



Email: editorijless@gmail.com

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ROLE OF TEACHER IN SHAPING THE QUALITY LEGAL EDUCATION IN NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITIES IN INDIA: A STUDY OF ISSUES & CHALLENGES

Dr.M.R.SREENIVASA MURTHY¹, Dr.K.SYAMALA²

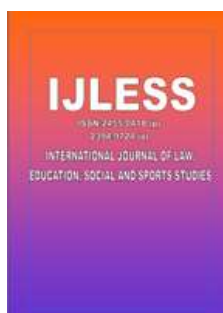
¹Associate Professor, National University of Study and Research in Law, Ranchi, Jharkhand

E-mail: meenigam@gmail.com

²Associate Professor, National University of Study and Research in Law, Ranchi, Jharkhand

E-mail: k.syamala@nusrlranchi.ac.in

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ABSTRACT

National Law School of India University, Bangalore is the first NLU, which has been established with an objective of bringing revolutionary changes in the legal education of India. The founding faculty of the NLSIU, Bangalore made remarkable contribution in convincing the country about the importance of establishing NLUs in each State for bringing the international standards in the bar and bench. Subsequent establishment of NLUs in other States was encouraging for a period, but the NLUs started facing issues such as financial crunch and infrastructural issues, due to the lack of monetary support from the States. The slow impact of the challenges was on academic quality by affecting the abilities of the teachers and students. The increasing number of private law universities, which are rich in financial resources and infrastructure slowly started grabbing quality faculty and students. The NLUs still with the innovative curriculums and teaching pedagogies able to attract the creamy layer, but struggle is not easy. The NLUs are in urgent need of reinventing and renovating the teaching-learning pedagogies, course curriculums and quality faculty to cater to the needs of the market and shaping the employability skills in the students. The NLUs are required to focus on developing themselves of Centers of Excellence in the field of legal education by developing quality faculty cadre and quality academic standards. The role of teacher in an educational institute can to a larger extent substitute the infrastructural issues and attract the quality students. The NLUs shall focus on nurturing quality teachers by reducing the administrative responsibilities from the shoulders of the teachers and creating space for them to focus on the research activities. The teachers to be trained and encouraged to take up research projects, contribute in policy development and support the Nation in addressing the social, political and legal issues. The article attempts to address the issues and challenges faced by the teachers of NLUs and possible solutions to overcome the same.

Keywords: National Law Universities, Teachers, Quality legal education, Teaching-learning pedagogy, course curriculums, research activities

INTRODUCTION

The need for internationalization of legal education paved path for reforms in Indian legal education. The emergence of LPOs (Legal Process Outsourcing) and establishment of corporate legal houses demanded special skills in young lawyers. The demand for brighter and outspoken law graduates increased with the growing corporate legal profession. The demand for specialized skills in terms of research, oration, logical thinking, and spontaneous reactions with modern legal understanding were expected out of young lawyers. The expectations are not like old wine in new bottle, but altogether a new wine with energy boosts.

The Advocates Act, 1961 is the starting step for reforms in legal education, which strived for integrating the legal education throughout the country under uniform standards. The establishment of State and Central Bar Councils to improve the standards of legal education in consultation with Universities offering law courses is another major step in legal education reforms. The introduction of 5-year LLB programme is another landmark achievement in the legal education reforms.

Establishment of National Law School of India University (NLSIU) at Bangalore in 1986 changed the face of legal education by an expectation of 'the Harvard at East'. The success of NLSIU, Bangalore led to the establishment of NLUs at almost every State in India and also the establishment of private Law Schools like Jindal, Benett etc., The expansion of international trade and incoming multinational companies demand for skilled legal officers, advocates etc., was met by the production of young capable lawyers by the NLUs and other private legal education institutions.

The demand for legal education increased gradually and the students of middle class started dominating the law schools and topped the placements by gaining international jobs. The students of modern legal education strived hard to make their own mark in the changing legal market at the national and global level by competing with top Universities across the globe.

Till here, the story is about the success of modern legal education in India. The story line started declining when modern legal education started losing the quality standards including NLUs and premier legal education institutions. The lack of contemporary course curriculums, quality teachers, lack of practical knowledge and many more reasons contributed for the declining of the standards of legal education.

Whatever may be the reasons; there is an immediate requirement to focus on the critical areas for uplifting the quality of legal education. Among many reasons, the important is the quality of teachers of law schools. Professor Madhava Menon, father of modern legal education in India, in his several speeches stressed upon the importance of a role of teacher in the success of legal education.

The present article focuses on the quality enhancement of a teacher of modern legal education system. The article attempts to analyze the expectations of the modern legal education system from a teacher and tries to identify the critical areas. The article attempts to provide models to enhance the quality teachers who are the face of legal education after the students.

NLUs CONTRIBUTION TO LEGAL EDUCATION

National Law Universities were established with an aim to develop an institution of legal education having a national character in its composition. Instead of three years LLB programme, five years LLB programme is offered to orient the students towards legal education from their tender age i.e., after finishing 12th standard. A national level admission test titled, Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) has been developed to attract the creamy layer intending to pursue law as their career. Every year approx. fifty thousand students compete in the CLAT examination to gain the seat in NLUs.

To nurture the committed pool of students, NLUs also developed committed pool of teachers who have intensive academic experience. The institutions were given a fully residential character to nurture the students in the style of *Gurukula*, the oldest pattern of education system in India.

NLSIU Bangalore, though established in 1986, could complete the bare minimum infrastructure only in 2013 with the support of Government of Karnataka, Bar Council of India, Ford Foundation, Infosys etc., after ten years of experimenting with the NLSIU, Bangalore, in the year 1998, National Academy of Legal Studies and Research (NALSAR), Hyderabad & National Law Institute University (NLIU), Bhopal was established. Subsequently, West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences (WBNUJS), Kolkata (2000), National Law University, Jodhpur (2001) was established. As on today, almost every State in India has a National Law University established within its territory.

NLUs engineered and re-engineered on the curriculums with greater degree of institutional autonomy by UGC and BCI. The pool of academicians, practitioners and industrialists nurtured the course content to give it an international standard. Faculty exchange programmes were conducted by collaborating with the foreign universities. The innovative teaching-learning pedagogies were invented to provide the best taste of legal education to the students. Internships were introduced both for faculty and students to learn the contemporary needs of the legal profession. Legal practitioners, corporate lawyers, academicians from abroad were invited to deliver talks to expand the horizons of the student vision. The courses such as B.B.A. LL.B.; B.Sc., LL.B.; B.Com., LL.B.; B.Tech. LL.B. was introduced. To develop inter-disciplinary approach, the teachers of social sciences, liberal arts, and literature were given special trainings in integrating their specializations with a flavor of law. 'Sociology of Law', 'Law & Economics' are some of the examples of inter-disciplinary approach. LL.M. courses were developed to generate the pool of researchers and academicians to cater to the needs of the legal education, research activities of the government and private entities. NLUs introduced Distance Education courses in Master's level in different fields of study like Intellectual Property Law, Business laws, Child Rights law etc.,

Innovative teaching-learning pedagogy with mootings, debating, parliamentary debating, case-analysis, panel discussion, seminar presentation, research publication, research projects etc., were introduced for the overall development of the students. Clinical courses such as arbitration & mediation etc.,

Apart from the aforementioned activities related to academics, International and National level conferences and workshops were organized for all sections of legal profession including judges, advocates, NGOs, business executives etc., Specialized courses were designed to facilitate the corporate personnel, social activists etc., to support them in understanding the legal intricacies of their day to day activities.

Various Centers and committees were established to conduct outreach activities to support the State as well as the Nation in developing policies, legislations etc., neighbor friendly approach has been adopted by adopting the near by villages for providing legal awareness, education etc.,

NLUs strived hard to develop as legal research pools by developing research reports on various issues of national and state importance. NLUs have undertaken research projects funded by Government of India and State Governments, UGC, World Bank and many other institutions of repute in international and national level.

NLUs worked hard to establish international connections with foreign universities by entering into the MoUs with National University of Singapore, Harvard University, Yale University etc., for faculty exchange and student exchange programmes.

The working style of NLUs is carved to include the social responsibility of leading the legal education of the country with best practices in enhancing the academic quality, introducing innovative teaching-learning pedagogy etc.,

ISSUES & CHALLENGES FACED BY NLUs IN TODAY'S CONTEXT

Once upon a time, the students and those who couldn't achieve or missed out an option to join any other stream, only used to choose law as a professional education, chose legal profession as last option. Though the aforementioned notion is not true in all cases, but a general opinion about legal profession in common parlance is a last option. Career options available were either bar or bench largely, legal officers in banks and other companies is nominal. The scope and ambit of employment is narrower and limited.

The advent of law firm's culture, growing industrialization and corporate litigation increased the options, and the ones who pursued law degree with caution were successful. The establishment of NLUs gave an opportunity for those who want to pursue law with seriousness in India. The interdisciplinary approach, research projects, compulsory internships and other innovative teaching-learning pedagogy provided scope to excel in the profession.

The important challenge to the law schools is to cater to the demands of the globalized legal profession and to develop the institutions to the global standards of excellence. The intention behind the establishment of NLSIU, Bangalore and other subsequent NLUs is to build centers of excellence with world class academic standards with the capacity of producing capable and committed legal professionals, who has the potential to enrich the bar and bench with their skills equivalent to the global standards.

The NLUs, which are established by the State Legislations, are dependent largely on UGC and State Government for funds. Majority of NLUs are suffering with fund crunch and step mother approach from State Governments in terms of allocation of funds to the Universities. Apart from NLSIU Bangalore, NALSAR Hyderabad, WBNUJS Kolkata, RMNLU Lucknow, GNLU Gujarat, other NLUs are suffering with fund crunch. In many NLUs, the absence of annual recurring grant from the State Government or other financial support leaves no option to the Universities other than to meet the expenses with the fee paid by the students. Many NLUs are still running in the private accommodations or functioning with the bare minimum infrastructure developed with the little financial support extended by the State Government.

For reviewing the course curriculums, NLSIU Bangalore in 2001 developed syllabi on the in line with Mac Crate Report and Harvard models. Both Mac Crate Report and Harvard Model were tailored to the Indian education needs by incorporating fundamental lawyering skills required to cater to the needs of the changing dimensions of legal profession in the light of the globalization, liberalization and privatization. The revolutionary changes relating to information and communication technologies also influenced the teaching-learning pedagogy in legal education by converting physical classroom into virtual classroom. The changing patterns of legal litigation required the students of law to develop interdisciplinary approach with the other fields of study such as medicine, engineering, commerce etc., the new subjects such as infrastructural laws, science and technology, intellectual property rights, business laws, electricity laws, laws relating banking and finance, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code etc., are some emerging areas.

Despite of efforts to innovate new courses and curriculums to introduce contemporary changes to the students, still the challenge of innovating teaching-learning pedagogy, which can imbibe the required skills in students continued.

What in reality is obstructing the dreams of Prof. (Dr.) Madhava Menon and many other legal luminaries, supporters of NLUs and alumini of law schools from success? What are the real challenges

faced by NLUs in today's context? Why NLUs were criticized in today's context as paradox? Is it because the teaching quality is degrading? If yes, what are the reasons for such degrading of the teaching quality?

ROLE OF A TEACHER IN NLUs

A teacher in a NLU shall be competent to guide the motivated students who opted legal education above all other professional studies. A teacher with a deep understanding of the subjects taught by them with contemporary knowledge and practical understanding is expected. A teacher with effective communication skills, enthusiastic to research, innovative in teaching methods and good in classroom management are required to handle the highly vibrant students of the modern legal education system. To acquire all the aforementioned qualities, a teacher shall be committed to the profession, understand the value of role of teacher in the life of a student. A teacher may be 'accidental teacher', 'teacher by choice' or 'teacher by compulsion', once tied with the profession if is committed, can be a successful teacher.

Modern legal education system gives scope for the teacher to define curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation method. The challenge is to teach the basics of the law, teach the nuances of the law, to teach the practical application of the law and also to teach the innovation in the interpretation of law within the specified time limit of the course. In modern legal education, teaching law is a full time job engaging students to think innovatively, (what we call in general parlance, out of the box thinking ability) with deep-rooted knowledge in the subject.

A teacher can be called successful when his student is successful. When a teacher meets a successful student holding higher position in the society, the head of the teacher rises to great height. When a teacher meets an unsuccessful student suffering with unemployment or meager employment, the introspection towards the failure in transforming the student shall start within the teacher. Introspection shall be judge, whether the failure was even after giving his hundred per cent to make the student employable and capable or failure was because of his own negligence.

Committed to the cause, dedicating professional life to the betterment of students only makes a teacher successful. Knowledge and skills are aids to excel in the commitment. A teacher, who understands the role perfectly, can only perform his job successfully. Especially in legal education, challenges to make the students capable to excel in profession, transforming them to possess the employable qualities is a tough challenge as demands of the market are vibrant and ever changing. The every day changing dimensions of legal profession is a confluence of traditional and modern skills.

In earlier days, the teachers were generally men of distinct personality, with great learning, whose mind and heart would naturally attract the student. They had the good capacity to present the contents of the course with good humor with the ability to raise the thinking capabilities of the student. They were systematic in their teaching-learning pedagogy and class management and course plans were perfect and up-to-date. They were experts in multi-disciplinary approach, engaged themselves in debate with different fields of study and always keen to integrate law with other subjects such as sociology, history, economics etc.,

The teacher and student can engage into a purposeful learning experience only when the teacher sets a clear goals, possess the skills to translate these goals into sound curriculum and pedagogy, possess the leadership qualities in guiding and mentoring the students and managing the class room environment.

CHALLENGES TO THE TEACHERS IN NLU'S LACK OF ADEQUATE NUMBER OF PROFESSORS/ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS AS PER UGC/BCI NORMS

According to the Bar Council of India (BCI) for U.G. Programme student-teacher ratio is 1:40 and according to the UGC student-teacher ratio is 1:30 and for P.G. Programme 1:15.

For 600 students approx.. (BCI sanctioned strength to the University for BALLB is 120 students) total 20 teachers (as per UGC ratio). Additional 2 teachers may be recruited for each of the batch, therefore total 10 additional teachers may be recruited for five batches. Total 30 teachers are required for UG courses. For 60 students approx.. [as per BCI sanctioned strength], 2 teachers for batch, i.e., 6 teachers. additional 3 teachers may be recruited.

According to the UGC faculty cadre ratio for full strength of one U.G. Programme is 1:2:6 [Professor - Associate Professor - Assistant Professor (Selection/Senior/Lecturer Level depends upon CAS)].

The following is the faculty numbers in NLU's:

Name of the NLU	No. of Professors (Excluding Vice Chancellor, Adjunct Professors, Honorary Professors etc.,)	No. of Associate Professors	No. of Assistant Professors
NLSIU, Bangalore	10	4	6
NALSAR, Hyderabad	9	4	32
NLIU Bhopal	6	6	15
WBNUJS, Kolkata	6	2	22
NLU Jodhpur	2	4	22
HNLU Raipur	-	1	29
GNLU, Gandhinagar	3	9	29
RMNLU Lucknow	2	5	24
RGNUL, Punjab	2	2	29
CNLU Patna	4	-	13
NUALS, Kochi	2	2	9
NLUO, Odisha	6	-	25
NUSRL, Ranchi	-	3	16
NLUJA, Assam	-	3	12
DSNLU, Visakhapatnam	3	4	11
TNNLU, Tiruchirapalli	-	1	27
MNLU, Mumbai	-	1	12
MNLU, Nagpur	1	2	4
MNLU, Aurangabad	1	-	8
HPNLU, Shimla	-	2	16
DNLU, Jabalpur	-	3	19

The crunch of qualified faculty is always an issue in NLU's, which can be seen from the aforementioned table.

ACADEMICS & ADMINISTRATION: DUAL ROLE

Where to concentrate - Academics or Administration? Should I race for emerging as 'Motivation Guru' or for publications and research or support the institute as Warden, Chief Warden, Disciplinary committee, Proctor or Registrar? The modern way of working of the educational institutions is to assign the responsibility of academics and administration both to the teachers to exploit the fullest of their full

time labor. The additional responsibilities to teachers, in terms of administrative responsibilities engages the teacher more in administrative tasks rather than research and outreach activities.

ROLE AS QUALITY AND MOTIVATION GURU: MEMBERSHIP IN CENTERS AND COMMITTEES

Challenges are too many and amidst which a teacher of modern legal education is expected to emerge as 'Quality Guru', 'Motivation Guru', 'Research Guru' etc., 'Motivating Guru' – the role the teacher is expected to play in modern legal education system by becoming part of different centers or committees. The centers or committees are expected to carry outreach activities, organize seminars, workshops, conferences etc., parliamentary debates, moot court competitions etc., A job on and above teaching and other administrative works are carried out to motivate students in enhancing their skills, guiding them towards research, exposing them to new or contemporary areas of development in the legal fields. This education is provided to the students by conducting meetings, guiding students by allotting works, monitoring their knowledge acumen etc.,

ROLE AS RESEARCHER

'Publish or perish' – an important rule of teaching profession requires teachers to publish research papers, research reports, books etc., The everyday changing rules of UGC with regard to the Academic Performance Indicators (API) score or Academic or Research Score, minimum qualifications with regard to publications for appointment of Assistant Professor, keeps the backbone of the teacher straight in terms of conducting research activities.

ROLE AS CAREER ADVISOR

Moots to Internships and placements - developing the employability qualifications of the student is another task which teacher is expected to perform in modern legal education. To upgrade the bio-data of the student, the teacher should support him in solving moot problems, arranging internships and placements, updating the market requirements and incorporating the contemporary employability qualities as per demand in the students is another challenge. Students learn a lot in their internship about the practical application of the subject and if teacher is not upgrading himself about the same, the classroom teaching becomes theoretical and teacher may not meet the expectations of the student. The teacher either by his own efforts or by interaction with the students should know the changing trends of employment criteria, changing avenues of employment, market trend, contemporary changes to legal profession, legal drafting, demands of the employers etc., Everyday changing patterns of the jobs in law firms, corporate firms, banking sectors, legal professions poses new challenges to the teacher in terms of molding the course content to suit to the demands.

INADEQUACY OF QUALIFIED AND COMPETENT TEACHERS

Lack of sufficient number of senior professors in the institutions of legal education to guide the young faculty is another challenge in modern legal education system. As per the requirement of UGC/BCI, per undergraduate batch, there shall be 1 professor, 2 Associate professors and 4 Assistant Professors (a pyramid structure).

Paucity of competent teachers even in the best law schools is one of the important challenges for teaching profession in modern legal education. Non-joining of bright students into the teaching profession is another challenge. UGC introduced one-year LLM programme to meet the scarcity by believing that the same will pump the qualified teachers into the law teaching.

CHALLENGE AS TO INTEGRATED TEACHING & LEARNING OF LAW

Traditional legal education was part of University system where in the other fields of education such as science, engineering, literature, social sciences and behavioral sciences are taught as full-fledged courses. The old teachers had the privilege to engage themselves in cross-cutting angles of legal

education with other streams of education. The modern teachers, who work in a 24 teachers x 600 students approx.. model of modern legal education system miss the opportunity of updating themselves on regular basis with such interactions. Working in islands of law schools, the professional interaction with other fields is one of the missing links for teachers of modern legal education system.

The study of successful teachers of the country will show their expertise not only in law but also in other fields such as economics, political science, English, science, mathematics, commerce or something else and their zeal to integrate is visible through their writings and speeches. For example, Hon'ble Mr. Justice (Retd) Deepak Mishra, Ex-Chief Justice, Supreme Court of India has excellent hold on English literature and his writing and speeches reflects his command. This extraordinary skill in other fields and the ability to integrate the same with law attracts the listeners, readers, undoubtedly the young generation of lawyers.

NLUS WORKING IN SILOS

NLUs are Islands with isolated 12th pass students working with 30 to 50 teachers. What's the problem, if NLUs are islands with isolated 12th pass students working with 30 to 50 teachers? In traditional legal education, the three year LL.B. course students were mature, having basic degree in arts or science or engineering etc., The confluence of different streams into the class room of three year LL.B. course, necessarily initiates an inter-disciplinary dialogue.

In islands of isolated 12th pass 5-year B.A. LL.B. students are clean slates, where teachers are responsible to write the words of wisdom. What happens when teachers are incompetent or unable to enhance the inter-disciplinary understanding of the law with the other streams? Considering the chance of inability of teachers in educating inter-disciplinary understanding among the students, let us look into the challenges faced by the teachers of social sciences and liberal arts, who were engaged in teaching 5 years B.A. LL.B. students in NLUs.

In majority of NLUs, there is only one teacher for subjects such as History, Sociology, Economics, Psychology, Political Science, English etc., Unlike traditional university teachers of the aforementioned streams, these teachers of NLUs do not have the opportunity to interact with the teachers of core economics, sociology, literature etc., on day to day basis. The students who are just 12th pass, has no intellectual ability to question these teachers curriculums and teachings. Hence, the teachers dominate the entire learning process with students as simple followers, a one-way process, with teacher-dominant course curriculum and teaching-learning method.

The performance appraisal of the curriculum and teaching-learning pedagogy of the teachers of social sciences and liberal arts requires an expertise.

AREAS OF CONCERN

NEED FOR REENGINEERING OF INNOVATIVE TEACHING-LEARNING PEDAGOGY

Teaching-learning pedagogy has two components, i.e., teaching methods and evaluation methods. The following is the standard evaluation pattern adopted in general by all the NLUs course curriculums:

- Case-law/Case presentation
- Debate / Parliamentary debate
- Panel discussion
- Written test
- Moot court
- Research publication

Apart from above, there are few courses, which demands other types of pedagogy, a bit different from the aforementioned list.

The aforementioned strategy of teaching-learning pedagogy is required to be reinvented to suit to the needs of the changing legal profession. The students to be trained in drafting, reviewing and auditing of the implementation of laws, public policies, government schemes etc., The students shall be engaged to develop e-content in terms of videos, blogs etc., as part of internal evaluation. Rather than adopting a fixed pattern of evaluation, the teacher shall be flexible to encourage the students to explore the practical aspects of the subject. For example, as part of Constitutional law subject, the students shall be encouraged to conduct study on the implementation of Right to Education Act, 2009, Food Security Act, 2013, Right to Information Act, 2005, State reservation policies etc., As part of Environmental law, working of the State Pollution Board, lacunae in the implementation of State rules related to pollution etc., will help the students in understanding the practical application of the subject.

There is a huge criticism about plagiarism in the research papers submitted by the law students across the nation. It is also criticized that the research papers are exchanged among the students of different colleges for submissions. The teachers should discuss and guide the students about the importance of research and encourage them towards producing empirical study or original research with novel thoughts.

A lot needs to be done to reengineer the teaching-learning pedagogy of the NLUs to remove the monotonous in the internal assessments.

TRAINING THE TEACHERS TO ORIENT TOWARDS AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF MODERN LEGAL EDUCATION

NLUs are established to cater to the needs of the international and national law firms and corporations, develop the standards of the Indian Bar Associations and judiciary. The students of NLUs are expected to contribute in policy development, governance and social developments also apart from serving bar and bench. The teachers shall have an understanding of the working culture of the market, changing dimensions of the legal services and the international standards and practices for incorporating the same into the curriculum and introducing such teaching pedagogy.

CONDUCTING WORKSHOPS & TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR TEACHERS OF NLUs TO EQUIP THEM TO INVENT & RE-INVENT NEW TEACHING-LEARNING PEDAGOGIES, NEW COURSE CURRICULUMS ETC.,

The NLUs shall develop a common platform to train the teachers in developing course curriculums and teaching pedagogies. There are two ways to address this issue:

- Establishment of National Academy of Teachers (NALT)
- Conducting workshops and training programmes for teachers of NLUs

The sharing of best practices and knowledge will help the teachers of NLUs to re-innovate the course curriculums and teaching pedagogies. Further, it will also help the teachers to discuss and debate upon introducing new courses and modules to adopt the nuances and current trends.

ADOPTING STRATEGIES TO LESSEN THE ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES AND CREATING SPACE FOR ACADEMIC & RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

The NLUs shall adopt strategies to lessen the administrative responsibilities from the heads of the teachers for creating space for them to concentrate on academic and research activities. At present, the teachers are given responsibilities in various committees of the Universities, which are responsible for administrative tasks. The areas such as discipline, hostel management, proctorship etc., are taken care of by the teachers in all most all NLUs. The NLUs shall strengthen the administrative setup and

relieve the faculty from the administrative positions and create space for academic and research activities.

ENCOURAGING TEACHERS TO TAKE UP RESEARCH PROJECTS AND FOREIGN ASSIGNMENTS

The NLU teachers shall be encouraged to take up the research projects and foreign assignments. In this regard, the University shall conduct workshops and seminars on developing research projects and the skills required to acquire the foreign assignments. In this regard, to push the faculties into the research projects and foreign assignments, periodical self appraisal and incentives to be provided.

COMMON CURRICULUM AND TEACHING PEDAGOGY TO BE DEVELOPED IN ALL NLUs FOR STANDARDIZATION AND COLLECTIVE UPGRADATION

Though the basic structure of legal education is governed in accordance with the Bar Council of India Rules of Legal Education - Part IV, still, in terms of the Honors and elective papers, evaluation pattern, teaching learning pedagogy is different from one NLU to another. Working as independent entities, NLUs create an impression of competing within themselves. The NLUs shall develop as centers of excellence in the field of legal education and collectively work for bringing reforms in legal education. The standardization and collective upgradation of NLUs will help to achieve the noble objective of establishing such premium institutions with the public funds.

CONCLUSION

The NLUs in the today's context are facing tough challenges from the private law universities, which are rich in infrastructure, resource and faculty. NLUs, which are committed for imparting quality legal education, are service-oriented institutions, established by the State Universities to develop law professionals. The students of NLUs are expected to bring radical changes in the advocacy and judiciary of the country, and contribute in bringing justice to the common man.

To achieve such noble objectives, the NLUs had to go through a tough route starting from establishment of the institution to the maintenance of the quality. All NLUs are suffering with financial issues for developing quality infrastructure. The financial challenges are affecting the academic management of the institution, as infrastructural issues can impact the teaching-learning programmes.

The lack of infrastructure influences the quality of teachers and students. The students of creamy layer always try to look for good library and infrastructure for better learning process. The quality teachers also get attracted to high salaries and quality infrastructure and opt for better institutions.

The NLUs shall adopt problem-oriented strategies to overcome the challenges and to maintain the quality of the legal education. To retain the quality teachers and to attract quality students, NLUs shall work hard to overcome the financial challenges, reinvent the course outlines and teaching-learning pedagogy to compete with the private universities. The NLUs shall offer market-oriented courses and develop the employability skills in the students through innovative pedagogies. Periodical appraisal of teachers, identifying the areas of improvement, conducting seminars, training programmes and workshops for students and teachers to overcome the lacunae, working hard to contribute in Nation's development, becoming a neighbor friendly institute by addressing the local issues are the immediate areas of focus for NLUs. The NLUs shall collectively work hard to impress Government of India & Government of respective States with their presence in the areas such as development law & policy, legal awareness programmes, research works and pilot studies.

The aforementioned objectives can be achieved only when the faculty cadre of the institute is strong. NLUs shall work hard in strengthening the faculty cadre by reducing the administrative workload from their shoulders and encouraging them to contribute in academic and research activities.

The struggle for existence for NLUs in the beginning days was for evolution of the culture, later days for the existence, currently for sustaining in the competition of education market. Reinventing and renovating the Institutional framework will help NLUs to overcome the challenges.

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