

INCLUSION OF LEGAL EDUCATION IN SECONDARY AND HIGHER SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM IN BANGLADESH: AN APPRAISAL

S. M. Hayat Mahmud¹, Md. Fajlay Rabbi²

1. Assistant Professor, Law Discipline, Khulna University, Bangladesh

2. Assistant Professor, Education Discipline, Khulna University Bangladesh

Corresponding author: Md. Fajlay Rabbi, email: ranjanrabbi@edu.ku.ac.bd

Abstract

This abstract offers a succinct overview of a comprehensive analysis on the integration of legal education into Bangladesh's secondary and higher secondary educational framework. It explores how teaching legal information at a young age can help pupils develop civic engagement, legal literacy, and awareness. Using qualitative approaches to analyze integration potential and difficulties, the study assesses the current condition of legal education in the curriculum. Interviews with students, instructors, legislators, and legal experts provide qualitative data that illuminates how legal education influences students' moral and intellectual development. The study emphasizes the benefits of including legal education in the secondary and upper secondary curriculum since it fosters ethical reasoning, critical thinking, and a deeper understanding of legal topics. It also identifies obstacles to successful implementation, including problems with curriculum integration and resource limitations. The conclusions emphasize the significance of comprehensive legal education in developing responsible persons capable of navigating legal intricacies and making recommendations for improving Bangladesh's educational system through curriculum, teacher training, and legislative changes. These observations underline the critical role that legal education plays in developing socially conscious persons in secondary and higher secondary schools, and they greatly add to the current discourse in Bangladesh regarding education reform.

Keywords: Legal Education; Secondary Education, Higher Secondary Education, Curriculum

Introduction

Legal education is the process of acquiring knowledge and skills in the field of law (Macfarlane, 1992). It is typically provided at the university level, but there is a growing movement to include legal education in secondary education systems (*Include Legal Education in School Curriculum - - observerbd.com*, 2024). This movement is based on the belief that exposure to legal concepts and principles at an early age can help students develop critical thinking skills, become more informed citizens, and make better decisions about their lives. There are several reasons why legal education could be beneficial for secondary school students in Bangladesh. First, it can help them develop critical thinking skills. Law is a complex and nuanced field, and students who study law will learn to analyze legal problems, evaluate evidence, and make reasoned arguments. These skills are essential for success in all aspects of life, from academic pursuits to career development to civic engagement. Legal education can help students become more informed citizens.

Students who learn about the law will be better equipped to understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens (*Legal Education for the Future - Harvard Law School Center on the Legal Profession*, 2023). They will also be more informed about the political process and be able to participate more effectively in their communities. Legal education can help students make better decisions about their lives. Students who learn about the law will be better equipped to understand the legal implications of their choices. For example, they will be able to understand the terms of contracts before they sign them and the legal consequences of breaking the law.

In the ever-changing landscape of contemporary societies, the importance of secondary-level legal education cannot be emphasized (“The Turning Point: Why We Must Transform Education Now,” 2023). As nations strive to cultivate knowledgeable and accountable citizens, providing students with a foundational comprehension of the legal system and its principles becomes a crucial endeavor. This is especially true for Bangladesh, a nation with a rich cultural heritage and a rapidly developing education system (Rahman et al., 2010). To grasp the gravity of the situation, one must delve into the complexities of the Bangladeshi education system, identifying its strengths and identifying critical voids that require immediate attention.

Over the years, Bangladesh, a country in South Asia, has made remarkable advances in expanding its educational infrastructure (Admin, 2022). With a population of over 160 million, the country acknowledges that education is the foundation of progress and development. The education system consists of primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, with an emphasis on fostering academic excellence, civic consciousness, and the skills necessary for a labor market that is swiftly evolving (Joynes et al., 2019). Nevertheless, despite these commendable efforts, there is a glaring absence in the curriculum: legal education at the secondary level.

Recognizing that legal literacy is not a niche requirement but an essential life skill is the central challenge (Amin, 2024). Legal principles underlie a variety of everyday situations, ranging from the comprehension of fundamental rights and responsibilities to the resolution of complex societal issues (Rodrigues, 2020). Inadvertently, a lack of legal education at the secondary level leads to a misunderstanding of the rights and responsibilities that are the foundation of an equitable and just society. This oversight not only leaves young minds unprepared to manage legal dilemmas, but also impedes the development of a knowledgeable citizenry capable of upholding the rule of law.

In this context, the research problem at hand – the absence of legal education in the secondary curriculum – becomes glaringly apparent. This academic blind spot calls into doubt the comprehensiveness and efficacy of the current education framework. It is essential to conduct a thorough analysis of the potential ramifications of this omission,

such as perpetuating misconceptions about legal matters, limiting career aspirations in the legal field, and limiting the nation's ability to foster a culture of legal awareness and compliance from a young age.

In light of these considerations, the significance of incorporating legal education into the secondary curriculum becomes glaringly apparent. Not only does addressing this gap correlate with the global shift towards holistic education, but it also aligns with Bangladesh's aspirations for an educated and empowered populace. By providing young minds with a comprehension of fundamental legal principles, the nation can foster the growth of critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and civic participation (Chowning et al., 2012). In addition, this initiative is consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, particularly Goal 16, which emphasizes the promotion of peace, justice, and strong institutions (OHCHR, 2023).

The inclusion of legal education in secondary and higher secondary is of utmost importance because it serves as a conduit for fostering citizens with a nuanced comprehension of their rights and responsibilities within the legal framework (Islam, 2022). This crucial role derives from legal education's inherent capacity to foster critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and civic participation (Li & Sun, 2022). Students are empowered to actively participate in democratic processes, advocate for social justice, and contribute to a more equitable society when legal knowledge is imparted to them at an early age. The incorporation of legal education equips students with the skills necessary to navigate the complexities of the legal system, allowing them to make informed decisions while protecting their individual and collective interests (Hews et al., 2023).

In addition, legal education is essential for elucidating the intricate web of rights and responsibilities that underpins societal interactions. Through exposure to legal concepts, students develop the ability to distinguish between lawful and unlawful conduct, thereby nurturing a culture of legality and ethical behavior (Alperen, 2017). In turn, this results in responsible citizenship in which individuals actively uphold justice and contribute to the improvement of their communities. By elucidating the legal dimensions of various issues, legal education equips students with the skills to address societal challenges from an informed standpoint (Kankindi & Chimbwanda, 2021).

The incorporation of legal education into secondary curricula is supported by international models of success (Gane & Huang, 2017). Countries such as the United States and Australia have successfully incorporated civics and legal education into their secondary education systems, with positive results (Campbell, 2006). For instance, research conducted in the United States demonstrates that students exposed to civics education are more likely to participate in political activities and community service, indicating a higher level of civic engagement. Similarly, Australia's experience demonstrates that legal studies in

secondary education not only improve legal literacy, but also foster critical thinking, enabling students to navigate complex legal issues with ease (Kamvounias, 1994).

To establish the value of legal education in secondary institutions, it is necessary to examine empirical data and examples from these nations. Data from the Centre for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement in the United States demonstrate the direct correlation between civics education and increased student civic engagement (Hauser, 2000). This information not only supports the positive outcomes of integrating legal education, but also highlights the far-reaching implications for informed citizenship and societal advancement.

The lack of legal education in Bangladesh's secondary curriculum represents a significant gap in the country's educational structure (Azam, 2005). Recognizing the importance of legal literacy in fostering responsible citizens and a just society, it is crucial to address this disparity with urgency and deliberation. As the subsequent discussion develops, a thorough examination of the implications of this absence and the potential avenues for its incorporation will elucidate the way forward. By promoting legal education at the secondary level, Bangladesh can chart a course towards an enlightened future in which legal knowledge is not merely a privilege, but a fundamental right for every citizen. These influence the investigators to concentrate on choosing the objectives:

- To examine the potential benefits and challenges of incorporating legal education in secondary and higher secondary education in Bangladesh.
- To determine the feasibility of implementing legal education in secondary and higher secondary education in Bangladesh.
- To recommend potential initiatives for caging legal education in secondary and higher secondary education in Bangladesh.

Methodology:

This research is embedded in constructivist epistemology, a contextually specific approach to knowledge shaped by individuals constructing meanings and understandings as they interact with ideas, events, and activities (Creswell, 2014). Focusing on reflexivity, the research approach is open-ended such that there is scope for a variety of responses from the research participants. The research is qualitative and intends to explore and evaluate the feasibility and potential impact of integrating legal education into the secondary and higher secondary education system in Bangladesh. Qualitative methods were chosen to capture the rich and nuanced perspectives of key stakeholders, including educators, students, legal professionals, and policymakers (Bingham et al., 2019).

This study will use a descriptive survey that seeks to explain or record the conditions that can describe the situation (Tiyas Puji Setianti & Tatat Hartati, 2023). This research is a research and development (Yuli Prihatni, Pardimin & Novia Dewi, 2023).

The participants in this study were purposively selected to ensure a diverse representation of key stakeholders involved in the education system. Purposive sampling, sometimes called judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, involves the judgment of the researcher in determining the units to be researched (Reddy & Ramasamy, 2016). The sample included secondary and higher secondary school teachers, students, legal professionals, and policymakers with experience in the Bangladeshi education sector.

Purposive data sampling is adopted to select 10 secondary level schools from Khulna division and 5 colleges or higher secondary level institutions from Khulna division considering their geographical locations, the quality of education that they've provided, and the proportionality between male and female students. The data was obtained in Khulna since the researchers had greater access there, and the national curriculum in Bangladesh is the same throughout the country, therefore researchers collected data from the Khulna Division.

Semi-Structured Interviews:

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, law faculties from higher educational institutions, and education experts to gather in-depth insights into their perspectives on the inclusion of legal education in the formal education system. 30 teachers from 10 secondary schools and 5 colleges were interviewed, 10 law faculties from Khulna, Barishal, Dhaka and Mymensingh were interviewed and 5 education experts from various universities who were engaged in the national curriculum development previously. The interviews were designed to elicit information on the perceived benefits, challenges, and recommendations for the integration of legal education.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):

In this stage, the researchers informed all interviewees of the purpose of the study and reminded that their participation is voluntary. The researchers explained the research process in detail in an accessible manner to the participants, giving them the opportunity to ask questions to ensure they are fully informed. The researchers also provided them a clear summary of the objectives and possible outcomes of this research.

Focus group discussions were organized with groups of students from 5 Secondary level schools from Khulna and 2 Colleges from Khulna; 5 FGDs were conducted with the secondary level students and 2 FGDs were conducted with the higher secondary level students and 2 FGDs with legal professionals to facilitate dynamic interactions and explore shared opinions on the topic. FGDs provided a platform for participants to express their views, engage in discussions, and generate collective insights.

Data analysis:

Thematic analysis was employed to identify and analyze patterns, themes, and recurring concepts within the qualitative data. Transcripts from interviews and FGDs were coded systematically, and themes were iteratively refined. The analysis aimed to uncover commonalities and variations in perspectives among different participant groups.

The qualitative content analysis is adopted in this study. It includes legal instruments and existing scenario drawn by the scholars. It offers a comprehensive understanding of the perspectives surrounding the inclusion of legal education in the secondary and higher secondary education system in Bangladesh. The findings contribute valuable insights to inform future policy decisions and educational reforms in the country.

Ethical and Practical Considerations

The research adhered to ethical guidelines, ensuring informed consent from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study, and participants were assured that their responses would be used solely for research purposes.

The findings may not be generalized to the entire population, and the qualitative nature of the research limits the quantification of results. To minimize the notion, purposive data sampling is adopted and the researchers take into consideration the geographical locations, quality of education provided and the proportionality between male and female students.

Results:**Potential Benefits of Legal Education****The Empowerment for Responsible Citizenship Initiative:**

Students are provided with a foundational understanding of laws, rights, and responsibilities through legal education. By providing students with a nuanced understanding of the legal system, teachers empower them to navigate complex legal landscapes and make informed decisions as responsible citizens. This education fosters critical thinking, enabling students to evaluate situations from a legal perspective and make moral decisions. By adhering to laws, engaging in civic activities, and holding authorities accountable, citizens who are well-informed contribute positively to society.

Avoiding Legal Conflicts and Misunderstandings:

A comprehensive legal education curriculum can prevent misunderstandings and conflicts resulting from legal misunderstandings. Students who possess legal knowledge are less likely to violate the law through ignorance. Understanding contractual obligations, property rights, and criminal liabilities at a young age can significantly reduce the likelihood of future legal disputes. This proactive approach can reduce legal system burdens and foster a culture of compliance.

Developing a Culture of Legal Consciousness:

Early legal education lays the groundwork for a society in which legal awareness is ingrained. Students are exposed to the mechanisms that govern their rights and responsibilities when legal concepts are incorporated into mainstream education. This not only empowers them individually, but also fosters a culture in which people are aware of the legal implications of various aspects of life, such as consumer rights and digital ethics.

Shaping the Perception of Rights and Obligations:

Youth perceptions of rights and responsibilities are shaped by legal education. It sheds light on the fact that rights come with responsibilities and that the exercise of one's rights should not violate the rights of others. This unbiased viewpoint promotes tolerance, respect for diversity, and a more harmonious coexistence in a pluralistic society.

Impact on Civic Engagement and Governance:

A well-informed populace is necessary for robust democratic governance. Legal education fosters a sense of agency, empowering students to participate in civic activities, comprehend public policies, and advocate for reform. In turn, this enriches the democratic process by ensuring that informed voices influence the dynamics of governance.

Addressing Social Inequalities and Violations of Human Rights:

Legal education is a powerful instrument for combating social inequality and human rights violations. By providing students with knowledge of discrimination laws, gender rights, and social justice principles, legal education fosters empathy and encourages young people to challenge systemic injustices. This proactive strategy is essential to establishing a more equitable society.

Community Empowerment for Marginalized Groups:

Legal education has the capacity to empower underprivileged communities. It empowers individuals to challenge discrimination, exploitation, and injustice by explicating legal avenues for protection and redress. When combined with practical knowledge of legal procedures, this empowerment can level the playing field and contribute to a more equitable and inclusive society.

Formulation and Advocacy of Policy:

The implementation of legal education at the secondary level is contingent on the formulation and advocacy of effective policy. Governments and educational institutions play a pivotal role in the development of a curriculum that is comprehensive and aligned with national legal frameworks. Legal experts must collaborate with policymakers to ensure that the curriculum is accurate, applicable, and tailored to the needs of students.

Balancing Critical Thinking and Ethics:

Legal education includes an ethical component, as it must foster critical thinking without promoting biased or controversial viewpoints. Creating a curriculum that encourages students to think critically while adhering to ethical standards requires navigating cultural, social, and ethical nuances sensitively in order to address ethical dimensions.

Challenges towards incorporating legal education

Inadequate Resources and Facilities: A significant obstacle is the lack of necessary resources and infrastructure for implementing legal education effectively. Developing comprehensive learning materials, updating textbooks, and acquiring legal reference materials place a financial burden on legal education, potentially compromising its quality. Providing access to technology for interactive learning experiences may also be difficult, particularly in educational settings with limited resources.

Lack of Qualified Educators: Legally knowledgeable educators are in short supply, posing a significant obstacle. Legal education delivery necessitates a specialized skill set that extends beyond conventional teaching techniques. The lack of qualified educators proficient in both legal knowledge and pedagogy may jeopardize the quality of instruction and restrict students' exposure to in-depth legal knowledge.

Developing a Suitable Curriculum: It is difficult to create a curriculum that strikes a balance between legal concepts, critical thinking, and ethical awareness. It necessitates the integration of legal knowledge with existing subjects without overloading students with information. Curriculum development must take into account the cultural, legal, and educational context of Bangladesh, while also ensuring conformity with international legal principles.

Possible opposition from stakeholders: Resistance from a variety of stakeholders, including educators, parents, and traditional education systems, could pose formidable obstacles. Concerns about curriculum overcrowding, the perception of the complexity of legal education, and resistance to change may impede the integration of new students. It becomes imperative to effectively address these concerns through communication and tailored engagement strategies.

Multifaceted Obstacles and Methods: In addition to curriculum development, resource allocation, teacher training, and societal perceptions, the challenges span a broad spectrum. To navigate these complexities, lessons from comparable international cases can be gleaned. Canada and the United Kingdom have been able to overcome obstacles through careful curriculum integration, teacher training, and stakeholder participation.

- i. Concerns about curriculum overcrowding are alleviated by devising inter-disciplinary modules that seamlessly integrate legal education into existing subjects. International examples demonstrate that gradual integration, as opposed to abrupt changes, can garner support from stakeholders while preserving curriculum coherence.
- ii. To address resource constraints, a multifaceted strategy is required. Collaboration with legal professionals, universities, and institutions can aid in the development of cost-effective educational resources. When feasible, integrating technology permits access to a greater variety of legal resources and interactive learning tools.
- iii. It is essential to invest in specialized teacher training. Dedicated legal education training programs can equip educators with the necessary pedagogical skills and legal knowledge by drawing on international models. Collaborations between educational institutions and legal professionals can facilitate the development of comprehensive training programs.
- iv. To combat resistance, it is necessary to communicate openly about the benefits of legal education. Establishing advisory boards comprised of educators, parents, and legal experts can facilitate collective decision-making, ensuring a balanced integration that addresses concerns.

The obstacles and challenges surrounding the incorporation of legal education in secondary schools are multifaceted and require strategic approaches. The inadequacy of resources, the scarcity of trained educators, the complexities of curriculum design, and the resistance of stakeholders constitute a formidable landscape. However, international case studies provide strategies that can be adapted to Bangladesh's specific environment. Bangladesh can effectively overcome these challenges by adopting an incremental strategy, prioritizing teacher training, leveraging technology, and fostering open communication with stakeholders. To foster a generation endowed with legal literacy, critical thinking, and ethical awareness, overcoming these obstacles must be a top priority.

Possible Approaches for Incorporating Legal Education in Secondary Education

Curriculum Integration and Development: Developing a curriculum that integrates legal education into the existing subjects is a crucial strategy. This integration must be gradual in order to ensure a balanced distribution of material without overburdening students. This approach allows legal concepts to be interwoven naturally, thereby enhancing the curriculum's relevance and engagement. It draws inspiration from globally successful examples, such as the United Kingdom's Citizenship Education.

Teacher Education and Professional Growth: It is essential to equip educators with the necessary tools and knowledge. A comprehensive training program that emphasizes legal education pedagogy can equip teachers to effectively deliver content. Using lessons learned from comparable international cases, such as Canada's model of teacher workshops on legal rights and responsibilities, Bangladesh can implement specialized training to ensure that educators are proficient in both legal knowledge and instructional techniques.

Allocation of Resources and Technological Integration: Allocating resources strategically is essential for a successful implementation. Collaborations between educational institutions and legal professionals can result in the development of accessible, low-cost educational materials. Utilizing technology can provide students with interactive learning platforms, making legal references and case studies readily accessible even in regions with limited resources.

Collaboration with Legal Professionals and Organizations: The foundation of effective legal education is collaboration between educational institutions and legal professionals. Legal professionals can provide practical insights and real-world context, bridging the theoretical-practical divide. Developing partnerships with law schools, legal organizations, and practitioners can infuse the curriculum with authenticity and encourage students to pursue legal careers.

Analyses comparatives and contextual adaptation: Analyzing nations where legal education has been successfully incorporated into secondary education yields insightful information. Bangladesh can tailor its strategies to its unique environment by critically examining the cultural, social, and legal contexts that fostered successful integration. In order to facilitate well-informed decision-making, this analysis must incorporate both successes and flaws. We can look at how the US and Australia have incorporated legal schooling into their educational policies. The United States and Australia have done a good job of incorporating civics and legal education into their higher school systems. (Campbell, 2006). Australia's precedent shows that including legal studies in secondary school enhances legal literacy and promotes critical thinking skills, helping students effectively address intricate legal matters. Data from the Centre for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement in the United States demonstrate the direct correlation between civics education and increased student civic engagement. This information not only supports the positive outcomes of integrating legal education, but also highlights the far-reaching implications for informed citizenship and societal advancement.

Taking into account cultural and societal norms: Effective integration requires an awareness of and response to cultural and societal norms. Customizing content to resonate with local values and legal frameworks ensures that legal education is relatable and acceptable to students and stakeholders by making the material relevant and consistent with local norms. A comparative analysis of nations such as Australia, in which indigenous legal systems are recognized, provides insight into navigating cultural sensitivity.

Continuous Feedback and Evaluation: Improving the integration process requires a strategy of continuous evaluation and feedback. Regular evaluation of students' progress, teachers' effectiveness, and the curriculum's relevance ensures an adaptable strategy. Open lines of communication with students, teachers, parents, and legal professionals facilitate continuous improvement.

Awareness and Advocacy Campaigns: It is essential to raise awareness and advocate for the value of legal education. Launching awareness campaigns directed at students, parents, educators, and policymakers highlights the benefits of legal literacy, thereby generating support and enthusiasm for its incorporation.

Discussion:

The current state of legal education in Bangladesh is a complex tapestry of higher education, professional training, and a striking omission of secondary-level legal education. This analysis of the existing legal education structure reveals both its strengths and limitations, highlighting the critical need to bridge the gap between higher education and secondary education in order to ensure a more thorough and equitable dissemination of legal knowledge.

Higher education institutions, such as law colleges and universities, dominate the legal education landscape in Bangladesh, where specialized legal education is provided. This segment of legal education is predominantly geared towards those pursuing careers in law. These institutions' curricula encompass a vast array of legal topics, from substantive law to procedural aspects. The academic rigor and specialization of these programs contribute to the development of competent legal professionals who play crucial roles in establishing the nation's legal framework and dispensing justice (Sherr, 2005).

The objectives of the curriculum, as outlined in the Australian Higher School Manual, is to foster an understanding of the rights and obligations of individuals within the Australian legal system and a consciousness of how the law affects them in a dynamic society. Its purpose is to assist in closing the "social distance" that exists between the law and the individual so that individuals may become participants rather than recipients in legal processes (Le Brun, Marlene; Clark, Eugene E -- "the Growth of Legal Education in Australian Secondary Schools: Implications for Tertiary and Secondary Legal Education")

[1989] LegEdRev 16; (1989) 1(2) Legal Education Review 217, 1989). Such manual or educational policy is absent in secondary level in Bangladesh. Education Commission of Bangladesh (2003) headed by Professor Moniruzzaman Miah, suggested the necessity to form a separate legal education commission in our country (National Education Commission 2003). At the secondary level, the main obstacle to the incorporation of legal education is trained teachers in legal grounds. The World Bank (2016) estimates that currently only 58% of secondary teachers were fully trained and accredited with a bachelor of education qualification (Thornton, 2006). Training may promote the age-old transmissive mode of learning but the expansion of legal education through them would be 'sporadic' in nature.

When contemplating the lack of legal education in secondary schools, however, a significant disconnect becomes apparent (Lewis & Kern, 2018). The secondary education system lacks a systematic legal education, whereas higher education institutions emphasize specialized legal training. This disjointed approach perpetuates a legal knowledge divide among the general population. Students who do not pursue a legal education at the university level lack access to foundational legal knowledge, which is necessary for navigating legal complexities in a variety of life situations.

A higher education system that caters to the requirements of individuals who aspire to become legal professionals is central to the legal education framework (Rahman, 2009). Law schools and universities aspire to provide students with the theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and ethical values required for their roles as legal practitioners, judges, and legal scholars. The curriculum includes constitutional law, criminal law, and administrative law, laying the groundwork for a variety of legal vocations.

While institutions of higher education pursue excellence in legal education, secondary schools continue to lack legal education offerings. This absence creates a significant gap in citizens' legal literacy. Students who do not pursue legal careers lack knowledge of fundamental legal principles, their liberties, and their societal obligations. This lack of legal education hinders students' ability to effectively engage in legal and civic matters, thereby impeding the development of an informed citizenry capable of making informed decisions. In Bangladesh, efforts have been made to introduce legal education at the secondary level, but these initiatives are inconsistent and lack comprehensive implementation (Islam, 2022). Several institutions and organizations have implemented extracurricular legal education programs that, while commendable, remain marginal and inconsistent. Furthermore, these initiatives are not universally accessible, leaving many students without access to the benefits of legal education. There is a growing awareness of the need to integrate formal legal education into the secondary curriculum in order to assure widespread exposure to legal knowledge.

Ethical Considerations:

The research adhered to ethical guidelines, ensuring informed consent from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study, and participants were assured that their responses would be used solely for research purposes.

Limitations:

While qualitative methods provide rich insights, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this study. The findings may not be generalizable to the entire population, and the qualitative nature of the research limits the quantification of results.

Conclusion

This article argues on the importance of the chronological approach required for all secondary and higher secondary level students in acquiring legal education. However, there are a number of challenges that would need to be addressed in order to implement this reform successfully. The existing framework for legal education in Bangladesh illustrates the clear disparities between secondary and higher education in law. There remains an immense need for secondary legal education, notwithstanding the increased focus on professional development and post-secondary education. While there has been considerable progress towards integrating legal education, further research has to be done to fully integrate it if its potential influence on governance and society is to be realized. In case of actively participating in their communities, preventing legal disputes, encouraging a general awareness of rights, duties, and liabilities, combat with social injustice, human rights violations, and empower underrepresented groups, consistent with democratic values and constitutional principles, empowerment and civic engagement, legal education from the secondary level can fuel students to react in these regards.

It is crucial to identify all relevant stakeholders, including policymakers, educators, legal professionals, students, and parents, and their respective roles. Curriculum planning, resource allocation, educator preparation, and involvement of relevant stakeholders are all parts of an overarching strategy necessary to tackle these complex problems. Bangladesh can learn from international practices regarding how to better priorities curriculum integration, teacher education, and stakeholder participation (Biswas & Ahsan, 2023). The conclusion of this study is a call to action in which policymakers, educators, and stakeholders are all urged to work together. To ensure the successful integration of legal education, which will pave the way for a more informed, just, and empowered society, the authors recommend further research and action.

References

Alperen, M. J. (2017). *Foundations of homeland security: Law and Policy*. John Wiley & Sons.

- Amin, A. A. (2024, January 26). Is lack of legal knowledge a barrier to justice in Bangladesh? *The Business Standard*. <https://www.tbsnews.net/thoughts/lack-legal-knowledge-barrier-justice-bangladesh-781742>
- Azam, M. M. (2005). Reforming Legal Education in Bangladesh. *Journal of Legal Education*, 55(4), 560–570. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42893940>
- Bingham, A. J., Dean, S., & Castillo, J. (2019). Qualitative comparative analysis in educational policy research: Procedures, processes, and possibilities. *Methodological Innovations*, 12(2), 205979911984098. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2059799119840982>
- Biswas, A., & Ahsan, W. B. (2023). Innovative Teaching and student Engagement in Bangladesh: policy implications. <https://doi.org/10.58947/hlbr-qvzm>
- Campbell, D. E. (2006). What is education's impact on civic and social engagement? (Symposium on Social Outcomes of Learning, held at the Danish University of Education (Copenhagen)). <https://www.oecd.org/education/innovation-education/37425694.pdf>
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE.
- Chowning, J. T., Griswold, J., Kovarik, D. N., & Collins, L. (2012). Fostering Critical Thinking, Reasoning, and Argumentation Skills through Bioethics Education. *PLOS ONE*, 7(5), e36791. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0036791>
- CRI. (2022, May 23). What milestones have Bangladesh crossed in 50 years. Centre for Research and Information. <https://cri.org.bd/2021/03/26/what-milestones-have-bangladesh-crossed-in-50-years/>
- Education Commission - *Banglapedia*. (2021). https://en.banglapedia.org/index.php/Education_Commission
- Gane, C., & Huang, R. H. (2017). *Legal education in the global context: Opportunities and Challenges*. Routledge.
- Hauser, S. M. (2000). Education, ability, and civic engagement in the contemporary United States. *Social Science Research*, 29(4), 556–582. <https://doi.org/10.1006/ssre.2000.0681>
- Hews, R., Beligatamulla, G., & McNamara, J. (2023). Creative confidence and thinking skills for lawyers: Making sense of design thinking pedagogy in legal education. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 49, 101352. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2023.101352>
- Include legal education in school curriculum - - observerbd.com*. (2024). The Daily Observer. <https://www.observerbd.com/news.php?id=460163>
- Islam, M. J. (2022). The need for legal education at secondary and higher secondary level of education system of Bangladesh. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357900675_The_Need_for_Legal_Education_at_Secondary_and_Higher_Secondary_Level_of_Education_System_of_Bangladesh
- Instrument construct of student's discipline attitude: Validity and reliability <https://doi.org/10.33292/petier.v5i2.162>
- Joyes, C., Rossignoli, S., & Amonoo-Kuofi, E. F. (2019). 21st Century Skills: Evidence of Issues in Definition, Demand and Delivery for Development Contexts. K4D Helpdesk Report). <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/14674>
- Kamvounias, P. (1994). Legal Studies in Secondary Schools: The New South Wales Experience. *Legal Education Review*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.53300/001c.6019>
- Kankindi, A. K., & Chimbwanda, V. (2021). Legal Education and its Contemporary Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Strathmore Law Journal*, 5(1), 145–179. <https://doi.org/10.52907/slj.v5i1.143>

- Le Brun, Marlene; Clark, Eugene E --- "The Growth of Legal Education in Australian Secondary Schools: Implications for Tertiary and Secondary Legal Education" [1989] *LegEdRev* 16; (1989) 1(2) *Legal Education Review* 217. <https://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/LegEdRev/1989/16.html>
- Legal Education for the Future - Harvard Law School Center on the Legal Profession*. (2023, September 28). Harvard Law School Center on the Legal Profession. <https://clp.law.harvard.edu/knowledge-hub/magazine/issues/legal-education-for-the-future/legal-education-for-the-future/>
- Li, L., & Sun, Y. (2022). The rule of law in education and its relationship to thinking skills. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, 44, 101034. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2022.101034>
- Lewis, M. M., & Kern, S. (2018). Using education law as a tool to empower social justice leaders to promote LGBTQ inclusion. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 54(5), 723–746. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161x18769045>
- Macfarlane, J. (1992). Look before You Leap: Knowledge and Learning in Legal Skills Education. *Journal of Law and Society*, 19(3), 293. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1409907>
- OHCHR. (2023, December 31). Conflict prevention, early warning and security. https://www.ohchr.org/en/topic/conflict-prevention-early-warning-and-security?gclid=CjoKCCQiAr8eqBhD3ARIsAle-buPKM1dfNJRRCR46P4YCDC6eZtl2_VHQSCXByo4eg39_3YgheY5rGhQUaAjr7EALw_wcB
- Rahman, M. M., Hamzah, M. I. M., Meerah, T. S. M., & Rahman, M. (2010b). HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH: COLONIAL PERIOD TO 21st CENTURY. *International Education Studies*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v3n1p114>
- Rahman, S. S. (2009). Legal education system in the UK: An overview - Chancery Law Chronicles. <https://www.clcbd.org/journal/9.html>
- Reddy, L. S., & Ramasamy, K. (2016). A study on sampling technique to analyse the matrix organization in IT outsourcing industry. *Social Science Research Network*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3287730>
- Rodrigues, R. (2020). Legal and human rights issues of AI: Gaps, challenges and vulnerabilities. *Journal of Responsible Technology*, 4, 100005. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrt.2020.100005>
- Sherr, A. (2005). Legal Education – Where do we begin? Starting Again. . .Again. *Social Science Research Network*. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/Delivery.cfm/SSRN_ID1883524_code242508.pdf?abstractid=1883524&mirid=1&type=2
- Thornton, H. (2006). Teachers talking: the role of collaboration in secondary schools in Bangladesh. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 36(2), 181–196. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057920600741180>
- The problems of educational field experience for the students of elementary school teacher education study programs during the pandemic <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057920600741180>
- UNESCO. (2023). The turning point: Why we must transform education now. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/turning-point-why-we-must-transform-education-now>

