as text graphics, voice etc, i.e. multimedia.

Impact of the Internet on Legal Research

Internet is facilitative tool for more broad based education and research. It facilitates access to knowledge and research in a more cost effective way. However students and academics in elite institutions of the country may really too much on internet source for information and education[16]Legal academia and researchers in India have largely remained on the margins of

the legal system. They can play a much more important role in coming future in which the internet can play a crucial role. Internet is a major source for information. Access to material at a reality cheaper cost and with lesser time and effort is helping in the quality of education and research. Internet has become the most important source for communication. Ideas and views can be debated; law and policies can be critiqued and discussed with a wider public rather than only legal academics. Internet also becomes an effective tool for empirical research to some extent as questionnaires are being sent across via electronic mail and information and views can be collected at lesser cost, time and effect[17]

The role of technology in the field of legal research has become widespread and researchers frequently take help of the digital tools for their research works. The world through technology has been made a global village and the legal profession cannot be left behind. The field of legal research has been well revolutionized by the technical developments in the digital era of today. Technological advent in the field of legal research has resulted in better and timelier research. The challenges are the cultural, technical and monetary demands that moving to a complete digitalization of source involves. With the advent of the internet and electronic publishing, new models of scholarly communication have emerged that simultaneously complement and challenges established systems[18]

When it comes to access to reliable information, technological advances have both negative and positive effects. No doubt, incredible information is accessible in an easy and convenient way through Internet. But it is raw and unfiltered because of lack of organized control of information on web. Using these checklist points a legal information user can verify the quality of information available on the web. In addition to making self evaluation of web information, the user can follow two general tips. To manage the mass of legal information provided, an Internet user can start with reputable web sites.

In spite of huge technological advances, access to information is different from use as a reliable source. There are both positives and negatives. An incredible amount of information is accessible in an easy and convenient way, but it is raw and unfiltered. On the web currently, there is no organized control of information, so it is hard to know what you are missing, or if the information you do find is accurate and authoritative and relevant to your specific needs. Researchers want easy, convenient access to the most reliable materials that directly relate to their research interests. This is the reason library indexing and classification tools and systems have been designed in the first place: to facilitate precision in research. Unfortunately, these tools are unavailable in full text searching. Full text online searching can yield a wealth of information, but it often lacks the proper context and direction to ensure the mass of information is highly relevant to the matter at hand. This problem can be ameliorated by resorting to web guides or background texts (online or in print), which provide analysis and summaries.

CONCLUSION

In this paper we have articulated the modern trends in legal education and legal research in the digital era. There is great shift from the manual mode to technology to the electronic mode of communication. The impact of electronic information revolution can be seen in many places of the world. The western countries, due to the effects of legal institutions and commercial enterprises, legal information system were designed and developed and made

accessible to wider clientele using state of art technologies. Even in India, the information has been provided by commercial publishers like publishers of Supreme Court Cases. Moreover, because of the country's liberalized economic policies, international leading publishers like M/S Butterworth have started publishing Indian Legal Commentaries. Because of the effects of Law Commission of India, the Supreme and National Informatics Centers (NIC) have made a remarkable beginning in the field of computerization of legal information services on the whole. It can be said that computerized information system in India is still at growing stage and needs to be improved. After effects of information explosion are already experienced all subjects and law is not an exception. The increasing numbers of publications and variety of formats have made the task of collection and development on one hand and providing access to global information on the other hand difficult and complex. The Internet is the key factor leading to globalization and information revolution as well. The internet also leads to the information overload and simultaneously speedily and free to information. Free access to law contributes to quality before law and access to public legal information. In the digital regime internet has proved to be one of the best development to legal education and legal research.

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