A Survey and Analysis of Information Literacy MOOCs in China (Postprint)

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Abstract

[Purpose/Significance] Based on the practice of information literacy MOOC course construction in China, this study proposes effective development recommendations, aiming to provide reference and guidance for the construction and development of information literacy education in China. [Method/Process] Using literature research and case analysis methods, this study investigates 35 information literacy MOOC courses offered by 27 universities or institutions on well-known domestic MOOC platforms. Against the backdrop of the newly promulgated "Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education," it analyzes the current status of domestic information literacy MOOC construction in terms of teaching content, teaching models, teaching resources, teaching interaction, and feedback. [Results/Conclusion] Through the analysis of the current status of construction and application of information literacy MOOCs in China, this study proposes improvement recommendations that hold guiding significance for the construction and development of information literacy education in China.

Full Text

Preamble

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Investigation and Analysis of Information Literacy MOOCs in China
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Abstract

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recommendations to provide reference and guidance for the construction and development of information literacy education in China. [**Method/Process**] Using literature research and case analysis methods, this study investigates 35 information literacy MOOCs offered by 27 universities or institutions on major domestic MOOC platforms. In alignment with the newly promulgated *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*, the current state of domestic information literacy MOOC construction is analyzed in terms of teaching content, teaching models, teaching resources, teaching interaction, and feedback mechanisms. [**Result/Conclusion**] Through analysis of the construction and application status of information literacy MOOCs in China, this paper puts forward improvement suggestions that hold guiding significance for the construction and development of information literacy education in the country.

Keywords: MOOC; information literacy; course construction; survey analysis
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Information literacy constitutes one of the fundamental survival capabilities for individuals in an information society. As the external information environment evolves, the connotation of information literacy expands, and learner demands for information literacy education change, educational objectives have shifted from emphasizing learners' abilities to retrieve, acquire, analyze, and evaluate information to focusing more on developing learners' participatory learning capabilities, critical learning, and information sharing and acquisition skills within interactive social environments as both information consumers and creators. In terms of teaching models, to accommodate learners' new characteristics of online, mobile, fragmented, and data-driven learning, information literacy education must be embedded within these new learning environments [1]. After more than 30 years of development and accumulation, China has achieved certain accomplishments in information literacy education. In recent years, the rise of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) has brought positive and significant impacts to global higher education, becoming an effective supplement to traditional higher education. MOOCs, centered on learners, provide personalized educational services that fully stimulate learners' subjective initiative and enhance learning effectiveness. The unique advantages of MOOCs also present new development opportunities for information literacy education. To explore the deep integration of information literacy education and MOOCs in China, this study conducts a comprehensive survey of current domestic information literacy MOOCs, analyzing their construction status and proposing improvement recommendations to provide references and guidance for the construction and development of information literacy MOOCs in China.

2. Data Sources and Survey Overview

Information literacy education has long been a hot topic in academic research both domestically and internationally. In October 2017, the author searched

the CNKI journal database using the search expression "KY=information literacy AND KY=MOOC OR MOOC" and supplemented the search with sources such as VIP and Wanfang databases. After screening, 78 relevant articles were obtained, including 8 from 2014, 23 from 2015, 30 from 2016, and 17 from January to October 2017. Specifically, many scholars have conducted research focusing on the construction practices of foreign information literacy MOOCs. For instance, Zhang Libin and Wei Wei [2] proposed that libraries should fully utilize MOOCs for information literacy education innovation through analysis of information literacy education content and methods in American university libraries under the MOOC environment. Jiang Lili and Chen Youhua [3] investigated 27 information literacy MOOCs offered domestically and internationally, employing typical case analysis and expert interviews to analyze and summarize key success factors for university information literacy MOOCs. Li Jinfang, Liu Na, Wang Lian, et al. [4] selected xMOOC courses from well-known foreign platforms including Coursera, Udacity, edX, FutureLearn, Open2Study, and Khan Academy to investigate and summarize beneficial directions for the practical exploration of information literacy education in China. Regarding research on the integration mechanism between MOOCs and information literacy education, Chen Guoling [5] elaborated on the inevitability of integrating MOOC concepts with library information literacy education and the safeguard measures for this integration mechanism from the perspective of the current state of traditional information literacy education. Zhao Fei and Ai Chunyan discussed the opportunities and existing problems in combining MOOCs with information literacy education and compared different models of their integration. Ou Qun [6] conducted surveys on information literacy courses in five Guangzhou universities, providing in-depth comparative analysis of traditional information literacy courses and MOOC courses, concluding that the integration and innovation of MOOCs with traditional information literacy courses represents a new direction for information literacy education research. In terms of platform design and educational model applications based on MOOCs, Chen Xiaohong, Gao Fan, and He Xuemei [7] argued that information literacy education needs to break through previous teaching content and methods to establish a diversified integrated teaching model that combines the advantages of "MOOC" courses and "flipped classroom" concepts. Ou Qun [8] suggested organically blending information literacy MOOC courses, online teaching platforms, and traditional classroom teaching from four dimensions: teaching content, teaching time, teaching methods, and learning evaluation. Deng Jia and Zhan Huaqing [9] constructed a model for university library information literacy education under the MOOC environment and proposed implementation models including offering independent courses, embedding information literacy education into MOOCs, conducting flipped classrooms, and building online information literacy education platform resources. Chen Guoling explored the construction of embedded information literacy education models from three aspects: educational objectives, educational forms, and educational targets. Additionally, Huang Ruhua and her team [10-14] analyzed and summarized the teaching content, interaction models, course certification, and funding sources of existing information literacy MOOCs both

domestically and internationally.

A comprehensive review of these research findings reveals that domestic scholars have primarily focused on analyzing foreign information literacy MOOC construction, integration mechanisms between MOOCs and information literacy education, specific information literacy platform design based on MOOCs, and practical applications of educational models. However, there is a lack of comparative research against the latest *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* promulgated by ACRL, which is crucial for the construction and development of information literacy MOOCs in Chinese universities. Building upon existing literature, this study employs network survey methods to investigate the construction and application of information literacy MOOCs on major domestic platforms including XuetangX, iCourse, China University MOOC, and ewant. As of October 23, 2017, 27 universities or institutions had offered 35 information literacy MOOC courses on well-known domestic MOOC platforms (see). The launch of these courses has diversified the development of information literacy education, demonstrating the following characteristics: universities, particularly university libraries, remain the main providers of information literacy MOOCs; key universities offer significantly more high-quality information literacy MOOCs than ordinary institutions.

Overview of Information Literacy MOOCs in China

Course Name	Institution	Platform	Time Commitment	Duration
Information Literacy—A Required Course for Academic Research	Wuhan University	China University MOOC	3-5 hours/week	10 weeks
Go for It! Big Data Analysis Practice	University of Science and Technology of China	iCourse	6 hours/8 weeks	-
Literature Management and Information Analysis	Jiaotong University Library Promotion Service Group	China University MOOC	6 hours/6 weeks	-
Getting Started with Your First Report	Taipei University of Technology	ewant	8 hours/8 weeks	-

Course Name	Institution	Platform	Time Commitment	Duration
Information Power and Information Searching	The Chinese University of Hong Kong (Raymond Yeung)	ewant	3 hours/week	-
General Information Literacy Course: A Required Course for Digital Survival	Sun Yat-sen University	China University MOOC	2-3 hours/week	13 weeks
Webometrics and Evaluation	Beijing Normal University (Xiao Ming, Wang Wei, Wang Jingshan)	China University MOOC	1-2 hours/week	14 weeks
Foundations of Information Management	Ma Feicheng et al.	China University MOOC	2-3 hours/week	12 weeks
Information Literacy: A New Engine for Efficiency Improvement and Lifelong Learning	Sichuan Normal University (Zhou Jianfang et al.)	China University MOOC	1 hour/week	9 weeks
Five Practices of Information-based Teaching Capability	South China Normal University (Jiao Jianli et al.)	China University MOOC	2-3 hours/week	17 weeks
University Information Technology Foundation	Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University	China University MOOC	-	-

Course Name	Institution	Platform	Time Commitment	Duration
Database Technology and Application	Northeast Normal University	China University MOOC	2-2.5 hours/week	4 weeks
Art Literature Retrieval and Utilization	China Academy of Art	China University MOOC	-	-
Personal Knowledge Management	University of Science and Technology of China	China University MOOC	3-5 hours/week	20 weeks
Innovative Thinking and Practice	University of Science and Technology of China	China University MOOC	-	-
Information Retrieval and Utilization	Southwest Jiaotong University	China University MOOC	-	-
Literature Information Retrieval	Shandong University of Technology	China University MOOC	-	-
Biomedical Literature and Web Resources	Chengdu Aeronautic Polytechnic	China University MOOC	-	-
Visual Culture and Media Literacy	China Medical University	China University MOOC	-	-
Information Organization and Utilization	Nanjing Normal University	China University MOOC	-	-
Information Management	North China Electric Power University	China University MOOC	-	-
Electronic Information Retrieval	Northeast Normal University	China University MOOC	-	-
Library and Literature Retrieval	Northeast Normal University	China University MOOC	-	-

Course Name	Institution	Platform	Time Commitment	Duration
Library Future Star Employment Guidance	Central China Normal University	China University MOOC	-	-
Academic Research and Literature	Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics	China University MOOC	-	-
Literature Information Retrieval and Thesis Writing	Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University	China University MOOC	-	-
Information Retrieval and Analysis Utilization	Guangzhou University of Chinese Medicine	China University MOOC	-	-
Information Retrieval and Utilization	-	China University MOOC	-	-
EffectiveInformationSearchingandManagement	-	-	-	-
Medical Information Literacy and Information Retrieval in the All-Media Era	-	-	-	-
Web Information Resource Acquisition and Management	-	-	-	-
Information Retrieval and Utilization	-	-	-	-

3. Construction and Analysis of Domestic Information Literacy MOOCs

3.1 Deepening and Broadening of Teaching Content

In the big data and new media environment, the connotation of information literacy has been re-examined, emphasizing that learners, as information consumers and creators, should not only master the abilities to retrieve, acquire, analyze, and evaluate information but also focus more on engaging in participatory learning within interactive social environments and possessing critical learning, sharing, and information acquisition capabilities. The expansion and transformation of information literacy connotation have led to a trend of deepening and broadening in the content and scope of information literacy teaching. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) officially released the *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* (hereinafter referred to as "the Framework") in February 2015. As an important guiding document for information literacy education internationally [15], this Framework is based on the core concept of metaliteracy, emphasizes metacognition, and proposes threshold concepts—core and foundational concepts within various disciplinary fields. Centered on threshold concepts, the Framework proposes that new information literacy teaching content encompasses six elements [16]: (1) **Authority Is Constructed and Contextual**, which enables learners to maintain an open mind, respect diverse values, pursue accuracy and reliability, respect intellectual property rights and academic norms, and critically evaluate authoritative perspectives objectively. (2) **Information Creation as a Process**, which enables learners to comprehensively understand various traditional and emerging forms and functional characteristics of information, recognize the value of different types of information products, match information to their needs at different stages and scenarios of disciplinary development, and accurately select and utilize various information products to achieve effective information communication and dissemination. (3) **Information Has Value**, which enables learners to understand basic intellectual property knowledge, recognize the value of fair use and open access resources, understand individual rights and obligations in information activities, and follow ethical norms in information activities. (4) **Research as Inquiry**, which enables learners to master basic information organization methods, develop certain information organization capabilities, cultivate the ability to effectively discover and refine research questions in scientific research, select and adopt appropriate research methods for problems, evaluate collected information, and draw reasonable conclusions through information analysis and deduction. (5) **Scholarship as Conversation**, which enables learners to understand the importance of academic communication, possess the ability to participate in academic dialogue, and adhere to relevant information ethics and norms during academic conversations. (6) **Searching as Strategic Exploration**, which enables learners to recognize the complexity of the retrieval process, accurately identify information sources according to their needs, select matching retrieval tools, formulate and adjust

retrieval strategies based on retrieval results, and manage retrieval results [17].

A comprehensive review of the teaching objectives and content of existing domestic information literacy MOOCs reveals that they are basically designed around and cover the six elements proposed by the Framework, all containing a general knowledge system for information literacy education based on the Framework, such as characteristics of information, roles of information users, information ethics, connotation of information literacy, information retrieval strategies, and the importance of combining information literacy education with academic contexts. This content sufficiently meets the learning needs of novice users and helps cultivate their basic information skills. However, for advanced users who already possess certain information skills, existing teaching content lacks analysis of different academic contexts and is relatively deficient in applying the threshold concept framework to information literacy course design. It has not been integrated into these users' academic research and thus cannot closely align with their learning and research needs.

3.2 Diversification and Personalization of Teaching Models

The expansion of information literacy connotation has brought about changes in information literacy teaching models. In terms of teaching models, the Framework requires that information literacy education be integrated into learners' academic activities at different stages through progressive and systematic approaches. The investigation reveals that China's information literacy MOOCs have broken the single teaching model of traditional information literacy education by combining the advantages of traditional face-to-face classroom teaching, online teaching platforms, and MOOCs. This has resulted in diverse and personalized teaching models that greatly improve teaching effectiveness. The specific teaching models mainly include the following four types:

(1) **Inquiry-based teaching**. According to reasonable course arrangements, interactive Q&A methods are employed to promote learners' exploration of problem essence, effectively enhancing learners' subjective initiative and ability to solve practical problems. Under the inquiry-based teaching model, instructors pre-arrange question nodes and replace "cramming" teaching with guided Q&A methods to more effectively improve information literacy teaching outcomes.

(2) **Gamified teaching**. Information literacy courses are highly practical and applicable with a broad audience. To enhance the 趣味性 (interest/engagement) of teaching content, most domestic information literacy MOOCs have redesigned their teaching language and structural systems. First, they use accessible language to interpret various terms and concepts in teaching. Second, they employ a large number of interesting film clips and popular videos as teaching materials in production, making the content engaging. Finally, they extensively use social media for exchange and discussion, with topics originating from the curriculum yet remaining

close to daily life. Actual survey results show that learner participation is very high, demonstrating strong learning enthusiasm.

(3) **Practice-based teaching**. To maximize the practical characteristics of information literacy education, information literacy MOOCs have added numerous practical cases, encouraging learner participation through prizes or scoring. These practical cases are distributed across different teaching modules, with case designs emphasizing different aspects to comprehensively assess learners' abilities in information analysis, retrieval, acquisition, and evaluation.

(4) **Embedded teaching**. The investigation found that China's information literacy MOOCs are currently achieving the integration of information literacy with professional courses by creating problem-oriented professional learning scenarios within information literacy courses and embedding content from different majors or disciplines into information literacy teaching. Examples include "Art Literature Retrieval and Utilization" offered by the China Academy of Art, "Biomedical Literature and Web Resources" offered by China Medical University, and "Medical Information Literacy and Information Retrieval in the All-Media Era" offered by Sun Yat-sen University—all successful practices of embedded information literacy teaching. However, this embedding remains superficial and incomplete, ignoring the multi-dimensional differences among information literacy teaching models at different levels and failing to accommodate the characteristics of tasks faced by different audiences at various stages of teaching and research.

3.3 Rich Media and Modularization of Teaching Resources

Rich media encompasses diverse forms of digital interactive media, representing a combined and interactive information carrier modality that includes text, images, video, audio, etc. It is not a specific form of internet media but can enhance information dissemination effectiveness. Traditional information literacy teaching primarily employs PPT presentations and instructor lectures. In contrast, MOOC platforms typically integrate rich media resource interfaces, perfectly blending various forms of rich media materials, integrating all available teaching resources, and demonstrating stronger inclusiveness and three-dimensionality, allowing instructors to add needed media for auxiliary teaching anytime inside or outside the classroom.

A comprehensive review of existing domestic information literacy MOOCs shows that they have all achieved rich media transformation of teaching resources. On one hand, this breaks through the limitations of traditional static teaching resources, making teaching forms and content more diverse and enriched [19], thereby strengthening learners' understanding and mastery of knowledge. On the other hand, the embedding of rich media also stimulates learners' interest in learning and innovative thinking, improving teaching effectiveness. Further-

more, teaching resources in information literacy MOOCs are modularly organized based on unit teaching content and different target audiences, which not only expands learner applicability but also facilitates instructors' flexible assembly of teaching content, enhances adaptability and applicability, and promotes personalized learning for learners. For example, in the "General Information Literacy Course: A Required Course for Digital Survival" MOOC offered by Sun Yat-sen University, audience behaviors are segmented into life scenarios, learning and research contexts, workplace entry, and entrepreneurship pathways, with course content progressing from basic to advanced levels, highly aligning with the learning objectives of learners at different stages.

3.4 Benign Teaching Interaction and Feedback Mechanisms

The Framework emphasizes collaborative cooperation among librarians, instructors, and other institutional partners in information literacy teaching and research, greatly enhancing learners' enthusiasm for participating in teaching and research through multi-channel interactions. It also recommends developing course resources according to local conditions and conducting teaching evaluation and feedback based on actual circumstances to promote mutual improvement between teaching and learning. Compared with traditional classroom teaching, MOOCs emphasize interactive learning that extends beyond classroom activities to before and after class. The investigation found that interaction models in China's information literacy MOOCs are divided into online and offline interactions. Currently, all surveyed information literacy MOOCs have discussion areas or forums where participating learners can ask questions, discuss learning content, and share learning experiences. In the "Literature Management and Information Analysis" MOOC offered by the University of Science and Technology of China, learners can engage in real-time online communication with teaching assistants through the chat area on the course page while watching live broadcasts. After class, instructors also participate in real-time interactions. Outside of live broadcast times, the course utilizes forums for exchanges, distributing courseware, and achieving the accumulation of high-quality resources [20]. Additionally, most instructors have established dedicated interactive groups or communities for information literacy courses using social media such as Weibo, WeChat, and QQ, with subdivisions by topic to facilitate instructors' instant responses to learners' questions or ideas and achieve real-time communication.

The investigation also found that some information literacy MOOCs provide offline interactions. For example, Wuhan University's "Information Retrieval" MOOC holds offline meetups and sends gifts such as commemorative postcards and textbooks with instructors' autographs to actively participating learners.

Currently, China's information literacy MOOCs have all established diversified and scientific teaching evaluation systems, specifically manifested in: comprehensive evaluation indicators with greater emphasis on evaluating the teaching process, including pre-class self-learning assessment, in-class learning commu-

nication assessment, and post-class learning effectiveness evaluation; scientific evaluation methods primarily based on records of instructors' teaching processes and learners' learning processes by network teaching platforms, making evaluation results more accurate and objective; and diversified evaluation subjects, including not only teacher-student mutual evaluation but also learner self-evaluation and peer evaluation, making teaching evaluation more fair and equitable.

The investigation also found that librarians, instructors, and other institutional partners have not yet established extensive and close cooperative relationships in information literacy teaching and research, and the participation of disciplinary professional teachers and researchers in information literacy teaching activities is not high, which is not conducive to achieving mutual penetration and improvement between professional teaching and information literacy education.

4. Reflections and Implications

With the continuous deepening of information literacy connotation and the promotion of new educational models represented by MOOCs, the content and models of information literacy teaching at home and abroad are undergoing tremendous changes. The investigation reveals that in terms of current domestic information literacy MOOC construction, university libraries remain the main construction entities, teaching content focuses primarily on general knowledge of information literacy education based on the Framework, lacking analysis of different academic contexts and remaining relatively deficient in applying the threshold concept framework to information literacy course design. Although teaching models have demonstrated characteristics of diversification and personalization, the teaching capacity and effectiveness of embedded information literacy education still need improvement. In information literacy teaching activities, good, extensive, stable, and close cooperative relationships should be established with disciplinary professional teachers, researchers, learners, and academic roles to promote deep integration between professional teaching and information literacy education. Additionally, information literacy MOOC platforms require further optimization and improvement.

4.1 Integrate Course Resources and Enrich Teaching Content

Information literacy educators should be guided by the threshold concepts of information literacy in the Framework, focusing on cultivating learners' abilities to retrieve, acquire, and evaluate information, helping learners engage in participatory learning within interactive social environments, and emphasizing the development of learners' critical learning, sharing, and information acquisition capabilities. They should continuously sort out and enrich teaching content, integrate course resources, develop course guidelines, and design teaching projects. When designing and organizing information literacy teaching content, attention should be paid to the following two points:

(1) **Ground in learner needs and support ubiquitous learning.** Centered on learners, information literacy educators should communicate multiple times with professional teachers and learners through interviews and surveys to clarify learners' learning and professional development needs, thereby determining teaching themes and nodes. Teaching should be combined with learners' research and innovation activities, focusing on the goal of improving learners' information literacy knowledge, skills, and behaviors to develop course guidelines and design relevant course content. Efforts should be made to integrate the cultivation and improvement of information literacy into all stages of learners' studies, enabling teaching activities to respond to and support learners' learning needs, allowing learners to obtain needed learning information and support anytime and anywhere.

(2) **Focus on improving practical skills and support situated learning.** It should be recognized that information literacy education emphasizes situated teaching. To implement the objectives of the Framework, greater attention should be paid to creating an active and collaborative learning environment for learners, adopting problem-based research teaching strategies, fully utilizing the advantages of MOOCs, and designing teaching projects based on authentic contexts of various information activities integrated into the teaching process and learners' contexts. This enables learners to fully participate in every teaching 环节 (segment/phase), enhances their understanding of information needs and behaviors generated in scientific research and innovation activities, and thereby improves learners' ability to solve practical problems.

4.2 Innovate Teaching Models and Embed in Professional Education

Facing the educational technology innovations brought about by the rise of MOOCs, as well as reforms in educational concepts and teaching models, we should fully utilize the current network environment and information communication technologies. Through MOOC platforms, we should seize the opportunity of embedded education, break the boundaries between professional teaching and information literacy education, cooperate with professional teachers to develop concept maps, design group projects, discussions, and assignments, integrate information literacy-related courses into the professional curriculum system, and timely provide learners with learning resources, information methods, and other aspects of help and support related to their majors. This achieves mutual penetration and improvement between professional teaching and information literacy, enabling learners to gradually enhance their information utilization and scientific research innovation capabilities while mastering professional course knowledge.

4.3 Optimize Platform Construction and Unify Retrieval Access

Currently, China's information literacy MOOC platforms mainly include XuetangX, iCourse, China University MOOC, and ewant. These MOOC platforms primarily provide specific retrieval access based on disciplinary classification. The survey shows that information literacy MOOCs are usually classified under management or education disciplines, while some platforms classify them under computer science. If searching by keywords, one needs to simultaneously input "information literacy," "information competence," "data literacy," "literature retrieval," "information technology," and "information retrieval" to comprehensively find corresponding MOOC courses. Learners need to search through different columns to gain a comprehensive understanding, which is not convenient for retrieval and use. In view of this, MOOC platform construction should be optimized, retrieval pathways should be uniformly planned, and a classification label of "information literacy education" should be established to facilitate learners' quick understanding and acquisition of resources and improve utilization rates. It is worth mentioning that the iCourse platform is building a "Library (Science) Online Course Alliance" that currently includes 26 related courses, making information literacy MOOCs on the iCourse platform relatively concentrated and convenient for learners to find and use.

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Investigation and Analysis of the Information Literacy MOOC in China

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Abstract: [Purpose/significance] Based on the practice of Chinese information literacy MOOCs, this paper puts forward some effective suggestions to the building and development of information literacy. [Method/process] By applying the method of literature research and case analysis, it investigates 35 information literacy MOOCs of the domestic main MOOC platforms. And with comparison of the new "Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education," in terms of teaching content, teaching mode, teaching resources, teaching interaction and feedback, etc., it analyzes the present situation of domestic information literacy MOOCs construction. [Result/conclusion] By analyzing the current situation of construction and application, this paper puts forward some suggestions to improve the construction and development of information literacy education.

Keywords: MOOC; information literacy; course construction; survey analysis

Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.