



LEGAL EDUCATION AND CIVIC NATION-BUILDING IN NIGERIA, RWANDA AND INDONESIA: A COMPARATIVE REVIEW

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Article Information:

Article Type:
Research Article

Manuscript Received:
13 February 2026

Final Revision Received:
25 April 2026

Published Online:
15 May 2026

Keywords:
Legal Education, Civic
Nation-Building, Nigeria,
Rwanda, Indonesia.

The paper through a comparative review examines the transformative role of legal education in fostering civic development, national integration, and sustainable development pathways in Nigeria, Rwanda, and Indonesia. Adopting a comprehensive literature review methodology, the paper integrates and examines existing academic papers, policy documents, and case studies that shows how quality legal education largely determines the quality of law graduates. The objective is to ascertain how legal education contributes to Civic Nation-Building in Nigeria, Rwanda and Indonesia. The literature review cut across several sources, including national policy documents, scholarly materials, and materials from global legal education, thereby offering in-depth review of the current state and future directions on legal education as a tool for Civic Nation-Building in countries under review. The findings reveal the emergence of innovative policy strategies, highlighting better approaches that will enhance quality legal education. This paper critically evaluates these strategies, considering its relevance in promoting quality legal education and Civic Nation-Building. Drawing upon Nigeria, Rwanda and Indonesian legal education, the paper argues that a strong and robust regulatory framework on legal education in countries under review can foster civic nation-building. Ultimately, these approaches underscore the centrality of legal education in building context-sensitive, ethically grounded frameworks for sustainable societal progress.

Cite this article: Uche Nnawulezi, Jacques Kabano, Safiyyah U. Mohammed, Mugisha J. Vianney, and Septhian E. Adiyatma (2027). Legal Education and Civic Nation-Building in Nigeria, Rwanda and Indonesia: A Comparative Review. The Journal of Sustainable Development, Law and Policy. Vol. 18:1. 95-126. DOI: 10.4314/jsdlp.v18i1.4



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Publisher: Institute for Oil, Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development (OGES Institute), Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti, Nigeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

In every society, legal education contributes significantly to the training of legal practitioners. In this sense, the quality of legal education to a large extent determines the quality of law graduates, guarantees rule of law as well as promotes social justice and equality before the law.¹ The phenomenon of legal education has evolved significantly over the years, influenced primarily by British colonial practices.² According to Fabunmi, the introduction of indirect rule policy in Nigeria greatly impacted on education in Nigeria thereby created disparities in the educational development existing in the Northern and Southern parts of the Country.³

Furthermore, the historical evolution of legal education dates back to the era of colonial rule in 1860.⁴ The concept of formal legal education in this sense is construed as a systematic training of law students at the University level in order to prepare them for admission to the Bar.⁵ In order to achieve the primary objective of formal education in Nigeria, a law school was established in Lagos known as the Nigerian Law School, solely to provide vocational training to legal practitioners as Barristers and Solicitors.⁶

¹ L. SHI, 'Examining the Status and Role of Legal Education from the Perspective of the Objectives of Legal Education,' (2023)15 Region-Educational Research and Reviews, 3: 74.

² B. Wey-Amaewhule, 'Historical Development of Education Law and Implications for Educational Policy and Planning in Nigeria,' (2018) 6 International Journal of Innovative Education Research, 2: 49-53.

³ M. Fabunmi, 'Historical Analysis of Educational Policy Formulation in Nigeria: Implications for Educational Planning and Policy,' (2005) 4 International Journal of African and American Studies, 2: 1-8.

⁴ A. L. Haruna et al. 'Legal Education and Social Change: The Nigerian Experience,' Available at: <[https://www.unimaid.edu.ng/oer/journals-oer/law/private %20 law/vol.2-1/Do%1b.pdf](https://www.unimaid.edu.ng/oer/journals-oer/law/private%20law/vol.2-1/Do%1b.pdf)>

⁵ J. O. Fabunmi and A. O. Popoola, 'Legal Education in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects,' (1990) 23 Law and Politics in Africa, Asia and Latin America, 1: 34.

⁶ B. A. Bukar, 'Legal Education and Challenges of Contemporary Development in Nigeria,' (2014) 20 International Journal of Clinical Legal Education, 2: 593.

Also, legal education has significantly contributed to the socio-economic, scientific and technological growth of Nigeria in several ways.⁷ This paper contributes to the discussion on legal education and Civic Nation-Building in Nigeria, Rwanda and Indonesia, offering insights on the interplay between legal education and national integration.

METHOD

The methodology of the paper is centred on a comprehensive literature review, designed to analyse, and critically evaluates a wide array of published papers, policy documents, and caselaws related to legal education in the context of Civic Nation-Building in Nigeria, Rwanda and Indonesia through a comparative study. This approach is clearly adopted to provide a holistic appreciation of the evolving nature of regulatory frameworks, approaches, and application in response to several challenges experienced in national integration. The paper adopts a thematic approach in its analysis that contributed to a comprehensive understanding of the subject. This methodology, therefore, serves as a basis of the paper.

1.1. Historical and Socio-Political Context of Nigeria

Nigeria's history dates to 13,000 BC, with early inhabitants settling in the region.⁸ Nigeria was amalgamated under British rule in 1914, with the Northern and Southern Protectorates forming modern Nigeria. The country gained independence on October 1, 1960, with Nnamdi Azikiwe as the first President and Tafawa Balewa as the Prime Minister. Nigeria became a republic in 1963, but faced challenges, including a civil war from 1967 to 1970, military rule, and struggles with democracy. The country has continued to evolve, with various periods of military rule and democratic governance.⁹ Nigeria being a diverse country, with a rich cultural heritage and made up of several ethnic regions and languages. Despite its challenges,

⁷ C. B. Berebon, 'The Impact of Educational Laws and Policies on National Development in Nigeria: Challenges and Pathways for Effective Implementation,' (2024) 12 *Journal of Contemporary Dialectical Sociology*, 2.

⁸ A. Vinod, 'History of Nigeria.' Available at: <https://tichr.in/history-of-nigeria> Accessed 17 June 2025.

⁹ *Ibid.*

the country continues to grow and develop, playing a significant role in African affairs.

The incorporation of British legal system in the late 19th century marked the beginning of formal legal education in Nigeria. However, the Supreme Court Ordinance of 1876 regularized the administration of justice in Nigeria and specified qualifications for legal practitioners. As from 1876 to 1914, the Supreme Court Ordinance allowed three classes of persons to practice law: professionally qualified legal practitioners, and those who had passed certain exams. The Supreme Court Ordinance of 1914 repealed the 1876 Ordinance, and enrolment was restricted to qualified lawyers only. In 1960, Nigeria gained independence, and legal education began to evolve to meet the country's specific needs. In 1962, Nigerian Law School (NLS) was established as a professional institution to provide mandatory professional training of lawyers. In this sense, Council of Legal Education (CLE), a regulatory body was set up to oversee the professional training and issuance of qualifying certificates. Hence, the Legal Education Act (LEA) along with Legal Practitioners Act (LPA) was promulgated in 1962 to regulate legal education and practice in the country.¹⁰

1.2. The Structure and Objectives of Legal Education in Nigeria

Legal education in Nigeria is structured into different stages that aspiring lawyers must go through for them to be qualified as Solicitors and Advocates of the Supreme Court of Nigeria. These stages are designed to ensure that individuals are adequately trained in such a manner that he will acquire relevant knowledge and skills for his legal practice. Legal education is at the core of law practice in Nigeria. To achieve the core objectives of continuing legal education in Nigeria, two regulatory bodies are created to supervise and monitor legal studies in Nigeria.¹¹ For example Council of Legal Education (CLE) along with National Universities Commission (NUC).

¹⁰ See Afe Babalola University, "Repositioning Legal Education for National Development." Available at: <<https://www.abuad.edu.ng/repositioning-legal-education-for-national-development/1/>> Accessed 17 June 2025; B. Ikusika, 'Solutions To The Problems of Legal Education in Nigeria,' June 5, 2022. Available at:<<https://ssrm.com/abstract=4161222>> Accessed 17 June, 2025.

¹¹ M. Yahaya, I. M. Jimoh and T.Sani, "Challenges of Legal Education in Nigeria,"(2022)9 *International Journal of Innovative Legal and Political Studies*, 3: 20-26.

Specifically, with regard to Section 10 (1) of the Education (National Minimum Standards and Establishment of Institutions) Act,¹² the power to lay down minimum standards for all universities along with creations of higher institutions of learning in Nigeria as well as accreditation of programmes of study is vested on National Universities Commission (NUC).¹³

Furthermore, National Universities Commission Act, 1974 provides among other things that NUC is obliged to perform advisory function to the Federal and State governments on all issues bordering on University education and general development of Universities in Nigeria. Also, Section 1 of Legal Education (Consolidation, Etc.) Act¹⁴ created CLE and however, vested on it the responsibility of training individuals on legal education to become or practise as legal practitioners in the country. In addition to this instrumental value of legal education, Nigerian Law School (NLS) under the control of CLE provides mandatory professional training that qualifies an individual to be Called to the Nigerian Bar. It is against this background that such a person must be a holder of university degree in law to be admitted to the Nigerian Law School. That said, it should be noted that the Nigerian Law School programme is divided into Bar Part II regarded as preparatory course for individuals who obtained their law degrees outside Nigeria. This suggests that Bar Part II is for all aspirants to the Nigerian Bar.¹⁵

The following classes or categories of legal education exists in Nigeria:

- 1) **Primary Degree in Law (undergraduate legal education):** The primary degree in law is the Bachelor of Laws¹⁶ obtained upon completion of an undergraduate legal/law education in the Faculty of Law of a university. This involves a four to five-year program where students study criminal law, constitutional law, and commercial law. 'LL.B' known in Latin language as Legum Baccalaureus, and the 'LL.'

¹² See Cap E3 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) as updated to 2004.

¹³ Yahaya, Jimoh and Sani (n4).

¹⁴ See Cap L10 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) as updated to 2004.

¹⁵ C. Achinewhu, 'Law Practice and Education in Nigeria: The Importance of Technology'. Available at: <BCES Conference Book> Accessed 2 June 2025.

¹⁶ Abbreviated as LL.B., LLB, or rarely LL.B.

in the degree abbreviation comes from the genitive plural *legum* ('of the law').¹⁷

- 2) **Advanced Academic Degrees in Law:** In Nigeria, at the advanced (post-graduate) level of legal education, the Master of Laws (LL.M) Degree and then Doctor of Laws (PhD) Degree may be obtained. The PhD is the highest degree obtainable in law in Nigeria. In Nigeria, advanced academic degrees in law are obtained usually from the accredited Faculties of Law in the various universities and in some other institution for advanced learning in law, such as the Nigerian Instituted of Advanced Legal Studies.¹⁸
- 3) **Practice or Training Courses:** These are courses undertaken to qualify as a lawyer. An example is the Bar Part II (Bar Final) Course in the NLS upon successful completion of which the Barrister-At-Law (BL) Certificate is awarded to the graduate.¹⁹ The NLS is responsible for the provisions of mandatory professional training to law graduates along with preparing them for the Bar Part I and Bar Part II examinations.²⁰ The duration of the Bar Part II vocational programme consists of two weeks induction (including a week of case studies and mock trials), twenty weeks lectures; one week mock trials; twelve weeks Court and Law Firm attachment (Externship Programme); three weeks debriefing, tagged: 'portfolio assessment and evaluation'; one week private revision; and one week Bar Final examinations.²¹
- 4) **Applied or Specialized Law Accreditation:** Examples of this form of legal education include specialized training on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms (including Arbitration, Mediation,

¹⁷ E. Ngige and S. Udemezue, "Pedagogical Renaissance: A Disquisition on the Changing Face of Legal Education in Contemporary Nigeria". Available at: <<http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5040637>> Accessed 2 June 2025.

¹⁸See NIALS.

¹⁹ Ngige and Udemezue (n10).

²⁰ N. N. Chinwuba, 'Jurisprudence and Legal Education: An Assessment of their Link to Nigeria's Developmental Aspirations' (2014) 40 (2) *Commonwealth Law Bulletin* 269-291.

²¹ O. Onadeko, "The Nigerian Law School and the Improvement of the Quality of New Wigs". Available at: <<https://repository.acu.edu.ng/server/api/core/bitstream/38e763a-8bc7-48bb-70d.f66ae2a/content>> Accessed 2 June 2025.

Conciliation, Reconciliation, Negotiation) and Trademarks amongst others.

- 5) **Continuing Legal Education:** This form of legal education (delivered at seminars, workshops, symposia, conferences, webinars) usually does not lead to any special qualification but is meant to provide practicing lawyers, judges and other members of the legal profession with updates on recent legal developments.

It must be emphasized that the essence or crux of legal education in Nigeria is to train legal practitioners and law teachers. Be that as it may, National Universities Commission (NUC) has maintained that the ‘Philosophy and Fundamental Principles of the LL.B Degree Programme’²² in Nigeria is to ensure the enrichment along with the sustenance of legal education and practice, provisions of legal education within the realm of a dynamic socio-political environment that comprised of national and international development and challenges. In addition, NUC emphasizes that the focus of the Law programme is ‘to create an environment that encourages intellectual rigour, analytical and critical engagement as well as profound ethical standards and to produce law graduates who can compete actively in legal, social, economic and political developments on a global scale.’²³

Adumbrating further on the relevance of Bachelor of Law Degree programme, NUC stated that the essence of the Bachelor Degree in Law programme is to ensure that Law is taught as it exists at any given time, and that every Law student adopts a comparative approach to legal studies bearing in mind that there are many systems of Law (Common Law, Statutory Law, Customary Law and Islamic Law) currently in operation in the country. This is to ensure that students are imbued with a general knowledge and understanding of law; enhance students intellectual ability to apply research, knowledge and analytical skills to solving theoretical and practical legal problems; acquaint students with principles of the judicial process and legal systems, as well as their interaction with socioeconomic

²² See NUC-CCMAS LAW. Available at: <<https://nuc-ccmas.ng/law/>> Accessed 4 June 2025.

²³ Ibid.

frameworks; and provide through training along with orientation, an appreciation of the growing relevance of inter- and multi-disciplinary approach to the solution of complex life problems and the role of law therein.²⁴

In Nigeria, the object of legal education includes inculcation of legal ethics, expertise responsibility and values to intending members of the Nigerian Bar. Additionally, aspiring lawyers must possess good character, as determined by Body of Benchers (BoB), which is the regulatory body for legal practitioners in Nigeria.²⁵ This is to ensure that individuals entering the legal profession uphold the ethical standards and integrity required of legal practitioners. Overall, legal education in Nigeria is aimed at preparing aspiring legal practitioners with requisite learning, skills, along with practical experience for effective practice. Completing the legal education stages and meeting practitioner requirements enables individuals to contribute to justice in society. Thus, the legal education curriculum in Nigeria is designed to nurture a strong sense of personal responsibility and professional ethics in the lawyer to be.²⁶

1.3 Legal Education's Contribution to Civic Development in Nigeria

One of the primary concerns associated with the concept 'civic' is its emphasis on the study of the rights and duties of citizenship as well as how States functions along with forms of government.²⁷ These also comprised of the training and skills acquired that will be useful for the growth of the society, formulation of policies, along with individual's participations in the electoral process. Essentially, the concept of citizenship education comprised of political structure, democratic guidelines, citizenship

²⁴ See NUC-CCMAS LAW. Available at: <<https://nuc-ccmas.ng/law/>> Accessed 4 June 2025.

²⁵ The Role of Legal Education in Nigeria's Jurisprudence' Role of Legal Education in Nigerian Jurisprudence accessed 2 June 2025.

²⁶ N. S. Okogbule and C.T. Brown, 'Appraising the Impact of Helicopter Parenting on Legal Education in Nigeria,' (2023) 17 (2) *Journal of Jurisprudence, International Law and Contemporary Legal Issues* 1-8

²⁷See What Is Civics? & Importance of Civics Education. Available at: <https://www.civiced.org/index.php?page=civic_education_resources> Accessed 2 June 2025.

participations in democratic governance, knowledge of individual's basic rights and obligations in the society. These are issues covered by legal studies in Nigeria.

However, the reason behind an understanding of legal studies in Nigeria is to appreciate the extent it has significantly contributed to civic development and empowerment of legal practitioners who will in turn contributes to continuing legal studies of intending aspirants. In addition, it helps to train scholars with relevant skills and knowledge of law, rights, along with procedural guidelines on advocacy needed in the dispensation of justice. Legal education emphasizes the importance of access to justice, particularly for marginalised communities, and encourages law students in the provisions of legal assistance along with representation of those in need. A key requirement of several Law Faculties in Nigeria is the establishment of law clinics.²⁸ In the law clinics, students are exposed to real life cases that requires them to put their advocacy skills to work and fight for the rights of the marginalised and indigent members of the public. In this way, legal studies performed significant role in encouraging analytical thinking along with problem-solving skills that prepares students to navigate complex legal issues and propose innovative solutions.

Furthermore, legal education contributes significantly to shaping of Nigerian Jurisprudence.²⁹ It influences the development of laws and legal institutions, thereby cultivating a sense of legal responsibility along with ethical conduct among legal professionals.³⁰ Notwithstanding this, while legal studies promotes fairness along with civil liberties, it also educates students about human rights, social justice, and equality, and encourages them to engage in pro bono services and legal aid clinics. In this sense, law students learn about their basic rights, particularly, right to life, dignity, equality, along with freedom of expression contained in the Constitution

²⁸ Also, see N.J. Madubuike-Ekwe, 'Challenges and prospects of legal education in Nigeria: An overview,' (2017) 8 *Nnamdi Azikiwe UJ Int'l L. & Juris* 128.

²⁹ N.N. Chinwuba, 'Jurisprudence and Legal Education: An Assessment of their Link to Nigeria's Developmental Aspirations,' (2014) 40 *Commonwealth Law Bulletin*, 2.

³⁰ A. L. Alabi, 'Jurisprudential Perspectives on the Fountain of Nigerian Legal System,' (2020) 13 *Agora International Journal of Juridical Science*, 2: 15-24.

of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. A core course undertaken at undergraduate level is constitutional law which focuses on citizenship and fundamental human rights. This equips future lawyers with the requisite knowledge of their rights and those of other Nigerians and fires them up to be advocates for the protection and enforcement of the fundamental rights. Legal education supports national development by producing employable law graduates who can contribute to various fields, including law, governance, and entrepreneurship. Aside the contribution of legal education in civic Nation-Building in Nigeria, it has several challenges that impedes its delivery of quality education.³¹

1.4 Legal Education's Role in Promoting National Integration in Nigeria

Legal education has significantly contributed to the advancement of national integration in Nigeria by fostering a sense of citizenship through unification of diverse groups for the purpose of uniform identity that promotes national cohesion, shared values and encourages equal rights of all members.³² The concept of national integration can be viewed from the perspective of the individuals ability to create cohesion and togetherness amongst them in order to foster a sense of national identity through various families, tribes, villages or locations.³³ In other words, national integration is the mental and educational procedures that involves the advancement of sense of unity, cohesion and togetherness in the minds of individuals within a locality.³⁴ In addition, understanding of the Nigerian Constitution, laws and institutions by law students also helps in promoting a sense of national identity and citizenship.³⁵ In this sense, legal educators advances national integration through the use of inclusive

³¹ I. U. Jacob and H. Adeniran, 'Challenges of Legal Education in Nigeria and the Effect on National Development,' (2019) 6 International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, 10: 90-99.

³² Y. L. Silalahi et al. 'Citizenship and its Role in Shaping National Identity,' (2025) 1 Journal Pendidikan Kurikulum Dan Pembelajaran, 2: 56-59.

³³ O.W.M. Ogeh and I.O.Q. Eyong, 'Education for National Integration in Nigeria: A Historical Analysis' (2020) 25 IOSR-Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 2: 1-9.

³⁴ S. P. Ahluwalia and H.P. Basis, *Education Issues and Challenges*, (New Delhi A. P. H Publishing Cooperation, 2010).

³⁵ S. E. Ibanga, *The Concept of National Identity, In Citizenship Education in Nigeria*, Book 2, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, University of Uyo, 2013.

language in teaching.³⁶ This acknowledges and respects diversity by avoiding terms or expressions that may marginalize or excludes certain groups based on gender, race, ethnicity or other identities, and thus creates an enabling environment along with conducive academic learning environment for all scholars, regardless of their backgrounds which the students practice in the wider society.³⁷

1.5. New Pathways for Sustainable Development through Legal Education in Nigeria

Legal education contributes to sustainable development through the adoption of a multi-disciplinary approach in the teaching and learning of law. Ikpeze suggests that cross-disciplinary approach to learning involves combinations of more than one programmes of studies as an integral programme.³⁸ For example, this is also found in research collaborations. This arose from creations of something new through crossing traditional boundaries and thinking about new concepts that will bring change of old ideas. Also, it serves as a multi-dimensional approach to learning process or problem-solving strategies applicable to educational training that adopts new strategies along with insights into several other created programmes.³⁹ In this sense, it may be argued that an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning comprised of researchers, scholars along with lecturers who have the skills and knowledge capable of achieving set out goals through the incorporation and integration of diverse academic curriculum, proficiencies and innovations along with different perceptions pursuant to collective interest aimed at achieving corporate objectives.⁴⁰ Arguably, if this type of approach is imbibed or integrated

³⁶ A. Balan, "Cultural Diversity and Widening Participation: Enhancement of Teaching and Feedback Practices for Law Students from a Diverse Range of Backgrounds," (2024)58*The Law Teacher*, 3: 327-349.

³⁷ N. A. Herma, 'An Analytical Study on Legal Education In the Context of National Education Policy,' (2021) 6 *Research Ambition: An International Multidisciplinary e-Journal*, 3: 1-3.

³⁸ I.Ogugua, "Legal Education in the 21st Century Nigeria: Need for Diversity in Content Paradigm," (2015)39 *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization*. Available at:<<https://www.iiste.org/journals/index.php/JLPL/article/viewfile/2446425040>> Accessed 13 June 2025.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

into legal education, it will provide an enabling environment for the training of legal practitioners who will be better placed tomorrow as officers in the temple of justice, and as well as promoters of rule of law in the society.

Technological advancement especially in form of ICT has impacted on human activities generally and no sphere is left out including legal education and practice. The Black's Law Dictionary⁴¹ defined technology as emerging innovations with adaptive strategies bordering on deep insights on field of study or methodology, while Britannica online dictionary defines it as the application of empirical understanding in the explanation of factual situations bordering on existential issues or may be construed as efforts made towards ecological restoration.⁴² It should be noted that this common use of applied sciences on contemporary appliances such as processors, detectors; telephones, motor vehicles, internet services as it particularly applies to legal practice and education.⁴³ Technology has had a monumental impact on regulatory regimes in Nigeria, especially in areas of computer-aided legal research and instructions arising from the emergence of online legal research websites like: LexisNexis, Legal Pedia, Nigeria Weekly Legal Online Reports and Law Pavilion amongst others. Arguably, these computer-aided online legal sites have to a large extent reduced the challenges faced by legal researchers in sourcing for relevant information as well as easy access to information online.⁴⁴ Hence, in the Nigerian context relevant stakeholders including judges, magistrates, legal practitioners and law students are beneficiaries of the online site engines through quick access to online information that have aided their legal research and improved their access to (legal) information. It may be stated that these sites facilitate legal research and provides reliable and dependable information relevant to case management

⁴¹ B.A.Garner, *Black's Law Dictionary* 10th edition (Westside Publishing Co:) p.1692.

⁴² B. A. Garner *Black's Law Dictionary* 10th edition (Westside Publishing Co:) p1692.

⁴³ S. P.Okangla, "The Impact of Technology on Legal Practice in Nigeria" Available at:<<https://papers.ssrn.com>> Accessed 9 June 2025.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

systems to legal practitioners, along with court system and administration.⁴⁵

In Nigeria, reliance on technology is have some impact on the legal education and profession in the country. For example, many law firms in the country have deployed technology to enhance their day-to-day legal practice. Furthermore, for law students in Nigeria, technology is also being applied to enhance active learning techniques including group discussions, case studies, problem-solving exercises and role-plays. In this sense, it should be noted that the above offers opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world contexts, bridge cultural differences through collaborative learning experiences and build confidence in expressing their ideas and opinions.⁴⁶ Traditional seminar formats which may pose challenges for some students, such as cultural aversions to confrontation or discomfort with speaking up in large groups, adapting seminar activities to be more inclusive can create a supportive learning environment where all students feel empowered to participate and contribute.⁴⁷

2. PERSPECTIVES FROM RWANDA

Rwandan legal education is grounded in the Constitution, where it is provided that every Rwandan has the duty to respect the Constitution and other laws of the Country to further reinforce civic responsibility and shared values by nurturing informed citizens who can contribute to legal order, social cohesion and lasting National reconciliation.⁴⁸ In this sense, it reflects the urge to know those laws before respecting them and engages the State to enact and make laws being known to its citizen in compliance with the principle '*Ignorantia juris non excusat*'⁴⁹ to ensure that individuals

⁴⁵ I. Olubiye et al. Role of Technology in the Advancement of Legal Education and Practice in Nigeria, Nigerian Association of Law Teachers (NALT) Conference, Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria, June, 2015.

⁴⁶ A. Balan, "Cultural Diversity and Widening Participation: Enhancement of Teaching and Feedback Practices for Law Students from a Diverse Range of Backgrounds," (2024)58*The Law Teacher*,3: 327-349.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ See Article 49 of Rwandan Constitution, 2003. Revised in 2023.

⁴⁹ Black's Law Dictionary, 5th Ed. (West Publishing,1979), 672.

cannot evade legal responsibility by claiming ignorance of the law as an excuse or suffer from the weight of laws that they could have observed before undergoing its consequences. Integrating this principle, legal education in Rwanda not only aims to train professionals who legislate laws and get them enforced, but also who can use the acquired legal knowledge to raise citizen awareness with the purpose to nurture civic development and national integration.

Following the hardships that Rwanda underwent through its history, which resulted into the nightmare of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi,⁵⁰ where over one million lives were lost and left the country devastated. In Rwanda, legal education has emerged as a major pillar on which every aspect of national life rotates, *inter alia* the civic development and national integration, in the sense that it nurtured civic consciousness and fostered national unity and identity as pivotal concerns to deal with. To achieve this, Rwanda implemented a dual-track legal education and justice approach by formally preparing legal professionals through a specialized training enabling them to drive legal reform, prosecute perpetrators, and foster national awareness; and by informally adopting the community-centred systems such as Gacaca Courts which engaged citizens in participatory justice sessions and teaching them core legal principles. These forums equipped ordinary Rwandans with legal knowledge, strengthened civic engagement, and reinforced grassroots rule of law. Overall, blending institutional reform with traditional community practices, Rwanda's legal education strategy has been crucial in promoting civic development and national integration in the aftermath of genocide.

2.2. Historical and Socio-Political Context of Rwanda

The current Legal education in Rwanda has evolved considerably from the country's pre-colonial traditions and the profound impacts of colonial rule's experience. Understanding this evolution requires not only an examination of both historical and socio-political contexts but also considering the four historical stages namely pre-colonial, colonial, post-

⁵⁰ See UN. General Assembly's Draft Decision A/72/L.31 of December 17th, 2017.

colonial as well as the post-genocide period through which the Rwandan legal education evolved.

It must be emphasized that prior to the colonial administration, Rwanda possessed a robust legal system rooted in indigenous practices headed by the King, who had absolute power to exercise over his subjects.⁵¹ During that period, the legal education was informal, transmitted orally through elders and community leaders. That said, it may be argued that, though, this regulatory framework appears not to be perfect but was arranged in such a manner that it provided solid home-grown juridical order which forms the basis of existence of the Rwandan Kingdom. Bearing this in mind, it should be noted that this system promoted a sense of unity and collective responsibility amongst Rwandans.⁵²

During the colonial rule, Rwanda's indigenous judicial system was systematically dismantled whereby Germans imposed centralized authority tending to weaken customary legal mechanisms; followed by Belgians who replaced traditional practice with western-style Court that was characterized by the favouritism and denying true equality before the law.⁵³ This authoritarian, two-tiered legal framework privileging written colonial law while marginalizing customary governance, thereby undermining social unity and institutional trust. Far from delivering a so-called civilized legal order, colonial rule imposed divisive structures that eroded Rwanda's traditional judicial foundations and obstructed fair treatment under Law.⁵⁴

⁵¹ S. Kambanda, et al. 'Understanding Constitutional Culture in Rwanda through Social Norms and Practices from the Monarchy to the Republic,' (2025) 2 *African Quarterly Social Science Review*, 2 :173-182.

⁵² J.M. Kamatali, *Introduction to Rwandan Law* (1st ed.) 2020 Routledge. Available at: <<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003004721>> Accessed 9 June 2025.

⁵³ A. Binagwaho and R. Freeman, 'Decolonization of the Legal Code: The End of Colonial Laws in Rwanda and a Model for Other Post-Colonial Societies', (2021)62 *Harvard International Law Journal*, 48

⁵⁴ S. M. Mitchell, *Reframing Legalization, Compliance and Rule by Law as Law as Practice: The Example of Authoritarian Rule, the 1994 Genocide and the Pursuit of National Unity in Rwanda*. *Hum Rights Rev* (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12142-025-00740-3/> Accessed 9 June 2025.

During the post-independence period, the first and second Republic tried to fill the gap that colonialists left by keeping, copying and applying colonial laws, but failed due to the fact that those laws had no connection with Rwandan reality, and this approach led to dictatorship and failed rule of law that was one of the reasons for plunging Rwanda into the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi. In essence, Rwanda's journey through pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods has immensely influenced its legal education system. From indigenous practices emphasizing community and restorative justice to colonial disruptions that entrenched divisions, and finally to contemporary reforms promoting unity and human rights, Rwanda's legal education reflects its resilience and commitment to building a just and inclusive society.⁵⁵

Drawing from the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, which devastated Rwanda's legal infrastructure with many legal professionals killed, imprisoned, and exiled, Rwanda undertook extensive reforms in its legal education system to address the profound challenges by rebuilding the judiciary and legal education institutions with the mandates of training new generation of lawyers well equipped to handle Country's complex post-genocide legal needs such as restoring legal order along with ensuring responsibility for genocidal-related crimes.⁵⁶ In essence, the post-genocidal era in Rwanda marked a transformative period for legal education, characterized by comprehensive reforms aimed at rebuilding the legal system, promoting justice, and fostering national reconciliation.⁵⁷ Through the integration of traditional justice mechanisms such as Gacaca Courts and Abunzi Committees, curriculum reforms, technological advancements, and gender-inclusive policies, Rwanda's legal education system has played an indispensable role in the country's recovery and ongoing development.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ E. Mutabazi, *Rwanda's Legal System and Legal Materials*, March/April 2025.

⁵⁶ N. Johnson and D. Hill, 'Charting the Role of Professional Legal Education in Developing and Strengthening the Justice Sector in Post-Genocide Rwanda', (2012) 46 *The Law Teacher*, 2: 190-196.

⁵⁷ R. Ouafaa, 'The Post Genocide Reconciliation in Rwanda: Erasing Ethnicity and Building Citizenship,' (2021)12 *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies*, 1: 23-29.

⁵⁸ D. Brian, 'A Survey of Law Libraries in Rwanda', (2015-9)107 *Law Library Journal*, 2.

2.3. Structure and Objectives of Legal Education in Rwanda

Legal education's structure is characterized by a comprehensive framework encompassing both formal and informal system. Apart from cultivating competent legal practitioners, legal training appears to be the foundation upon which individuals became aware of, acquires relevant skills along with experience in understanding their basic rights and obligations needed to deal with issues as well as accessing justice, with sole aim of preserving along with upholding legal order.⁵⁹

From the perspective of formal legal education, the latter is basically structured at the undergraduate and Master levels, where several universities offer it. Institutions such as the University of Rwanda's College of Arts and Social Sciences, Kigali Independent University (ULK); University of Kigali (UoK); INES Ruhengeri; University of Lay Adventist (UNILAK); and Mount Kigali University (MKU) provide programmes that are designed to equip scholars with robust background in legal theory along with practical experience, preparing them for various roles within the legal system. To this end, a law graduate student should be conversant with the basic principles of professional ethics within their jurisdictions, along with the underlying principles of justice and legal order.⁶⁰

In a similar vein, the Institute of Legal Practice and Development (ILPD) responsible for Postgraduate programmes was established in 2008 to enhance practical skills of legal professionals, offering Diplomas in Legal Practice, Diploma in Child Justice and Legislative Drafting.⁶¹ These programmes are tailored to provide practical legal skills in-service advocates, prosecutors, judges, and fresh law graduates with the necessary

⁵⁹ L. S. Wintersteiger, *Effectiveness of Public Legal Education Initiatives: A Literature Review*, Legal Services Board, United Kingdom February, 2021. Available at: <<https://coillink.org/20.500.1252/t371g9>> Accessed 12 July 2025.

⁶⁰ See Singapore Declaration on Global Standards and Outcomes of a Legal Education, 2013, M. E. J. B, Williamson, 'Global Standards and Outcomes of a Legal Education: How Rubrics Can Help to Deliver Objectivity, Transparency, Verifiability and Consistency,' (2016) 51 *The Law Teacher*, 3: 287-311.

⁶¹ H. Xanthaki, 'Legislative Techniques in Rwanda: Present and Future,' (2013) 15 *European Journal of Law Reform*, 3: 95-176.

competencies to navigate the complexities of legal procedures and legislative processes effectively.⁶²

In informal legal education programs, all Legal Aid providers, to the extent that their resources and area of operations permit, offer citizens free legal guidance and education about their rights and responsibilities except in cases where legislation or regulations explicitly set different requirements to fulfil legal obligations. This public legal outreach is delivered through a variety of channels, including community events like meetings, workshops, and conferences, as well as broadcasts on radio and television, and via online platforms and social media.⁶³

Regarding legal education's objectives, Rwanda's legal education should meet national priorities and play its role to guarantee the rule of law with the aim to strengthen justice capacity by training judges, lawyers, prosecutors, and mediators to professionalize the judiciary and enforce law reforms. Again, it promotes universal access to legal knowledge, integrating civic and legal literacy into schools and community programs to empower citizens as well as nurturing a culture of ethical citizenship, balancing rights and duties to encourage and improve social cohesion, good governance, and sustainable national development.⁶⁴

2.4. Legal Education's Contribution to Civic Development

Legal education in Rwanda keeps playing a remarkable and fruitful role in boosting civic development through Itorero programmes which aims at promoting national unity, cultural values, and reconciliation.⁶⁵ This programme is rooted in the pre-colonial traditions where it was conceived as a cultural school for youth, then through its evolution, it expanded and became a comprehensive civic education programme targeting various segments of the population including students, civil servants, community leaders, as well as private sector. Participants are engaged in activities that emphasize Rwandan history, language, and societal values, aiming to

⁶² S. Rugege, 'Some Aspects of Judicial Reform in Rwanda from 2004 to 2019,' (2020)1 Rwanda Law Journal, 1.

⁶³ See National Legal Aid Policy, October, 2014, p. 24.

⁶⁴ See Rwanda Judiciary Strategic Plan, (2018-2024).

⁶⁵ R. Bailey, *Teaching Citizenship Values and Attitudes Throughout the Curriculum*, 1998.

cultivate responsible citizenship and leadership. The programme's decentralized approach ensures that civic education is accessible across all regions, reinforcing its impact on national cohesion.⁶⁶

Through various means such as legal education, awareness campaigns within the communities, legal advice, and representation, Legal Aid Forum (LAF) aims to promote access to justice for marginalized people, ensuring equal justice for all.⁶⁷ These community-based legal education programs often involve workshops, seminars, and public discussions facilitated by legal professionals. They cover a range of topics, including understanding legal procedures, navigating the justice system, and recognizing one's rights under the law.

In essence, the engagement of legal professionals in community service and awareness campaigns is a cornerstone of Rwanda's efforts to enhance civic participation and legal literacy. By bringing legal knowledge to the grassroots level, these initiatives not only empower individuals but also strengthen the overall fabric of society. Legal professionals engage in community service and awareness campaigns, educating citizens about their rights and responsibilities, thereby enhancing civic participation and legal literacy.⁶⁸

2.5. Legal Education's Role in National Integration

In Rwanda, legal education serves as a cornerstone sustaining the pillars of national integration by enhancing a legal culture grounded in equality and impartiality. Conducted through a comprehensive training and ethical grounding, it prepares legal professionals to uphold justice in a manner that reinforces public trust and unites diverse communities under the rule of law. By educating individuals about laws that protect against discrimination and uphold equal rights, legal education empowers citizens to understand and assert their rights, thereby contributing to a more inclusive society. Therefore, the integration of such educational

⁶⁶ W. Gierszewska and V. Sinining, 'Civic Education in Rwanda: The Impact of the Itorero Program,' (2023)4 *Edukacja Miedzykulturowa*, 23. DOI:10.15804/em.2023.04.03

⁶⁷ Available at: <https://www.legalaidrwanda.org/legal_empowerment.php/>. Accessed June 13, 2025.

⁶⁸ See Note 17.

approaches is particularly significant given the country's history and ongoing efforts toward national reconciliation. By equipping legal professionals with the knowledge and skills to uphold anti-discrimination laws and promote equality, legal education contributes to healing past divisions and building a cohesive national identity.⁶⁹

Therefore, it is in this very perspective that Rwanda's legal education embraced traditional justice mechanisms such as Gacaca Courts and Abunzi Committees by integrating them into academic curricula to emphasize restorative justice and community-based conflict resolution. The Gacaca Courts⁷⁰, established in 2001, regarded as community-based justice system was created as measures capable of addressing increasing number of cases arising from 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Rooted in traditional practices, these courts aimed to expedite legal proceedings, establish the truth about the genocide, and promote reconciliation among Rwandans.⁷¹ Similarly, the Abunzi mediators are local committees mandated to resolve civil and minor criminal disputes through mediation before such cases reach formal Courts. Established under Organic Law No. 31/2006, the Abunzi system draws from Rwanda's traditional conflict resolution methods, emphasizing dialogue and consensus-building. This approach not only alleviates the burden on formal judicial institutions but also reinforces community cohesion and access to justice at the grassroots level.

2.6. New Pathways for Sustainable Development through Legal Education

Legal education in Rwanda is emerging as a transformative driving force for sustainable development, civic engagement, and national integration. Institutions like Mount Kigali University are pioneering modern legal curricula that emphasize practical skills through moot courts, legal clinics,

⁶⁹See National Policy of Unity and Reconciliation, 2020.

⁷⁰ See Organic Law no. 40/2000 of 26/01/2001 setting up Gacaca Jurisdiction and organizing Prosecutions for offences constituting the Crime of genocide or Crime against humanity committed between October 1, 1990, and Decembre 31, 1994.

⁷¹ Chakravarty, Anuradha, Gacaca Courts in Rwanda: Explaining Divisions within the Human Rights Community (2006). Yale Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2006, Available at SSRN: [https://ssrn.com/abstract=2380954/](https://ssrn.com/abstract=2380954) Retrieved on 12/06/2025

and cross-border exchanges with East African universities. This hands-on approach equips students to address contemporary legal challenges, including cybercrime and e-commerce disputes.⁷²

The integration of civic education programmes such as Itorero and other pertinent initiatives instil shared values, promote reconciliation, and cultivate a collective Rwandan identity. This grassroots approach enhances civic participation and strengthens the rule of law. Moreover, legal education aligns with Rwanda's Vision 2050, which aspires to elevate the nation to upper-middle-income status by 2035. By producing legal professionals who are adept in both civil and common law traditions, Rwanda is positioning itself as a hub for regional legal expertise, thereby attracting investment and promoting sustainable economic growth.⁷³

In essence, Rwanda's integrated strategy anchored in comprehensive legal education, civic engagement, and robust decentralized governance creates a solid foundation for sustainable development and national cohesion. By training judges, lawyers, prosecutors, mediators, and equipping local officials through decentralization, the country strengthens its justice sector and ensures rule of law at all levels. Simultaneously, civic initiatives such as *Umuganda*, Itorero, and community legal literacy programs empower citizens, foster ethical responsibilities, and build social capital. Together, these efforts nurture unity, accountability, and shared development goals as core components of Rwanda's journey toward cohesive, sustainable progress.⁷⁴

Legal education in Rwanda has undergone significant transformation, emerging as a pivotal force in promoting civic development and national integration. Through structured academic programs and culturally rooted initiatives, it fosters unity, justice, and sustainable development. Institutions like the Institute of Legal Practice and Development (ILPD) provide vocational training for legal professionals, enhancing the quality

⁷² Hervine Ishimwe, Mount Kigali launches School of Law; A New Era in Legal education, in Mount Kigali University Magazine, published on March 1st, 2025.

⁷³ See National Strategy for Transformation (NST2), 2024-2029.

⁷⁴ See National Decentralisation Policy, May, 2000.

of legal services. Home-grown programs such as ‘*Itorero ry’Igihugu*’, and ‘*Ndi Umunyarwanda*’ programmes instil civic values, reconciliation, and national identity among participants, contributing to social cohesion. These initiatives are integral to Rwanda's broader efforts in post-genocide recovery and nation-building.⁷⁵

The integration of technology into legal education and practice further strengthens Rwanda's legal system. The adoption of the Integrated Electronic Case Management System (IECMS) streamlines judicial processes, improving efficiency and accessibility. This digital advancement aligns with Rwanda's Vision 2020 and Vision 2050 goals, aiming to transform the country into a knowledge-based economy. Overall, continued investment in legal education, embracing innovation, and aligning with national development objectives are essential for further strengthening Rwanda's legal framework and societal cohesion. By nurturing a well-informed and ethically grounded legal community, Rwanda is poised to uphold justice, unity, and sustainable progress.⁷⁶

3. PERSPECTIVES FROM INDONESIA

3.1 Historical and Socio-Political Context of Legal Education in Indonesia

Legal education in Indonesia exemplified the country's resolve in reshaping its old-fashioned legal training. During Indonesia's independence era, the legal heritage from Dutch colonial rule remained in used because of the need for an operational along with well-designed regulatory mechanisms. However, a major challenge arose from the translation of European legal principles to Indonesian vernacular along with inculcating them into a dynamic archipelagic tradition.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ See Itorero Strategic Plan, 2009-2012.

⁷⁶ Rwandan Minister of Justice Dr. UGIRASHEBUJA Emmanuel's Remarks during The African Law and Tech Network Summit held in Kigali on March 13, 2024. Available at: <https://www.minijust.gov.rw/news-detail/technology-plays-a-big-role-in-enhancing-access-to-justice/>

⁷⁷ Also, see Robert Cribb, ‘Legal pluralism and criminal law in the Dutch colonial order’ (2010) 90 *Indonesia* 47-66; Nadirsyah Hosen Jeremy J. Kingsley, and Tim Lindsey, ‘Lost in

It should be noted that at the period of representative democracy under President Soekarno, perspectives of law were transformed significantly.⁷⁸ In this sense, law was construed as a tool for social along with political struggle, and not a mere normative rule. With this transformative agenda, the concept of legal training aimed at training scholars in law programmes who will upon their graduation contributes to the sustainable development of the country. Nevertheless, several Faculties of Law criticized unnecessary policies that are counterproductive to best practices in legal training along with critical thinking skills.

Similarly, it should be noted that in this contemporary period, legal training is well positioned primarily as an instrument used to achieved good governance along with promotion of financial growth and stability. Naturally, considering the historical nature of Indonesia, legal training tends to be focused on training professionals with the relevant skills capable of operating within the state's free enterprise or market economy. Indeed, this strategy created gaps, as it lacks analytical reflections on fair treatments, power structures or equal rights. Consequently, legal training was limited to a mere managerial duties and played a minimal role as an agent of social change.⁷⁹ However, it should be noted that Indonesia's legal system began as a pluralistic framework, combining aspects of Civil Law along with Continental European Legal Traditions, which were made part of the legal system in order to fill the notable gaps found in the existing regulatory framework. Legal training in Indonesia started right from the period of colonization of Indonesia by the Dutch through the creations of the *Rechtsschool* in 1909. Again, it needs to be emphasized that this

translation: Indonesian language requirements and the validity of contracts' (2021) 40 (3) *The University of Queensland Law Journal* 531-553.

⁷⁸ Also, see Ratih Adiputri, 'The empowerment of parliament in the transition from an authoritarian to a democratic regime: Indonesian experiences and problems' (2018) 38 (1) *Parliaments, Estates and Representation* 49-62.

⁷⁹ A. Bedner and J. Vel, 'Legal Education in Indonesia,' (2021)1 *Indonesian Journal of Socio-Legal Studies*, 1: 8, 9 and 17, <https://doi.org/10.54828/ijls.2021v1n1.6>

institution was designed to train indigenous legal professionals to serve the colonial administration.⁸⁰

The *Rechtsschool*, initially named *Opleidingsschool voor de Inlandsche Rechtskundigen*, operated for about 18 years until 1928, graduating 189 Indonesian legal experts.⁸¹ Many graduates continued their studies at Leiden University in the Netherlands or at the *Rechtshogeschool* (Higher Law School) established in 1924 in Batavia (now Jakarta), that provided a comprehensive syllabus containing Civil Law, Criminal Law; Constitutional Law; Customary Law, along with Legal Philosophy. In addition to the concerns over legal education in Indonesia, it should be noted that the foremost Law-related education in Indonesia integrated Western jurisprudence with local heritage, inspired by intellectuals such as Cornelis van Vollenhoven.⁸²

With this development, the emergence of legal training in Indonesia traditionally emphasized on theoretical approach which produces scholars with strong theoretical knowledge but often lacks practical skills along with training. Therefore, it is important to clearly distinguish and manage the career paths of legal educators and practitioners. Prospective legal educators typically pursue Master's and Doctoral Studies at the end becomes lecturers and researchers focused on legal science development, research methodology, and curriculum innovation. Meanwhile, prospective lawyers undertake professional education designed to equip them technically and ethically for direct societal engagements.

⁸⁰ Luther Lie, '100 Tahun Pendidikan Hukum Indonesia,' Hukum Online, October 24, 2024, <https://www.hukumonline.com/berita/a/100-tahun-pendidikan-hukum-indonesia-lt67192f5e0f389/?page=all>. Accessed June 16, 2025.

⁸¹ Also, see A. Massier, *The voice of the law in transition: Indonesian jurists and their languages, 1915-2000* (Vol. 235) Brill 2008.

⁸² Generally, see Adriaan Bedner and Jacqueline Vel. 'Legal education in Indonesia' (2021) 1 (1) *The Indonesian Journal of Socio-Legal Studies* 6; Irianto, Sulistyowati. 'Legal education for the future of Indonesia: A critical assessment' (2021) 1 (1) *The Indonesian Journal of Socio-Legal Studies* 1.

3.2 Structure and Objectives of Legal Education in Indonesia

At the undergraduate level (Strata 1 or S1), graduates of law study programs receive the degree of Sarjana Hukum (S.H.) after completing approximately four years of study and fulfilling academic requirements such as completing a thesis and earning the prescribed number of semester credits. In this sense, the Sarjana Hukum degree officially replaced the Dutch title ‘Meester in de Rechten’ based on Presidential Decree No. 265 of 1962. At the postgraduate level (Strata 2 or S2), graduates of law master’s programs are awarded the degree of Magister Ilmu Hukum (M.H.), typically obtained after one to two years of study focused on advanced legal expertise and research. Subsequently, at the doctoral level (Strata 3 or S3), the degree of Doktor Hukum (Dr.H. or Dr.(Hk.)) is granted to those who have completed comprehensive doctoral research in the field of law. In addition, several universities in Indonesia offer dual-degree programs. For example, the Faculty of Law at Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII) and Universitas Indonesia (UI) collaborate with foreign universities such as Youngsan University in South Korea and the University of Coventry in the United Kingdom. These programmes enable students to earn both the Sarjana Hukum (S.H.) degree and a Bachelor of Law (LL.B.) degree from the partner foreign universities.

Considering the above developments, two notable specialized legal training emerged which qualifies one either as an Advocate or a Notary. That said, upon acquisition of Sarjana Hukum degree, prospective advocates must undergo Special Advocate Professional Education (Pendidikan Khusus Profesi Advokat or PKPA) organized by advocate organizations such as PERADI, pass the Advocate Professional Examination (Ujian Profesi Advokat or UPA), complete a minimum of two consecutive years of internship at a law office, and take the advocate oath at the High Court. Advocates play a vital role in the judicial system as defenders of citizens’ legal rights, both inside and outside the courtroom, and are bound by a professional code of ethics.⁸³

⁸³ Tedy Subrata, ‘Special Education Is Required for Individuals Pursuing A Career as An Advocate, As Stated In Article 3, Paragraph (1), Letter F of The Republic of Indonesia Law Number 18 of 2003, Which Pertains to Advocates,’ *Jurnal Legisci* 2, no. 1 (2024): 63–76; Batahan Fransciskus Sihombing, ‘Indonesian Law: Development and Renewal,’ *Beijing Law Review* 15, no. 01 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.4236/blr.2024.151001>.

Furthermore, to be recognized as a Notary, one must pursue Masters of Notarial Law (Magister Kenotariatan or M.Kn.) after earning a Sarjana Hukum degree. Upon graduation from the Notarial Master's programme, such candidates should complete minimum of twenty-four months of internship training at Notary Office, either at their own discretions or upon recommendations from a Notary Organization. Additionally, candidates should be able to comply with the policy guidelines bordering on age along with legal status, and thereafter, completes the appointment and inaugurations procedures to be conducted by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights.⁸⁴ Notaries performed a significant functions in citizen's rights law, particularly as regards to drawing up of genuine agreement that represents legitimate foundations for several deals along with undertakings.

3.3 Contribution of Legal Education to Citizenship Development

Legal education is fundamental to the development of citizenship based on supremacy of law and social justice. Legal education is not merely aimed at producing technically competent legal professionals but must also serve as a strategic component in shaping citizens who are legally aware, responsive along with having the capacity of applying the legislations as tools for achieving fundamental justice in human society. Firstly, legal education helps raise public legal awareness by providing a deep understanding of the constitution, judicial system, human rights, and other legal norms. With this knowledge, citizens can avoid legal violations and act in accordance with the values of justice, thereby fostering a law-abiding society that respects the applicable legal processes.⁸⁵ Citizenship education integrated with legal education also strengthens citizens' attitudes and skills in responsibly exercising their rights and obligations. Secondly, an ideal legal education curriculum not only teaches normative

⁸⁴ Fitria Rosalinda dan Aminah Aminah, 'Akibat Hukum Pelanggaran Kewajiban Calon Notaris Magang: Kajian Peraturan Perundang-undangan,' *SIGN Jurnal Hukum* 5, no. 1 (2023): 126–40; lihat Pasal 2 dan Paal 3 Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 30 Tahun 2004 tentang Jabatan Notaris sebagaimana telah diubah dengan Undang-Undang Nomor 2 Tahun 2014.

⁸⁵ Anisaul Nurul Hidayati and Esha Riska Qur'ani, 'Peran Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan Dalam Mewujudkan Penegakan Hukum Di Indonesia,' *Indigenous Knowledge* 2, no. 1 (n.d.): 21–29.

and technical aspects but also develops critical thinking and professional ethics. Law students are educated to understand the philosophy of law, principles of justice, and how law can be applied fairly in various aspects of life. This equips them to become defenders of justice who can analyse cases and resolve conflicts with high integrity, while also preparing graduates to play roles at both national and global levels.⁸⁶

Thirdly, legal education should be seen as an evolving phenomenon that addresses problems of expansions, advancement in technology, along with accelerated social change. Globalization demands a curriculum relevant to advances in science and technology, as well as contemporary skills such as analytical thinking, collaboration, and adaptability to social change. The digitalization of education is also an important part of expanding access and improving the quality of legal education, thereby creating equitable learning opportunities and supporting inclusive citizenship development,⁸⁷ and, fourthly, strong and well-conceptualized legal education will strengthen the national legal system. A responsive and adaptive legal system that meets societal needs can drive positive social change, such as the elimination of discrimination and increased access to justice. Thus, legal education directly contributes to building a harmonious, orderly, and just society, which are the hallmark characteristics of the rule of law and good citizenship.⁸⁸

3.4 Role of Legal Education in National Integration

Legal education performs fundamental functions in the process of national integration in Indonesia. Through legal education, the younger generation is equipped with deep insights on the values of Pancasila, the constitution, along with the diverse legal procedures present in the country, such as customary law, religious law, and national law. With this knowledge, law graduates are expected to serve as bridges connecting various social groups

⁸⁶ 'Mencetak Generasi Pembela Keadilan: Peran Prodi Hukum 1,' accessed June 29, 2025, <https://hukum.umsida.ac.id/mencetak-generasi-pembela-keadilan-peran-hukum/>.

⁸⁷ Diah Rusmala Dewi, 'Pengembangan Kurikulum Di Indonesia Dalam Menghadapi Tuntutan Abad Ke-21,' *As-Salam: Jurnal Studi Hukum Islam & Pendidikan* 8, no. 1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.51226/assalam.v8i1.123>.

⁸⁸ Muhammad Rafli Aprideano and Elisatris Gultom, 'Pengaruh Sistem Hukum Dalam Dinamika Sosial Kehidupan Masyarakat,' *Gudang Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu* 2 (2024): 22–26.

and to promote social justice and the supremacy of law above particular group interests. Moreover, legal education instils critical thinking skills, the ability to engage in discussions, and sensitivity to social and cultural differences. This is essential so that law graduates do not merely become enforcers of rules but also agents of change and guardians of national unity amidst potential conflicts or disintegration. Through a culture of literacy, discussion, and academic writing fostered within legal education, students are encouraged to understand and respect differences and to seek solutions to national issues through legal and constitutional means. Thus, legal education not only produces competent legal professionals but also citizens with a high legal awareness, ready to safeguard the unity and peace of multicultural Indonesia.

3.5 New Path Towards Sustainable Development Through Legal Education

Legal education in Indonesia currently faces significant challenges, particularly in cultivating a strong intellectual culture among law students. A literacy crisis, a lack of reading habits, and weak critical thinking skills are major obstacles in producing graduates capable of addressing contemporary challenges, including the realization of sustainable development. Many law students are not accustomed to deep reading, critical discussion, or producing quality academic writing. This results in a legal education system that tends to be doctrinal and rigid, focusing primarily on memorizing rules without connecting the law to social, environmental, and evolving community needs. In fact, sustainable development demands human resources who not only understand the law textually but are also capable of innovative, critical, and adaptive thinking in the face of change. Legal education should be a space for fostering a culture of literacy, intellectual discourse, and advocacy skills that prioritize the interests of the wider community and environmental sustainability.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ Also see Katie Woolaston et al, 'Embedding sustainability in law curricula: a mindset shift for future lawyers' (2025) *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*; Tony G. Puthucherril et al. 'Integrating the sustainable development goals into India's legal education landscape: The what, why and how of a reform paradigm' (2025) 12 (1) *Asian Journal of Legal Education* 40-60

The new path that must be taken involves reforming the curriculum and the legal education ecosystem to emphasize habitual reading, thinking, and writing in depth. Students should be encouraged not only to study theory and doctrine but also to analyse real cases, conduct research, and engage in community service oriented towards concrete solutions for social and environmental problems.⁹⁰

This transformation in legal education can begin by cultivating the habit of reading extensive legal literature, integrating sustainable development case studies into learning, and developing discussion classes that encourage argumentation and exchange of ideas. Furthermore, interdisciplinary collaboration with other faculties such as environmental studies, economics, and engineering is essential to enrich law students' perspectives in addressing sustainable development issues. Thus, law graduates are expected not only to become competent legal practitioners but also agents of change capable of formulating policies and legal advocacy focused on social justice, environmental protection, and the welfare of future generations.

This new path through legal education is key to advancing sustainable development in Indonesia. By building a culture of literacy, critical discourse, and active engagement in sustainability issues, legal education can produce a generation of visionary, innovative jurists ready to face global challenges and realize a just and sustainable society.⁹¹

4. CONCLUSION

In this paper, the role of legal education in Civic Nation-Building in Nigeria, Rwanda and Indonesia have been examined through critical analysis of the concept of legal education as new pathways for sustainable development. The discussion and analysis in this paper revealed that there

⁹⁰ Rafsi Albar, 'A Rendezvous with Destiny: The Past, Present, and Future of Indonesian Legal Scholarship,' *Juris Gentium Law Review: Thoughts!*, 2024, <https://jurisgentium.org/a-rendezvous-with-destiny-the-past-present-and-future-of-indonesian-legal-scholarship>.

⁹¹ Sulistyowati Irianto, 'Legal Education for The Future of Indonesia: A Critical Assessment,' *Indonesian Journal of Socio-Legal Studies* 1, no. 1 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.54828/ijsls.2021v1n1.1>.

are variations both in form and structure of legal education in the jurisdictions under review. Further analysis in the paper shows that legal education in Nigeria emerged from the English Common Law doctrine, while Rwanda and Indonesia regarded as Civil Law Countries adopted both formal and informal systems. While some have argued that legal education has contributed immensely to civic development and national integration in the countries under review, this paper argues that through a comprehensive training and ethical grounding, legal practitioners are fully prepared to uphold justice in such a manner that reinforces public trust and unifications of the society under the rule of law.

Regarding civic development and national integration as panacea for sustainable development of legal education, the paper observed that in Nigeria, legal education has promoted a sense of national identity and citizenship through the use of inclusive language in teaching. In Rwanda, it serves as a cornerstone that sustains the pillars of national integration by enhancing a legal culture grounded in equality and impartiality, while in Indonesia, legal education serves as a strategic tool in shaping citizens ways of life as an instrument in use to achieve substantive justice in human society. Thus, while a lot has been said or written on the concept of legal education along with the contributions of civic development and national integration as pathways for sustainable development, the central contribution of the paper is premised on the relationship between the two concepts as it relates to the countries under review.

Key observations of the paper from the discussions and analysis shows that the two concepts contribute immensely to the sustenance of legal education in the countries in focus, irrespective of the differences that exists in their legal systems. The analysis of the paper also shows that the two concepts in the case studies or countries remained key drivers and are not only responsible for the production of competent legal professionals, but also citizens with a high legal awareness, who are ready to safeguard the unity and peace of multicultural society. The paper argued that while civic development and national integration remained notable drivers for sustainable legal education, technological advancement in Nigeria, Rwanda and Indonesia, especially on information and communication technology immensely impact on legal education through computer -

aided legal research and instructions. Thus, the paper that the emergence of technology impact on students learning capacity in Rwanda and has been able to largely address the challenges of cybercrimes and e-commerce disputes.

The paper further highlights significant challenges faced by legal education in Indonesia, particularly from cultivating a strong intellectual culture amongst law students arising from lack of reading habits, weak critical thinking skills capable of addressing contemporary challenges and realizations of sustainable development. Thus, as lot have been written on the historical evolution of legal education in Nigeria, Rwanda and Indonesia, as well as the role of legal education in civic nation-building, also in terms of more recent advancement and contributions of technology to the development of legal education more generally, the key contribution of this paper lies in its discourse on the contribution of legal education in civic Nation-Building in Nigeria, Rwanda and Indonesia.

Nevertheless, bearing in mind the relevance of legal education in civic Nation-Building in Nigeria, Rwanda and Indonesia, it is more appropriate to understand that legal education in Nigeria, Rwanda and Indonesia are faced with several challenges stemming from moribund curricula and pedagogy, ineffective institutional mechanisms, corrupt practices along with disconnections with local situations that oftentimes affects its performance in Nation-Building, thereby resulting to graduation of unqualified lawyers who are meant to promotes the course of justice, human rights and responsive governance.

Accordingly, the paper has argued that why Nigeria battles with its dual system bordering on university and law school, where government exercises monopoly over professional training of lawyers, arguably restricted the growth of legal training and education in the country. In the Nigerian context, the paper suggests that there is need for privatization of the sector. In the Indonesian context, the paper sought to explore these issues and found out that Indonesia has a history of political domination along with academic culture that impacted greatly on its critical thinking, despite its democratic reforms. The paper in this regard, suggests enhancement of academic freedom that will encapsulate diverse perspectives. In a similar vein, while Rwanda faces post-conflict

rehabilitation, nation-building, and reconciliation challenges, it then requires legal education to foster unity and justice. Be that as it may, these challenges have led to ill-equipped legal practitioners who are meant to build robust institutions, promoting human rights alongside ensuring unhindered access to justice. Arguably, all these circumstances or issues, contribute to the challenges of realizing a stable democratic institutions and national integrations.

Ultimately, the paper concludes that promoting a sustainable legal education in the countries under review through civic Nation-Building can be achieved through building context -sensitive, and ethically grounded frameworks for sustainable societal progress.