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Legal Education System In Malaysia: An Overview

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Abstract: *Over the years, legal education in Malaysia has been improving due to the participation of the stakeholders. This contributes positively to the Malaysian legal system. Furthermore, both Shari'ah Law and Civil Law play their roles in the improvement of the judicial system. Most of the institutions that offer legal education ensure adequate curriculum structure, theoretical-practical learning, and competent law educators are part of the system. However, there are some challenges present in the current legal education system, which are highlighted by stakeholders such as faculty members, members of the Bar, and judges. Hence, this paper analyses the Malaysian legal education system from the historical background to the present. Also, the paper gives an in-depth analysis of the quality assurance mechanism adopted in legal education. This exploratory study summarizes the past and present position, explores the challenges, and ends with recommendations for improvement of the legal education system.*

Key Words: Legal Education, Malaysian Legal Education System, Quality Assurance Mechanism

Introduction

Legal education is the area of study where people learn the rules, procedures, and theories of the law; it is the process of preparation for the practice of law (Sheridan et al.), a specialized education for those who intend to become lawyers to practice law within a particular legal system. The Malaysian legal system follows Common law, Statutory law, Islamic Law, and Customary law, while the supreme law of the country is the Federal Constitution. Malaysian law graduates are required to acquire knowledge of these laws as well as the methods of practicing the law (Husaini & Salleh, 2013). The history of legal education in Asia reflects the colonialism era, which means Malaysia, being a Commonwealth country, has its legal system rooted in the United Kingdom being Common Law as well as Islamic Law (Member Countries of the Common Wealth). Adhering to the dual system, the legal education encompasses English common law and Islamic law. The existing literature on legal education in Malaysia offers a multifaceted view encompassing critical aspects of the field. Tagoranao (2015) underlines the crucial role of effective resources within legal education, illustrating their necessity in preparing students for a dynamically evolving job market. Ayub and his colleagues (2016) delve into the potential benefit of allowing law teachers in Malaysia to engage in legal practice alongside their teaching responsibilities, drawing insightful parallels with the established practice in Singapore. Awang (2008) focuses on broadening Islamic legal education within the Malaysian context, aiming to bridge gaps between shariah and civil law, presenting a nuanced perspective on the integration of Islamic principles in legal education. Additionally, Dotsenko (2020) sheds light on the policy aspect of legal education, elucidating its status as an independent directive in state policy. The ultimate goal, as emphasized, is to achieve full legal socialization of individuals and foster a high legal culture within society. In synthesis, these works collectively navigate the landscape of legal education in Malaysia, emphasizing resource efficacy, the multifaceted role of law teachers, the necessity for Islamic legal education, and the broader societal objectives inherent in legal education. Thus, this research aims to explore three main objectives: first, to explore the historical background of legal education in Malaysia. Second, to examine the present position; and third, to analyze the quality assurance mechanism in place

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to make sure legal education is of a high caliber. The paper ends with a conclusion and suggestions on the measures in order to promote legal education in Malaysia.

Historical Background of Legal Education in Malaysia

Before British colonial powers in Malaysia, Malaysian Courts followed Islamic Law, influenced by the Malay customary law in western Malaysia and native customary law, which included Malay-Muslim Law in Sabah and Sarawak. English Law was only introduced into the legal system after the British came to power in the Malay States after the Sultans were advised by British residents to sign treaties with them for English law and legislation to be used in Malaysian courts. Similarly, in Sabah and Sarawak, English Law was introduced by legislation and judicial decisions (Ibrahim, 1993). Legal education in Malaysia began with the British legal education system, with the University of Malaya being the pioneer in offering legal education in Malaysia. Before 1956, the people of Malaysia had to read law in England; one could be a lawyer by way of studying law at one of the Inns of Court there and be enrolled as a solicitor in England (Rajeswaran).

Emeritus Professor Tan Sri Ahmed Ibrahim uncovered the facts and historical background of legal education in Malaysia by stating that the Senate and Council of the University of Malaya asked Dato Sir Roland Braddell and Professor R.G.D. Allen to present a plan of courses and organization for the Senate and Council to consider for the teaching in Social Studies and in Law in the year 1953. (Ibrahim, 1980). As a result, they recommended in the report that the University of Malaya needs to build a law school and start awarding degrees in law. (Ibrahim, 1980). Furthermore, they also asserted that for a better future of legal education in Malaya, it was important to provide high standards of legal training for those who intended to begin practicing law, either in a private capacity or in a public one (Braddell-Allen Report). Further, the established faculty of law would also provide the necessary legal education for all individuals who need legal knowledge outside the legal profession, such as those "who wish to join the spheres of business, accountancy and sectorial job, banking, and insurance" (Braddell - Allen Report).

The Braddell-Allen report was accepted by the Senate and Council of the University of Malaya, and its recommendations were approved and implemented in the campus setup in Singapore. It must be noted that after independence, there were two campuses for the University of Malaya, one in Singapore and one in Kuala Lumpur. Singapore's University of Malaya, which had been known as the University of Singapore until 1965, adopted the name National University of Singapore (Rajeswaran). It can be said legal education in Malaysia started in Singapore. Before the setting up of the faculty of law at the University of Malaya at Kuala Lumpur, the faculty of law at Singapore served the needs of both Singapore and Malaysia (Ibrahim, 1980). As a result, the University of Malaya created a law department on 31st July 1956 as a non-faculty department. There was concern about the appointment of teaching staff in its initial stage. Thus, a Professor of law was appointed, and law teaching began in 1957. The University of Malaya established the Faculty of Law in Kuala Lumpur in the year 1972, which replicated the British type of university of law school; however, apart from local law, other systems of law were also taught (Ibrahim, 1980).

In addition to local law programs, in 1968, an external law program (LL.B external program from the University of London) was initiated in Institute Mara. With the establishment of the Faculty of Law in 1972, the nation's first honors degree law was formally launched in Malaysia. That meant Malaysia was taking a bold and admirable exit from the English legal tradition when the University of Malaya formulated a conventional academic course that was theoretical as well as practical. More institutions followed suit with courses based completely on Malaysian laws (Faruqi, 1993).

Based on the extensive review of scholarly works, a historical perspective emerges regarding the evolution of the legal system and legal education in Malaysia. Preceding British colonial influence, Malaysia's legal system was primarily rooted in Islamic Law and Malay customary law in West Malaysia, while native customary law, including Malay-Muslim Law, prevailed in Sabah and Sarawak (Ibrahim, 1993). The advent of British rule introduced English Law into the legal framework, facilitated through treaties with local Sultans and subsequent legislation (Ibrahim, 1993). In the realm of legal education, the British legal education model was first introduced in Malaysia by the University of Malaya, which established a law department in 1956 and evolved into a full-fledged Faculty of Law in 1972, aligning with the British approach (Ibrahim, 1980). Furthermore, the incorporation of external law programs,

exemplified by the LL.B external program from the University of London, added a valuable dimension to legal education within the Malaysian context (Faruqi, 1993). Over time, the legal education system in Malaysia has demonstrated resilience and adaptability, progressively shifting focus toward producing graduates ready for legal practice while aligning with the evolving standards set by the legal profession (Ali et al., 2018). This historical trajectory underscores the diverse influences and strategic developments that have shaped legal education in Malaysia into its present form.

Present Legal Education System in Malaysia

Legal Education in Malaysia is gaining importance due to the high number of successful graduates from renowned public and private universities. Undoubtedly, the success rate is due to the dedication of the law institutions in Malaysia to provide the legal skills and tools for both secular laws and Islamic legal studies. These institutions also work towards instilling confidence through their teaching and learning approach, proper management of law curricula, legal clinics, legal research, and practical training in order to broaden the students' academic purpose and career opportunities in the modern world. Moreover, to produce high-quality law graduates, industrial training, clinical legal education, community services, conducting research, and other innovative programs should be organized by law institutions (Tagoranao, 2015). However, the legal education in Malaysia, i.e., undergraduate law programs, which are in line with Commonwealth university law faculties and departments, are based on the English model, focused on substantive law and academic law education (Fadzil, 2004).

In essence, local law schools in Malaysia provide legal education under the auspices of regional universities. But there is also a separate University of London curriculum that is offered by private law schools. Students must hold a pre-university certificate, such as "the Malaysian Higher School Certificate," A-Levels, "International Baccalaureate, Foundation Course, or a Diploma," in order to study law in law faculties at local and private universities (Ayub et al., 2016). After receiving legal education (a law degree), it's essential to meet the standards of "Malaysia's Legal Profession Qualifying Board (LPQB)" to acquire a license to practice law. "The Legal Profession Qualifying Board" performs a variety of duties, but one of its most crucial ones is deciding whether law graduates meet the requirements to practice law in Malaysia ("Section 5 of the Legal Profession Act 1976"). A graduate may only become an advocate or a solicitor if they meet all of the conditions outlined in the Legal Profession Act of 1976, which includes completing the required pupillage term (Section 11 of the Legal Profession Act of 1976).

According to Rashid et al. (2013), the primary goal of legal education is to educate attorneys who are sensitive to justice and fair play and who can see the tension between the "law in books" and the "law in action." "The University of Malaya (UM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), Multimedia University, Institut Teknologi MARA, University Sultan Zainal Abidin, International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM), and Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM)" (Legal Profession Qualifying Board) all offer such legal education as undergraduate programs (Bachelor of Laws program) in Malaysia. There is also a gradual rise in the number of foreign law schools in the nation, including "Monash University (Australia), The University of Nottingham (UK), Curtin University (Australia), Swinburne University of Technology (Australia), Newcastle University School of Medicine (UK), University of Southampton (UK), and Crescendo International College (University of London International Program)." The majority of the civil law courses in Malaysian law degree programs. The teaching of Islamic law has, nevertheless, been included in the academic curricula of the law schools at IIUM, USIM, and UKM (Tagoranao, 2015).

There are four ways to get qualified to practice law in Malaysia. First, a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) or LL. B (Hons) program from an accredited local university that requires a minimum of four (4) years of full-time study (Legal Profession Qualifying Board). Second, the Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)'s three (3) year Bachelor of Legal Studies (BLS) (Hons) degree program. Students who successfully complete the BLS (Hons) degree may opt to work as legal executives or consultants, but they are not yet completely competent to apply to become advocates or solicitors. However, "they have to be verified and short-listed to proceed with a one (1) year Bachelor of Laws (Hons) or LL. B (Hons) degree given by UiTM" if they want to work as advocates and solicitors. Students who do not make the shortlist may take the Certificate in Legal Practice test or reapply after earning work experience. The LL. B. (Hons) degree from UiTM is a unique curriculum in Malaysia where the students are placed in a replica legal office setting as in specific



companies and given case studies to strengthen their practical abilities. The University of Technology MARA (UiTM) created the course with the Inns of Court in England in mind. The three (3) year Bachelor of Jurisprudence (Hons) or B. Juris (Hons) degree program is Malaysia's third option for obtaining a legal education. The self-study B.Juris (External) program is only open to Malaysian nationals or Malaysian permanent residents. The University of Malaya (UM) does not teach any procedural or practical topics for the B.Juris (External) degree, which is an academic degree. Students must pass the Certificate in Legal Practice Examination after graduation in order to practice law (Faculty of Law, University of Malaya).

The third and last option is the three (3) year LL. B (Hons) from accredited British institutions, including those in New Zealand and Australia, and the B.A. in Law programs at Oxford, Cambridge, and the University of London. A few private colleges in Malaysia provide a three-year LL. B. (Hons) curriculum with twinning provisions, requiring students to complete the first year of their studies in Malaysia and the remaining two years abroad (1+2). The only approved foreign degree that may be completely completed in the regional private universities is the LL. B (Hons) from the University of London International Programs. After earning a law degree, students must pass the certificate in a legal practice test, such as B.Juris (Hons), in order to practice law. In addition to the aforementioned four routes, qualified individuals must complete their pupillage period—also known as practicing in chambers or chambering—for six months before being admitted to the Bar (Legal Profession Qualifying Board, Malaysia) in order to be eligible to practice as advocates and solicitors.

The collective insights from the reviewed papers underscore the pivotal role of legal education in Malaysia, highlighting the concerted efforts of academic institutions to equip students with vital legal skills and knowledge. Emphasizing the crucial function of law schools, these papers stress their responsibility to nurture confidence and expand academic and professional horizons for students. Additionally, the diverse pathways to becoming a qualified lawyer in Malaysia, encompassing both local undergraduate law programs and foreign law schools operating within the country, are acknowledged and discussed (Tagoranao, 2015; Ayub et al., 2016). The imperative for legal education to cultivate graduates with a strong sense of justice and the ability to bridge the gap between theory and practice is a recurring theme (Rashid et al., 2013). The challenges associated with the quality of legal education are acknowledged (Mahmod, 2010), motivating the need for continuous improvement and adaptation to align with the dynamic requirements of the evolving job market (Tagoranao, 2015). In summary, the papers collectively shed light on the structure, standards, and ongoing advancements in legal education in Malaysia, underscoring its vital significance and the imperative for continuous enhancement and responsiveness to societal and professional shifts.

Quality Assurance Practices of Legal Education in Malaysia

Higher education institutions in wealthy nations have mechanisms and resources for enhancing the quality of their teaching, research, and community service endeavors. Universities in poor nations have begun to feel more confident in the quality of their higher education in recent years (Mhlanga, 2010). According to Fadzil (2004), quality assurance refers to all planned and systematic actions that include policies, strategies, attitudes, procedures, and activities that give consumers confidence that quality is being upheld and improved and that the goods they receive meet the required standards. Thus, it encompasses all systems, resources, and information that contribute to raising the bar for instruction, scholarship, and research, as well as student learning outcomes (Fadzil, 2004). The practice of quality assurance at public institutions is not a recent development in Malaysia. The Malaysian government is working to make its higher education system's quality assurance process better. Under the guidance of “*the Quality Assurance Division, Higher Education Department, and Ministry of Education,*” the law faculties and the majority of law schools have made efforts in this area in the form of a developed code of practice. “*Code of Practice for Institutional Audit, Malaysian Qualifications Agency, MQA.*” “*The Code of Practice*” has been planned and put into action to accomplish the quality assurance mechanism to ensure public confidence that the quality of higher education is being upheld.

The Malaysian cabinet resolved to combine “*the National Accreditation Board (Lembaga Akreditasi Negara, LAN)*” with “*the Quality Assurance Division (QAD) of the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE)*” in December 2005, which led to the creation of the quality assurance mechanism. “*The Malaysian Qualifications Agency*

(MQA) was created in 2007 as a result of this merger (Malaysian Qualifications Agency Act 2007), and it has full authority over local higher education program accreditation and qualification as well as supervision and regulation of quality and standards in educational institutions (Yew et al.). “*The Malaysian Quality Assurance (MQA)*” system in higher education established specific educational regulations and directives aiming to obtain worldwide recognition and quality in order to make Malaysia the educational center in the Asian area (Yew et al.). Among the laws enacted are “*the National Accreditation Act*” of 1997 and “*the Malaysian Qualifications Agency Act*” of 2007. MQA's principal duty is to make sure that Malaysian higher education is always of the highest standard. To ensure the quality of higher education providers and programs, it would accredit programs that meet a set of criteria and standards, facilitate the recognition and articulation of qualifications, implement “*the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF)*” as a reference point for Malaysian qualifications, and develop standards, criteria, and instruments as a national reference for the conferment of awards.

Quality control is quickly emerging as a crucial tool in higher education. Similarly, the Malaysian credentials Framework (MQF) is the main tool for classifying credentials based on a set of national consensus-driven standards that are benchmarked against global best practices and that make clear the academic levels of learning outcomes (Yew et al.). According to the Malaysian Qualification Agency (2013), the learning outcomes outlined in the MQF document are “knowledge, practical skills, social skills and responsibilities, values, attitudes and professionalism, communication, leadership and team skills, problem-solving and scientific skills, information management and lifelong learning skills, managerial and entrepreneurial skills.” Additionally, MQA establishes three key indicators of quality assurance procedures for institutions of higher education operating in Malaysia: “(i) SETARA rating; (ii) Self-Accreditation Status (SAS); and (iii) ISO 9001:2008 certification” (Yew et al.). The following legislative and regulatory frameworks control the delivery of higher education in Malaysia: “*The Education Act 1996 (Act 550), The Private Higher Educational Institutions Act, 1996 (amended 2009), The National Council of Higher Education Act, 1996, Malaysian Qualifications Agency Act 2007 (replacing the previous namely National Accreditation Board Act 1996 which has been repealed), The Universities and University Colleges (Amendment) Act, 1996 (amended 2009), The National Higher Education Fund Corporation Act, 1997 (Amendment 2000), The National Higher Education Fund Corporation (Amendment) Act 2000, Private Higher Educational Institutions (Amendment) Act 2009 and Akta Universiti dan Kolej Universiti Pindaan 2009*”

There are many councils and committees working under MQA for the improvement of higher education. Under MQA, several councils and committees are aiming to raise the bar for higher education. To ensure that education quality is maintained in all educational institutions, both public and private, the MQA has established a number of councils with delegated authority “(Code of Practice for Program Accreditation).” A important document in MQA that supports and sustains quality assurance of higher education in Malaysia, in addition to the councils and committees, is the MQF. A recognized higher education provider (HEP) must meet a set of standards established by the quality assurance system in order to issue any degree. According to the student's academic curriculum, the framework specifies the academic levels, learning objectives, and credit systems. In addition, it provides learning paths that logically lead to these certifications. Through credit transfers and certification, students may advance at their own pace and ensure their own success. Full (or Final) Accreditation is a conferral to denote that the program has met all the criteria and standards set for that purpose and is in compliance with the MQF) (Code of Practice for Higher Education), while Provisional Accreditation indicates that the program has met the minimum requirements for it to be offered (including requesting MOHE approval to conduct the new program). To do so efficiently, we use tools like “*the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (MQF), the Code of Practice for Program Accreditation (COPPA), the Code of Practice for Institutional Audit (COPIA), the Program Discipline Standards and Guides to Good Practices (Code of Practice for Program Accreditation), and the quality assurance evaluation. Code of Practice for Program Accreditation (COPPA) is based on the Quality Assurance Division's (QAD) 2002 Code of Practice for Quality Assurance in Public Universities of Malaysia*”. There are nine (9) distinct parts that make up the quality assessment process, including the vision, mission, educational objectives, and learning outcomes. In addition, there are academic personnel, educational resources, program monitoring and evaluation, leadership, governance, and administration, as well as continuous quality improvement, student assessment, student selection, and support services. “(Code of Practice for Program Accreditation)”. Following is a list of all important organizations and their relative tasks in Table 1.

**Table 1**

Councils and Committees Established under MQA

No.	Name	Responsibilities
1	The Malaysian Qualifications Agency Council	Authorizes plans and policies; Accepts changes to and modifications to the MQF; Adopts rules and regulations governing audit procedures and the certification of courses, credentials, and institutions of higher learning; Obtains analyze reports, returns, statements, licenses, institutional audits, and evaluations; Directs the Agency in carrying out its role as a body for quality control.
2	Joint Technical Committee	Oversees all HEP approvals, is in charge of the accreditation procedure, and serves as an assessment panel. Examines if the standards and practices are valid assesses the instruction Taking into account each application for authorization and taking the necessary next steps
3	Accreditation Committee	To assess and examine program accreditation reports and to make judgments on an HEP's application, there are five accreditation committees, each of which covers the main subjects of study. To offer, decline, uphold, or withdraw Provisional Accreditation.
4.	Institutional Audit Committee	To receive and evaluate equivalency assessment reports; • to decide if two credentials are equivalent;
5	The Standards Committees	To create and evaluate guidelines, criteria, and standards for institutional audits and program accreditation; To create and review standards for certain disciplines; • to create and review good practices guides.

The Malaysian Qualifications Agency Council (MQAC), as shown in Table 1, has a wide range of duties, including approving plans, policies, revisions, and updates for the operation of the Agency and MQF. The rules and regulations serve as benchmarks for quality control. The MQAC also oversees the accreditation of programs, the adoption of rules and norms related to audit procedures, and the examination of higher education providers' credentials. The Agency receives and keeps track of all reports, returns, statements, and other data pertaining to institutional audits, evaluations, and accreditation. The MQAC also has the duty to continually direct the Agency in carrying out its role as a quality assurance body, ensuring that it takes all reasonable actions necessary to carry out its obligations under the Act.

Additionally, one of the main committees of MQA is “the Joint Technical Committee (JTC).” According to Section 51 of the MQA Act 2007 (Act 679), JTC is in charge of the accreditation process and syllabus approval for all HEP; in addition, they must review the accrediting team's report and submit their endorsements for ratification by the Council; validate the standards and procedures; assess the curriculum and take into account the HEP plans in general and their implementation for the first two years of the program; and review and recommend related matters.

The accrediting Committee includes five further accrediting committees that cover the main fields of study, including science, medicine, engineering, the built environment, arts, humanities, and social sciences. The accreditation committees' duties include reviewing and analyzing program accreditation reports, deciding on HEP's request for provisional or full accreditation of programs, and making decisions regarding qualifications. They also have the authority to grant, deny, maintain, or revoke provisional or full accreditation of programs and qualifications.

The process known as institutional audit examines the caliber of academic programs, the standards of awards, and internal controls over caliber and standards. As shown in Table 1, the Institutional Audit Committee (IAC) is in charge of receiving and analyzing reports on program and qualification equivalency assessments and making decisions regarding the qualifications' equivalency for placement in the MQF and Standards Committees. The rules, standards, and criteria for program accreditation and institutional audit,

as well as the development and evaluation of the standards for particular disciplines and their guidance in good practices, are all the responsibility of the standards committees. Legal education adheres to the same quality control procedures as other higher education as set out by MQA. In order to encourage the establishment of academic programs in the area of law and Sharia law, the Programme Standards for Law and Sharia Law were also developed. (MQA Malaysian Qualifications Agency, *Programme Standards: Law and Shariah Law, Second Edition 2015*) The Standards for Law and Shariah Law contain detailed guidelines on program aims and educational objectives, program learning outcomes, program design (including a proposed program structure), student admission criteria, student assessment method, criteria for academic staff, educational resources, and continuous quality improvement.

The collective examination of these papers offers a comprehensive insight into the critical aspect of quality assurance in legal education within Malaysia. Mahmoud (2010) delves into the evaluation of the teaching and learning methodologies within law schools, presenting a perception survey that assesses the quality of lawyers churned out by both local and foreign institutions. Mahmud & Kamal (2005) goes further to underline the challenges faced in maintaining the standard of legal education, particularly emphasizing language proficiency and training for the teaching staff. Ali and his colleagues (2018) provide a comprehensive overview of the legal education landscape in Malaysia, zooming in on the rigorous review processes conducted by the Legal Profession Qualifying Board, demonstrating a commitment to maintaining high standards. Jalil (2013) contributes by exploring diverse perspectives, gathering insights from students and employers on legal education, and suggesting the establishment of a national Center for Legal Education to further bolster the quality. Overall, these works collectively shed a revealing light on the state of legal education in Malaysia, encompassing efforts to uphold and enhance its quality, aiming to produce proficient lawyers who meet the demands of a dynamic legal landscape.

Challenges in Legal Education in Malaysia

Despite having a robust system for legal education, Malaysia nonetheless faces several challenges. According to Raja Singham (2010), the Malaysian legal education system places a strong emphasis on exams, which makes it difficult for lawyers to effectively communicate their ideas. He also lamented the mindset that forces students to remember case citations only for test purposes rather than for the purpose of practicing law. Additionally, he argued that education in obligatory moot sessions, simulations, and participation is not necessary for students to acquire their practical legal skills, such as negotiation, advocacy, time management, and legal research (Singham, 2010). There are still certain challenges for recent law graduates to face when they enter the working world. "The Common Bar Examination" was a major topic of discussion during "the 12th Biennial Malaysian Law Conference", which the Bar Council convened. One of the main difficulties is the bar's many reservations about "Certificates in Legal Practice (CLP)." The CLP test's difficulty to pass is probably due to the quality of legal education provided by regional law institutions (Husaini & Salleh, 2013). Legal, educational institutions are making a concerted effort to address student concerns about the caliber of instruction and the learning environment, adaptability in course delivery, and the effectiveness of their courses as a planning tool for future employment opportunities and professional success (Husaini & Salleh, 2013). This is consistent with the need for enhancement. The broad skills that employers appreciate, such as research, communication, collaboration, and leadership, should thus be present in graduates.

In his 2010 analysis of Malaysian legal education providers, Professor Dr. Nik Ahmad Kamal Nik Mahmud highlighted the market opinion that local graduates cannot compete with those from international institutions. In addition, he emphasized the difficulties facing Malaysian legal education. He said that graduates from both local and foreign institutions lacked soft skills and found it challenging to re-learn Malaysian law (Mahmod, 2010). Moreover, the quality guidelines executed by organizations in Malaysia and this nation where its primary educational facility is located present a "dual" guarantee of quality challenge for foreign-based educational institutions operating in Malaysia (Yew et al.).

Haji Sulaiman Abdullah claims that the state of Malaysia's law education is appalling (Jalil, 2013). He said that Malaysia's attempts to develop competent lawyers were "positively endangered" by "the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE)." He recalled that in the past, graduates from Malaysia's state-owned institutions could compete at any international session. However, the MOHE's heavy involvement



in matters such as university appointments had diminished this capacity. Jalil acknowledged the importance of his viewpoint in a 2013 research on the potential directions for Malaysian legal education. The research concludes that uniform standards for selecting law schools and establishing admission requirements are fundamentally required. These two issues have lasted for far too long, and nothing has been done to investigate solutions that would enhance legal education and the profession as a whole (Jalil, 2013). In addition, Haji Sulaiman brought up the complaints of professors asserting that having a doctorate should also publish articles in ISI journals, even though, in his opinion, these articles have no direct bearing on how Malaysian laws are actually applied. This was brought up when talking about the issue of faculty promotion. In addition, he believed that being a member of the Bar and having some prior experience practicing law were much more important qualifications for law instructors (Abdullah 2010).

"The Chief Justice of Malaysia" has expressed his dismay at the state of legal education in the country. He expressed his disgust with the legal profession's decline, law schools, and students. Furthermore, he cautioned that "law graduates may find themselves in the unemployment line if law schools didn't effectively prepare learners for the market and newly admitted lawyers weren't assertive." The Chief Justice thus urged graduates of the nation's higher learning law institutions to further their careers. Additionally, he asserts that more experienced lawyers have told him that younger lawyers lack professionalism (Tee, 2019). This demonstrates the urgent need to improve the educational standards for legal education.

The comprehensive examination of these papers underscores various pressing challenges within legal education in Malaysia. Mahmud & Kamal (2005) emphasizes the critical need to preserve the standard of legal education amidst declining English language proficiency among law students, advocating for proper training of teaching staff to address this concern. Ayub and his colleagues (2016) delve into the potential solution of allowing law teachers to practice as lawyers alongside their teaching roles, drawing insightful comparisons with practices in Singapore. Tagoranao (2015) pinpoints the essentiality of efficient resources, encompassing effective management of law courses, legal research, legal clinics, and industrial training, to ensure high-quality legal education and adequately prepare students for a fiercely competitive job market. Furthermore, Jalil (2013) advocates for strengthened collaboration between law schools and practitioners, proposing the establishment of a national Center for Legal Education as a strategic step to overcome weaknesses in the legal education system. In summary, the amalgamation of these papers succinctly identifies and addresses crucial challenges in legal education within Malaysia, ranging from the maintenance of high standards to strategic resource management and fostering meaningful collaboration between academia and legal practitioners.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Malaysian legal education has been assumed to be insensitive to the changes in the profession, and this has resulted in the inability of homegrown law graduates to fulfill the potential of members of the profession (Thiru & Ang, 2012). Thus, it is essential for law faculties to teach all the knowledge and skills expected of a legal practitioner from day one of employment. If the requirements of the legal profession have evolved with the change in times, so must legal education and training keep up-to-date with the changes to the law graduates. What must be borne in mind is that the quest for improvement in the program contents and teaching in Malaysian legal education is being developed gradually. The local law faculties have, from time to time, conducted continuous review and improvement.

Additionally, within the realm of instruction, educational institutions are being tasked with meeting the needs of a wider range of student populations, teaching at more flexible times and locations, becoming adept at the use of technological tools in the classroom, designing education programs around learning objectives and cutting across disciplines, instructing in teams, tying their instruction to monitoring and creating and implementing improvements, monitoring and responding to students' assessment of their own learning, and so on. Simply put, the caliber of legal counsel offered to clients after lawyers have graduated from law school depends on the resources and training they received throughout their undergraduate and legal studies, specifically (Fadzil, 2004). However, legal education in Malaysia does not encourage specialization. As a result, graduates from all law faculties learn the same subjects and are unable to meet the demands of employers who are looking for graduates who possess specialized

knowledge and skills. Hence, all law faculties need to identify their role as preparatory centers and train their students according to employers' needs that pursue their students most (Jalil, 2013).

As illustrated in this paper, law programs are needed to follow the criteria set by MQA and LPQB. The program standards do not only specify the minimum core courses but also the minimum core skills to be taught during the professional year. In accordance with these requirements, all the law programs have fulfilled these program standards. In terms of the content of the programs, not much variation is found in them. All the law programs are generic; they are either LLB or LLB Shari'ah. The only variation is in the diversity of electives courses offered to students. The courses conform to the structure of the judicial system in Malaysia, which includes both the Civil and the Shariah Courts.

In conclusion, a strong demand exists for a legal education that is successful and focuses on fostering a variety of abilities, including knowledge, presenting skills, legal ethics, and character development. Additionally, there is a critical need for practical training at law schools to prepare students for the legal profession, as well as ongoing legal education to help recognize many career routes and concentrate on more relevant goals for professionals. Interdisciplinary academic programs that will raise levels of learners' knowledge and self-assurance are critically important to concentrate on in light of globalization. The Malaysian Bar Council and law schools play a crucial role in ensuring that recent law graduates have received all the required training so they are prepared to serve and advance social justice in society.

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