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DOCTRINAL OBSOLESCENCE AND LEGAL PEDAGOGY **POST CRIMINAL LAW REFORM: A FRAMEWORK FOR** **RE-CERTIFYING INDIAN LAW FACULTY**



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Abstract

The sweeping overhaul of India's criminal justice system through the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) represents the most comprehensive transformation of criminal law in the nation since Independence. These legislative changes, aimed at modernizing and streamlining India's criminal law framework, have introduced significant shifts in legal procedures, definitions of offenses, and rights of the accused and victims. However, despite the scale of these reforms, the country's legal education infrastructure has largely remained stagnant, unable to keep pace with the evolving legal landscape.

A key issue lies in the fact that many university law faculties, whose qualifications were based on older, now-obsolete statutes, continue to teach legal doctrines that no longer hold validity in contemporary courtrooms. This disconnection between the law taught in educational institutions and the law applied in practice threatens both the quality of legal education and the

efficiency of the criminal justice system. Faculty members, having been certified under outdated curricula, may lack the practical knowledge needed to teach the most current and relevant legal concepts, leaving law students ill-prepared for real-world legal challenges.

This article presents a comprehensive and actionable roadmap to rectify this situation by aligning criminal law pedagogy with the latest statutory changes. By integrating international comparative frameworks, policy analysis, and legal academic theory, the article argues for a multifaceted approach to reforming legal education. Key recommendations include the mandatory recertification of law faculty to ensure their familiarity with contemporary criminal law, comprehensive curriculum audits to remove outdated material, and the establishment of stronger regulatory mechanisms for ongoing faculty development.

Additionally, the article advocates for the creation of policy guidelines that would mandate regular updates to academic syllabi in response to legislative changes. Such reforms are vital not only to preserve doctrinal integrity and academic rigor but also to maintain public trust in India's legal education system. The proposed changes will ensure that legal education remains relevant, accountable, and reflective of the nation's evolving legal landscape, ultimately contributing to a more robust and effective criminal justice system.

By taking these steps, India's legal education system can better serve the needs of the legal profession, the judiciary, and society at large, fostering a new generation of legal professionals who are adept at applying modern criminal law principles with precision and competence.

1. Introduction: A Legal Renaissance Without Academic Synchronization

India's legal reformers have achieved a historic milestone by repealing several colonial-era statutes that had long governed the country's criminal justice system. The Indian Penal Code (1860), the Code of Criminal Procedure (1973), and the Indian Evidence Act (1872) three pillars of India's legal framework have been replaced by the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), respectively. This monumental shift in criminal law represents a post-colonial legal renaissance, symbolizing a break from outdated frameworks and embracing a more contemporary, progressive approach. The new laws reflect modern priorities that focus on victim-centric justice, the integration of digital technologies in criminal investigations, the promotion of efficiency within the judicial system, and the empowerment of citizens through

enhanced legal rights.

The reforms aim to address several longstanding challenges in the criminal justice system, such as the need for more responsive, transparent, and fair legal procedures, while also aligning the country's criminal justice framework with global standards of human rights and technological advancements. In this sense, India has embarked on a transformative journey to modernize its legal landscape ushering in a new era of legal practice and principles designed to better serve its citizens and the broader society.

However, this sweeping legal overhaul has not been met with a corresponding transformation in India's legal education infrastructure. While the laws themselves have evolved to reflect the demands of the present, the academic system that trains the future legal professionals has largely remained rooted in the past. A significant number of law educators in India most of whom cleared the University Grants Commission's National Eligibility Test (UGC-NET) under the old, now-repealed statutes continue to teach, conduct research, and assess students using outdated legal doctrines and frameworks. This situation has created a profound disconnect between the laws in practice and the legal education being provided.

Law educators, whose certifications were based on the outdated codes, often lack familiarity with the new legislative frameworks, making it difficult for them to teach the most up-to-date legal principles or methodologies. As a result, they continue to impart knowledge based on statutes and legal principles that have either been completely overhauled or entirely replaced by new laws. This has led to a structural pedagogical lag, where law schools and universities risk producing graduates who are ill-equipped to navigate the modern criminal justice system effectively.

This mismatch between legal education and the current legal reality has serious implications. It risks rendering legal education anachronistic out of step with the real-world needs of the legal profession. Moreover, the persistence of outdated teaching practices poses a danger to the professional development of law students. Graduates entering the legal profession may be inadequately prepared to handle cases under the new codes, leaving them vulnerable to misapplication of the law in courtrooms and legal practice. This disconnect between academic knowledge and practical application could ultimately harm the integrity of India's criminal justice system, weakening public trust in its ability to deliver justice in line with modern

standards.

In light of these issues, it is crucial to address the academic synchronization gap that currently exists within India's legal education system. Without reforms to ensure that legal educators are equipped with up-to-date knowledge and that academic curricula are aligned with the latest legal developments, the country risks undermining the very foundation of its legal reforms. This article explores the urgency of bridging this gap and proposes concrete steps to ensure that India's legal education system evolves in tandem with its criminal justice system.

2. Structural Incongruence: Repealed Laws, Certified Faculty

Despite the comprehensive enactment of new criminal codes specifically the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) India's legal education system has yet to establish a formal mechanism to ensure that law educators are adequately re-trained or re-certified to teach the revised statutes. This lack of formalized, nationwide professional development for legal educators presents a significant structural incongruence between the laws that govern criminal justice and the way they are taught in academic institutions.

The absence of a standardized recertification process for law faculty in India has allowed a wide gap to persist between the criminal laws currently in force and the outdated curricula used by educators. While the reforms to India's criminal justice system have been groundbreaking, the teaching and understanding of these new laws remain largely trapped in the past. This failure to synchronize legal education with legislative reform has created several critical issues that undermine the quality of legal pedagogy and ultimately affect the entire legal profession.

Critical Observations:

1. Outdated UGC-NET Syllabi

The University Grants Commission's National Eligibility Test (UGC-NET) syllabus for criminal law has not been updated in accordance with the repeal of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), and the Indian Evidence Act. As a result, the academic content being taught to future educators and legal scholars remains grounded in obsolete legal frameworks. Although the UGC-NET serves as a primary qualification for law educators, its syllabus fails to reflect the realities of the modern legal environment, leaving educators with inadequate training in the

application of the newly enacted BNS, BNSS, and BSA. Moreover, the revision of syllabi at the institutional level is inconsistent, with some universities failing to update their curricula altogether, further exacerbating the problem.

2. Law Educators Holding Positions Based on Repealed Statutes

Thousands of law educators across India currently hold valid teaching positions despite having cleared the UGC-NET based on the old criminal laws. These educators, though qualified by previous standards, often lack the necessary expertise in the new statutory frameworks. Their continued employment under these outdated credentials presents a major challenge to ensuring that law students are being taught the most relevant and up-to-date legal principles. Furthermore, faculty members who have spent years teaching based on now-repealed statutes may be resistant to embracing the new criminal laws, hindering the necessary shift in legal pedagogy.

3. Absence of National Mandate for Bridge Certification and Retraining

A major structural flaw is the absence of a national mandate for bridge certification, orientation, or retraining programs specifically focused on the new criminal codes. While there are numerous law schools and legal institutions across India, no unified policy or regulatory framework exists to require faculty members to undergo training or certification to teach the new BNS, BNSS, and BSA. This lack of a formalized retraining process means that law educators continue to teach outdated concepts, which directly impacts the preparedness of their students for real-world legal challenges. Without such certification programs, educators are left to independently update their knowledge if they choose to do so leading to an inconsistent and fragmented approach to legal education across the country.

Tangible Consequences of the Disconnect

The disconnect between the updated criminal codes and the outdated teaching frameworks has significant consequences for multiple facets of the legal education system in India:

- **Curricular Development**

The current state of legal academia reflects a significant lag in curricular development. The new codes introduce complex concepts such as victim rights, digital evidence, and more streamlined legal procedures, but these are not adequately covered in many law

school syllabi. The continued teaching of the Indian Penal Code, CrPC, and the Indian Evidence Act creates confusion among students who are learning concepts that have little to no application in contemporary legal practice. This disconnect risks the introduction of gaps in legal knowledge, affecting the quality of future legal professionals.

- **Student Competence**

Law students who graduate under these outdated curricula are being equipped with knowledge that is misaligned with the realities they will face in practice. They may struggle to apply the new laws in real-world settings, reducing their competence and effectiveness as legal practitioners. This puts students at a disadvantage when they enter the legal workforce, particularly in a rapidly evolving field like criminal law, where outdated knowledge can hinder their ability to address contemporary challenges.

- **Integrity of Legal Academia**

The continued reliance on outdated teaching methods erodes the credibility and integrity of India's legal academia. If students are not learning the most relevant and current legal principles, the entire system of legal education risks losing its relevance and authority. This may lead to a situation where legal education becomes discredited in the eyes of the public and the legal community, further undermining the trust placed in India's academic institutions.

In conclusion, the structural incongruence between the repeal of old criminal laws and the outdated certification of law educators is a critical issue that must be addressed in order to align India's legal education system with the reality of the country's new criminal justice framework. Only through a formal system of recertification, curriculum updates, and re-orientation for law faculty can the educational system keep pace with the legal reforms and ensure that students are adequately prepared for the demands of contemporary legal practice.

3. Pedagogical Fallout: Legal Education at Risk

Legal education is not simply about teaching students the letter of the law it is about instilling in them a deep understanding of the law's philosophical, constitutional, and jurisprudential context. Law faculty serve as the guiding figures who help students grasp not just the technicalities of legal provisions, but the broader implications of these provisions within a

society governed by justice, rights, and fairness. When faculty members lack familiarity with or working knowledge of the most recent criminal codes namely, the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) the consequences are inevitable and far-reaching. These outdated pedagogical practices are poised to create serious long-term challenges for legal education, the legal profession, and India's broader criminal justice reforms.

Critical Consequences of Pedagogical Fallout

1. Doctrinal Displacement

One of the most significant outcomes of this academic lag is the teaching of doctrines, legal provisions, and case laws that are no longer enforceable or relevant under the current legal framework. Law students, when exposed to outdated legal materials, are taught provisions and rulings that have been explicitly repealed or replaced by newer statutes. For instance, students may be instructed on case laws and procedural frameworks that were once pivotal under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) or the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), yet these are now inapplicable or superseded by the BNS, BNSS, and BSA. As a result, students are left with a warped understanding of the legal system, where the doctrines they study no longer hold weight in the courts. This doctrinal displacement compromises the students' ability to engage with the real-world legal system effectively, leaving them ill-equipped to navigate the complexities of modern law.

2. Career Risk

The stakes for students are high, as they face career-defining exams and assessments based on the new legal frameworks but are being trained in outdated legal principles. India's judiciary, bar, and administrative law exams are all based on the current criminal codes, but law students are not being trained adequately to engage with the legal material that will appear on these exams. As such, graduates are at risk of failing to properly address questions based on the BNS, BNSS, and BSA in their examinations. Furthermore, in practice, these students may struggle to apply the current criminal law in real-world legal proceedings, whether in courts or in legal practice, thus risking their professional credibility and potential success in the legal field. The disconnect between what is taught and what is required in professional settings places graduates at a severe disadvantage, undermining the integrity of the legal profession and delaying their

ability to contribute effectively to India's justice system.

3. Moot Courts and Clinics

Moot courts, simulated trials, internships, and legal clinics are intended to provide law students with practical, hands-on experience, mirroring real-world legal practice as closely as possible. However, when these activities are based on outdated statutes and procedural frameworks, they fail to accurately reflect current legal procedures or challenges. For example, moot court exercises may still rely on the Indian Penal Code (IPC) or the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), even though these have been replaced by the more modern BNS, BNSS, and BSA. This disconnection means that students may enter the profession without having experienced the current legal processes in their training, rendering their experiential learning irrelevant and misleading. Moot courts and internships are supposed to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, but if the simulations are based on outdated legal frameworks, they only serve to reinforce misunderstandings and perpetuate anachronistic practices.

4. Academic Obsolescence

The outdated approach to criminal law education also has significant consequences for the academic and scholarly output of law institutions. Research, thesis supervision, and scholarly publications often rely on the most current legal frameworks, reflecting the contemporary state of the law. When law educators continue to operate within the confines of repealed statutes, the quality and relevance of academic work is severely compromised. Thesis supervisors may guide students to explore outdated legal principles or research topics that no longer have bearing in the legal world. Consequently, academic papers, publications, and even textbooks produced by legal scholar's risk becoming obsolete, contributing to the stagnation of legal scholarship. The integrity of legal research is at stake, as it becomes disconnected from the real-world evolution of law. Scholars may end up writing about subjects that no longer hold practical significance, diminishing the credibility of their work in contemporary legal discourse.

Broader Consequences: Generational Learning Gaps and Judicial Inefficiency

The cumulative effect of these pedagogical shortcomings could result in a generation of law graduates who are poorly equipped to deal with the current challenges of India's criminal

justice system. As law students remain detached from the legal reforms introduced by the BNS, BNSS, and BSA, they may face steep learning curves upon entering the legal profession. The failure to align academic training with legislative changes may result in judicial inefficiency as newly qualified lawyers and judges struggle to adapt to the realities of the modern criminal law landscape. This generational gap in legal education may perpetuate outdated practices, undermine the broader goals of criminal justice reform, and slow the progress of India's legal modernization.

Furthermore, judicial officers, practitioners, and legal scholars trained under the old legal frameworks may resist or struggle to adapt to the new statutory provisions, leading to a delay in the full implementation of the criminal justice reforms. If the new legal codes are not incorporated into the training of the next generation of legal professionals, the reform agenda will be stunted, and the broader goals of victim-centered justice, procedural efficiency, and citizen empowerment will remain unfulfilled.

Conclusion

The pedagogical fallout from the lag in legal education risks creating an entire generation of legal professionals who are inadequately prepared for the demands of the modern criminal justice system. Law students, educators, and legal scholars must be equipped with the tools and knowledge to fully engage with the new criminal codes, and this requires a concerted effort to update syllabi, retrain faculty, and realign academic institutions with the current state of the law. Without addressing this disconnect, India's ambitious legal reforms could be undermined by the very system that is meant to support them its legal education infrastructure. The time for immediate action is critical to ensure that legal education contributes positively to the nation's progress and transformation.

Legal academia around the world has long recognized the importance of keeping pace with legislative changes to ensure that law students and legal professionals are adequately trained and prepared for the evolving legal landscape. As legal systems undergo reforms, the academic institutions that train future lawyers, judges, and legal scholars must swiftly adapt their curricula and faculty training programs. This ensures that the legal education they provide remains relevant, rigorous, and aligned with the latest legislative changes. Several countries have established exemplary models in this regard, setting global standards for how legal education can adapt to new laws. India's legal education system must aspire to these global

best practices to ensure academic currency, doctrinal accuracy, and the professional competence of its future legal professionals.

Key International Practices:

1. United Kingdom: Rapid Updates to Legal Training Programs

In the United Kingdom, the adaptation of legal education to new criminal justice reforms is an ongoing, systematic process. For example, after significant reforms in criminal justice, such as changes to procedural law or sentencing guidelines, the Bar Professional Training Course (BPTC) which is a mandatory qualification for becoming a barrister undergoes immediate and comprehensive updates. These updates ensure that trainees are taught the most current legal principles and practices in accordance with the latest legislative changes. Furthermore, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements for law faculty are designed to keep educators informed of these legal reforms. This CPD process involves mandatory training and education for faculty members to ensure they are up-to-date with the latest legal developments. This proactive approach to curriculum updating and faculty development guarantees that law students in the UK are equipped with the legal knowledge and skills they need to succeed in practice.

2. United States: ABA-Accredited Law Schools and Regular Curriculum Audits

In the United States, the American Bar Association (ABA) plays a critical role in ensuring that law schools remain aligned with current legal standards. ABA-accredited law schools are required to conduct regular curriculum audits, particularly in response to significant legislative changes or judicial rulings. These audits assess whether the content being taught is in accordance with the most up-to-date legal statutes and case law. Following legislative changes, law schools must ensure that their syllabi reflect the latest legal principles, theories, and practices. This requirement is not only aimed at ensuring the academic rigor of law schools but also at maintaining the public's confidence in the quality of legal education. By institutionalizing these audits, the U.S. ensures that law students graduate with the most relevant and applicable knowledge of the law, preparing them for success in legal practice and the judiciary.

3. Australia and Canada: Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (CLE) for Educators

In both Australia and Canada, Continuing Legal Education (CLE) programs are a mandatory requirement for legal professionals, but these programs are not limited to practicing lawyers alone. Accredited law schools in these countries also mandate that their teaching faculty undergo regular CLE training to stay current with legislative changes. This requirement ensures that educators are not only up-to-date with the law but also capable of teaching these changes in a relevant and accurate way. Faculty members in law schools are required to participate in CLE modules that focus on recent developments in the law, as well as best practices in legal pedagogy. The mandatory nature of CLE for educators ensures that there is no gap between the evolving law and the instruction provided to students, allowing law schools to offer legal education that aligns with contemporary legal practice. This approach highlights the importance of ongoing professional development for legal educators, ensuring they remain qualified to teach the next generation of legal professionals.

Lessons for India's Legal Education System

India's legal education system can draw valuable insights from these global best practices, particularly in the following areas:

- **Mandatory Curriculum Audits and Updates**

Similar to the ABA's curriculum audits in the U.S. and the rapid updates to the BPTC in the UK, India's law schools must establish regular and mandatory curriculum reviews. These audits should assess whether the teaching materials, case laws, and doctrines being taught align with the latest legislative changes, particularly in light of the reforms introduced by the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA). This will ensure that law students receive the most current and accurate legal education, helping them to be more effective practitioners upon entering the legal profession.

- **Faculty Certification and Re-Certification**

India should establish a national mechanism for re-certifying law faculty members in accordance with updated criminal laws. Just as law educators in Australia and Canada are required to engage in Continuing Legal Education (CLE) to remain certified, India

should create similar programs for law educators to ensure they are familiar with the latest legal reforms. These CLE programs for educators should be mandatory and could take the form of online modules, seminars, or workshops focused on recent legislative changes. This would ensure that educators are well-equipped to teach the most current legal frameworks and that students receive the highest quality education.

- **Integration of Technology in Training**

Given the technological advancements that have been integrated into the criminal justice system, particularly with the digitalization of evidence and investigative processes, law schools should also incorporate technology-focused CLE programs for faculty. This would allow educators to stay updated on technological innovations in the law, such as cybercrime, digital evidence handling, and the use of artificial intelligence in legal proceedings. By integrating these technologies into the curriculum, India can ensure that its law students are prepared for the future of legal practice.

- **Collaboration with Legal Institutions**

Indian law schools could benefit from partnerships with legal institutions, such as the judiciary, the bar council, and the government, to facilitate regular updates and training for faculty members. Similar to how law schools in the UK and the U.S. work closely with professional bodies to ensure that their curricula are aligned with real-world legal needs, Indian universities should foster stronger connections with legal practitioners and policymakers to ensure that their teaching remains relevant and reflective of legislative changes.

Conclusion

By adopting international best practices for academic re-certification and curriculum updates, India's legal education system can better align itself with the country's evolving criminal justice landscape. Implementing regular curriculum audits, mandatory faculty re-certification, and continuing education programs will not only enhance the quality of legal education but also help preserve doctrinal integrity and academic rigor. This alignment with global standards will ensure that India's law students graduate with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the modern legal system, ultimately contributing to the effectiveness of India's criminal justice reforms and the broader goals of justice and equity in the country.

Given the urgent academic deficiencies within India's legal education system particularly in light of the criminal justice reforms introduced through the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) it is imperative to undertake a comprehensive overhaul of the country's legal education framework. This will ensure that faculty, students, and the broader legal community are equipped to handle the contemporary demands of India's evolving legal landscape. To address these challenges and align legal education with modern statutory frameworks, the following policy proposals are put forward for consideration by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the Bar Council of India, and the Ministry of Education.

5.1 Bridge Certification Program

A critical first step in addressing the current pedagogical gap is the establishment of a **Bridge Certification Program** designed for faculty members teaching criminal law. Given that the majority of law educators cleared the University Grants Commission's National Eligibility Test (UGC-NET) based on outdated criminal law syllabi, they need a structured orientation and re-certification to ensure they are well-versed in the new legal codes BNS, BNSS, and BSA.

- **Mandatory National Orientation:** This program should be mandatory for all faculty members who teach criminal law at universities and law colleges across India. The orientation should be comprehensive, covering the nuances and major provisions of the new codes, as well as the significant changes in procedure and practice brought about by these reforms.
- **Assessment:** The program should conclude with a formal assessment or certification, ensuring that participants have a full grasp of the new legislative framework. This certification should be a prerequisite for continuing to teach criminal law, effectively ensuring that all law educators are operating with the most up-to-date legal knowledge.
- **Implementation Strategy:** The Bridge Certification Program should be developed by a collaboration between the Ministry of Education, UGC, and academic bodies specializing in criminal law. Universities should work in coordination with these bodies to organize and conduct these programs nationwide, both in-person and through virtual platforms for greater accessibility.

5.2 Revised UGC-NET Component

The UGC-NET is a significant qualification exam for legal educators, and its syllabi play a

vital role in shaping the content that faculty members teach. However, given the obsolescence of the current criminal law syllabus, a revision is essential to align it with the current legal framework.

- **Updated Criminal Law Syllabi:** The criminal law section of the UGC-NET should be immediately revised to reflect the content of the new laws BNS, BNSS, and BSA. This should include updates on key provisions, principles, case laws, and procedural shifts under the new codes.
- **Re-Qualification Pathway:** For individuals who have already qualified for the UGC-NET under the old syllabus, a re-qualification pathway should be offered. This could involve a supplementary exam or an online module that tests knowledge of the new criminal law codes, ensuring that faculty members are adequately qualified to teach the updated curriculum.
- **Ongoing Curriculum Updates:** The UGC should commit to ongoing updates to the UGC-NET syllabus, reflecting any future legislative changes in criminal law. This would ensure that law educators remain current with evolving legal frameworks and are constantly challenged to enhance their expertise.

5.3 Re-Accreditation of Criminal Law Faculty

In order to ensure that only qualified and knowledgeable individuals are entrusted with teaching criminal law, a re-accreditation process for faculty members should be instituted.

- **Proof of Updated Knowledge:** Universities and academic institutions must mandate that criminal law faculty members demonstrate proof of updated legal knowledge through certified courses or examinations before they are allowed to continue teaching. This process could be facilitated through partnerships with law schools, professional bodies, and legal experts to create specialized certification courses.
- **Certified Courses or Exams:** To meet the re-accreditation requirement, faculty members could be required to either complete a certified course on the new laws or pass an examination that demonstrates their understanding of the BNS, BNSS, and BSA. Such certification should be renewed periodically, ensuring that faculty stay updated with any subsequent reforms.
- **Ensuring Accountability:** This re-accreditation process will not only raise the standards of legal education but also ensure that faculty members are held accountable

for their teaching practices. Only those who meet the new educational standards should be allowed to teach criminal law.

5.4 Institutional Curriculum Audit

A critical aspect of legal education reform is ensuring that the entire curriculum across law institutions is aligned with the current legal framework. This requires an **Institutional Curriculum Audit** to standardize and update law syllabi across universities and law colleges.

- **Centralized Audits:** The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the UGC, should conduct centralized audits of criminal law syllabi across universities to ensure uniformity in curriculum updates. These audits should verify that the legal principles taught reflect the provisions of the BNS, BNSS, and BSA, and should track whether updates are being implemented consistently and effectively across different educational institutions.
- **Curriculum Alignment:** The audits should focus on ensuring that law programs cover the full scope of the new criminal codes and that all related subjects such as criminal procedure, evidence law, and victimology are integrated into the updated curriculum. This will ensure that law students across India receive the same high-quality, up-to-date legal education.
- **Feedback and Revision Mechanism:** After the audit, universities should be required to submit a plan for revising their curricula where gaps are identified. Additionally, there should be a feedback mechanism to ensure that any practical challenges faced by law schools in implementing the updated syllabus are addressed in a timely manner.

5.5 Bridging Modules for Students

To address the challenges faced by students who have been taught under the old criminal laws, a **Bridging Module** should be developed. This program will provide a smooth transition for students from outdated curricula to the new legal framework.

- **Reorientation Programs:** For students who have completed significant coursework under the old legal codes, reorientation programs should be implemented. These programs will help bridge the gap by familiarizing students with the key differences between the old and new criminal laws. These could be short-term, intensive modules designed to bring students up to speed quickly.
- **Transition Courses:** These courses should cover the major areas of reform introduced

by the BNS, BNSS, and BSA, providing students with the legal knowledge they need to adapt to the new laws. The courses should also be offered as elective modules or supplementary classes to students who have already completed their primary coursework under the old system.

- **Practical Workshops:** To further support student transition, workshops should be conducted to simulate real-life applications of the new criminal laws, giving students practical experience and training on how the new provisions affect court proceedings, legal practice, and investigative processes.

Conclusion

The policy proposals outlined above are crucial to addressing the pressing academic deficiencies in India's legal education system, particularly in light of the recent criminal justice reforms. By launching a Bridge Certification Program, updating the UGC-NET, mandating re-accreditation for faculty, conducting curriculum audits, and providing bridging modules for students, India can ensure that its legal education system stays relevant, rigorous, and in alignment with the evolving demands of the criminal justice system. This reform initiative will help create a legal education infrastructure that produces competent, well-trained legal professionals, equipped to engage with and implement the progressive changes brought about by the new criminal laws.

The sweeping legislative reforms brought about by the enactment of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) have set a transformative course for India's criminal justice system. These changes reflect a shift towards more victim-centric, efficient, and modern legal practices, integrating technology, empowering citizens, and ensuring justice is accessible and fair. However, the success of these reforms hinges not just on the laws themselves but on the ability of the next generation of legal professionals to understand, apply, and interpret them.

While legislative reform has made remarkable strides, **academic reform is equally essential** to ensure that the legal education system aligns with the evolving legal landscape. **Without this synchronization**, the goal of meaningful and sustainable legal reform will remain out of reach. If law educators are not sufficiently trained to teach the latest provisions and concepts from the new criminal codes, they risk imparting outdated knowledge to students. This results in a generational gap where legal education does not align with the legal realities of the country,

putting future legal practitioners at a disadvantage.

The Dangers of a Fractured Legal Ecosystem

A system that continues to teach outdated laws in an era of sweeping reforms risks creating a fractured legal ecosystem. Without the necessary academic reforms to match the legislative updates, educators, students, and the broader legal system are all left adrift in a state of misalignment. When faculty members continue teaching outdated laws, students are often taught principles, doctrines, and case laws that are no longer enforceable in the courtroom. This compromises the integrity of legal education, reduces student competence, and jeopardizes the quality of future legal professionals entering the workforce.

If students graduate without being equipped with up-to-date legal knowledge, they enter the legal profession ill-prepared for the challenges of modern legal practice. They may struggle to succeed in judicial exams, bar exams, or administrative law exams that are based on new laws, even though they were trained under old frameworks. Furthermore, internships, moot courts, and practical legal training become ineffective if they do not reflect the legal realities shaped by the latest legislative reforms.

The Ripple Effect on the Legal System

The impact of an outdated legal education is not confined to the classroom or the law school. It extends far beyond, affecting the **judiciary**, the **bar**, and the **entire legal system**. The judiciary of tomorrow requires judges and lawyers who are well-versed in the current legal environment people who understand not just what the law once was, but what it is today and what it ought to be in the future. This is crucial for maintaining a fair and efficient judicial system that upholds justice in the spirit of modern reforms. If legal professionals are not prepared to handle the evolving complexities of criminal law under the new codes, the legal system itself could experience inefficiencies, inconsistencies, and failures in delivering justice.

Furthermore, as law firms, courts, and other legal institutions begin to apply the new laws in practice, they will require lawyers who are adept at interpreting and utilizing the updated provisions. Failing to provide the proper training in the classroom today means that the legal profession will face significant challenges in the future.

The Need for Living Law in Legal Education

India's legal education system must be reoriented to reflect the **living law** the law as it is now, shaped by current statutes and evolving societal needs. To prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of the legal world, law faculty must be equipped with a deep and up-to-date understanding of criminal law. This involves not merely theoretical knowledge of the law but practical understanding of its application, the nuances of judicial interpretation, and the procedural aspects under the new codes. Faculty who are **well-versed** in the latest legal frameworks are essential in melding the next generation of legal professionals who can engage with the law dynamically and effectively.

In the spirit of **national legal renewal**, it is imperative to re-anchor faculty qualification in criminal law to the living law of India. By equipping law educators with the most up-to-date legal knowledge and teaching methodologies, we ensure that the next generation of lawyers, judges, and legal scholars is ready to uphold the principles of justice and equality as envisioned by India's new criminal justice reforms.

Ultimately, **legal reform requires academic reform**. The two must go hand-in-hand to create a coherent, functional, and forward-thinking legal system. By ensuring that law educators are fully aligned with contemporary legal developments, India can produce competent legal professionals who are capable of upholding justice, protecting citizens, and advancing the nation's legal objectives in an ever-changing world. Only then can we guarantee that the legislative reforms introduced today will have a lasting and positive impact on the country's legal landscape.

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Prasad, 2021

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4. The Impact of Legislative Reforms on Legal Education – Amit Prakash & Neeraj Kumar, 2017

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Journal Articles on Legal Pedagogy:

5. Reforming Legal Education in India: A Critical Analysis – M. S. Shukla, 2020 An analysis of the gaps and challenges in the Indian legal education system, focusing on the outdated syllabus and the disconnect between what is taught and what is required by the legal profession.

6. Global Best Practices in Legal Education – D. H. Smith, 2016

This article explores best practices for adapting legal education systems worldwide to meet evolving legislative and societal changes. It offers valuable insights into how other countries implement faculty re-certification and curriculum updates.

7. Challenges of Implementing Legal Reforms in India – Ravi Verma, 2019 This article delves into the challenges India faces in implementing legal reforms effectively, particularly in the criminal justice system, and the role of legal education in overcoming these barriers.

Reports and White Papers:

8. UGC National Eligibility Test (NET) Guidelines – University Grants Commission, 2021

Official guidelines for the UGC-NET, which would be pertinent to the discussion on updating the NET syllabus and certification processes for law educators.

9. Report of the Committee for Reforming Legal Education in India – Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, 2017

This government report provides recommendations for reforming legal education in India, including updating curricula and improving faculty qualifications to meet the demands of modern law.

10. The Role of Continuing Legal Education (CLE) in Maintaining Professional Standards – International Bar Association, 2018

A report detailing the importance of Continuing Legal Education for practicing lawyers and educators, which can support the idea of mandating faculty re- certification in India.

International Legal Education Resources:

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Government Reports and Legislation:

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This government document will be essential in understanding the details of the new criminal codes and how they will impact legal education.

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Government reports detailing the specifics of these reforms will provide the foundation for discussing their influence on criminal law education in India.

Online Legal Databases and Resources:

16. Indian Kanoon – [IndianKanoon.org](https://www.IndianKanoon.org)

A comprehensive legal database that provides access to the full text of statutes, judicial

decisions, and reforms. It can be a valuable reference when discussing specific provisions of the new criminal codes (BNS, BNSS, BSA).

17. JSTOR and SSRN Legal Research Databases

These platforms host numerous academic papers, law reviews, and articles related to legal education reforms, legislative changes, and criminal justice reforms. They are useful for sourcing additional academic references to support the arguments made in the article.

