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Copyright Literacy as a Component of the Modern Information and Media Literacy in University Environment: Project Concepts

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Abstract

Introduction: *The diversity of platforms through which media content is disseminated and the digitalisation are changing the media culture. The future is oriented towards transcultural thinking and effective career development and that requires new skills. The new 21st century skills are essentials and are now obligatory for every student and copyright literacy (CL), as one of those skills, is a critical part of media and information literacy. CL and the modern media and information literacy in today's digital world go hand in hand and are built into the educational process together.* ***Presentation:*** *As a combination of knowledge, skills, practices for dissemination of information and knowledge in a new innovative way solve socially significant tasks that arise from real situations in everyday social life. In 2019 two scientific projects funded by the Bulgarian National Science Fund started at the University of Library Studies and Information Technologies, the first one entitled "Model for research and increase copyright literacy at the media in the university environment", financed by the National Science Fund of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria (Contract № KP-06-M35/1 from 18.12.2019, led by Evelina Zdravkova-Velichkova, PhD). The main objective of the project is the research and practical activities related to the formation of the CL of students and professionals in the media. The second one "A Conceptual Educational Model for Enhancing Information Literacy in an University Information Environment" (Contract № KP – 06 – H35/10 from 18.12.2019, led by Prof. DSc Stoyan Denchev, aims to study the state of information literacy, with a special focus of intellectual property literacy in an university information environment among learners and trainers by challenging a civil debate on raising culture on issues of intellectual literacy among academics, which is extremely timely and necessary.* ***The aim*** *of this paper is to study and analyse the nature of CL as a component of the modern media and information literacy. Emphasis is placed on the presentation of two scientific project's results and research activities in the field of media and information literacy, whose main objectives are related to increasing the competence of CL of pupils and students.* ***Methodology:*** *The paper will make a short overview of the project's concepts, drawing out the main activities, related the paper's topic.* ***Conclusion:*** *Thanks to the education in CL students will acquire skills that will prepare them for everything that future holds for us. Creating conditions for the development of creative thinking and copyright competency as part of the media and information literacy in a university environment will contribute to a higher competitiveness of learners in the labour market and to the promotion of an active civil society. The connection of both projects is revealed, as they are both aimed at those new skills, essentials for the whole community, especially in university information environment.*

Keywords: Journalism, Electronic Media, Traditional Media, Intellectual Property, Law, Media Industry, Copyright

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of new technologies, when information becomes one of the most valuable resources, effective information literacy plays a leading role, both in the personal development of scientists and in their ability to pursue basic scientific research. In today's information and knowledge-based society, we are witnessing the expansive development of information and communication technologies (ICTs), which has led to the globalization of information and a new "revolutionary wave", the so-called information wave or wave of knowledge. Some authors call this turning point "the second Gutenberg advent." The amount of electronic information flow is growing exponentially and is reaching the so-called information boom. As Alvin Tofler points out, the creation and dissemination of information has become a major activity and source of power for humanity.

According to some authors, the increase in the growth of electronic information flow is due to the advancement in the field of printing, the multiplication of traditional sources of information and their dissemination on the Internet with the use of web technologies.

Information literacy (IL) has become a concept in recent years and is embedded in many international projects, programs and initiatives, with the main task not only to promote information literacy, but also to promote it as one of the possible solutions to overcome the "digital divide". IG is one of the key competences that builds the fundamental knowledge of modern society. Her upbringing was the initial step in the ability and ability to seek and use the huge information flow.

The achievement of information literacy, which not only corresponds to the contemporary social practice, but also to advance its development, is based on adequate educational models. At the heart of each modern educational model are values, standards, methods and requirements, with the research process based on them being the main approach to training in the context of transdisciplinary topics. In line with this principle, the structure of educational models typically incorporates a specific research program, which includes innovative training, in order to achieve both its educational and scientific objectives.

Intellectual property (IP) reaches the everyday life of each and every one of us, as a part of information literacy in a university information environment. Therefore, awareness of the importance and understanding of intellectual property is essential for today's students, who are the future information specialists, engineers, researchers, lawyers, politicians, and managers of tomorrow.

In the university information environment students have to master the important IP related matter and its application in their upcoming career development. Students and universities have to know how to utilize and benefit from the unparalleled richness of the technical and commercial information, found in IP-related documentation. It is necessary for universities to make efforts to raise awareness of IP issues in the academic community, to research IP right, by engaging in a transfer of technology to industrial partners to create value and benefit for society. Last but not least, students and universities have to be aware with the consequences of the lack of knowledge and the inability to protect their intangible assets under the form of IP, including from risks such as misuse of foreign intangible assets, industrial espionage, etc.

The new information environment imposes new requirements on the competences and knowledge of the young modern professionals, graduating from higher education.

Basic IP knowledge are of particular relevance to the fields of information and social sciences, as currently they are the most dynamically developing. The main areas of realization of specialists in the fields of information and social sciences are: regional and

national media; government and non-government organizations and administrations; cultural, archival, and educational institutions. The specifics of the work in these areas are related to the use of a wide range of information resources and products, which is the basis of professional activity and condition for a successful realization. Here, however, the question of awareness and preparedness of IP professionals comes to the agenda. Their competence in the main aspects of IP, in particular the protection of copyright, related rights and industrial property, is an essential part of their complex information literacy, especially in regards to using IP objects on the Internet and the lawful use of digital content. It is here where the actuality of the researched problem is determined as the main goal of IP integration as part of the information literacy in the university information environment is to create a culture of respect towards IP among the academic fields and to increase the competitiveness of future specialists.

2. Copyright Literacy as a Component of the Modern Information and Media Literacy in University Environment: Project Concepts

IP is a special element of IL in university information environment, as to develop good skills, students must learn how to use effectively the wide variety of information products and services available in the digital space. The new information civilization including so called knowledge economy imposes new requirements for the competence and appropriate knowledge of modern young professionals, receiving their higher educational degrees. Especially it's characteristic of professional fields related to information and social sciences, as currently these sciences are one of the most dynamically developing. Knowing the specifics of the problem and typical country trends support the formation and development of proper strategies to improve and enrich the curriculum.

University of Library Studies and Information Technologies (ULSIT) has contributed to the successful dissemination of IP knowledge, as there are already 20 years of experience in IP courses for non-laweyers. ULSIT's contribution to the research of IP awareness in information and social sciences is indisputable, considering two projects that are fully focused on the research of future professionals and practitioners.

The first one entitled: "Model for research and increase copyright literacy at the media in the university environment", financed by the National Science Fund of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria (Contract № KP-06-M35/1 from 18.12.2019, led by Evelina Zdravkova-Velichkova, PhD). The main objective of the project is the research and practical activities related to the formation of the Copyright Literacy (CL) of students and professionals in the media. Media plays an extremely important role in the dynamic and increasingly complex societies of today. The information society of the 21st century accelerates the pace of development of human intellectual activity. Unique creative outputs are created in industry, science, literature and the arts. The audience has potential access to an unprecedented range of journalistic sources. The legal rights of authors of creative products in the media are intellectual property rights, which should be regarded as objective and subjective law, discipline and science. There is no discipline in the curricula of higher education in the field of copyright in the media. So far, no research has been conducted on copyright literacy in the media industry among students learning in the fields of journalism, media, public relations, communications, as well as the establishment of copyright competence of specialists in this field. Observations show that this competence is not at the necessary level, there is a real need for additional knowledge and training. Existing models and best practices in Europe and in the world are also unknown. Within the

framework of this project a study will be made related to the formation of copyright literacy of students learning in the professional field “Public Communications and Information Sciences” at ULSIT and students learning in similar specialties in other higher education institutions; will be studied also the educational content offered by higher education and programs that meet this range of knowledge and competences.

The main objective of the project is research and practical activities related to the formation of copyright competence of students and the creation of a concept for its further improvement.

The object of the study of this project is the impact of technologies on the transformation of media in an intellectual law aspect, in particular copyright literacy at media in university environment.

The subject of the study will be the disclosure of the state and peculiarities of the media as objects of intellectual property, in particular copyright and related rights, as well as their peculiarities.

The working hypothesis of this study can be formulated as follows: The lack of knowledge of copyright and related rights at the media in university environment and the increasingly obsessive tendency for the free use of journalistic material in the commercial digital space provokes the need for filling some of the gaps in media industry research related to the intellectual property aspects of the media industry, in particular copyright and related rights. The specific manifestations of the interaction between media product creators and consumers, their role as authors of knowledge, information and culture for society and overcoming the digital divide and isolation, and the need for this to be bound by copyright and related rights in the media – these components outline the relevance of the study.

In order to achieve the goals of the project, a training course will be developed in accordance with the professional direction of the students.

The second one entitled: “A Conceptual Educational Model for Enhancing Information Literacy in an University Information Environment” (Contract № KP – 06 – H35/10 from 18.12.2019, led by Prof. DSc Stoyan Denchev, aims to study the state of information literacy, with a special focus of intellectual property literacy in an university information environment among learners and trainers by challenging a civil debate on raising culture on issues of intellectual literacy among academics, which is extremely timely and necessary.

The role and place of creativity and innovation for modern societies has been repeatedly reaffirmed in various strategic documents, including the Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (COM (2010) 2020 final) and the European Commission Green Paper “Unlocking the Potential of the cultural and creative industries”, which, on the other hand, placed on a strong, competitive and diversified industrial basis with a view to building a society and knowledge economy, creativity and innovation are a common goal European Union, which implies a differentiated approach, reflecting the social, economic, cultural and educational differences between Member States. The future of the culture of society implies the development of new forms and policies that will change the current ones. The achievement of such a state of the culture of society requires the support of strategically important initiatives such as: preservation and promotion of cultural diversity, creative mobility, protection of intellectual property, enhancing intellectual literacy of society, and creation of conditions for development of quality education in the field of the cultural, information and creative industries.

This project is entirely in line with both the above-mentioned strategic documents and the National Research Strategy 2017-2030 as it aims to: study the state of IL, with a special focus of intellectual literacy in a university information environment among

learners and trainers by challenging a civil debate on raising culture on issues of intellectual literacy among academics, which is extremely timely and necessary.

Conducting research related to the creation of a conceptual educational model for raising IL, in particular intellectual legal literacy in a university information environment, is conditioned by a number of prerequisites. First of all, there is a limited number of in-depth independent studies focusing on the relationship between IP and IL in a national perspective; secondly, the need to explore existing models and best practices for IP training for non-specialist lawyers in Europe and the world; third, to analyze the educational content offered and the curricula relevant to this spectrum of knowledge; in the fourth place, it is necessary to examine the foreign experience of existing networks in raising awareness of IP issues; Fifth, the need to examine the level of awareness of human rights and social sciences in the humanities and social sciences, both among trainees and university educators. After all, it has to be concluded that the issue of the positioning of IP in the context of the broader framework of IL is relevant, timely and necessary. The problem under consideration is extremely relevant, partly concerned with various aspects by other authors, but has not been fully disclosed so far.

The subject of the project proposal is interdisciplinary and covers current issues in the field of social and humanities, law, formal and non-formal education, pedagogy, sociology and other areas considered in the context of the contemporary information society. The project puts purposefully linked research tasks at three levels: The first level is of a theoretical nature: the accumulation of factual information in the form of bibliographical references on the subject of the project; studying models and good practices for integrating IS education into a university environment in the social and human sciences, on a national, European and international scale; developing questionnaires and conducting two surveys among learners and trainers; opening the international survey and conducting it in Italy and Australia. The second level has a practical application and the main task at this level is to create a common and comprehensive methodology for raising awareness of intellectual property issues in the university information environment, disseminating intellectual property knowledge and promoting the objectives, activities and results of the project by: creating a dedicated website for the project; organizing and conducting a scientific seminar with international participation dedicated to the International Intellectual Property Day (26 April).

The third level has a methodological and informational nature, and the basis of this level is the development of a model for formal and informal intellectual property education. Creating new learning content aimed at students in social and humanities, as well as creating training courses for university lecturers. Promotion of the innovative model for the integration of intellectual literacy in a university information environment.

Performing a series of master classes, workshops and public lectures aimed at both students, PhD students and young scientists in the team.

In order to achieve the stated objective and the resulting sub-objectives, the project will use interdisciplinary research tools, including: a complex approach; method of searching, analysis, synthesis and systematization of factual information; descriptive and comparative method; survey method; modeling method, etc.

The research team of the project consists of leading Bulgarian scientists and the interdisciplinary problem of the project is covered by researchers with corresponding scientific interests, achievements and international reputation in the field of theory and practice of intellectual legal issues, which is visible from the scientific publications mentioned in their biographies, lecture courses and participation in expert groups, committees and projects. The capacity of the scientific team is complemented by a core of prominent international specialists in the studied subject.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion we could say that ULSIT is one of the universities in Bulgaria appreciated the role and importance of Intellectual Property as a stimulator of innovation development and step by step carrying out the necessary steps to disseminate knowledge and information on Intellectual Property. As can be seen from the above-mentioned project initiatives, SULSIT works really very actively to achieve its ambition to train students on Intellectual Property Rights in all three forms of education: full, part time and distance, as well as three degrees: Bachelor, Master and Doctoral. These two projects make the relation between the science education in one hand and the media practitioners in other. It conducts its activities in support of the initiatives of the two leading organizations in the world – the World Intellectual Property Organization and the European Patent Organization, and implement its initiatives.

Acknowledgments

This publication has been realized under the projects: "A Conceptual Educational Model for Enhancing Information Literacy in an University Information Environment" (Contract № KP – 06 – H35 / 10 from 18.12.2019, led by Prof. DSc Stoyan Denchev) & "Model for research and increase copyright literacy at the media in the university environment", financed by the National Science Fund of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Bulgaria (Contract № KP-06-M35/1 from 18.12.2019, led by Evelina Zdravkova-Velichkova, PhD).

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