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Prasanna S,

Chairman of Institute of Legal Education (Established by I.L.E. Educational Trust)

No. 08, Arul Nagar, Seera Thoppu,

Maudhanda Kurichi, Srirangam,

Tiruchirappalli – 620102

Phone : +91 94896 71437 – info@iledu.in / Chairman@iledu.in



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IS IT EASY, BEING A LAW STUDENT?

AUTHOR- SARWAR NAGPAL, STUDENT AT ILS LAW COLLEGE, PUNE

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Abstract

Law has always been a powerful weapon to change the world and bring changes in society. Changes in society lead to evolution. Both law and changes in society are inter-dependent on each other. The research Article covers the contemporary issues in legal education and issues faced by Law students in general. The article covers the issues from the starting point i.e. Law Entrance exams and covers important topics infrastructure, cost of education etc. It also analysis what could be the consequences of low- quality legal education on field of law and on society. With rapid technological advancements and emergence of Artificial Intelligence, it is important to adapt the new changes and skills. The article discusses the new dynamics in field of law and the issues which can arise from it

Keywords – Law, Entrance Exams, CLAT, AILET, NLU's, teaching faculty, curriculum, syllabi, cost of education, technological advancements

I. Introduction

Law is an instrument for governing people, society and world. It is the most basic concept essential for society to function. That's why we found its presence since ancient times. From ancient time to contemporary times, society had evolved a lot. So, it was also important for lawmakers to evolve the law according to changes in society. As Law and Legal education are inter-related concept, the evolution had brought change in Legal Education as well. Legal Education of contemporary times is much more dynamic than the past. It is because of emergence of new fields due to technology, increased international trade and changing structure of society. From Entrance exams to Law degree, the journey is not easy for a law student. Because Legal education is now not only studying and understanding law, it has gone far way through Debates, Moot Courts, Legal Aid and many more things.

II. Legal Education

According to Law Commission of India, 'Legal Education is a science which imparts to students knowledge of certain principles and provisions of law to enable to them to enter the legal profession'. Legal education is the study of law before starting the professional journey. Lawyers are often referred as, 'Social Engineers'. Legal Education provides law students a social vision which is used by them to build and rebuild society. As law is the essence of a society, so it is important to have efficient law officers to maintain it.¹ High- quality legal education is a pre-requisite for high quality legal practitioners. It is more important for developing countries. As with development, it creates demand for efficient law practitioners in large numbers. Moreover, Legal Education is also important to bring change in the society in rightful direction. And with change always arises issues.

¹ <https://www.legalbites.in/challenges-legal-education-21st-century/?infinitescroll=1>



III. Issues faced by law students

I. Law Entrance exams:

Before starting legal Education, a child is judged whether it had the aptitude to pursue law as a career. Entrance Exams are conducted by law schools to provide admission in their college. Entrance exams were introduced to identify people who are seriously interested in law. But now these entrance exams are becoming a burden on law aspirants. The biggest issue faced by students is so many entrances, all with different paper pattern and had to pay exam fee for every entrance.

The most popular law entrance exam of India is Common Law Admission Test [CLAT]. This exam and establishment of 1st NLU in Bangalore made 5 years course famous among students. It is the exam taken by almost every aspirant to get admission in 22 National Law Universities. Every year almost 50,000 students appear for this exam for about 3300 seats. But this exam is now criticized of being to be biased towards students with English background. This exam is only conducted in English language. Even students from English background find it difficult to read 25-30 paragraphs and answer 150 questions in just 120 minutes.

After CLAT, All India Law Entrance Test [AILET] is the most popular law entrance but it is the most competitive. The exam is conducted for just 120 seats of NLU, Delhi. It is also a NLU but it conducts its separate exam with a complete different Paper pattern as compare to CLAT. CLAT is more reading focused whereas AILET is more solving analytical questions.

Apart from it, other law entrances like SLAT, MH-CET, LSAT and entrances conducted by Private Universities are also there. Each exam has a different paper pattern. This forces law aspirants to prepare for every exam with a different paper pattern.

Moreover, Fee for registration for a law entrance is also quite high. This high fee is to be paid by aspirants for every different entrance exam. Keeping in mind, the main entrance and the

backups, an aspirant end up about spending Rupees 10000- 12000 just on exam forms.

II. INFRASTRUCTURE:

The number of colleges/ universities granting legal education has increased drastically in the past 2 decades. The numbers of law aspirants were much higher than seats in law schools. Private players got a chance to earn profit and made full use of it by opening colleges without any proper books, proper teaching staff and even without permission of Bar Council of India. Thus, such law schools only became a source of earning money and having high profits for private players. No attention was paid to infrastructure and other necessities.

III. Teaching Faculty:

With the motive of earning profits, these institutes deteriorate the academic level for legal studies. This is leading to law becoming a lucrative field. As, profit was the main aim, so enough focus was not on the quality of teaching and faculty. Most of the teachers are recruited as guest lecturers which are paid according to the classes they delivered. It doesn't bother them, whether syllabus is completed or did the students get the concept clearly. It also leads to classes not being held regularly. Moreover, these guest teachers do not possess a master degree which is a proof of enough knowledge to teach law. Legal Education requires a good level of knowledge, dedication and passion by teachers to make students understand the legal concepts. A teacher with half knowledge of legal concept will lead to students only with bookish knowledge and they will be of no use when they graduate and become lawyers.² These colleges do not possess enough selection criteria for teachers but teaching here on non-regular basis will add to their experience when applying somewhere else. That's why these non regular teachers agree to take classes on a less wages. Thus, Institutes do not have to pay a high amount for recruiting permanent faculty.

IV. Outdated curriculum and syllabus:

² <https://www.legalbites.in/challenges-legal-education-21st-century/?infinitiescroll=1>



Bar Council of India and UGC regularly requested universities and colleges to update their syllabus but no avail. All the universities in India differ vastly in syllabus and curriculum. There is no uniformity of subjects, neither which subject to be taught in which semester. Most of the colleges offering 5 year law course now start with some law subjects from 1st year. But there are still some prominent Universities like Mumbai University and Pune University which still runs on the outdated 2 years B.A subjects i.e. social studies and 3 years law subjects' method. Moreover, there is always a tussle on introduction of new subjects or continue with the traditional subjects. This creates a wide gap between students in different law schools, which are going to be future lawyers.

V. High Cost of Education:

Possessing legal Education and a law degree is not affordable by all. The fee of law schools is quite high. Setting aside the private universities, fee of National Law Universities [NLU's] are also quite high. On an average, it is estimated to be Rupees 2.5 Lakh/ year. Except fee, NLU's student are required to live in hostel only which is provided by University itself. The hostel fee also ranges about Rupees 1 Lakh/ year. NLU Delhi procures a high fee of about Rupees 4 Lakh/ year. And this is only the academic fee, except this, Students spend a lot of money on purchasing books. Law books are also not cheap. Some good quality of law books are so high priced that even the libraries of law school are able to manage only a handful of copies. In a 5 year law degree, a student may end up spending a sum total of about 20 Lakh Rupees on his education. This estimation doesn't include his travelling, food, health and other expenses. The amount of 20 Lakh is not affordable by a middle class person in India or even by upper middle class. The higher cost is restricting legal education only to elite class in NLU's and other reputed law colleges.

Apart from all this changing needs of society, technological advancement coming up with more fields resulting in new laws, amendments

in acts, change in constitutional provisions, Judgement of court and their interpretation etc, everything a law student has to take care of.

IV. Changing Dynamics in field of law

Law has always been a field which does not accept changes easily. It has always loved to stay stick to its old approach and traditional ways. But the world and technology keeps on evolving and it is important to accept the changes and evolve with the same pace to survive. Legal Education too has to accept the changing dynamics and evolve itself which would result in students with better skills and finally skilled lawyers which can solve modern issues and cater the needs of society. Here are some common issues that are often discussed in relation to legal education:

- A. **Technological advancements:** Rapid advancements in technology are reshaping the legal profession and requiring law schools to adapt their curricula to include relevant skills such as data analysis, e-discovery, cyber security, and legal tech. Integrating technology into legal education is essential to ensure graduates are well-equipped to navigate the evolving legal landscape.
- B. **Access to justice:** There is an increasing concern about the gap between the legal needs of underserved populations and the availability of affordable legal services. Many law schools are emphasizing clinical programs and pro bono opportunities to address this issue, providing students with hands-on experience in serving marginalized communities.
- C. **Interdisciplinary approach:** The complex legal challenges of today often intersect with other fields, such as business, technology, healthcare, and the environment. Legal education is now embracing interdisciplinary approaches to equip students with a broader understanding of the legal implications



in these areas and foster collaboration across professions.

- D. **Practical skills training:** While the traditional legal curriculum has historically focused on theory and analysis, there is a growing recognition of the need to develop practical skills among law students. This includes training in legal writing, negotiation, client counseling, trial advocacy, and legal research methodologies to ensure graduates are job-ready upon entering the profession.
- E. **Diversity and inclusion:** The legal profession has been grappling with issues of diversity and inclusion for many years. Law schools are increasingly emphasizing diversity in their student bodies and faculty, promoting inclusive teaching practices, and addressing biases within the legal system. Efforts are being made to create a more diverse and representative legal education environment.

V. Conclusion:

So, being a law student is not easy, forget about difficulties in Professional life after becoming a lawyer. In conclusion, the issues in legal education highlight the need for ongoing reform and adaptation within the legal field. The rising costs of tuition, the outdated curriculum, and the lack of practical skills training all contribute to a growing disconnect between the education provided and the demands of the legal profession. To address these issues, it is imperative for legal institutions to prioritize affordability, promote interdisciplinary approaches, and integrate practical training into their curricula. Additionally, the advancement of technology and the changing landscape of legal practice call for a renewed focus on teaching digital literacy and understanding emerging legal fields. By addressing these issues head-on, legal education can better equip future lawyers with the knowledge, skills, and adaptability necessary to thrive in an ever-evolving legal

landscape. Ultimately, by embracing innovation and implementing meaningful reforms, legal education can better prepare students to serve justice and meet the needs of a diverse and dynamic society.

VI. References :

1. <https://www.legalbites.in/challenges-legal-education-21st-century/?infinitescroll=1>
2. <https://www.legalserviceindia.com/legal/article-76-legal-education-in-india.html>