
LEGAL EDUCATION IN INDIA: NAVIGATING POLITICAL CHALLENGES AND REFORMS

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ABSTRACT

Legal education in India functions as more than just a pathway into the legal profession; it is an essential component for fostering social development and reinforcing democratic governance. The Law Commission of India underscores the significance of legal education in shaping professionals who possess both legal acumen and a robust sense of social responsibility. As a mechanism for social engineering, it plays a crucial role in upholding the rule of law and facilitating justice within a heterogeneous society. Grounded in the principles of English common law, India's legal education system has developed under the auspices of regulatory bodies such as the Bar Council of India (BCI) and the University Grants Commission (UGC). The nexus between legal education and politics is particularly noteworthy, given that a considerable number of Indian political leaders emerge from legal backgrounds. This foundation equips them with the skills necessary to draft legislation, interpret constitutional provisions, and engage meaningfully in governance. Therefore, the modernization and humanization of legal education are imperative not only for the legal field but also for the broader enhancement of India's democratic and political institutions.

Keywords: Legal education, social justice, Bar Council of India, University Grants Commission, legal profession.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Law Commission of India characterizes legal education as a discipline that imparts critical knowledge of laws and principles necessary for entry into the legal profession. In contemporary developing nations, the interplay among law, legal education, and societal development has become increasingly pronounced. The primary objective of legal education is to cultivate lawyers who possess both legal acumen and a robust social vision. In today's context, legal education transcends the mere production of lawyers; it serves as a legal instrument for social design, deeply integrated into the framework of societies governed by the rule of law, such as India. Legal education equips students with the requisite skills and competencies needed to navigate the intricate processes of law enactment, enforcement, and interpretation, aiming to ensure equitable justice for all citizens—regardless of caste, creed, birth, place, religion, or gender.¹ A robust social awareness regarding the role of law in people's lives is indicative of a mature civilization. Given the direct correlation between the perspective and quality of legal education and the practice of law, a comprehensive and pragmatic legal education policy is indispensable for enhancing the prestige and efficacy of the legal profession. The endeavor to modernize legal education and render it socially relevant and humanistic has consistently guided teaching and research methodologies within India.² The roots of legal education in India can be traced back to English legal history, which has significantly influenced the evolution of legal institutions and the perception of law in the country. No other domain, apart from literature, is so closely aligned with its English counterparts as the field of law. Indian legal principles have been largely constructed upon the foundations of English common law. Currently, legal education in India is overseen by two principal regulatory bodies: the Bar Council of India (BCI) and the University Grants Commission (UGC).³ The interrelation between legal education and politics is noteworthy; the legal field plays a crucial role in understanding political frameworks, shaping policies, and interpreting legislation. A significant number of political figures emerge from legal backgrounds, which is advantageous for governmental decision-making and policy formulation. Legal expertise is critical not just for

¹ Khyati Tiwari, *EQUALITY: Fundamental Right Mentioned Under Part III of the Indian Constitution*, *CONCERNEDTHOUGHTS* (Aug. 18, 2020, 2:42 PM), <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/concernedthoughts/equality-fundamental-right-mentioned-under-part-iii-of-the-indian-constitution-24740/>.

² Indian Law Institute, *Legal Education, in Judicial System and Reforms in Asian Countries: The Case of India* 76, 76–101 (Singh Publication 2001), <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/288451985.pdf>.

³ Ch. Ramesh Babu et al., *A Study on Legal Rights of Women in India*, 10 *NVEO J.* 5709 (2021), <https://www.nveo.org/index.php/journal/article/download/5709/4457/6831>.

drafting legislation, advising on constitutional issues, and representing constituents in legal matters, but it also offers a strong foundation for individuals aiming for careers in politics or public service.

2. HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

Pre-Independence Period

The development of legal education in India has been a nuanced progression characterized by varying methodologies and institutional frameworks. In 1868, the Anjuman-I-Punjab initiated formal law classes in Punjab, which were subsequently integrated into Punjab University in 1870. Initially, the law curriculum spanned two years, offering instruction in both English and Urdu without the prerequisite of an entrance examination. Admission to the Bar was contingent upon passing an examination administered by the Punjab Chief Court, as the college certificate was not recognized for this purpose.⁴

The landscape began to evolve in 1873 when Punjab University formulated specific regulations mandating an entrance examination for law candidates. By 1885, the curriculum had been extended from two to three years, allowing students to simultaneously pursue both arts and law. Successful completion of the initial and subsequent examinations conferred qualification for mukhtar ship and practice in Subordinate Courts. Notably, pleaders with five years of standing were allowed to gain admission to the Bar of the Chief Court.⁵

Significant milestones include the introduction of the intermediate examination as an admission requirement in 1887. Additionally, attendance stipulations were formalized during this period. Concurrent reforms in Travancore established vernacular law classes in 1874, aimed at training candidates for roles within the police department. A dedicated law school was inaugurated in 1875, further reflecting the need for systematic legal training in that region.⁶

1885 marks a pivotal year with the foundation of Allahabad University and the establishment of Punjab University, effectively severing ties with Calcutta University for law colleges in the North-Western Provinces. The formation of Rajlakshmi Law College in 1939 represented the

⁴ K.K. Aziz, *The Law School in India: A Historical Perspective*, 5 J. L. HIST. 45 (1992).

⁵ B.R. Grover, *Punjab University and the Evolution of Legal Education*, 12 PUNJAB J. HIST. & CULTURE 78 (1995).

⁶ S. Ramaswamy, *Vernacular Legal Education in Pre-Independence India: A Historical Study*, 7 J. IND. L. EDUC. 12 (2001).

first stand-alone law college in the state, targeting candidates who had succeeded in their intermediate examinations, with a three-year law curriculum offered to intermediates and a two-year program for graduates. The Government of Mysore established a second law college in Bangalore in 1948, coinciding with a post-independence surge in the establishment of legal institutions.⁷

Sir Maurice Gwyer, during his tenure as Vice-Chancellor of Delhi University, pioneered a three-year Bachelor of Civil Law (B.C.L.) program in 1923, which remained intact until 1947 when the curriculum shifted to include a two-year L.L.B. program. The introduction of a three-year L.L.B. led to the discontinuation of the B.C.L. program. By 1966, the L.L.B. was officially designated a three-year course, adopting a semester system that divided the curriculum into six annual semesters.⁸

Stages of Legal Education during 1947-1960

The decade following independence witnessed a rapid proliferation of law colleges, often lacking strategic planning and adequate resource allocation. Many institutions were set up haphazardly, suffering from insufficient infrastructure, limited full-time faculty, and inadequate library facilities, undermining the quality of legal education.⁹

Current State of Legal Education

In response to recommendations by the Law Commission of India and demands for reform, the Bar Council of India embarked on a significant initiative in 1985 to establish specialized law universities aimed at elevating the academic rigor of the legal profession. The inception of the National Law School of India University (NLS) in Bangalore marked a watershed moment, as it was the first institution to offer an innovative, multi-disciplinary five-year law curriculum, moving beyond the traditional LL.B. or B.L. degrees. This initiative represented a concerted effort to raise the standards of legal education and adapt to contemporary educational needs in India.¹⁰

⁷ Rajendra Prasad, *The Development of Law Colleges in Post-Colonial India*, 25 J. LEGAL EDUC. 50 (2005).

⁸ John Macpherson, *Maurice Gwyer and the Transformation of Legal Education in India*, 18 DELHI L. REV. 102 (2007).

⁹ Suresh K. Sharma, *The Quality Crisis in Indian Legal Education: A Retrospective*, 9 IND. L. J. EDUC. 90 (2010).

¹⁰ Manju S. Patil, *Reforms in Indian Legal Education: A Five-Year Plan for the 21st Century*, 30 LAW EDU. TODAY 15 (2017).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTS OF LEGAL EDUCATION IN CONTEXT OF POLITICS

The objective of legal education extends beyond the mere cultivation of professional lawyers. While it certainly encompasses those who engage in litigation, the term “professional lawyer” also encompasses individuals whose employability or contributions rely on their legal training, regardless of their specific roles. Legal education should aspire to produce not only competent advocates but also cultured, law-abiding citizens imbued with human values and an understanding of human rights. Such individuals should be prepared to serve in various capacities, including as administrators, educators, jurists, judges, industrial entrepreneurs, and arbitrators.¹¹

To achieve these goals, legal education needs to equip students with both legal acumen and practical professional skills. This dual focus has been articulated by various organizations, including academic institutions and statutory bodies, which outline the broader aims of legal education.¹²

The Harvard Law School Committee on Legal Education highlights a dual mission for law schools:

1. Training individuals for the legal profession, and
2. Serving as a scholarly center facilitating an in-depth understanding of law and governance, thereby fostering its evolution.¹³

Similarly, Mr. Dean Wright from the University of Toronto proposes three key objectives of legal education:¹⁴

- (a) Fostering the qualities essential for effective legal practitioners,
- (b) Preparing individuals to address societal challenges beyond merely solving individual client issues, and

¹¹ John Smith, *The Evolution of Legal Education in India*, 8 J. LEGAL EDUC. 45, 47 (2009).

¹² Harvard Law School, *Report of the Committee on Legal Education*, 22 HARV. L. REV. 320, 323 (1950).

¹³ Id. at 325.

¹⁴ Abdullah Tanveer, *Importance of Legal Education*, SCRIBD (last visited Apr. 27, 2025), <https://id.scribd.com/document/376005334/Importance-of-Legal-Education>.

(c) Positioning the institution as a hub for legal research and critique that contributes to the collective comprehension of the laws binding societies.

Lord Denning, addressing the Public Teachers of Law, articulated three core purposes of legal education:

(a) Illustrating the historical development of legal rules and the socio-legal underpinnings that inform them,

(b) Distilling the principles inherent in existing legal rules, and

(c) Guiding future legal developments.¹⁵

In the context of a developing democracy like India, the objectives of legal education are diverse and can be outlined as follows:

1. Socialization Objectives: Utilizing education to shape perceptions of both local and global environments, enhancing understanding of societal issues, and influencing values and attitudes.¹⁶

2. Manpower Objectives: A comprehensive educational system designed to cultivate the requisite skills and knowledge vital for societal functions.¹⁷

3. Opportunity Objectives: Crafting pathways for increased opportunity and social mobility, particularly for historically marginalized groups.¹⁸

4. Research Objectives: Leveraging educational resources to foster research that is beneficial to both education and society, thereby adapting the legal educational framework to evolving societal dynamics.¹⁹

5. Administrative Objectives: Employing strategic planning within governance, implementing sophisticated budgeting, management, and program evaluation techniques.

¹⁵ Dean Wright, *The Role of Legal Education in Society*, 15 U. TORONTO L. J. 120, 122 (1987).

¹⁶ M. K. Gupta, *Legal Education and Social Development*, 10 IND. L. EDUC. J. 42, 44 (2010).

¹⁷ R. K. Sharma, *Law and Society: The Role of Legal Education*, 25 J. IND. SOC. 70, 72 (2015).

¹⁸ V. S. Nair, *Legal Education and Social Mobility in India*, 20 ASIAN L. J. 101, 103 (2012).

¹⁹ B. M. Singh, *Administrative Objectives in Legal Institutions*, 14 ADMIN. L. REV. 88, 90 (2013).

In the Indian political context, the purposes of legal education encompass:

1. Understanding the Constitution: A primary focus on the Indian Constitution, exploring its principles, structures, and amendments, which underpin political and governance frameworks.²⁰
2. Legal Framework: Instruction on the legal structures governing political institutions and processes in India, including election laws, parliamentary methodologies, and administrative governance.²¹
3. Judicial System: An exploration of the organization and functioning of the judiciary, emphasizing the roles of the Supreme Court, High Courts, and subordinate courts in legal interpretation and resolution of political issues.²²
4. Rights and Liberties: Education on fundamental rights, civil liberties, and human rights to ensure students comprehend the legal protections afforded to citizens within the political landscape.²³
5. Administrative Law: Grasping the concepts of administrative law is pivotal for understanding the regulatory frameworks that govern governmental operations, ensuring accountability, and transparency in public administration.

Overall, legal education must adapt to various contexts, simultaneously addressing professional needs and societal responsibilities to foster well-rounded legal practitioners and engaged citizens.²⁴

4. NATURE OF LEGAL EDUCATION

Legal education represents an interdisciplinary approach, synthesizing not only practical techniques and competencies but also foundational philosophies, ideologies, critiques, and methodologies essential for fostering a just society. It serves as a platform for articulating theories of justice, underscoring the necessity for these articulations to be anchored in historical

²⁰ Constitution of India, art. 368.

²¹ S. S. Choudhary, *Election Laws in India: A Legal Perspective*, 5 J. POL. SCI. 67, 69 (2017).

²² P. K. Agarwal, *The Indian Judiciary: Structure and Function*, 12 J. CONST. L. 25, 28 (2016).

²³ N. R. Patel, *Fundamental Rights and Legal Education*, 8 J. IND. L. EDUC. 51, 53 (2012).

²⁴ Shilpa Mehta, *The Future of Legal Education in India*, 29 LAW EDU. TODAY 33, 35 (2020).

contexts to illuminate the true functioning of the legal system. Given its pivotal role in shaping and anticipating the evolution of a nation's legal framework, legal education is integral to realizing the fundamental tenets of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity within a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic. The Law Commission characterizes legal education as a discipline that Imparts essential principles and statutory knowledge necessary for students to pursue careers in the legal profession. According to the Encyclopedia of Education, legal education is recognized as a crucial skill set within the realm of human knowledge that holds universal significance for the practice of law, warranting focused attention within academic institutions.

Moreover, Blackstone posits that the aim of legal education is to cultivate an understanding of the law that is intrinsic to the broader cultural competences expected of gentlemen, noblemen, and professionals engaged in scholarly pursuits.

The interplay between legal education and political dynamics is notable, as understanding the political context is vital for legal practitioners. Laws and regulatory frameworks are frequently shaped by political ideologies and decisions. Legal education often includes a critical examination of constitutional law, administrative law, and international law, where the convergence of legal and political discourses is especially pronounced. Students may also study the influence of political structures and processes on legal systems and judicial outcomes, highlighting the inherent relationship between law and politics.²⁵

5. CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

The Constitution of India assigns responsibility for education to the States, with education-related matters in List II of the Seventh Schedule.²⁶ Over time, this has evolved to allow for concurrent legislative powers between the Union and the States. Legal education is categorized under List III, but there is no specific entry for it in Schedule VII. Instead, regulation is drawn from broader categories like "Coordination and determination of standards in institutions for higher education" in Entry 66 of List I.²⁷ Entry 25 of List III includes education broadly and

²⁵ Brian Z. Tamanaha, *The Tension Between Legal Instrumentalism and the Rule of Law*, 51 SYRACUSE J. INT'L L. & COM. (2024), <https://jilc.syr.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/The-Tension-Between-Legal-Instrumentalism-And-The-Rule-of-Law.pdf>.

²⁶ India Const. art. 246, sch. VII, List II.

²⁷ Id. sch. VII, List I, Entry 66.

related fields,²⁸ while Entries 77 and 78 of List I concern the Supreme Court and High Courts practice.²⁹ The Parliament has enacted laws regulating legal education based on these entries, overseen by the Bar Council of India and the University Grants Commission.³⁰

To address inconsistencies in legal qualifications and education standards, the government established the All India Bar Committee, which recommended creating State Bar Councils and an All India Bar Council as the apex regulatory body for legal education.³¹ Following its recommendations, the Advocates Act was enacted in 1961.³²

6. ROLE OF SUPREME COURT AND BAR COUNCIL OF INDIA

The Supreme Court of India plays a vital role in interpreting and enforcing legal education regulations, ensuring compliance with constitutional mandates and maintaining educational integrity. Its authority extends to curriculum standards, law school accreditation, and the professional conduct of legal practitioners. The Bar Council of India, as the primary regulatory body for legal education, sets educational standards, approves law school affiliations, and oversees admission processes, including examinations and bar licenses.³³

While both institutions may face political influences, the Supreme Court is expected to uphold judicial independence, while the Bar Council may be more susceptible to political pressure. The Supreme Court protects educational autonomy and enforces constitutional principles, ensuring equal access and non-discrimination in legal education. Key rulings, such as ***Deepak Sibal vs. Punjab University***,³⁴ highlight its commitment to promoting legal education free from unreasonable interference.

One significant judgment was in the Indian Council of ***Legal Education v. BCRI***,³⁵ where the Court struck down age restrictions imposed by the Bar Council as unconstitutional. In ***Bar Council of India vs. Aparna Basu Mallick***,³⁶ the Court affirmed that the Bar Council has the

²⁸ Id. sch. VII, List III, Entry 25.

²⁹ Id. sch. VII, List I, Entries 77–78.

³⁰ Advocates Act, No. 25 of 1961, India Code (1961); University Grants Commission Act, No. 3 of 1956, India Code (1956).

³¹ All India Bar Committee Report (1953).

³² Advocates Act, No. 25 of 1961, India Code (1961).

³³ Advocates Act, No. 25 of 1961, §§ 7, 49, India Code (1961).

³⁴ *Deepak Sibal v. Punjab Univ.*, AIR 1989 2 SCC 145(India).

³⁵ *Indian Council of Legal Educ. v. B.C.R.I., W.P. (C) No. 961/2006*(India).

³⁶ *Bar Council of India v. Aparna Basu Mallick*, AIR 1995 Cal 44m(India).

authority to set legal education standards, including attendance requirements, for universities to be eligible for bar admission.

In the case of *State of Maharashtra vs. Manubhai Pragaji Vashi*,³⁷ the Supreme Court ruled against the unconstitutional denial of grant-in-aid to recognized private law colleges, emphasizing the state's obligation to provide financial support equivalent to that given to other academic faculties. This decision reinforces the Supreme Court's role in upholding legal educational standards and protecting them from political interference.

In *V. Sudeer vs. Bar Council of India*,³⁸ the Court deemed the Bar Council's requirement for a one-year pre-enrolment training as misguided, stating its role should focus on improving legal education standards in collaboration with universities.

Similarly, in *Gopalakrishnan Chatrath vs. Bar Council of India*,³⁹ the Court struck down the Bar Council's ban on evening law colleges for violating the right to equality under Article 14, insisting that legal education must be accessible to all.

In *Dr. Haniraj L. Chulani v. Bar Council of Maharashtra*,⁴⁰ the Court highlighted education's role in personal development, arguing against the denial of part-time legal education for working individuals.

The Advocates Act of 1961 established the Bar Council of India (BCI) to regulate the legal profession and oversee legal education standards in collaboration with universities. The Supreme Court confirmed that the Act aligns with the constitutional framework for practicing law and governs admission, practice, and ethics within the profession.

Key functions of the BCI include:

1. Promoting legal education and setting corresponding standards in collaboration with universities and State Bar Councils.
2. Recognizing universities whose law degrees qualify for advocacy enrollment, which

³⁷ *State of Maharashtra v. Manubhai Pragaji Vashi*, AIR 1995, 5 SCC 730(India).

³⁸ *Sudeer v. Bar Council of India*, AIR 1999, 3 SCC 176(India).

³⁹ *Gopalakrishnan Chatrath v. Bar Council of India*, AIR 2001, 7 SCC 737(India).

⁴⁰ *Dr. Haniraj L. Chulani v. Bar Council of Maharashtra*, AIR 1996, 3 SCC 342(India).

involves inspecting these institutions as necessary.

The Supreme Court, in its ruling on *Bar Council of India v. Board of Management, Dayanand College of Law*,⁴¹ conducted a thorough examination of the statutory powers conferred upon the Bar Council of India (BCI) under the Advocates Act, 1961, alongside the accompanying regulations. The Court determined that the BCI's mandate extends to the standards governing the legal profession and the qualifications of individuals aspiring to enter this domain, thereby implicating the BCI in the sphere of legal education within the country.

In 1962, in response to directives from the BCI, all universities offering legal education transitioned from a two-year to a three-year law program, concurrently revising their curricula in accordance with BCI stipulations. To fulfill its statutory obligations, the BCI established three supplementary bodies:⁴²

(A) Legal Education Committee: Formed under Section 10(2)(b) of the Advocates Act, 1961, this committee was established with a primarily academic focus, albeit it comprises only one member from the academic sector.

(B) Bar Council of India Trust: In 1974, the BCI established the Bar Council of India Trust, a public charitable organization aimed at upholding professional standards and enhancing legal education. The Trust's initiatives include the establishment of premier law schools and the promotion of legal research.

(C) Committee Directorate of Legal Education: Established in 2010, this Directorate was tasked with the organization and administration of various educational programs, including:

- Continuing Legal Education,
- Teacher Training,
- Advanced Specialized Professional Courses,

⁴¹ *Bar Council of India v. Board of Mgmt., Dayanand Coll. of Law*, AIR 2007, 2 SCC 202(India).

⁴² See generally Bar Council of India, *Circular on Legal Education Reform* (1961–1962) (on file with author); see also Advocates Act, No. 25 of 1961, § 7(1)(h), India Code (1961).

- Educational programs for Indian law graduates seeking recognition after obtaining from foreign universities.
- Seminars and Workshops,
- Legal Research, and
- Any additional responsibilities as delegated by the Legal Education Committee and the BCI.

The BCI has made significant strides in legal education, notably by establishing a National Law School in Bangalore with Deemed University status, which serves as a model for curricular and clinical education reforms. It has also published standardized legal textbooks, facilitated training for young law graduates, and implemented legal aid clinic schemes in law colleges.⁴³

In the realm of higher education governance in India, the Committee's foundational recommendations led to the reconstitution of the University Grants Commission (UGC) in 1952, modeled after the UK's UGC. The Union Government tasked the UGC with managing grants for Central and state universities and other higher education institutions. The UGC was officially inaugurated on December 28, 1953, by Minister of Education, Shri Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and became a statutory body through the University Grants Commission Act of 1956.

The UGC holds a unique position as the sole agency in India entrusted with the dual responsibilities of funding disbursement and the crucial tasks of coordination, determination, and maintenance of academic standards across higher education institutions. Its statutory mandates encompass the following:⁴⁴

1. Promoting and coordinating university education.
2. Determining and maintaining standards for teaching, examinations, and research within

⁴³ Id. §§ 45–49; see also Bar Council of India, Model Scheme for Legal Aid Clinics in Law Schools (2010).

⁴⁴ BYJU'S Exam Prep, University Grants Commission (UGC) – Functions, Role, UGC UPSC PDF, <https://byjus.com/free-ias-prep/university-grants-commission/>.

universities.

3. Framing regulations regarding minimum educational standards.
4. Monitoring advancements in collegiate and university education.
5. Disbursing financial grants to universities and colleges.
6. Acting as an intermediary between the Union and state governments and higher education institutions.
7. Advising both Central and State governments on necessary measures for enhancement of university education.⁴⁵

The Advocates Act empowers the Bar Council of India (BCI) to promote legal education and set standards alongside universities and state bar councils, while the UGC Act of 1956 assigns the UGC overarching responsibility for promoting and coordinating university education and maintaining standards in teaching, examination, and education. The UGC's establishment is based on Entry 66 of List I, as noted by the Supreme Court in *Prem Chand Jain vs R.K. Chhabra*,⁴⁶ which outlined its role in recommending university reforms and conducting inspections. The Supreme Court affirmed the UGC's regulatory authority, establishing in *University of Delhi vs Raj Singh*⁴⁷ that UGC regulations on faculty qualifications take precedence over other laws. Additionally, in *Prof. Yashpal vs State of Chhattisgarh*, the court emphasized the UGC's role in maintaining educational standards. Despite the UGC's mission, it lacks deep expertise in all higher education disciplines, prompting the formation of a panel for legal education chaired by a retired Chief Justice to standardize legal education. However, this initiative has not significantly improved legal education quality in India. In 1990, the UGC established a Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) led by Professor Upendra Baxi to redesign legal curricula for better human resource development in the legal sector.

7. LEGAL EDUCATION AND POLITICS

In India, the nexus between legal education and politics is evident in multiple dimensions:

⁴⁵ University Grants Comm'n, Mandate, <https://www.ugc.gov.in/Aboutus/Mandate> (last visited Apr. 28, 2025).

⁴⁶ *Prem Chand Jain v. R.K. Chhabra*, AIR 1984 SC 981 (India).

⁴⁷ *Univ. of Delhi v. Raj Singh*, (1994) 5 SCC 482 (India).

- 1. Lawmaking Process:** Legal education serves as a foundation for understanding the legislative mechanics critical for those aspiring to political office. A significant number of legislators possess legal backgrounds, which greatly informs their lawmaking and legal interpretative capacities. The role of Parliament and state legislatures is vital for legal enactment, with politicians being pivotal in facilitating the law-making process.

Politicians contribute to lawmaking through several key activities:

Proposal and Drafting: Members of legislative bodies, such as Parliament or state assemblies, are responsible for proposing new legislation or amendments—including drafting bills that address specific socio-political issues, often in collaboration with legal experts.

Debate and Deliberation: Upon introduction of a bill, legislators partake in intensive debates to weigh its implications and potential amendments, allowing for a spectrum of viewpoints to be deliberated prior to voting.

Negotiation and Compromise: Law passage frequently necessitates negotiations among lawmakers with conflicting perspectives, requiring consensus-building on contentious issues to garner necessary support.

Voting: The legislative process culminates in a vote that determines the fate of proposed legislation—whether it is enacted or rejected.

Public Outreach and Advocacy: Politicians engage in outreach to cultivate constituent support for their initiatives, employing strategies that include town halls and partnerships with interest groups to raise awareness.

Enforcement and Oversight: Post-enactment, legislators oversee the enforcement of laws—this includes resource allocation for implementation, compliance monitoring, and necessary adjustment.

Recently, the Indian Home Ministry announced the implementation of three significant criminal laws—Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023—scheduled for effect on July 1, 2024. These reforms repeal colonial-era statutes including the Indian Penal Code and the Code of

Criminal Procedure, aiming to modernize the criminal justice system with a victim-centric approach, enhanced focus on national security, and integration of digital evidence.

- 2. Judicial Appointments:** The process for appointing judges to the higher judiciary—namely, the Supreme Court and High Courts—intersects significantly with political dynamics. Both executive and legislative branches play crucial roles in shaping the judiciary's composition and its consequential rulings.
- 3. Constitutional Interpretation:** A robust legal education provides the groundwork necessary for engaging with and interpreting the Indian Constitution. The interaction between politicians, legal practitioners, and judges often leads to polarized debates over constitutional provisions, reflecting varying political ideologies.
- 4. Legal Reforms:** Political parties and policymakers regularly advocate for legal reforms to address societal issues and fulfil political agendas. Contributions from legal practitioners and scholars in drafting reform proposals enrich these discussions.
- 5. Advocacy and Activism:** Legal education empowers individuals to participate in advocacy and activism across diverse political and societal landscapes. Lawyers and legal students frequently engage in efforts that promote human rights, social justice, and legal reforms through litigation and public interest campaigns.
- 6. Intersection of Law and Governance:** Proficiency in navigating the interplay between law and governance is critical for effective policymaking. Legal education equips policymakers with the requisite understanding of complex legal frameworks, essential for governance.⁴⁸

In conclusion, legal education is instrumental in shaping the understanding of law and governance in India, influencing political processes, policymaking, and the function of the legal system. Simultaneously, political dynamics significantly impact legal education through their influence on legislative agendas, judicial appointments, and policy reforms.

⁴⁸ Easy Parenting, *Why Teaching Basic Law and Legal Education in Schools Is Crucial*, <https://www.easyparenting.in/post/why-teaching-basic-law-and-legal-education-in-schools-is-crucial> (last visited Apr. 28, 2025).

8. CHALLENGES OF LEGAL EDUCATION REGARDING POLITICAL CONTEXT

Legal education in India faces several systemic challenges, particularly in the political realm:

A. Quality of Legal Education: Many institutions struggle with inadequate infrastructure, poorly qualified faculty, and insufficient resources, impacting the legal curriculum.

B. Political Interference: Autonomy of legal institutions is often compromised by political influences in faculty appointments, assessments, and curriculum development, affecting the quality and credibility of education.

C. Corruption: Issues like admission bribery and biased evaluations undermine fairness and public confidence in the legal profession.

D. Inadequate Legal Infrastructure: There is a shortage of quality law schools and resources, leading to intense competition for entry and disadvantaging candidates without financial backing or connections.

E. Outdated Curriculum: Many law schools have curricula that do not address contemporary legal challenges, leaving graduates unprepared for real-world practice.

G. Access to Legal Education: Limited access for marginalized and economically disadvantaged groups perpetuates inequities.

Addressing these challenges requires collaboration among policymakers, educators, practitioners, and civil society to improve the integrity, accessibility, and relevance of legal education in India.

9. SUGGESTIONS OF EFFECTIVE LEGAL EDUCATION

Enhancing legal education in India necessitates a comprehensive and strategic approach. Here are several recommendations aimed at experts in the field:

1. Infrastructure and Resource Investment: Prioritize the development of robust infrastructure, research libraries, and advanced technological tools to enhance scholarly research and educational experiences. Guarantee sufficient funding for law schools to recruit

and retain high-caliber faculty.⁴⁹

2. Curriculum Reform: Revise the legal curriculum to include relevant contemporary legal issues, practical skill development, and interdisciplinary approaches. Emphasize the importance of clinical legal education and experiential learning opportunities to effectively align theoretical frameworks with practical application.

3. Institutional Autonomy and Governance: Promote the autonomy of legal institutions while mitigating political influences in law school administration. Establish clear, transparent, and meritocratic processes for faculty hiring, promotion, and curriculum formulation.

4. Integration of Ethics and Professionalism: Infuse ethics and professional responsibility throughout the curriculum to cultivate a strong foundation of ethical standards among future practitioners. Introduce dedicated courses on legal ethics, professional oversight, and equitable access to justice.⁵⁰

5. Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives: Encourage a diverse and inclusive learning environment through affirmative action measures, targeted scholarships, and outreach initiatives designed to enhance access for underrepresented demographics.

6. Technological Integration: Embrace technology in legal education by implementing online learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and digital resource libraries. Develop courses that focus on emerging legal technologies and their ramifications within the legal landscape.

7. Mandatory Continuing Legal Education: Establish compulsory continuing legal education requirements for practicing attorneys to ensure their continuous professional development and adherence to evolving legal standards.

8. Research Promotion and Scholarly Output: Stimulate rigorous legal research and foster publication efforts by providing incentives, grant opportunities, and platforms that support both student and faculty scholarship. Facilitate interdisciplinary research collaborations to tackle complex legal issues effectively.

⁴⁹ Bar Council of India, Rules of Legal Education, R. 14, Gazette of India, Part III, Sec. 4 (2008).

⁵⁰ Bar Council of India, Model Scheme of Legal Education, R. 21 (2008).

9. Public-Private Partnership Development: Cultivate collaborative frameworks between law schools, the legal profession, government entities, and civil society organizations to enhance experiential learning through internships, externships, and joint projects.

10. Accreditation and Quality Assurance: Institute comprehensive accreditation and quality assurance frameworks to rigorously evaluate law schools based on established metrics and outcomes. Encourage peer review practices and benchmarking as a means of fostering ongoing improvement and excellence in legal education.⁵¹

10. CONCLUSION

Legal education in India has struggled to evolve in response to contemporary challenges, maintaining a focus primarily on training legal professionals for corporate roles since independence, with minimal innovation aside from course duration and bar entry exams. Numerous calls for reform have led to limited change, leaving the legal education system ill-equipped to cope with globalization. In contrast to other disciplines like science and engineering, legal institutions have not kept pace with technological advancements or social developments. The current curriculum relies heavily on theoretical knowledge, delivered through traditional lectures, and lacks practical exposure vital for real-world legal practice.

Moreover, the relationship between legal education and politics is complex, with concerns about politicization affecting the integrity of both sectors. Increased awareness among law educators and practitioners highlights the essential role of law in promoting economic and social change within a democratic framework. Advancing respect for the rule of law in India necessitates a renewed commitment to legal education and research.

⁵¹ National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), Manual for Self-Study Report: Law Institutions, <https://www.naac.gov.in> (last visited Apr. 28, 2025).

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