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Legal Education in Bangladesh: Assessing the Gap Between Pre-Tertiary and Tertiary Learning

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Abstract

Education is the pillar of individual and social development, as it equips individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to create a sustainable future. In addition, legal education empowers people with knowledge regarding their rights and duties and how the justice system works. The Latin maxim, 'Ignorantia juris non excusat' meaning ignorance of the law is not an excuse, also emphasizes the importance of legal awareness. However, in Bangladesh, legal education is confined only to tertiary levels, with limited opportunities for students to acquire basic legal knowledge during pre-tertiary education. This study examines the gap between pre-tertiary and tertiary legal education in Bangladesh using a mixed-method approach that combines survey data with documentary and comparative analysis. Data were collected from 100 LLB students and 12 law faculty members across four universities

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in Bangladesh. The survey data were analyzed descriptively to examine respondents' exposure to pre-tertiary legal education and their perceptions of its relevance to LLB studies, while documentary and comparative analysis was used to examine selected approaches to pre-tertiary legal education in other jurisdictions. The findings indicate that 83% of the student respondents had received no legal education at the school or college level, while 93% believed that prior legal education would make LLB study easier. Moreover, 92% supported introducing basic legal education at the pre-tertiary level. The study also explores selected international practices of pre-tertiary legal education to identify relevant policy insights for Bangladesh. The findings suggest that introducing basic legal education at the pre-tertiary level may help students develop foundational legal knowledge and better prepare them for tertiary legal studies. The study therefore recommends introducing age-appropriate legal education in the pre-tertiary curriculum.

KEYWORDS
Legal Education; Tertiary Legal Education; Legal Literacy; Legal Curriculum; Bangladesh.

Introduction

It is a known fact that education is the cornerstone of individual empowerment and national development. *Nelson Mandela*, who was the first democratically elected president of South Africa, also stressed the importance of education, stating that it is the best weapon for achieving global change.[1] It not only provides the knowledge and skills, but also provides the kind of awareness that one needs in order to engage effectively in a democratic society.[2] However, a very important but frequently neglected aspect of this awareness is legal literacy, the

[1] Nelson Mandela, 'Addressed at the Launch of the Mindset Network' (Johannesburg, 16 July 2003) "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

[2] John Dewey, Democracy and Education (Standard Ebooks, 2003).

knowledge of laws, rights, obligations, and legal organization. A society that is literate in the law is more competent in the preservation of justice, in resisting oppression, and in active participation in governance.[3]

Nevertheless, in Bangladesh, professional legal education is offered at the tertiary (university) level, while basic legal literacy is not generally provided as a distinct, organized component of pre-tertiary level (secondary and higher secondary education).[4] However, this should be distinguished from civic and citizenship education, through which students may encounter certain legal concepts, rights, duties, and constitutional principles. The problem here is not that there is an absence of legal content in pre-tertiary education, but rather that there is no systematic and specific programme introducing basic legal literacy to the students with structured exposure to foundational legal concepts before entering university. Such an imbalance between general education and formal legal education may leave some students entering university with limited prior knowledge of core legal concepts, terminology, and reasoning methods of law.

For this study, 'Legal education' refers to the structured teaching and learning of law, including legal concepts, principles, institutions, and methods of legal reasoning. 'Legal literacy' refers more specifically to the ability to understand basic legal rights, duties, rules, and institutions relevant to everyday life. 'Civic education' is broader and concerns knowledge and understanding of citizenship, democratic institutions, participation, rights, and responsibilities; it may therefore contain legal content without constituting formal legal education. 'Legal awareness' refers to an individual's awareness or recognition of relevant legal rights, obligations, protections, and available legal mechanisms. In this study, the principal empirical focus is on the extent of students'

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[3] Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor (CLEP), Making the Law Work for Everyone: Volume I, Report of the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor (2008), https://ycsg.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/making_the_law_work.pdf.

[4] SM Hayat Mahmud and Md Fajlay Rabbi, "Inclusion of Legal Education in Secondary and Higher Secondary Education System in Bangladesh: An Appraisal," Psychology, Evaluation, and Technology in Educational Research 6 (2024): 168, https://doi.org/10.33292/petier.v6i2.219.

prior exposure to legal education and their perceptions of its relevance to tertiary LLB studies, while legal literacy and legal awareness are considered as related broader implications rather than as independently measured outcomes.

Students' knowledge of basic legal concepts prior to university may not only have an impact on their transition into tertiary legal study, but may also decrease their awareness of rights, duties and the legal system.[5] This issue may become particularly relevant during socio-political movements, when understanding constitutional rights and legal safeguards can be important for citizens' engagement with public affairs.[6] Conversely, other nations like South Africa,[7] the United States,[8] the United Kingdom,[9] even India[10] and China[11] have included aspects of civic or legal education in their school or college curriculum. These nations provide their students with opportunities to encounter concepts

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5 Ibid.

6 Arpeeta Shams Mizan, "People's Understanding of Law during the Uprise: A Socio-Legal Analysis," The Daily Star, August 30, 2024, https://www.thedailystar.net/law-our-rights/news/peoples-understanding-law-during-the-uprise-sociolegal-analysis-3690016.

7 Department of Basic Education, "Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Senior Phase Grades 7-9 National Curriculum Statement (NCS)" (2011); Department of Basic Education, "Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Further Education and Training Phase Grades 10-12 National Curriculum Statement (NCS)" (2011).

8 Center for Civic Education, "We the People," Center for Civic Education, https://www.civiced.org/we-the-people.

9 Center for Civic Education, "Statutory Guidance National Curriculum in England: Citizenship Programmes of Study for Key Stages 3 and 4" (2013), https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-citizenship-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-citizenshi.

10 Shehwaaz Khan, "Limited Uptake of Legal Studies at Senior Secondary Level in Government Schools," Times of India, August 28, 2024, https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/education/news/limited-uptake-of-legal-studies-at-senior-secondary-level-in-government-schools/articleshow/112865416.cms.

11 Hanwei Tang and Yang Wang, "Moral Education Curriculum Reform for China's Elementary and Middle Schools in the Twenty-First Century: Past Progress and Future Prospects," ECNU Review of Education 4 (2021): 727, https://doi.org/10.1177/2096531120923416.

relating to law, rights, justice, and democratic governance before entering higher education.

Another critical issue in Bangladesh's education system is that the number of students continues to decline as they progress to higher classes. BANBEIS (2023) cites that around 33% of the students abandon school prior to completing secondary education, and over 21% abandon school prior to completing higher secondary education.[12] By the time students are in the university, a huge number of them drop their studies because of financial reasons, lack of support, or the necessity to work.[13] Due to this fact, many youths do not even receive an opportunity to get the bare minimum knowledge concerning law, their rights, or duties as citizens.

In this background, the absence of a dedicated and systematically structured programme of basic legal education at the pre-tertiary level raises questions about the continuity between general education and tertiary legal education in Bangladesh. Many students may enter LLB programmes without prior exposure to basic legal concepts, principles, or terminology. Although the existing literature identifies the potential value of introducing legal education before university, there remains limited empirical evidence concerning the extent of Bangladeshi LLB students' prior exposure to legal education, how students perceive the relevance of such exposure to their transition into LLB studies, and how law faculty members assess the need for greater continuity between the two educational stages. Similarly, young people who do not pursue higher education may have limited opportunities for structured exposure to knowledge regarding their rights, duties, and how law affects their daily lives. Such limited legal literacy may pose challenges to citizens' understanding of access to justice, participation in governance, and the rule of law.

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[12] Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS), Bangladesh Education Statistics 2023, https://banbeis.gov.bd/pages/files/69199763933eb65569ddc6fc.

[13] Md Rashed et al., "Factors Influencing on Dropouts at Undergraduate Level in Private Universities of Bangladesh: A Case Study," Australasian Journal of Business, Social Science and Information Technology 4 (2018): 177.

Mahmud and Rabbi examined the potential integration of legal education into Bangladesh's secondary and higher secondary education system and discussed its potential benefits and implementation challenges through qualitative inquiry.[14] However, their study did not empirically examine the prior exposure of current LLB students to legal education, students' perceptions of whether such exposure would facilitate their tertiary legal studies, or law faculty members' views on the relationship between pre-tertiary preparation and LLB education.

The present study extends this existing discussion by providing empirical evidence from 100 LLB students and 12 law faculty members from four universities in Bangladesh. This study examines the extent of students' prior exposure to legal education, their perceptions of the academic importance of such exposure, and faculty views regarding the incorporation of basic legal education at the pre-tertiary level. The study therefore addresses an empirical gap in the existing literature by connecting the question of pre-tertiary legal education with the educational transition into LLB programmes. Accordingly, the primary focus of this study is to assess the perceived gap between pre-tertiary and tertiary legal education and the potential value of greater continuity between these stages for students entering LLB programmes.

This study uses a mixed-methods approach that blends quantitative and qualitative data to analyze the perception of the gap between pre-tertiary and tertiary legal education in Bangladesh. The quantitative component examines LLB students' prior exposure to legal education and their perceptions of its relevance to tertiary legal study, while the qualitative component explores law faculty members' experiences and views regarding students' foundational legal knowledge and the introduction of basic legal education at the pre-tertiary level. Both datasets are analyzed separately before being compared and integrated at the interpretation stage.

Two groups of participants, LLB students and law faculty, are included in the collection of primary data. The student sample consists of 100 LLB students selected from four universities: Jahangirnagar University and University of Rajshahi as public institutions, and

[14] Mahmud and Rabbi, "Inclusion of Legal Education," 168.

Varendra University and City University as private institutions. Twenty-five students are selected from each university, with representation from different years of LLB study. The sample of faculty is composed of 12 law teachers, among whom 6 are from public universities, and 6 are from private universities. The respondents are purposively sampled as the study demands individuals who have direct experience in tertiary legal education. Student participants are eligible if they are studying the LLB programme in one of the selected universities, and faculty participants are selected based on their teaching experience in law.

The student questionnaire contains both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions generate quantitative data concerning students' prior exposure to legal education, perceived academic relevance, and support for introducing basic legal education at the pre-tertiary level. Conversely, open-ended questions allow respondents to explain their views in greater detail. Twelve law faculty members, including six from public universities and six from private universities, are interviewed using semi-structured interviews. The faculty members are purposively selected due to their practical teaching experience and their knowledge of the academic readiness of the LLB students. Each interview is conducted personally, and the responses are documented by the researcher. Some participants permitted audio recording, while others did not. The recorded interviews were subsequently transcribed, while responses from interviews that were not recorded were documented through detailed notes taken during the interviews. The semi-structured format ensures consistency across interviews while allowing participants to elaborate on students' academic difficulties, foundational legal knowledge, curriculum development, and potential reforms.

A purposive document review is used for secondary data. Sources include national education policies and curriculum documents of Bangladesh, relevant reports, selected materials on pre-tertiary legal or civic education in other jurisdictions, as well as scholarly literature on legal education and legal literacy. The documents are chosen for their relevance to the research questions, especially in relation to the topic of pre-tertiary legal education, legal literacy, curriculum development,

transition into education, and comparative models. The purpose of using the international materials is to offer comparative policy lessons, not to claim definite causal impact that can be applied to Bangladesh.

To identify patterns in students' prior exposure to legal education, their perceptions of its academic relevance, and support for curriculum reform, quantitative survey data were collected using Google Forms and subsequently analyzed descriptively using simple frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data from the open-ended survey responses and faculty interviews were analyzed thematically. The analysis involves four stages: familiarization with the responses, initial coding of relevant statements, grouping related codes into broader categories, and development of themes corresponding to the research questions. The major themes are students' previous legal experiences, their sense of academic readiness, their challenges with legal foundational knowledge, civic and legal awareness, and suggestions for curriculum changes.

Ethical considerations were addressed by obtaining informed consent from participants and maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and their right not to participate. The findings are analyzed in terms of participants' perceptions and experiences, and not as a measure of the causal effect of pre-tertiary legal education on academic performance or on wider social outcomes.

Literature Review

Basic legal education is an essential component of a democratic nation. It aids people in having knowledge of their rights, duties, legal system that governs their lives. But in most developing nations, like Bangladesh, legal education is taught only at the university (tertiary) level.[15] Pre-tertiary legal education can be categorized in a larger body of literature on legal literacy, that is, on people's ability to comprehend basic legal rights, duties, institutions, and procedures in their everyday

[15] Md Johurul Islam, "The Need for Legal Education at Secondary and Higher Secondary Level of Education System of Bangladesh," Khwaja Yunus Ali University Journal 3 (2018), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/357900675.

life. Legal literacy should nevertheless be distinguished from professional legal education. Whereas professional legal education develops specialized knowledge and skills for legal study and practice, legal literacy concerns foundational knowledge that may be relevant to both future law students and members of the general public. This is especially significant in Bangladesh, where legal education is mostly focused on the university level and the systematic introduction to basic legal concepts prior to university is limited.[16]

The Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor emphasizes that knowledge of rights and access to legal institutions are important dimensions of legal empowerment, particularly for disadvantaged populations.[17] This literature serves as a broader justification for pre-tertiary legal education. From Bangladesh's perspective, this problem has started to be discussed in a more explicit way. Mahmud and Rabbi examine the feasibility of incorporating legal education into secondary and higher secondary education in Bangladesh.[18] Their qualitative study points to some potential benefits of early legal education, such as building legal knowledge, critical thinking, and civic awareness, but also to some challenges for the implementation of early legal education in terms of curriculum integration, resources, and teacher preparation.[19] Their study thus provides an important policy and feasibility basis for the present study. However, its main focus is not on empirical evidence of the link between previous exposure to legal education and subsequent entry into LLB study but instead on the potential value of curricular integration and its feasibility.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) approach to Global Citizenship Education views the concept of citizenship education as a web of knowledge and critical thinking, values for human rights and diversity, and

[16] Mahmud and Rabbi, "Inclusion of Legal Education," 169.
[17] Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor, Making the Law Work for Everyone.
[18] Mahmud and Rabbi, "Inclusion of Legal Education," 168.
[19] Ibid.

responsibility for action at local, national, and global levels.[20] Therefore, UNESCO does not equate 'legal literacy' with 'global citizenship education', but it does support teaching rights, responsibilities, and democratic institutions in education.[21] The Council of Europe suggests that respect for human rights, civic participation, and legal reasoning are closely related skills that can be taught at the upper secondary or higher levels.[22] Furthermore, civic education and legal literacy should be viewed as separate, yet overlapping, areas of education. Scholars like Owen and Soule examined the relationship between civic education and civic participatory norms and found relationships between increased exposure to civic education, active teaching styles, and increased civic duty and voting responsibility.[23] This evidence is related to civic education and participatory norms and not to the impact of a specific legal education programme at pre-tertiary level. It thus offers context to the general civic argument for early legal learning.

Students who enter professional or specialized programmes find knowledge, terminology, analytical techniques, and expectations in their disciplines different. This shift could be especially meaningful in the context of legal education where students need to shift their focus from general academic learning to case analysis, legal interpretation, structured argument, and discipline-specific reasoning.[24] This has been

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[20] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Global Citizenship Education: Topics and Learning Objectives (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015), https://doi.org/10.54675/DRHC3544.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Martyn, Barrett, "The Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture: Policy Context, Content and Impact," London Review of Education 18 (2020): 1, https://doi.org/10.18546/LRE.18.1.01.

[23] Diana Owen and Suzanne Soule, "Civic Education and Development of Participatory Norms," paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC, September 2-6, 2010 (ResearchGate, 2010), https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228198775.

[24] Megan Bess, "Transitions Unexplored: A Proposal for Professional Identity Formation Following the First Year," 11, https://www.law.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/Megan%20Bess%20-%20Professional%20Identity%20Formation%20Following%20the%20First%20Year.pdf.

discussed in terms of transition shock, which can be experienced as a student moves into a new educational setting with different expectations and learning demands.[25] Sullivan and other scholars, in *Educating Lawyers: Preparation for the Profession of Law*, also analyze the educational journey of law students and outline clashes between traditional methods of legal schooling and building broader competencies.[26] The present study approaches the transition issue more narrowly and empirically. Rather than assuming that the absence of pre-tertiary legal education causes academic difficulty, it examines whether LLB students and law faculty perceive prior exposure to legal concepts as beneficial to students' transition into tertiary legal education.

Owen and Davis, examining legal education in Australia, highlight graduate attributes such as critical thinking, communication, ethics, professionalism, leadership, and lifelong learning, while also discussing collaborative learning and curriculum development.[27] This literature has an important implication for the pre-tertiary education debate. If tertiary legal education requires students to develop disciplinary skills progressively, earlier exposure to foundational legal concepts may provide an initial conceptual basis upon which more advanced legal reasoning can subsequently be developed.[28] The present study therefore contributes by examining the issue from the perspective of educational continuity. Rather than proposing that pre-tertiary students should receive professional legal training, it considers whether age-appropriate foundational legal learning could provide basic familiarity with legal concepts before students encounter specialized LLB coursework.

Comparative experiences provide further context for examining whether legal concepts can be introduced before university. In South Africa, the national curriculum includes constitutional and citizenship-

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[25] Ibid.

[26] William M. Sullivan et al., Educating Lawyers: Preparation for the Profession of Law, 1st ed. (Jossey-Bass/Wiley, 2007).

[27] Susanne Owen and Gary Davis, "Law Graduate Attributes in Australia: Leadership and Collaborative Learning within Communities of Practice," Journal of Learning Design 4 (2010): 15, https://doi.org/10.5204/JLD.V4I1.65.

[28] Ibid.

related content concerning human rights, democratic values, and responsibilities.[29] In the United States, programmes such as We the People provide structured civic education concerning constitutional principles and democratic institutions.[30] In England, citizenship education at Key Stages 3 and 4 includes democracy, government, the legal system, and citizens' rights and responsibilities.[31] India has incorporated constitutional values and citizenship-related themes within its school curriculum.[32] Conversely, Chinese curriculum reforms have emphasized moral and civic education[33]. These models demonstrate that exposure to legal and constitutional concepts can be incorporated into general education without transforming school education into professional legal training. They are significant for the present study because they present some potential avenues for age-appropriate legal and civic learning which can be considered for curriculum reform in Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh Law Commission also reviewed the prospects of early legal education and suggested that basic legal education be introduced in SSC and HSC (pre-tertiary level) as part of general legal awareness and preparation for higher education in law.[34] The literature as a whole demonstrates a fragmented but complementary stream of scholarship. However, these threads have not been previously woven together to look into the relationship of pre-tertiary legal education with tertiary LLB education in Bangladesh. The present study aims to fill this gap by relying on empirical data collected from 100 LLB students and

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[29] Department of Basic Education, "Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Further Education and Training Phase Grades 10-12 National Curriculum Statement (NCS)"; Department of Basic Education, "Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Senior Phase Grades 7-9 National Curriculum Statement (NCS)."

[30] Center for Civic Education, "We the People."

[31] Department for Education, "The National Curriculum in England: Key Stages 3 and 4 Framework Document, September 2013" (2013), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a81a9abe5274a2e8ab55319/PRIMARY_national_curriculum.pdf.

[32] Khan, "Limited Uptake of Legal Studies."

[33] Tang and Wang, "Moral Education Curriculum Reform," 727.

[34] Law Commission (People's Republic of Bangladesh), Review of Legal Education in Bangladesh: Final Report (2006), https://lc.portal.gov.bd/pages/reports.

12 law faculty members from four universities, with respect to their prior experience with legal education, their perception regarding the importance of legal education for LLB, and their opinion on the need for introducing basic legal education at the pre-tertiary level.

A. Current Status and Gaps in Pre-Tertiary Legal Education in Bangladesh

This part explores the current situation of legal education in Bangladesh in light of the limited availability of structured basic legal literacy at the pre-tertiary level. It examines selected national education policy frameworks, assesses relevant curriculum provisions, and reflects on the recommendations of the Law Commission. These aspects are discussed to establish the institutional and policy context within which the gap between pre-tertiary and tertiary legal education is examined.

Legal education was established under British rule specifically to train legal practitioners to serve the colonial rule.[35] It was primarily oriented towards professional legal training at the tertiary level. Since 1971, the number of tertiary institutions offering the LLB course has increased, including public universities like Dhaka and Rajshahi, private universities, and different law colleges.[36] But this type of growth was not extended to the pre-tertiary stages, and left an empty gap in basic legal literacy. However, the expansion of professional legal education at the tertiary level has not been accompanied by a comparable development of structured foundational legal education at the pre-tertiary level, leaving a gap in opportunities for students to acquire basic legal knowledge before university.

[35] BM Gandhi, V. D. Kulshreshtha's Landmarks in Indian Legal and Constitutional History, ed. Abhinandan Malik, 10th ed. (Eastern Book Company, 2012).

[36] Mohammad Monirul Azam, "Reforming Legal Education in Bangladesh," Journal of Legal Education 55 (2005): 560, https://jle.aals.org/home/vol55/iss4/15/.

Policy Frameworks

Education policy in Bangladesh is the roadmap for how learning will be organized, implemented, and assessed at all levels from pre-tertiary up to tertiary level.[37] Policies from 2010 are examined because they provide relevant national policy frameworks for assessing the treatment of curriculum objectives, civic values, and related educational priorities before tertiary education.[38]

a) National Education Policy of 2000:

The National Education Policy of 2000 emphasized expanding and improving education and aligning it with national development objectives. It gave considerable attention to science, ICT, and moral education, but it did not offer basic legal education at pre-tertiary levels. Additionally, no reference was made to the inclusion of basic legal literacy, constitutional awareness, or civic legal rights into the curriculum.

b) National Education Policy of 2010:

National Education Policy of 2010 prioritized universal access, gender equity, ICT integration, and technical or vocational education. This policy was broader and incorporated such objectives as the creation of responsible citizens, democratic values, and enhancement of moral and ethical education. Though giving emphasis on civic education, human rights, and values-based learning, it did not introduce basic legal education as a formal subject at any academic level (i.e., primary, secondary, or higher secondary).

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[37] Md Asaduzzaman Ukil, "Future of Education in Bangladesh," The Business Standard, January 23, 2021, https://www.tbsnews.net/first-anniversary/future-education-bangladesh-190711.

[38] Harun Ar-Rashid Mamun et al., "Tale of Education Policy in Bangladesh: Development, Changes, and Adaptation Approach," British Journal of Arts and Humanities 5 (2023): 152, https://doi.org/10.34104/BJAH.02301500165; Ministry of Education, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, National Education Policy 2010 (2010), https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/national-education-policy-2010-enbn.

Curriculum Limitations

National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) designs the curricula, selects educational content, and supervises the production of textbooks in schools and colleges in Bangladesh.[39] An examination of the relevant NCTB curriculum materials indicates that basic legal education is not established as a separate subject at the secondary or higher secondary levels.[40] Though Certain simple civic concepts are taught in subjects such as Social Science or Civics, these materials do not provide a systematic programme specifically focused on foundational legal reasoning, constitutional literacy, and rights-based legal knowledge.

Law Commission Report

The Law Commission of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (2006) acknowledged that legal education should not be confined to the professional domain only. There must be a provision for universal legal education to create legal awareness among the general population.[41] The Commission proposed the possibility of incorporating basic legal concepts in general education programs, especially at secondary and higher secondary levels. It emphasizes the necessity of educating on basic rights and obligations, basic legal processes, and the importance of law in everyday life.[42] It does not lay out a specific curriculum at higher or secondary levels, but it definitely encourages the inclusion of basic legal literacy in general education.

Although the report was made in 2006, it did not establish a specific curriculum for legal education at the secondary or higher secondary levels. The continued absence of a dedicated and systematically structured programme of foundational legal education in

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[39] Ukil, "Future of Education in Bangladesh."

[40] National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), "Revised Syllabus for SSC and HSC Exam 2022," National Curriculum and Textbook Board, June 23, 2025, https://nctb.gov.bd/pages/static-pages/6922dff5933eb65569e24d31.

[41] Law Commission (People's Republic of Bangladesh), Review of Legal Education in Bangladesh.

[42] Ibid.

the pre-tertiary curriculum therefore remains relevant to the research problem examined in this study. The issue is not the complete absence of civic or constitutional content from school education, but the limited availability of a structured programme specifically designed to develop foundational legal literacy before tertiary education.

B. Empirical Study on the Need for Basic Legal Education at the Pre-Tertiary Level

This section presents the findings of the mixed-method study in the four universities of Bangladesh, namely City University, Jahangirnagar University, University of Rajshahi and Varendra University. The study includes 100 LLB students and 12 law faculty members. Twenty-five students are selected from each university, while the faculty sample consists of six teachers from public universities and six from private universities. Students from all four academic years are represented: 20% from first year, 16% from second year, 18% from third year, and 46% from fourth year.

The findings are organized into three broader themes: (1) prior exposure to legal education and the perceived transition to LLB study; (2) the perceived civic and social value of foundational legal knowledge; and (3) support for integrating legal education into pre-tertiary curriculum and preferred curriculum content for pre-tertiary legal education. The quantitative findings are presented using frequencies and percentages, while the open-ended student responses and faculty interviews are used to provide contextual explanations of the survey results. The study uses purposive sampling and descriptive statistics, so that the results are not statistically representative of all law students or the general population of Bangladesh and are considered as evidence of the events and experiences of the participating students.

Source: Authors' survey

Survey item	Response category	Percentage (N=100)
Formal legal education before university	No	83%
	Yes/some exposure	6%
	Not sure	11%
Difficulty understanding legal terms	Very difficult	30%
	Moderately difficult	64%
	No difficulty	6%
Confidence during LLB	Lack confidence	55%
	Do not lack confidence	37%
	Not sure	8%
Prior legal education would make LLB easier	Yes	93%
	No	5%
	Not sure	2%
Perceived public legal-rights awareness	Not aware	87%
	Not sure	11%

	Adequately aware	2%
Legal knowledge may support responsible citizenship	Yes	95%
	Not sure	5%
Support for pre-tertiary legal education	Agree/Strongly agree	92%
	Neutral	6%
	Strongly disagree	2%

Prior Exposure and Transition to LLB Study

The first area of analysis is related to the students' previous experiences of formal legal education and their attitudes to the transition to LLB study. The survey questioned whether respondents had received any formal education in law during their school or college years (SSC/HSC or equivalent). Figure 1 indicates that 83% of students report that they did not receive formal legal education, 6% report some exposure, and 11% are unsure. It seems from these findings that the majority of the respondents do not have any formal legal education before entering university. This observation demonstrates a huge gap in legal education at an early stage, implying that most students have no prior knowledge of law by the time they enter university. For students studying other subjects, this gap renders them mostly ignorant of the fundamentals of law that govern their lives. However, the findings do not prove that the absence of such exposure is the sole reason for any subsequent academic difficulty.

These findings were greatly supported by legal academics. All 12 faculty members noted that first-year students in the LLB program lack foundational knowledge. This leads to academic challenges, lack of motivation, and misunderstanding the nature of law. Students with arts backgrounds might obtain some partial exposure to subjects such as civics or political science, but the majority of students with science and commerce backgrounds have considerable difficulty.

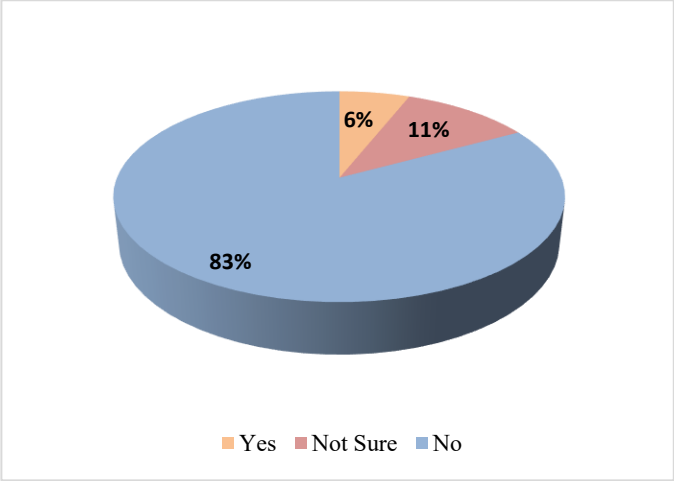

Figure-1: Formal Legal Education at School/College Level (N=100)
Source: Authors' survey

The study also examines respondents' perceptions of difficulties encountered during the initial stages of LLB study. Regarding difficulty in understanding legal terms and language (Figure 2), 30% of students report that it is very difficult, 64% report that it is moderately difficult, and 6% report no difficulty. The answers suggest that students are frequently encountering problems in the use of legal language. They should, however, not be interpreted as proof that the difficulty is caused by the lack of pre-tertiary legal education, because other factors such as English Language skills, teaching methods, previous educational preparation, and university-level education conditions can play a role. Figure 3 shows that 55% of students report lacking confidence in their LLB studies, 37% report that they do not lack confidence, and 8% are unsure.

The open-ended responses provide further context. Students report challenges in interpreting laws, reading legal texts, and understanding legal language. A few students mention challenges with English language comprehension. The responses given here reflect the perceptions of the participants and do not directly imply that the lack of pre-tertiary legal education is solely responsible for the problems of language and legal terminology. Rather, it indicates that if respondents had prior exposure to basic legal literacy, they may not have to face these issues during the tertiary level. Interviews with faculty also give some context to the students' background knowledge and how they first learned about legal materials.

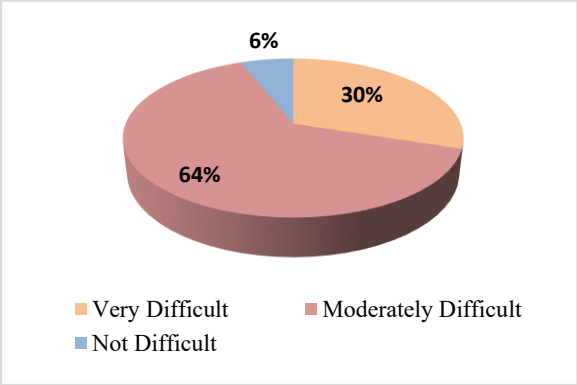

Figure-2: Difficulty Understanding Legal Terms at the Beginning of LLB (N=100)
Source: Authors' survey

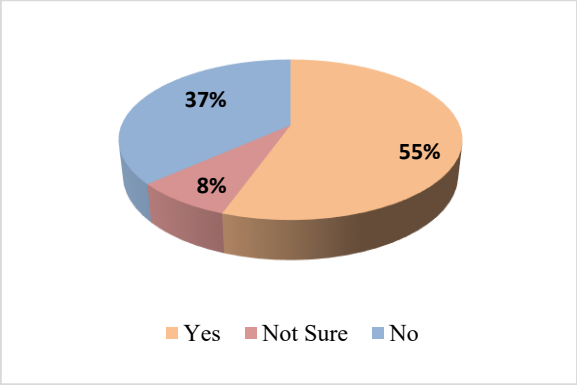

Figure-3: Lack of Confidence During LLB (N=100)
Source: Authors' survey

As shown in Figure 4, 93% of the respondents think that if they were exposed to basic legal concepts before they started their LLB studies, it would have been easier for them to do their studies; 2% are uncertain, and 5% disagree. This result clearly shows that the students who were surveyed had a high perceived value for prior legal exposure. It reflects respondents' assessment of what might have assisted their transition into LLB study rather than absolute evidence that such exposure would necessarily improve academic performance.

The faculty participants also recognize the potential advantages of prior knowledge, such as fewer initial learning problems, greater familiarity with legal reasoning, and confidence. The student and faculty responses together indicate a perceived link between basic legal knowledge and tertiary legal study. Together, the views of students and legal scholars give good arguments to support the introduction of basic legal literacy to the secondary and higher secondary syllabus.

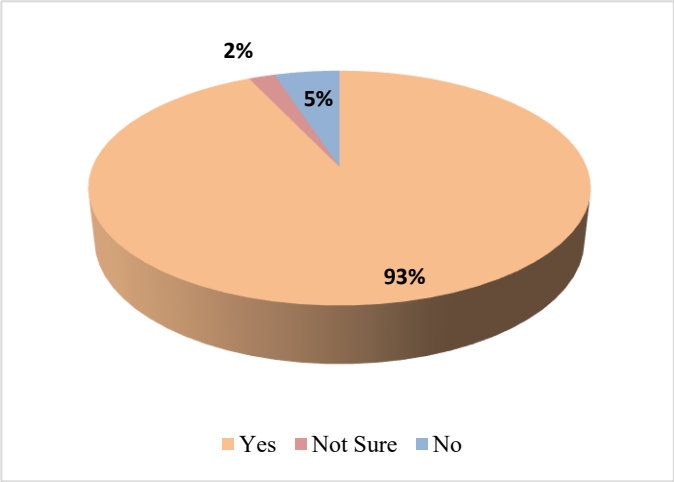

Figure-4: LLB Easier with Prior Legal Education (N=100)
Source: Authors' survey

Perceived Civic and Social Value of Foundational Legal Knowledge

The second theme concerns participants' perceptions of the broader civic and social value of basic legal knowledge. Figure 5 shows that 87% of students believe that people are not aware of their legal rights, 11% are unsure, and 2% believe that people are adequately aware. These figures represent law students' perceptions of the level of legal-rights awareness among the public; they do not constitute a direct measurement of legal awareness among the Bangladeshi population.

Figure 6 shows that 95% of respondents believe that basic legal knowledge may assist in developing responsible citizens, while 5% are

unsure and none select the negative response. This discovery suggests high support for the possible civic benefit of fundamental legal understanding. It should be interpreted as a belief that there is a possible benefit in it, and not as proof that pre-tertiary legal education actually yields more responsible citizens.

Faculty participants report similar perspectives, citing the importance of having some basic understanding of the law to understand rights, engage with legal systems, and be aware of legal safeguards. These qualitative responses provide contextual support for the perceived civic value of early legal learning but do not establish measurable changes in civic behaviour or legal awareness among the wider population.

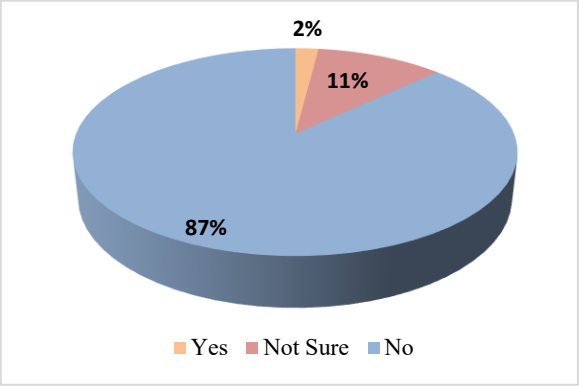

Figure- 5: Legal Rights Awareness Among Public (N=100)
Source: Authors' survey

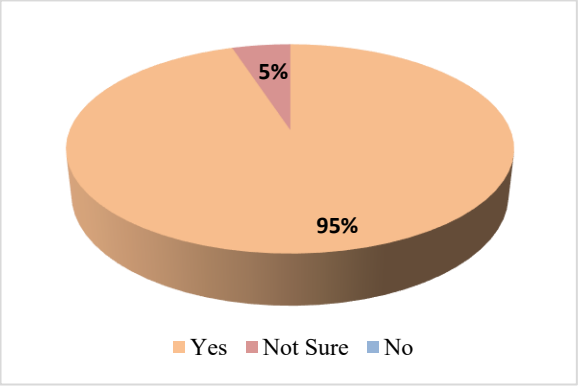

Figure- 6: Legal Literacy as a Path to Responsible Citizenship (N=100)
Source: Authors' survey

Support for Integrating Legal Education into Pre-Tertiary Curriculum and Preferred Curriculum Content

The third theme concerns respondents' preferred approaches and subject areas for introducing foundational legal education at the pre-tertiary level. Figure 7 shows that 92% of students agree or strongly agree with introducing basic legal education into the SSC/HSC curriculum, 6% are neutral, and 2% strongly disagree. This means that there is significant interest among surveyed students in having foundational legal education included in the pre-tertiary curriculum. It should be interpreted as respondent support rather than evidence that such reform would necessarily produce particular academic or civic outcomes.

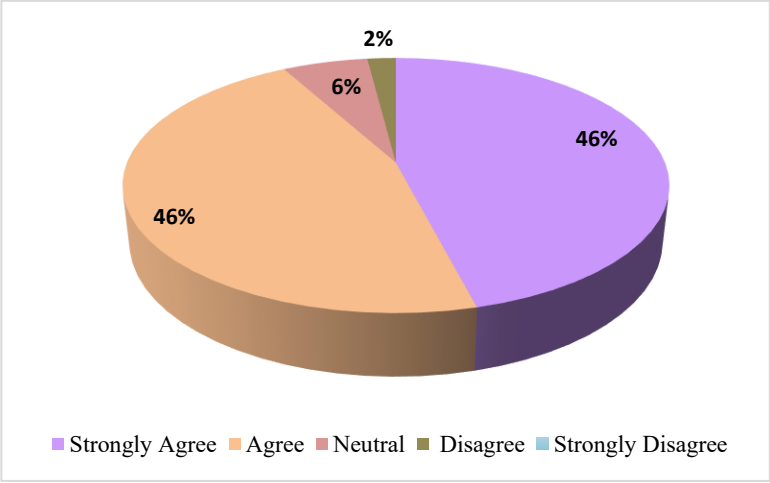

Figure-7: Inclusion of basic Legal Education in Secondary/Higher Secondary Education (N=100)
Source: Authors' survey

Student open-ended responses came out strongly in support of the introduction of structured, accessible, and practical basic legal education at the pre-tertiary level. This consensus was supported by interviews with legal academics who foresaw two positive outcomes. One is better law students with academic preparedness, and another is greater civic awareness among all citizens.

As far as the preferred teaching methods are concerned, it is observed from Figure 8 that 71% of the respondents opt for legal awareness workshops or seminars, 71% opt for civic/legal awareness classes at secondary and higher secondary level, 32% opt for moot court or debate competitions, and 24% opt for optional pre-tertiary subjects. Because respondents are permitted to select more than one option, these percentages do not represent mutually exclusive categories and therefore do not total 100%.

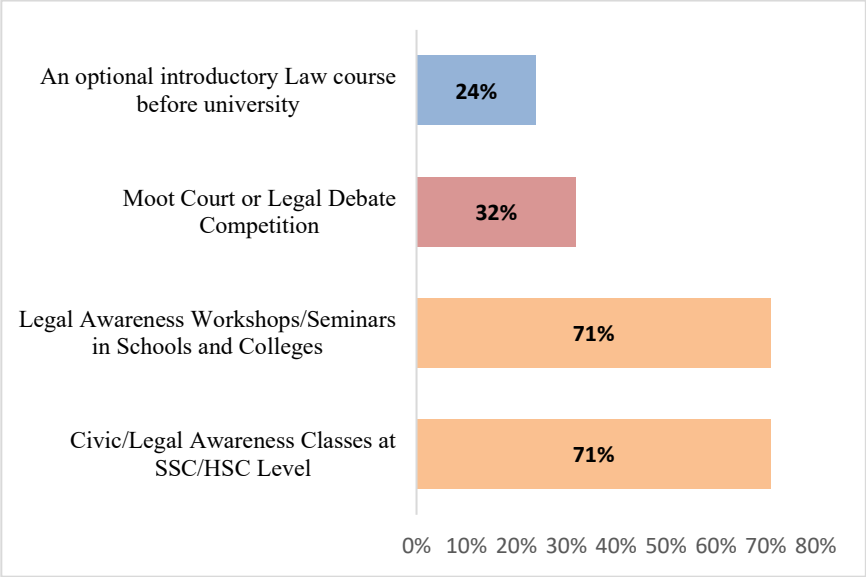

Figure- 8: Preferred Approaches for Foundational Legal Education
(N=100; multiple responses permitted)
Source: Authors' survey

Subject areas that are deemed important for legal education in the foundation stage are given in Figure 9. The highest level of selection is seen in Fundamental Rights and Duties (97%), followed by Consumer and Cyber Laws (52%), Domestic Violence (51%), Court Structures and Law Enforcement (48%), and Contract, Property and Family Law (47%). Each percentage is therefore calculated using N=100 as the denominator, and the categories are not expected to total 100%.

The open-ended responses further indicate preferences for interactive and accessible learning resources, mentorship, and online learning. Taken together, these findings provide an indication of the types of content and delivery methods preferred by the surveyed students and faculty. They do not constitute a definitive national curriculum design. Instead, they offer an empirical basis for discussion in the future of age-appropriate foundational legal education in Bangladesh.

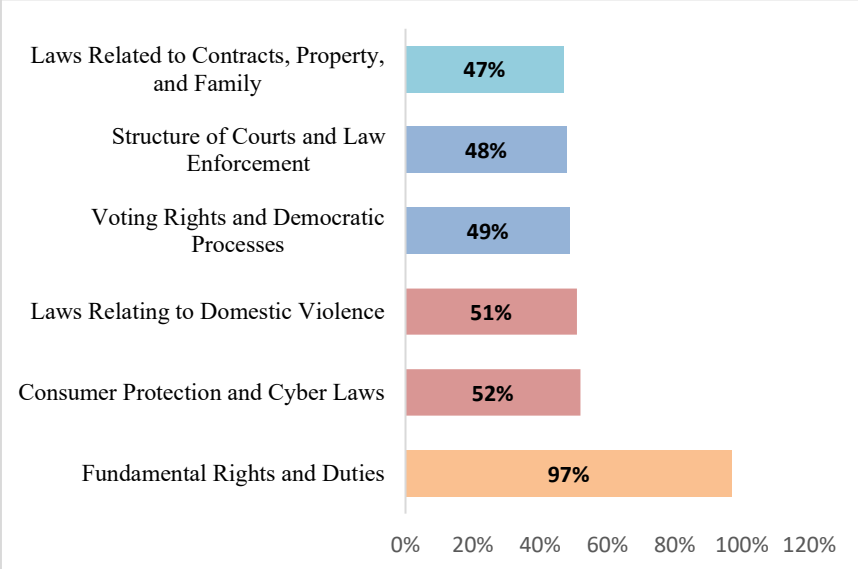

Figure-9: Essential Legal Topics for all (N=100; multiple responses permitted)
Source: Authors' survey

Overall results showed that there is a high level of support from the surveyed LLB students and faculty members for greater continuity between foundational legal learning and tertiary legal education. Conversely, the findings are based on participants' perceptions and experiences and should not be interpreted as establishing that the absence of pre-tertiary legal education solely causes academic difficulties or that its introduction would necessarily produce particular academic or civic outcomes.

C. International Models of Early Legal Education

Legal education systems worldwide differ greatly in structure, content, and delivery. Some nations introduce legal and constitutional concepts through school-based civic education, whereas in other countries professional legal education is primarily taught at the tertiary level. These five jurisdictions (the United States, England, South Africa, India, and China) have been selected purposively since they offer different models for introducing legal, constitutional, civic, and rights-based concepts before university. The different educational systems are relevant to identifying methods that could be adapted to the context of Bangladeshi context rather than directly replicated.

In the United States, civic and legal education is incorporated into the K-12 curriculum, particularly through Civics, Government, and Social Studies.[43] Students are exposed to constitutional principles, the legal system, and landmark Supreme Court cases. The National Standards for Civics and Government also address individual rights, duties, government institutions, and democratic processes.[44] The US model thus focuses on the incorporation of legal knowledge into its wider civic education, but not as a distinct school subject. Its significance to Bangladesh is related to the inclusion of age-appropriate constitutional rights, governmental institutions, and legal responsibilities in the existing subjects.

In England, citizenship education provides a more formally structured model. At Key Stages 3 and 4, the statutory citizenship curriculum includes democracy, government, rights and responsibilities, the nature of rules and laws, the justice system, courts, human rights, and the legal system.[45] The English model explicitly states

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[43] Arne Duncan, Martha Kanter, and Eduardo Ochoa, "Advancing Civic Learning and Engagement in Democracy: A Road Map and Call to Action" (2012), https://www.ed.gov/media/document/road-map-call-action-accessiblepdf-81669.pdf.

[44] Center for Civic Education, "We the People."

[45] Department for Education, "The National Curriculum in England."

the legal system and justice system as areas of learning, whereas the US model does not mention the legal system as one of the areas. This offers a potential blueprint for integrating fundamental legal principles into an existing citizenship or social-science curriculum in Bangladesh.

South Africa also uses constitutional and human-rights education within its school curriculum, particularly through Life Orientation. The curriculum addresses constitutional rights and responsibilities, human-rights violations, gender equality, and related social issues.[46] This is a model that contrasts with England in its focus on constitutional values, human rights, and social responsibility. The relevance to Bangladesh is that it helps to link basic legal knowledge and rights, responsibilities, equality, and social issues prevailing in daily life.

India provides a particularly relevant comparative example because of its geographical and socio-legal proximity to Bangladesh. Indian curricula include constitutional values, human rights, citizenship, and legal literacy throughout the curriculum instead of legal education being a strictly separate school subject. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) emphasizes constitutional values, including liberty, equality, justice, democratic outlook, and social responsibility, while recent secondary-stage curriculum materials expressly identify legal literacy as an area integrated across curricular learning.[47] This integrated approach could be well suited to Bangladesh as it does not demand the establishment of an entirely new subject for law in professional form.

China incorporates legal education within its broader moral and civic education framework. Tang and Wang describe the development of moral education in Chinese elementary and middle schools, while the broader model places emphasis on knowledge of law, civic

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[46] Department of Basic Education (South Africa), "National Curriculum Statements Grade R-12," Department of Basic Education (South Africa), https://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/NationalCurriculumStatementsGradesR-12.aspx.

[47] National Steering Committee for National Curriculum Frameworks, National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (2022), https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/focus-group/NCF-FS_2022EN.pdf.

responsibility, and respect for legal and social institutions.[48] Ministry of Education also controls the preparation of standardized textbooks and legal literacy through national campaigns.[49] The Chinese model has a greater focus on moral education and social order in comparison to the rights-based approach of South Africa and the constitutional and citizenship-based approach in England and India. Its applicability to Bangladesh is therefore more limited, and is confined primarily to the scope of introducing basic legal concepts into an existing value-based curriculum.

Overall, these models demonstrate both commonalities and differences. All five offer some exposure to law, rights, civic responsibilities, or constitutional principles before university, but with varying curricular placement, focus, and pedagogy. In the United States and in England, civic education is very structured, while in South Africa the focus is on constitutional and human-rights learning; in India, legal learning is a part of moral and civic education, and in China, legal learning is embedded in moral and civic education. The differences indicate that it is not just about importing a single foreign model into Bangladesh. Rather, the best transferable features are the incorporation of age-appropriate legal concepts in other subject areas, focus on constitutional rights and responsibilities, and the use of participatory and critical-learning approaches. This method may be used to close the gap between general education and basic legal consciousness, without turning pre-tertiary education into professional legal education.

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[48] Tang and Wang, "Moral Education Curriculum Reform," 727.

[49] Zhao Yimeng, "Revised Textbooks Arrive in Schools," China Daily, August 2, 2024, https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202409/02/WS66d4f41ea3108f29c1fc9742.html.

D. Discussion

The discussion centers on the following three related issues: students' prior exposure to legal education, the perceived transition between pre-tertiary and tertiary legal learning, and the implications for foundational legal literacy.

The results suggest that a large proportion of the LLB students (83%) responded that they had received no formal legal education before university, and 93% agreed that previous exposure would have aided them in their adaptation to studies of the LLB. The results indicate that there is a perceived difference between general education and tertiary legal education among the respondents, as the study revealed. This is consistent with the scholarship of Mahmud and Rabbi, who identify the limited integration of structured legal education within Bangladesh's secondary and higher secondary education and discuss its potential relevance to students' legal knowledge and educational development.[50] The present research builds on this discussion by drawing on empirical evidence from current LLB students and law faculty on their perceptions of this educational transition.

Students also reported difficulties with legal terminology and confidence in working with legal materials. Nonetheless, these findings demonstrate the experiences reported by participants and do not prove that the lack of pre-tertiary legal education caused these problems. Other factors such as language skills, teaching, previous academic background, socio-economic status and the curricula of the universities might also have an impact on the students' first experiences with law studies. The results therefore are not interpreted as evidence of a causal linkage between the two, but rather as evidence of a perceived educational gap.

The finding that 92% of surveyed students supported introducing basic legal education at the SSC or HSC level demonstrates substantial support among the respondents for curricular reform. Likewise, insufficient public legal awareness is reflected in students' opinions that the lack of this awareness is important not only for future law students.

[50] Mahmud and Rabbi, "Inclusion of Legal Education," 168.

This is a broader rationale that is consistent with the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor who linked legal empowerment with knowledge of rights and access to legal institutions.[51] Nevertheless, the present study does not directly measure national legal literacy, civic behaviour, access to justice, or other societal outcomes. Therefore, such outcomes are not to be presented as established effects of introducing pre-tertiary legal education.

The findings collectively support the consideration of age-appropriate foundational legal education as a means of providing greater continuity between general and tertiary legal learning. The evidence is particularly relevant to curriculum discussion. However, its interpretation should remain limited to the perceptions and experiences of the surveyed students and faculty rather than being generalized to all Bangladeshi students or treated as proof of future academic or societal effects.

E. Recommendations

This section offers practical recommendations based on the findings of the study. They are presented as evidence-informed implications arising from the perceptions of the surveyed LLB students and law faculty. The recommendations focus on curriculum development, teacher preparation, phased implementation, and supporting institutional and technological interventions.

a) Policy and Curriculum Reform:

Policy reforms may be initiated by the Ministry of Education to recognize basic legal literacy as a component of secondary and higher secondary education. This is also supported by the fact that 92% of students surveyed feel that there should be basic legal education incorporated into the SSC or HSC curriculum, and 93% feel that prior exposure to legal education would have assisted them

[51] Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor, "Making the Law Work for Everyone."

to adapt to LLB study. Basic legal literacy can thus be integrated into the appropriate national curriculum, along with clear and age-appropriate learning outcomes.

Two alternative curriculum models may be considered. The first is the progressive institutionalization of fundamental legal education in the secondary and higher secondary schools, starting from basic concepts and building up to more complex themes. The second is the integration of foundational legal content into existing subjects such as Civics, Social Science, or General Studies, which may reduce curriculum overload. The results of this study do not indicate that one model is superior to the other; the decision of using the separate subject model or integrated model should be evaluated through a pilot implementation and a stakeholder evaluation. Core areas may include fundamental rights and duties, democratic processes, law and order, separation of powers, consumer and cyber awareness, and everyday legal responsibilities.

b) Teacher Training and Curriculum Development:

Teachers need to be trained to teach fundamental legal information in simple, age-appropriate, and student-focused ways. Training may address basic legal concepts, legal reasoning, classroom discussion, and the use of practical examples. Resource persons can also be law graduates and legal professionals where appropriate. The curriculum should be presented in easy-to-understand Bangla or English with examples that are locally relevant, simplified legal concepts, and practical scenarios that students can relate to their daily lives. The findings concerning students' reported difficulty with legal terminology support the need for accessible approaches, although such difficulties may also reflect other factors such as language proficiency and prior academic preparation.

c) Phased Pilot Programs and National Implementation:

A phased approach should be adopted before nationwide implementation. Pilot programmes may first be introduced in selected urban and rural schools and colleges to test different curriculum models and teaching methods. The pilot should be followed by systematic review and revision of the curriculum and teaching materials, before considering wider implementation. The

Ministry of Education shall oversee the process with the assistance of curriculum experts, legal educators, teachers, and other stakeholders.

d) Supporting Technology and Community Engagement:

Technology can be used to assist in teaching foundational legal concepts using digital tools, animation, and interactive learning resources that are easily accessible. Students may also share their learned basic legal knowledge with families and communities through community-oriented activities. These measures should be treated as complementary to formal curriculum reform rather than as substitutes for structured legal education. The study's findings indicate strong respondent support for early legal learning, but they do not directly establish that such measures would reduce exploitation, increase civic participation, or produce broader societal outcomes.

In general, the evidence supports the consideration of a phased and age-appropriate approach to basic legal education in Bangladesh. The recommendations should thus be interpreted as policy implications based on the perceptions of the respondents who were surveyed, and not as confirmation that the introduction of pre-tertiary legal education would necessarily lead to better academic outcomes or to certain social outcomes.

F. Study Limitations

Self-reported survey and interview data were used as the primary source of information for this study, which could result in potential self-report, recall, and social-desirability bias. Respondents may also have interpreted some questions differently or provided responses that reflected their perceived expectations. Although the questionnaire was designed around the research objectives, the possibility of question framing or leading-question effects cannot be completely excluded. Furthermore, the study heavily depended on participants' perceptions

and their reported experiences and not on objective indicators of academic success, such as examination scores or academic records over time. In this regard, the findings cannot conclude that not having legal education before tertiary education itself necessarily results in academic challenges in LLB programmes. Other factors such as language skills, instructional strategies, socio-economic status, and prior schooling may also affect students' experiences.

Moreover, excluding secondary and higher secondary students, secondary and higher secondary educators, policymakers, and the general public makes this study limited to a certain group of participants. The absence of direct evidence from pre-tertiary students and teachers also limits the extent to which the findings can be generalized to the pre-tertiary education system. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design does not provide longitudinal evidence concerning whether early legal education would produce sustained academic or civic effects over time. While the above-mentioned constraints are significant, the findings provide a useful empirical basis for further studies that will explore the development, implementation, and evaluation of Basic Legal Education in Pre-Tertiary (Secondary/Higher Secondary) education in Bangladesh.

Conclusion

Early basic legal education is crucial in creating responsible, informed, and empowered citizens. Teaching the law in school and college can provide students with foundational knowledge of the rule of law, individual rights, and civic duties, which are important for participation in a democratic society.

The results of this study found that a structured introduction to basic legal concepts before the university is not widely available for the students studied in the LLB program. The majority of the respondents

expressed that they did not have any prior formal exposure to basic legal education, and many of them expressed difficulties in understanding the legal terminology and adjusting to the demands of LLB study. Moreover, the strong level of student support for introducing basic legal education at the SSC/HSC level, together with the views expressed by law faculty members, indicates a perceived need for greater continuity between pre-tertiary and tertiary legal education. The results in this document do not imply that the absence of pre-tertiary legal education contributes to academic difficulties or that its implementation will inevitably translate into specific social outcomes, but rather it reflects the perceptions and experiences of the participants.

Although school and college students do not have to know every provision of law, foundational knowledge of rights, responsibilities, legal institutions, and everyday legal processes may provide useful preparation for dealing with legal and civic matters. This study therefore reiterates the notion that early legal literacy can be helpful for future law students as well as students who will go into other fields, as they will be introduced to fundamental concepts of law which will be useful in everyday life.

The contribution of this study lies in connecting the existing policy and scholarly discussion on legal literacy and curriculum reform with empirical evidence from 100 LLB students and 12 law faculty members across four universities in Bangladesh. It also identifies a perceived educational gap between general education and tertiary legal education. Furthermore, highlights the potential value of greater curricular continuity.

In light of these findings, Bangladesh may consider a phased approach to introducing age-appropriate basic legal education at the pre-tertiary level, beginning with pilot programmes, evaluation, and curriculum revision before wider implementation. Such reform should be supported by appropriate teacher preparation and curriculum development. However, the effectiveness of any such reform remains to be established through future research involving secondary and higher-secondary students and longitudinal or intervention-based studies. Therefore, pre-tertiary legal literacy should not be seen as an alternative

to professional legal education but as a potential basis for citizens' legal awareness.

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I, Md Mehedi Hasan Himel, state that there is no conflict of interest in the publication of this article.

Generative AI Statement
During the preparation of this manuscript, I used an artificial intelligence (AI) assisted writing tool to support language refinement, grammar correction, and readability improvement. All AI generated outputs were carefully reviewed, edited, and verified by the me to ensure their accuracy, originality, and academic integrity. I take full responsibility for the final content of this manuscript. The AI tool was used solely as a supportive instrument and is not credited as an author.

Statements and Declarations

I, Md Mehedi Hasan Himel, hereby declare that the research paper titled 'Legal Education in Bangladesh: Aligning Pre-Tertiary and Tertiary Level Learning for Greater Societal Impact' is the result of my own independent work and investigation. I further certify that this work has not been previously submitted, in part or in whole, for any other degree or professional qualification at this or any other institution.

This paper was prepared under the supervision of Aroup Raton Shaha, Assistant Professor (Adjunct Faculty), Department of Law and Justice, Jahangirnagar University. I affirm that my supervisor's role was limited to the periodic review of my progress and providing academic guidance. The actual writing, research, and findings presented herein are my own.

Ethical Considerations

The empirical survey conducted as part of this mixed-method study was designed, distributed, and analyzed solely by me. I have maintained all necessary protocols regarding research ethics, participant anonymity, and data integrity. I have adhered to the principles of research equity and academic honesty, ensuring that all sources of information and literature used in this study have been duly acknowledged and cited.

Consent to Participate and Ethical Compliance

The empirical component of this research was conducted with the highest regard for ethical standards and research equity. I hereby certify that all individuals who participated in the survey did so voluntarily. Prior to their engagement, each respondent was fully informed of the study's academic purpose and the intended use of their data. Explicit informed verbal consent was obtained from every participant, ensuring they were aware of their right to withdraw at any stage of the process. Furthermore, to protect the privacy and dignity of the respondents, the survey was conducted under strict anonymity. All data were treated with

the utmost confidentiality. This study strictly adheres to the principles of academic integrity, ensuring that the findings presented are a true reflection of the participants' contributions.

Data Availability

I collected the quantitative data for this study from students across various universities. To protect the privacy of those who participated, all personal names and identifying details were removed from the dataset. This anonymized data can be found at the following link: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/13363G8WkmcmZ3nXMBpnLBaVVqXJy5U7x/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=116625789944093853526&rtpof=true&sd=true.

For the qualitative part of the study, I conducted semi-structured interviews with faculty members. To encourage open and honest discussion, I did not record the conversations. Instead, I took detailed notes during each interview. To make sure these notes accurately reflected the teachers' views, I shared the summaries with them for their review and approval before using the information in this research. Both the student survey and the teacher interview questionaries are included at the end of the paper as Appendix-1 and Appendix-2.