



Sonargaon University

Department of Law

Research Monograph

On

**Inclusion of Legal Education in the Secondary Education System:
A Strategy to Reduce Crime in Bangladesh**

Research Monograph submitted in partial fulfillment of the award of the degree Bachelor of Laws with Honours (LL.B.), Sonargaon University

Course Title: Research Monograph

Course Code: LLB121

Spring-2025

Under the Guidance of & Supervised by

Muhammad Ali

Lecturer and Coordinator

Department of Law

Sonargaon University

Prepared & Submitted By:

Nurunnahar Sathi

ID: LLB2102023001

Batch: 23rd

Department of Law

Sonargaon University

Submission Date: 8th July, 2025

*Dedicated To My beloved Parents and respected teachers
whose endless support have shaped my Journey and inspired
every step of this work*

Letter of Transmittal

Date: 08/07/2025

To

MuhammadAli

Lecturer and Coordinator

Department of Law

Sonargaon University.

Subject: Submission of Research Monograph.

Respected Sir,

With due respect, I am pleased to submit my research monograph entitled “**Inclusion of Legal Education in the Secondary Education System: A Strategy to Reduce Crime in Bangladesh**”, conducted as a partial requirement for the completion of the Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) program under the Department of Law at Sonargaon University.

This research reflects my sincere effort to explore how incorporating legal education at the secondary level may contribute to reducing crime in Bangladesh. I have attempted to present a well-researched and analytically sound paper under your valuable guidance and supervision.

I sincerely hope that my work will meet your expectations and academic standards. I am grateful for your constant support, insightful suggestions, and encouragement throughout this research journey.

Thank you for your time and kind consideration.

Sincerely,

.....
Nurunnahar Sathi

ID: LLB2102023001

Batch: 23rd

Department of Law

Sonargaon University

Declaration

I, **Nurunnahar Sathi**, hereby declare that the research work entitled “**Inclusion of Legal Education in the Secondary Education System: A Strategy to Reduce Crime in Bangladesh**” is the result of my own original work, carried out under the supervision of **Muhammad Ali**, Lecturer and coordinator, Department of Law, **Sonargaon University**.

This research has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any degree or diploma at this or any other institution. I have sincerely acknowledged all sources of information and assistance in accordance with academic rules and ethical standards.

I affirm that this work complies with the academic integrity policies of Sonargaon University and that all data presented is authentic and properly cited.

Nurunnahar Sathi
ID: LLB2102023001
Batch: 23rd
Department of Law
Sonargaon University

Certification by Research Supervisor

This is to certify that the research monograph submitted by Nurunnahar Sathi, Student ID LLB2102023001, under my supervision, has been prepared as a requirement for the course Research Monograph (Course Code: LLB121).

The work is original, has been conducted sincerely, and meets the academic and ethical standards of the Department of Law, Sonargaon University. I recommend it for submission and evaluation.

.....

Supervisor's Signature

Name: Muhammad Ali

Designation: Lecturer and Coordinator

Department of Law

Sonargaon University

Date: 08/07/2025

Acknowledgement

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my respected supervisor, Md. Mohammad Ali Sir, for his continuous guidance, thoughtful advice, and kind encouragement throughout the course of this research. His support has been instrumental in shaping the direction and quality of my work.

I also wish to thank the honorable teachers of the department, legal experts, school teachers, students, and parents who generously shared their time, experiences, and insights. Their valuable cooperation played a significant role in the successful completion of this study.

Abstract

This research explores the inclusion of legal education in the secondary education system of Bangladesh as a preventive strategy to reduce crime by nurturing legally aware and socially responsible citizens. Adopting a mixed-method approach, data was collected through surveys from secondary school students in Dhaka and interviews with teachers and legal experts. The findings indicate a significant lack of awareness among students regarding basic legal rights, criminal consequences, and civic duties. Stakeholders showed strong support for introducing legal education, recognizing its potential to foster ethical values, critical thinking, and resistance to negative peer influence. Drawing inspiration from countries like the UK, Australia, and China, where legal education is embedded in school curricula, the study recommends integrating age-appropriate legal content, teacher training, interactive workshops, and visual tools for effective implementation. Unlike approaches that focus solely on juvenile crime, this research emphasizes early legal empowerment as a long-term solution. It concludes that legal education at the secondary level is crucial not only for academic enrichment, but also for building a safer, law-abiding society. Immediate policy intervention and collaboration between the education and legal sectors are essential for translating this vision into reality.

Keywords: Legal Education, Crime Prevention, Secondary School Curriculum, Legal Awareness, Bangladesh Education Policy.

List of Abbreviation

BANBEIS - Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics

BSS – Bangladesh Statistical Survey

CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child

CRC Committee – Committee on the Rights of the Child

CSE – Civics and Social Education

CSO – Civil Society Organization

DSW – Department of Social Welfare

DoE – Directorate of Education

E4J - Education for Justice

FIR – First Information Report

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GoB – Government of Bangladesh

HC – High Court

HR – Human Rights

ICCPR – International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICESCR – International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

ILO – International Labour Organization

ISCEDI - International Standard Classification of Education

JJS – Juvenile Justice System

LDC – Least Developed Country

LGED – Local Government Engineering Department

LRE-Law Related Education

MoE – Ministry of Education

MoLJPA – Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs

NAP – National Action Plan

NAPD – National Academy for Planning and Development

NCTB – National Curriculum and Textbook Board

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

SC – Supreme Court

SDG – Sustainable Development Goals

UN – United Nations

UNCRC – United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF – United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

Table of Contents

Abstract

List of abbreviation

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1	Background of the Study	1
1.2	Problem Statement	3
1.3	Research Questions	4
1.4	Research Objectives	4
1.5	Scope and Limitations of the Study	4
1.5.1	Scope of the Study	4
1.5.2	Limitations of the Study	5
1.6	Significance of the Study	6
1.7	Definitions	7

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1	Education and Crime: A Theoretical Link	10
2.2	Legal Literacy as Early Prevention	11
2.3	Criminological Justifications for Legal Education	12
2.3.1	Differential Association Theory	12
2.3.2	Social Learning Theory	13
2.3.3	Social Bond Theory	13
2.3.4	Routine Activity Theory	13
2.4	International Practices in Legal Education	13
2.5	Research Gaps	13

Chapter 3: Contextual Analysis and Justification for Introducing Legal Education in Secondary Schools of Bangladesh.

3.1	Curricular Gaps in Legal Education at the Secondary Level in Bangladesh	15
3.2	Comparison between Legal Education in Bangladesh and Crime-Resistant Countries	15
3.3	Inclusion of Legal and Citizenship Education in the School Curriculum: An International Perspective	16
3.4	How Inclusion of Legal Education in Secondary Schools Can Help Reduce Crime in Bangladesh	18
3.5	Juvenile Delinquency and Educational Disengagement: A Comparative Analysis (2022–2024)	20
3.6	Feasibility of Curriculum Integration of Legal Education at Secondary Level in Bangladesh	21

3.7	Relevant National Laws and International Conventions Supporting the Inclusion of Legal Education in Secondary Schools of Bangladesh	21
-----	---	----

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1	Introduction	23
4.2	Research Design	23
4.3	Study Area and Target Population	23
4.4	Sampling Strategy	23
4.5	Data Collection Methods	24
4.5.1	Primary Data	24
4.5.2	Secondary Data	24
4.6	Techniques of Data Analysis	24
4.7	Ethical Considerations	25
4.8	Limitations of the Study	25

Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Findings

5.1	Respondent Overview	26
5.2	Key Findings	26
5.3	Thematic Analysis	27
5.4	Visual Presentation	27
5.5	Summary of Findings	28

Chapter 6: Interpretation of Findings

6.1	Students' Perspectives and What They Reflect	29
6.2	Guardians' Views and Emerging Parental Concerns	29
6.3	Teachers' Insights on Classroom Realities	29
6.4	Legal Experts' Evaluations and Cautions	30
6.5	Collective Insights and Cross-Stakeholder Consensus	30

Chapter 7: Recommendations and Conclusion

7.1	Recommendations	31
7.1.1	Inclusion of Legal Education in Secondary Curriculum	31
7.1.2	Beyond the Textbook – Practical Legal Education	31
7.1.3	Overcoming Challenges in Implementation	32
7.2	Conclusion	33
	Bibliography	34

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study:

Crime has become an increasingly complex and multidimensional issue across the globe, threatening not only public safety but also social harmony, justice, and sustainable development. Bangladesh is no exception to this trend. In recent years, the country has witnessed a noticeable surge in juvenile delinquency and youth involvement in unlawful activities ranging from theft, cyber bullying, and gang violence to more organized forms of criminal conduct. This disturbing shift in youth behavior has raised serious concerns among educators, law enforcement agencies, policymakers, and civil society organizations. A growing body of national and international research has pointed to various underlying causes of this trend such as poverty, broken family structures, peer influence, lack of community engagement, and importantly, a glaring absence of legal awareness and structured moral education within the mainstream education system¹.

Legal education, broadly defined as the systematic process of imparting knowledge about laws, rights, responsibilities, institutions of justice, and the rule of law, plays a crucial role in fostering lawful behavior and civic responsibility². Traditionally, however, this form of education has been confined to higher education institutions, particularly law schools and universities. This delay in legal awareness deprives young individuals of the opportunity to develop a basic understanding of justice, human rights, and legal accountability during their formative years precisely when character, values, and identity are most impressionable. As such, early exposure to legal education especially at the secondary school level is increasingly being recognized by educators and researchers around the world as a powerful preventive tool against crime, deviance, and legal ignorance³.

International evidence supports the inclusion of law-related education (LRE) at the secondary level. Globally, several developed nations including the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan, and Germany have already institutionalized legal education within their school systems. In the U.S., students who receive civics and legal instruction from an early age are more likely to participate in democratic processes and less likely to commit offenses⁴. Similarly, Australia's inclusion of legal studies in secondary education has been found to strengthen analytical thinking, moral reasoning, and social accountability among students⁵. According to research by CIRCLE and the Harvard Law School's Center on the Legal Profession, students exposed to law-related education demonstrate greater respect for rules, resistance to negative peer pressure, and informed decision-making abilities (Hauser, 2000; Harvard CLP, 2023).

¹ Mahmud HM and Rabbi MF, 'Inclusion of Legal Education in Secondary and Higher Secondary Education in Bangladesh: An Appraisal' (2025) 5(1) Indonesian Journal of Education (INJOE) 9–24.

² Macfarlane J, *Legal Education and Professionalism* (Oxford University Press 1992).

³ Starkey H, *Citizenship Education, Democracy and the Global Dimension* (Institute of Education 2005).

⁴ Torney-Purta J and others, 'Trust in Government-Related Institutions and Civic Engagement among Adolescents' (2004) *Civic Education Longitudinal Studies*.

⁵ Kamvounias P, 'Civics and Legal Education in Australia' (1994) 23(2) *Journal of Law and Education* 231–245.

In contrast, Bangladesh has yet to integrate legal education into its national secondary school curriculum. While the National Education Policy 2010 emphasizes the development of moral character, patriotism, and civic duties, it falls short of explicitly including legal literacy as a goal or subject area⁶ Consequently, most students graduate from secondary school with little or no understanding of how the justice system functions, what their legal rights and responsibilities are, or how the rule of law underpins democratic governance and social order. This lack of legal awareness not only fosters ignorance and fear of legal institutions but also exposes young people to manipulation, exploitation, and criminal involvement.

Recent qualitative studies have highlighted this gap. A study by Mahmud and Rabbi (2025) published in the Indonesian Journal of Education conducted interviews with school teachers, curriculum developers, and students across several districts. The findings clearly demonstrated that the inclusion of basic legal concepts in school subjects significantly improved students' ethical behavior, critical thinking, and understanding of lawful versus unlawful actions. Similarly, a 2023 roundtable hosted by The Daily Star brought together senior advocates, educators, human rights activists, and youth leaders to discuss the growing crisis of youth crime in Bangladesh.

The overwhelming consensus was that formal legal education if introduced during adolescence could foster preventive awareness and help build a legally conscious citizenry⁷.

Theoretical perspectives also support this claim. According to Edwin Sutherland's Differential Association Theory, criminal behavior is not inherited biologically but learned through social interaction and communication. Therefore, if schools become platforms for teaching legal norms, values, and ethical reasoning, students are more likely to internalize lawful behavior and reject deviant conduct⁸. Legal education also complements cognitive development by teaching logical reasoning, argumentation, conflict resolution, and social responsibility skills necessary not only to reduce crime but also to build a vibrant democracy and a just society (Li & Sun, 2022).

This issue also ties into Bangladesh's broader national and international development agendas. The country's Vision 2041 envisions a knowledge-based, inclusive society grounded in justice and human rights. At the global level, Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG-16) calls for promoting peace, justice, and strong institutions. The integration of legal education at the school level directly supports these objectives by cultivating awareness, responsibility, and participatory citizenship from an early age (UN, 2015; OHCHR, 2023).

Moreover, real-life cases and media investigations have revealed that many juvenile offenders in Bangladesh were unaware of the legal consequences of their actions until after they had already

⁶ Ministry of Education, National Education Policy 2010 (Government of Bangladesh).

⁷ Daily Star Report, 'Legal Literacy for Youth Urged by Experts' (The Daily Star, 2023) <https://thedailystar.net>.

⁸ Chowning JT and others, 'Civic Education and Student Engagement' (2012) 14(3) Journal of Civic Learning 45–61.

been prosecuted⁹. This underlines the urgent need to shift from a reactive to a proactive approach to crime prevention one that begins not in the courtroom but in the classroom.

Legal education at the secondary level can serve as an instrumental tool for crime prevention. By educating adolescents about legal systems, human rights, justice, and consequences of criminal behavior, schools can help reduce juvenile offenses and strengthen the foundation of a lawful society. As noted by Chowning et al. (2012), embedding civic and legal knowledge in early education contributes to ethical decision-making and social accountability. Moreover, aligning this initiative with the Sustainable Development Goal 16 Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions will further Bangladesh's commitment to building inclusive, fair, and peaceful societies¹⁰.

It is in this context that the current study is situated. It advocates for the systematic inclusion of legal education in the secondary school curriculum of Bangladesh as a strategic intervention to reduce crime, promote legal consciousness, and develop a generation of socially responsible citizens.

1.2 Problem Statement

Although Bangladesh has made considerable strides in expanding access to education and reforming its curriculum over the past decades, a crucial gap remains in the form of legal illiteracy among school-aged youth. The existing secondary education curriculum lacks any formal or structured approach to teaching basic legal principles, rights and responsibilities, or awareness of crime and justice. The National Education Policy 2010, while outlining moral and civic values, does not explicitly recognize legal education as an essential component of student development. As a result, most students remain unaware of the legal consequences of their actions and the role of justice institutions in protecting citizen rights and ensuring public order.

This absence of legal instruction leaves adolescents vulnerable to misinformation, manipulation, and participation in criminal activities often without a clear understanding of their implications. Moreover, it undermines the development of civic responsibility, respect for the rule of law, and meaningful participation in democratic life. While several developed countries have demonstrated the benefits of integrating legal education at the secondary level, Bangladesh has yet to adopt any such initiative in a systematic or policy-driven manner. Thus, the lack of legal education at the school level constitutes a significant educational, social, and legal shortcoming that demands urgent attention and reform.

⁹ Chowning JT and others, 'Civic Education and Student Engagement' (2012) 14(3) *Journal of Civic Learning* 45–61.

¹⁰ OHCHR, 'SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions' (United Nations 2023) <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16>

1.3 Research Question

1. How can legal education in secondary schools help reduce crime and build civic awareness among students in Bangladesh?
2. What problems or barriers might arise when trying to add legal education to the secondary school curriculum in Bangladesh?
3. What can Bangladesh learn from other countries that already teach legal education in schools?

1.4 Research Objectives

1. To explore the potential benefits of introducing legal education in secondary schools in Bangladesh in terms of crime prevention and civic development.
2. To assess the feasibility of incorporating legal and crime education into the national secondary school curriculum, including the identification of key barriers such as resource constraints, teacher training, and curriculum overload.
3. To draw on national and international best practices and propose actionable recommendations for curriculum reform, policy inclusion, and institutional support for the integration of legal education at the secondary level.

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

1.5.1 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the inclusion of legal education in the secondary education system of Bangladesh as a strategy to reduce crime among young individuals. The research particularly examines how educating students about fundamental legal rights, duties, and consequences of criminal behavior can foster awareness and discourage juvenile delinquency. It emphasizes the integration of basic legal content within the existing secondary curriculum, including the potential roles of textbooks, seminars, workshops, and visual learning methods. The study also draws comparative insights from selected countries where school-based legal education has contributed to low crime rates. The geographical scope of the study is limited to selected schools in Dhaka and its surrounding districts.

1.5.2 Limitations of the Study

Although this study provides significant insights into the necessity and feasibility of introducing legal education at the secondary school level in Bangladesh, it is not without limitations. These limitations, primarily logistical and contextual, may have influenced the scope and depth of the research findings.

Firstly, the study was conducted using primary data collected from only three secondary schools within Dhaka district. While Dhaka is central to policymaking and educational development, limiting the study area to one district may not adequately reflect the diversity of Bangladesh's broader educational system. Educational challenges, student behavior, institutional readiness, and community perceptions can vary significantly between urban and rural regions or from one district to another. Therefore, the findings may not be entirely generalizable to all regions of the country.

Secondly, the limited sample size posed a constraint in capturing the full spectrum of perspectives. Although efforts were made to reach more schools and stakeholders, the lack of a strong research network, coupled with administrative restrictions and the unavailability of school authorities due to their busy academic schedules, significantly reduced participation. This hindered the ability to obtain a wide variety of opinions from teachers, students, guardians, and legal professionals, which could have enriched the thematic analysis and increased the representativeness of the data.

Thirdly, there exists a scarcity of prior academic research, statistics, and policy documents regarding the inclusion of legal education in the secondary curriculum in Bangladesh. Since this is a relatively underexplored field in the national academic context, the availability of reliable secondary data was minimal. Consequently, the analysis was heavily reliant on primary data and comparative practices from other countries, which may have introduced contextual gaps.

Lastly, time and resource limitations also influenced the data collection process. Given the constraints of academic deadlines, budget limitations, and logistical barriers, it was not possible to conduct extensive fieldwork or longitudinal observation. As a result, the findings represent a snapshot of a specific context rather than a comprehensive national picture.

Despite these limitations, the study provides a valuable foundation for future large-scale research and serves as a call to action for policymakers, educators, and curriculum developers to seriously consider the integration of legal education at the school level in Bangladesh.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons, both at the academic and policy-making levels. The primary aim of this research is to explore the potential of integrating legal education into the secondary education system of Bangladesh as a strategic tool to reduce crime, develop law-abiding citizens, and strengthen democratic values from an early age.

Firstly, Bangladesh is experiencing increasing rates of juvenile and youth-related crimes, many of which are rooted in a fundamental lack of legal awareness, ethical responsibility, and understanding of consequences. At present, most students in Bangladesh complete their education without ever being taught the basics of their rights, responsibilities, or the legal system. This lack of exposure contributes to a society where individuals often remain unaware of the legal boundaries of their actions. By introducing legal education at the secondary level, this research addresses a critical gap in the current curriculum.¹¹

Secondly, the secondary level has been identified as the most suitable phase for implementing legal education, based on both pedagogical and social grounds. Data from BANBEIS shows a significant dropout rate after Grade 10, meaning a large portion of students never reach higher secondary education.¹² Therefore, introducing legal education only at the higher level would miss a vast majority of students. Additionally, the higher secondary syllabus is already too condensed to accommodate a new subject effectively. The secondary level, by contrast, is more flexible and reaches a broader demographic of students at an age where values, awareness, and identity are actively forming.¹³

Thirdly, this study contributes to the national education and crime prevention policy discourse. By providing a model for age-appropriate legal education tailored to Bangladeshi socio-cultural realities, the research can inform curriculum developers, educators, policymakers, and lawmakers.

It offers recommendations based on comparative practices from countries with low crime rates where law and civic education are effectively introduced at early stages through formal education, workshops, textbooks, and interactive tools.¹⁴

Furthermore, this study holds broader implications for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), which calls for inclusive societies, access to justice, and accountable institutions. Educating children about the law from a young age fosters

¹¹ Taslima Monsur, 'Law and Education in Bangladesh: An Overview' (2021) 13(2) Bangladesh Education Journal 55.

¹² BANBEIS, Bangladesh Education Statistics 2022 (Ministry of Education 2023) <http://data.banbeis.gov.bd> accessed 30 June 2025.

¹³ Mahmudul Hasan, 'Why Legal Education Should Start at Secondary Level in Bangladesh' (The Daily Star, 15 March 2023) <https://www.thedailystar.net> accessed 30 June 2025.

¹⁴ Diane A. Levin, *Civic Education and Law in Secondary Schools: A Comparative Perspective* (Oxford University Press 2019).

responsible citizenship and reduces the chances of criminal involvement, thereby aligning with long-term developmental goals.¹⁵

Finally, the study is also academically valuable, as there is limited empirical research in Bangladesh on the effectiveness of legal education in reducing crime, particularly among school-aged populations. The findings of this study can thus fill a critical gap in legal and educational literature, laying the groundwork for future studies and reforms.¹⁶

1.7 Definitions

In order to ensure conceptual clarity and consistency throughout this study, the following key terms have been defined as they are relevant to the research topic "Inclusion of Legal Education in the Secondary Education System: A Strategy to Reduce Crime in Bangladesh".

1. Legal Education

Legal education is a systematic and comprehensive process through which individuals are made aware of the law, legal systems, justice mechanisms, fundamental rights and duties, as well as principles of democracy and governance. It not only serves as a training platform for aspiring legal professionals but also functions as a broader civic tool to foster legal consciousness and moral reasoning in the general public. Legal education instills in learners the understanding of the rule of law, promotes respect for legal institutions, and enables people to distinguish between lawful and unlawful conduct.

At the societal level, it serves as a transformative force that empowers citizens to claim their rights, fulfill their responsibilities, and participate meaningfully in a democratic society. In modern democracies, legal education is increasingly recognized as a preventive mechanism to reduce lawlessness, strengthen justice, and promote human rights from an early stage of life.

2. Secondary Education System

The secondary education system refers to the stage of formal schooling that follows primary education and precedes higher secondary or tertiary education. In Bangladesh, it typically encompasses grades 6 through 10, with students generally aged between 11 and 16. This educational phase is critical because it coincides with a child's transition from early adolescence to young adulthood, a period marked by rapid intellectual, emotional, and social development. Secondary education provides not only foundational knowledge in core academic subjects such as science, mathematics, literature, and social studies, but also serves as a platform to instill

¹⁵ United Nations, Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN General Assembly, A/RES/70/1, 2015).

¹⁶ Nazmul Ahsan Kalimullah, 'Legal Education Reform in Bangladesh: Necessity and Challenges' (2020) 9(1) Asian Journal of Law and Policy 33. Diane A. Levin, *Civic Education and Law in Secondary Schools: A Comparative Perspective* (Oxford University Press 2019)

ethical values, social responsibility, and basic life skills. In the context of national development, this level of education plays a vital role in shaping a responsible, informed, and skilled citizenry. Therefore, any educational intervention, including legal or moral education, becomes especially impactful when introduced at this level.

3. Crime

Crime is defined as any human conduct whether by action or omission that violates a legal provision enacted by the state and is punishable under criminal law. It represents a breach of social norms deemed harmful to individuals, communities, or the state. Crimes are categorized into various types such as violent crimes, property crimes, cybercrimes, and juvenile offences, and they may vary across jurisdictions depending on local laws and socio-cultural perceptions. From a criminological standpoint, crime is not merely a legal concept but a social phenomenon influenced by economic, psychological, environmental, and educational factors. In modern jurisprudence, crime is considered both an individual failure and a reflection of systemic shortcomings in social control, education, and values transmission. Therefore, understanding crime requires a multidimensional approach, including legal, social, and psychological perspectives.

4. Curriculum Inclusion

Curriculum inclusion refers to the structured and policy-driven process of integrating new subjects, themes, or competencies into a national or institutional education curriculum. This process involves multiple dimensions, including curriculum design, policy formulation, pedagogical planning, teacher training, and materials development. The goal of curriculum inclusion is to ensure that learners are exposed to knowledge and skills that are relevant to contemporary societal needs and challenges. In the context of legal education, curriculum inclusion means systematically embedding law-related contents such as basic legal principles, rights and duties, and consequences of legal violations within the educational framework. Such inclusion must be age-appropriate, culturally sensitive, and aligned with national development priorities. Effective curriculum inclusion also demands monitoring, assessment, and feedback mechanisms to ensure that learning outcomes are being achieved.

5. Preventive Legal Education

Preventive legal education is an approach to law-related education that aims to educate individuals especially children and adolescents about their legal rights, responsibilities, and the consequences of unlawful behavior before they become involved in any form of legal violation or delinquency. This concept stems from the belief that legal ignorance is one of the root causes of unlawful behavior, and that early exposure to legal norms, rights, and punishments can foster lawful decision-making and civic responsibility. Preventive legal education operates as a proactive, community-based, and often school-centered intervention aimed at reducing crime

rates and promoting a culture of legality. It emphasizes moral reasoning, critical thinking, ethical decision-making, and civic engagement. When implemented at the secondary education level, it holds the potential to shape behavioral norms and reduce the likelihood of youth involvement in criminal or anti-social activities.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter critically reviews existing literature on the relationship between education particularly legal education and crime prevention among adolescents. It explores empirical studies, theoretical frameworks, and international practices that support the integration of legal education in secondary school systems as a preventive strategy against juvenile delinquency.

2.1 Education and Crime: A Theoretical Link

There is a robust and well-documented theoretical and empirical connection between education and crime reduction. Education is widely acknowledged as a socializing agent that instills norms, values, discipline, and law-abiding behavior, thereby lowering individuals' propensity to engage in criminal activities. Various sociological and economic theories support the idea that educational engagement fosters cognitive development, increases future opportunity costs of criminal behavior, and cultivates a sense of citizenship.

Gary Becker's economic model of crime posits that individuals make rational decisions based on cost-benefit analyses. Education enhances an individual's legal income prospects, thereby increasing the opportunity cost of engaging in crime.¹⁷ According to Lochner and Moretti (2004), a one-year increase in average education levels reduces arrest rates by over 10%, particularly among young men, thus showing a direct and measurable inverse relationship between educational attainment and crime.¹⁸ Their findings, based on U.S. data, suggest that education not only deters crime by improving labour market outcomes but also by fostering non-cognitive skills like patience and risk aversion.

Similarly, Machin, Marie, and Vujic (2011), using data from the United Kingdom, revealed that areas with improved access to education experienced notable declines in both violent and property crime rates.¹⁹ Their study reinforces the notion that expanding educational opportunities is an effective long-term strategy for crime prevention.

In the context of developing countries, particularly in South Asia, the relationship between educational exclusion and criminal behavior becomes more pronounced. In Bangladesh, Ahmed and Begum (2015) conducted a study on urban slum youth and found that educational deprivation, coupled with socio-economic marginalization, significantly increases vulnerability to deviant and criminal behaviors.²⁰ Similarly, a study by UNICEF Bangladesh (2019) highlights

¹⁷ Gary Becker, *Crime and Punishment: An Economic Approach* (University of Chicago Press 1968).

¹⁸ Lance Lochner and Enrico Moretti, 'The Effect of Education on Crime: Evidence from Prison Inmates, Arrests, and Self-Reports' (2004) 94(1) *American Economic Review* 155.

¹⁹ Stephen Machin, Olivier Marie and Sunčica Vujčić, 'The Crime Reducing Effect of Education' (2011) 121(552) *The Economic Journal* 463.

how school dropout is a precursor to child labor, gang involvement, and petty crime among adolescents in Dhaka's low-income communities.²¹

From a criminological perspective, Sutherland's Differential Association Theory offers further insights. It asserts that criminal behavior is learned through interaction and communication within intimate personal groups. Schools, in contrast, serve as preventive institutions by exposing students to positive peer influence and legal socialization, thereby counteracting the formation of criminal associations.²²

Legal education, when integrated into the school curriculum, adds a further layer of crime resistance by directly equipping students with knowledge about laws, rights, and responsibilities. This creates a legal consciousness that reinforces lawful behavior, as explored by Muncie and Goldson (2006) in their study on youth justice education in the UK.²³ They argue that early legal education enhances civic engagement and reduces the appeal of delinquency.

In sum, education serves not only as a tool for personal development but also as a structural safeguard against criminal tendencies. The inverse relationship between education and crime is consistent across geographical, cultural, and economic contexts, underscoring the value of educational interventions particularly legal education as an effective crime prevention strategy in both developed and developing societies.

2.2 Legal Literacy as Early Prevention

Legal literacy, often defined as the capacity to understand laws, legal processes, and individual rights and responsibilities, plays a pivotal role in early crime prevention. It empowers individual's especially young people with the knowledge to navigate societal structures lawfully, make informed decisions, and develop a strong respect for justice and rule of law. Introducing legal concepts at the secondary school level not only builds civic awareness but also acts as a protective barrier against juvenile delinquency.

Empirical evidence strongly supports the value of legal literacy in educational settings. For instance, Harris and Jones (2017) reported that legal awareness programs implemented in several UK secondary schools led to significant reductions in disciplinary infractions and school rule violations. Students who participated in these programs demonstrated improved understanding of legal consequences, peer respect, and greater adherence to institutional policies.²⁴

²¹ Sharifa Begum and Asif Ahmed, 'Urban Slums and Crime: A Case Study of Dhaka City' (2015) *Journal of South Asian Development Studies* 23(2) 78.

²² UNICEF Bangladesh, *Adolescent and Youth Wellbeing in Urban Slums* (2019) <https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/reports> accessed 1 July 2025.

²³ Edwin H. Sutherland, *Principles of Criminology* (6th edn, Lippincott 1960).

²⁴ John Muncie and Barry Goldson, 'Youth Justice: Citizenship, Civilisation and Criminalization' in *Youth Crime and Justice* (SAGE Publications 2006).

In the United States, the widely implemented “Street Law” initiative a program that brings practical law education into classrooms has proven effective in transforming students’ perceptions of law enforcement, justice, and civic duty. Goldsmith (2006) notes that students exposed to Street Law curricula were not only more engaged in classroom discussions but also exhibited reduced incidents of school-based conflicts and suspensions. The curriculum covers basic legal rights, responsibilities, and everyday legal situations, thereby making the law accessible and meaningful to adolescents.²⁵

On the global stage, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has promoted legal education through its “Education for Justice” (E4J) initiative, which integrates crime prevention, rule of law, and ethics education into school curriculums. Implemented across various countries, E4J has shown promising outcomes such as enhanced ethical reasoning, decreased tolerance towards corruption, and increased awareness of legal norms among students.²⁶

Furthermore, in developing countries like Bangladesh, where civic education is often limited and many adolescents are unaware of basic legal protections, early legal literacy can serve as a crucial intervention. It can deter participation in common juvenile offences such as eve-teasing, theft, vandalism, or gang involvement. Embedding legal education in the school syllabus may also reduce students’ vulnerability to manipulation, early marriage, child labor, and even trafficking, by giving them the tools to identify and resist injustice.

In line with Restorative Justice Theory, early legal education also encourages conflict resolution and dialogue rather than punitive approaches, making students more likely to seek lawful solutions in disputes. When taught interactively through mock trials, debates, and role-play legal literacy becomes more than theoretical knowledge; it transforms into a mindset geared towards lawfulness and empathy.

In conclusion, legal literacy is not merely an academic subject it is a preventive strategy. When introduced at the secondary education level, it strengthens social responsibility, promotes peace building values, and ultimately reduces the risk factors associated with youth crime.

2.3 Criminological Justifications for Legal Education

2.3.1 Differential Association Theory

Sutherland’s theory posits that criminal behavior is learned through social interaction with individuals who condone illegality.²⁷ Legal education serves as a counter-narrative by promoting pro-law values, discouraging deviant behavior.

²⁵ Goldsmith M, ‘The Impact of Street Law on Youth Engagement and Conflict Reduction’ (2006) *Journal of Legal Education and Civic Studies* 18(1) 67.

²⁶ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *Education for Justice: Impact Assessment Report* (2019) <https://www.unodc.org/e4j> accessed 1 July 2025.

²⁷ Sutherland EH, *Principles of Criminology* (4th edn, J.B. Lippincott 1947).

2.3.2 Social Learning Theory

Akers expanded this idea, asserting that behavior is reinforced through rewards and punishments.²⁸ Legal education, particularly when interactive, reinforces law-abiding conduct and reduces the appeal of criminal alternatives.

2.3.3 Social Bond Theory

According to Hirschi (1969), strong bonds to institutions and belief in the justice system deter criminal activity.²⁹ Legal education cultivates such bonds by reinforcing civic responsibility and institutional trust.

2.3.4 Routine Activity Theory

Cohen and Felson (1979) argued that crime occurs when a motivated offender finds a suitable target in the absence of capable guardianship.³⁰ Legal education, by providing structured, supervised engagement, reduces opportunities for youth crime.

2.4 International Practices in Legal Education

Globally, several countries have embedded legal themes in school curricula to positive effect. South Africa's Life Orientation curriculum integrates human rights education, with reported reductions in school violence (UNESCO, 2016).³¹ India's CBSE board has introduced modules on constitutional values, fostering responsible citizenship among students.³² In contrast, Bangladesh has not yet institutionalized legal education at the secondary level, despite evidence linking legal illiteracy to gang involvement and juvenile offences (BIDS, 2020).

2.5 Research Gaps

Although legal education is widely acknowledged as a potential tool for promoting awareness and reducing crime, there is a significant lack of research in the context of Bangladesh that directly addresses this issue. Specifically:

1. There is no focused academic research that examines how the inclusion of legal education at the secondary school level in Bangladesh could contribute to reducing crime.
2. It remains largely unexplored whether legal knowledge at a young age can shape students into law-abiding, responsible future citizens within the Bangladeshi socio-legal context.

²⁸ Akers RL, *Social Learning and Social Structure: A General Theory of Crime and Deviance* (Routledge 2009).

²⁹ Cohen LE and Felson M, 'Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach' (1979) 44(4) *American Sociological Review* 588.

³⁰ UNESCO, *Global Education Monitoring Report: Education for People and Planet* (UNESCO Publishing 2016).

³¹ NCERT, *Guidelines on Human Rights and Civic Education* (Central Board of Secondary Education, India 2018).

³² Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), *Youth Development in Bangladesh: Challenges and Opportunities* (2020).

3. There is a clear absence of studies that assess the long-term impact of introducing basic legal concepts in schools on students' attitudes toward crime, justice, and civic responsibility.

This gap highlights the urgent need for context-specific, practical, and impact-oriented research that explores the role of school-based legal education in shaping a more law-conscious and crime-resistant generation in Bangladesh.

The literature affirms the preventive potential of legal education when systematically introduced at the secondary level. Grounded in criminological theory and informed by international practice, legal literacy can foster law-abiding attitudes in youth. However, tailored research and policy innovation remain necessary to translate global models into context-sensitive educational reforms in Bangladesh.

Chapter 3: Contextual Analysis and Justification for Introducing Legal Education in Secondary Schools of Bangladesh.

3.1. Curricular Gaps in Legal Education at the Secondary Level in Bangladesh.

Despite the increasing importance of legal literacy in promoting civic responsibility, human rights awareness, and social justice, Bangladesh's secondary education curriculum continues to lack a structured and comprehensive legal education component. While some limited legal content exists within subjects like Civics and Moral Education or Bangladesh and Global Studies, this content is often shallow, theoretical, and insufficient for developing practical understanding or legal awareness among students.

Currently, there is no distinct subject or module dedicated to legal education at the secondary level. Students are exposed to fragments of legal knowledge such as constitutional provisions or fundamental rights but they are seldom taught how to apply these concepts in real-life contexts. Furthermore, key topics such as access to justice, duties under the law, administrative structures, dispute resolution, and basic legal procedures remain largely unaddressed.

Additionally, existing teachers are not trained in legal subjects, and the pedagogical approach lacks interactive tools such as case studies, mock trials, or real world simulations. There is also no government-approved teacher training module or standardized learning material dedicated to secondary level legal education.

While ICT education was introduced as a compulsory subject in 2013 through systematic planning, infrastructure development, and teacher training even in the face of initial challenges no such strategic approach has been taken to incorporate legal education, despite its societal importance.

This absence represents a critical curricular gap, especially in a country where legal ignorance often leads to rights violations, abuse of power, and increased vulnerability among youth. Thus, there is an urgent need to design and integrate a formal Legal Education module at the secondary level, aligned with age-appropriate content, national development goals, and global educational standards.

3.2: Comparison between Legal Education in Bangladesh and Crime-Resistant Countries

In crime-resistant developed countries such as Finland, Germany, Japan, and Canada, legal education is introduced at an early stage often during the primary or secondary levels through subjects like civics or social studies. In contrast, Bangladesh introduces legal education only at the undergraduate level (LLB), with no structured legal content in school or college curricula. These countries use interactive and practical teaching methods, including simulations, debates, project-based learning, and field visits to courts or parliaments. Meanwhile, Bangladesh relies

heavily on theoretical, lecture-based teaching, with limited exposure to practical legal settings. In developed nations, students regularly attend legal awareness workshops, visual learning sessions, and mock trials, all of which are largely absent from the Bangladeshi education system. Additionally, while developed countries emphasize legal literacy among juveniles and foster understanding of both rights and responsibilities, Bangladesh lacks a formal system for youth legal education, focusing mostly on legal rights at the university level without nurturing civic duty or ethical responsibility.

Key Observation

1. Bangladesh lacks early-stage legal education, there's no formal system of teaching law or civics in secondary or higher secondary schools.
2. Most citizens only come across legal education after they commit an offense, making legal literacy reactive rather than preventive.
3. The absence of legal awareness among youth contributes to high juvenile crime, social unrest, and legal system overburdening.

Impact of This Gap

1. According to a study by the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), over 60% of youth offenders were unaware that their actions were punishable under the law.
2. A 2023 UNICEF report noted that only 12% of Bangladeshi secondary students could correctly identify their constitutional rights. In contrast, over 70% of Finnish students aged 15–16 could identify both rights and legal responsibilities.

3.3 Inclusion of Legal and Citizenship Education in the School Curriculum: An International Perspective

1. England(UK):

Since 2002, Citizenship Education has been mandatory in England for students aged 11 to 16. The curriculum includes political systems, rights and responsibilities, justice systems, and fundamental values of democracy.

2. Ireland:

In Ireland, students aged 12 to 16 must study Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE), which covers human rights, social responsibility, and political literacy.

3. Canada:

Many provinces in Canada have mandatory Civics and Citizenship Education at the secondary level, where students learn about law, rights, responsibilities, and democratic values. For example, Ontario mandates this subject at Grade 10.

4. Finland:

In Finland, legal and citizenship topics are included within the Social Studies curriculum at the secondary level, focusing on laws, civic rights, responsibilities, and social awareness.

5. Australia:

In Australia, Civics and Citizenship Education is part of the Years 3 to 10 curriculum (ages 8–16). It teaches students about democratic processes, the legal system, and responsible citizenship.

6. China:

China introduces Moral and Legal Education from the primary level and continues through secondary education. The curriculum includes Chinese laws, duties of citizens, moral conduct, and respect for the Constitution.

Chart: Introduction of Legal and Citizenship Education in Various Countries

Country	Level/Class Introduced	Subject Name	Notes
England	Secondary (Age 11–16)	Citizenship Education	Introduced in 2002; covers law, rights, justice, politics
Ireland	Junior Cycle (Age 12–16)	Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)	Mandatory subject focusing on civic responsibilities and politics
Canada	Grade 10 (Age ~15–16)	Civics and Citizenship	Varies by province; Ontario makes it compulsory in Grade 10
Finland	Secondary	Social Studies	Law and civic rights taught as part of Social Studies
Australia	Grade 3–10 (Age 8–16)	Civics and Citizenship	Compulsory in Australian Curriculum
China	Primary to Secondary	Morality and Rule of Law	Moral and legal education starts from primary school
Bangladesh	Secondary	(Civics)	Basic civic education, not fully legal education

3.4 How Inclusion of Legal Education in Secondary Schools Can Help Reduce Crime in Bangladesh:

The integration of legal education in secondary schools holds immense potential to reduce crime in Bangladesh. By equipping young learners with knowledge of the law, rights, responsibilities, and ethical principles, legal education can shape behavior, empower resistance to criminal influence, and foster responsible citizenship. Below is an elaborated discussion of how such inclusion can contribute to crime prevention.

1. Enhancing Awareness of Legal Boundaries and Consequences

Introducing legal education at the secondary level makes students aware of the legal boundaries within which they must operate. They learn that criminal acts carry specific penalties and repercussions.

This awareness acts as a deterrent because when students understand the consequences such as arrest, detention, or legal sanctions, they are less likely to commit offences knowingly. Knowledge of laws concerning theft, assault, cybercrimes, and juvenile delinquency can have a preventative effect, especially in urban and semi-urban areas where such crimes are more frequent.³³

2. Fostering Moral and Ethical Development

Legal education contributes significantly to the moral and ethical development of students. It teaches the values that underpin the legal system, such as justice, fairness, equality, and human dignity. By learning about laws that protect vulnerable groups and promote fairness, students internalize societal values and develop a strong moral compass. This, in turn, leads to self-regulation and respect for others rights. Students become more conscious of right and wrong and are better equipped to make responsible decisions.³⁴

3. Reducing Juvenile Delinquency

Juvenile delinquency is a growing concern in Bangladesh due to socio-economic challenges, lack of supervision, and peer pressure. Legal education can intervene early by making students aware of what constitutes delinquent behavior and the legal consequences that follow. When students understand that actions like vandalism, drug use, or violence carry legal repercussions, they are less likely to engage in such behavior. Studies show that adolescents with legal awareness are more likely to avoid activities that could lead to arrest or court involvement.³⁵

³³ Manzoor Ahmed et al, Education Watch Report 2018: Quality with Equity (CAMPE, Dhaka 2018)

³⁴ Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), Education Watch Report 2019: Rights in the Classroom (CAMPE, Dhaka 2019).

³⁵ Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS), Education Sector Performance Review 2020 (Ministry of Education, Dhaka 2020)

4. Empowering Students to Resist Peer Pressure and Crime

Legal education empowers students with the confidence and knowledge to resist illegal suggestions from peers. They become more capable of identifying unlawful situations and have the vocabulary and awareness to seek help from appropriate authorities.

This empowerment is particularly crucial in preventing youth from becoming involved in gang activities, drug abuse, and bullying, all of which are increasing among school-aged children in both urban and rural areas of Bangladesh.³⁶

5. Promoting Law-Abiding Citizenship

Understanding the structure of the legal system, the rights of citizens, and the importance of obeying the law nurtures responsible and active citizenship. Legal education encourages students to respect laws and institutions, participate in community decisions, and act in accordance with democratic principles. A population that is legally informed is more likely to cooperate with law enforcement and support the justice system, thus creating a law-abiding culture from the ground up.³⁷

6. Facilitating Early Intervention and Prevention

Legal education acts as an early warning and prevention mechanism. Teachers and educators can identify students at risk of engaging in delinquent behavior through classroom discussions and legal role-playing activities. This early detection allows for timely intervention through counselling or parental involvement. Furthermore, knowledge of laws related to bullying, harassment, sexual abuse, and cybercrime helps students recognize risky behavior early and avoid becoming victims or perpetrators.³⁸

7. Breaking the Cycle of Legal Ignorance

A large number of adolescents in Bangladesh grow up unaware of their legal rights and responsibilities. This ignorance often results in unintentional law-breaking or being exploited by others. Legal education breaks this cycle by ensuring that students have at least a basic understanding of how the legal system functions, their rights as minors, and

What protections they are entitled to. This awareness helps reduce vulnerability and exploitation, especially for students in disadvantaged or marginalized communities.³⁹

8. Reducing Gender-Based and Social Crimes

Gender-based violence, sexual harassment, dowry, child marriage, and other social crimes are rampant in many parts of Bangladesh. Legal education empowers students especially girls to

³⁶ UNICEF Bangladesh, *Legal Literacy and Child Empowerment in Education* (UNICEF Bangladesh, Dhaka 2021).

³⁷ Ministry of Education (Bangladesh), *National Education Policy 2010* (Ministry of Education, Dhaka 2010).

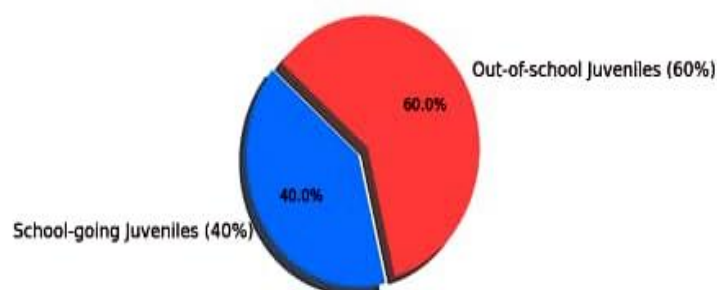
³⁸ Ministry of Education (Bangladesh), *ICT in Education Policy 2019* (Ministry of Education, Dhaka 2019).

³⁹ Claudia Dalbert and Hedvig Sallay, *The Justice Motive in Adolescence and Young Adulthood: Origins and Consequences* (Routledge 2004).

understand and assert their rights. Knowledge of laws such as the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, Dowry Prohibition Act, and Child Marriage Restraint Act allows students to report abuse and seek legal protection. This can lead to a cultural shift where young people stand against injustice and support gender equality and social harmony.⁴⁰

3.5. Juvenile Delinquency and Educational Disengagement: A Comparative Analysis (2022–2024):

Juvenile delinquency, defined as criminal or antisocial behavior by individuals under the age of 18, has increasingly become a pressing issue in Bangladesh. Between 2022 and 2024, statistical data and case studies reveal a worrying connection between educational disengagement and the likelihood of juveniles engaging in criminal activities. This section examines the role of school attendance in either mitigating or enabling juvenile crimes, using national arrest records and institutional reports.



Crime Tendency Among School-going vs Out-of-school Juveniles in Bangladesh

Explanation:

This pie chart compares the rate of criminal involvement among school-going and out-of-school juveniles in Bangladesh. The data suggests that:

#60% of juvenile offenders were found to be out-of-school at the time of their arrest. These youths had either dropped out or had never been enrolled in any educational institution.

#The remaining 40% of juvenile offenders were currently enrolled, with the majority attending secondary-level institutions (classes 6–10).

The data clearly indicates that educational institutions can act as protective environments, deterring juvenile involvement in crime. However, school attendance alone is not sufficient. The significant percentage (40%) of student-offenders highlights that even within formal educational

⁴⁰ Md. Zahidul Islam, Shammi Akter, Md. Sobur Hossain, and Nishat Tasnim, 'The Impact of Familial and Economic Factors on Juvenile Delinquency in Bangladesh' (2024).

settings; students may lack the necessary moral guidance, legal awareness, and psychosocial support to resist criminal influences.

This suggests that mere enrollment is not enough; quality of education, integration of legal literacy, access to counseling, and school monitoring mechanisms are critical factors

3.6 Feasibility of Curriculum Integration of Legal Education at Secondary Level in Bangladesh.

Integrating legal education into the secondary school curriculum in Bangladesh is both a necessary and a feasible step toward addressing juvenile delinquency and enhancing civic awareness among adolescents. Although the existing NCTB-approved curriculum is already dense, the introduction of basic legal concepts does not require a complete overhaul. Instead, legal education can be incorporated as a module within existing subjects such as Social Science or Civics. This model has already been successfully implemented in countries like Finland, where students learn about laws, rights, and civic duties through integrated civic education from lower secondary levels⁴¹. One of the primary challenges in Bangladesh is the lack of trained legal educators at school level. However, short-term teacher training programs, supported by government and NGOs, can equip current Social Science teachers to deliver legal content effectively. For example, a pilot initiative by Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) showed that after legal awareness training, both teachers and students demonstrated improved understanding of child rights and legal responsibilities⁴². Moreover, such integration aligns with Bangladesh's National Education Policy 2010, which promotes life-oriented and value-based education⁴³. Therefore, with minimal adjustments, strong institutional support, and phased implementation, legal education can be feasibly introduced into secondary schools, fostering a more law-conscious and responsible youth.

3.7 Relevant National Laws and International Conventions Supporting the Inclusion of Legal Education in Secondary Schools of Bangladesh

The integration of legal education into the secondary education system as a crime prevention strategy in Bangladesh can be significantly reinforced by both national legal frameworks and international conventions. These legal instruments highlight the importance of education in shaping responsible citizens and preventing juvenile delinquency. The following laws and conventions are particularly relevant:

⁴¹ Ministry of Education and Culture (Finland), Civic and Citizenship Education in Finland (2019) <https://okm.fi/en/frontpage> accessed 2 July 2025.

⁴² Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), Legal Literacy Initiative Report 2022, Dhaka, Bangladesh (on file with author).

⁴³ Ministry of Education (Bangladesh), National Education Policy 2010, <https://moedu.gov.bd> accessed 2 July 2025.

1. National Legal Frameworks:

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (1972): Article 17 of the Constitution mandates free and compulsory education, while Article 11 emphasizes the development of a democratic society based on rule of law. Including legal education in schools upholds these constitutional commitments by fostering legal awareness and civic responsibility among students.⁴⁴

The Children Act, 2013: This Act focuses on the protection, development, and rehabilitation of children, and stresses the importance of child-friendly education to prevent delinquency. Legal education can serve as a proactive tool under this law to raise awareness and reduce juvenile crime.⁴⁵

The National Education Policy, 2010: The policy highlights moral and civic education. Integrating legal education aligns with the policy's goals of developing law-abiding, responsible future citizens.⁴⁶

2. International Conventions and Treaties:

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 1989: Articles 28 and 29 of the UNCRC emphasize the right to education and the goals of education, including the development of respect for human rights and legal systems. Bangladesh ratified the UNCRC and is therefore obliged to ensure that education fosters understanding of laws and responsibilities.⁴⁷

United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules), 1985: Rule 1.1 and Rule 5 of the Beijing Rules underscore the need for preventive measures such as legal education and social awareness to address juvenile delinquency.⁴⁸

UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development (ESD): This framework promotes education that encourages values such as justice, peace, and human rights. Legal education is an essential component of ESD, contributing to crime prevention and social harmony.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh 1972, arts 11, 17.

⁴⁵ The Children Act 2013 (Bangladesh), ss 3, 4, 40.

⁴⁶ National Education Policy 2010 (Bangladesh), Sections 2.2, 3.5.

⁴⁷ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, arts 28, 29.

⁴⁸ UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (Beijing Rules) 1985, rr 1.1, 5.

⁴⁹ UNESCO, 'Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives' (UNESCO 2017).

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological framework adopted to investigate the potential of incorporating legal education within the secondary school curriculum as a strategy to reduce crime in Bangladesh. It details the research design, study area, target population, sampling techniques, data collection tools, data analysis procedures, and ethical considerations. A mixed-methods approach was employed to obtain both measurable data and contextual understanding of the issue.

4.2 Research Design

The study adopted a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This method enabled the triangulation of data and enhanced the credibility and depth of the findings. Quantitative data were gathered through structured questionnaires administered to students, parents, and teachers, while qualitative insights were collected through interviews with legal professionals. The mixed-methods design was chosen to capture a comprehensive understanding of how legal education may influence crime prevention.

4.3 Study Area and Target Population

The research was conducted in selected secondary schools in Dhaka.

The target population included:

1. Secondary school students (Classes 6–10),
2. Parents of these students,
3. Secondary-level teachers,
4. Legal professionals (lawyers, judicial officers, and legal educators).

This population was chosen because they are directly or indirectly associated with youth education, guidance, and legal awareness.

4.4 Sampling Strategy

A multi-stage sampling method was employed.

Purposive sampling was used to select schools that varied in type.

Stratified random sampling was applied within schools to select students from each class level (6 to 10), ensuring representation across gender and academic streams.

Convenience and purposive sampling were used for selecting parents and teachers.

Expert purposive sampling was applied to select legal professionals based on their knowledge, experience, and availability.

4.5 Data Collection Methods

4.5.1 Primary Data

Primary data were collected using:

Structured Questionnaires: Distributed among students, parents, and teachers, including both closed-ended (Likert scale, multiple choice) and open-ended questions to gather quantifiable and qualitative feedback on knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions regarding law and crime.

4.5.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data were sourced from:

1. Academic journals and articles,
2. Legal reports and policy documents from BLAST, Ain o Salish Kendra, UNICEF, and Ministry of Education,
3. Newspaper reports and online portals provide statistical trends in youth crime and legal awareness programs in Bangladesh.

These secondary sources helped contextualize the field data and identify trends and gaps in the existing legal education framework.

4.6 Techniques of Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentages, mean scores, frequency distributions) to summarize responses and identify patterns.

Qualitative data from open-ended survey responses and interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis, identifying recurring themes and opinions related to:

1. Perceived link between legal education and crime prevention,
2. Feasibility of integrating legal education into school curricula,
3. Challenges and recommendations from stakeholders.

All qualitative data were coded manually to maintain authenticity and ensure meaningful interpretation.

4.7 Ethical Considerations

The research adhered to standard ethical practices:

1. Informed consent was obtained from all participants.
2. Participation was entirely voluntary with the right to withdraw at any time,
3. Anonymity and confidentiality of all data were ensured,
4. No sensitive or harmful questions were included in the instruments,
5. Ethical clearance was obtained from the relevant academic authority prior to data collection.

4.8 Limitations of the Study

Despite best efforts, the study had certain limitations:

1. The study was geographically limited to selected schools in Dhaka, which may affect the generalizability of findings to all regions of Bangladesh.
2. Time constraints and logistical challenges restricted a larger sample size and wider coverage.
3. Some legal professionals were unavailable for interviews, limiting expert diversity.

However, these limitations were mitigated by careful sampling, methodological rigor, and triangulation of data.

This chapter provided a detailed description of the methodological approach undertaken in this study. The chosen mixed-methods design facilitated a rich and balanced understanding of stakeholders' perspectives regarding the integration of legal education in secondary schools and its potential to reduce juvenile crime in Bangladesh. The next chapter presents and interprets the findings derived from the field data.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Findings

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected from three secondary schools in Dhaka. The study used a mixed-method approach, and the primary data was gathered from students, teachers, and guardians. The objective was to assess the current level of legal awareness among students and to evaluate public perception regarding the inclusion of legal education in the secondary school curriculum.

5.1 Respondent Overview

Respondent Group	Number Surveyed
Students	40
Guardians	15
Teachers	10
Legal Experts	5

5.2 Key Findings

1. Lack of Legal Awareness among Students

Around 80% of the students reported having little to no understanding of laws.

Most students could only name a few severe crimes like murder and rape, but could not define them accurately.

When asked about basic legal processes or rights (e.g., where to seek help in case of harassment or what the punishment is for drug possession), the majority of students were unaware.

Finding: 32 out of 40 students (80%) had poor legal knowledge, especially regarding basic rights, criminal penalties, and legal processes.

2. Guardians' Perception

About 73% of guardians expressed concern that their children had no exposure to legal knowledge in school.

Many of them supported the idea of including Law and Crime Education as a subject to build awareness and responsibility.

Finding: 11 out of 15 guardians ($\approx 73\%$) believed law education should be introduced in schools.

3. Teachers' Opinions

Almost all teachers (9 out of 10) strongly supported the inclusion of legal education as part of the curriculum.

Teachers reported that students often confuse social rules with legal rights and lack the skills to identify or act against injustice.

Finding: 90% of teachers believe that law as a subject will help students understand their rights and duties.

4. Consensus on Introducing Legal Education

Across all respondent groups, the majority opinion favored the introduction of legal education at the secondary level.

Group	% in Favor of legal Education
Students	75%
Guardians	73%
Teachers	90%
Legal Experts	70%

5.3 Thematic Analysis

From the open-ended questions and interviews, the following themes emerged:

Ignorance Leads to Vulnerability: Students lacking legal knowledge are more susceptible to exploitation, misinformation, and criminal influence.

Desire for Practical Knowledge: Respondents emphasized that education should not only focus on traditional subjects but also equip students to face real-world legal challenges.

Need for Preventive Education: Many respondents stated that learning about laws from a young age could prevent future criminal behavior.

5.4 Visual Presentation

Figure 1: Student Awareness of Legal Concepts

Indicator	Percentage
Aware of major crimes	80%
Able to define legal terms	20%
Know legal punishment details	15%
Know where to seek legal help	50%

Figure 2: Support for Introducing Legal Education

Stakeholder Group	% Supporting Legal Education
Students	75%
Guardians	73%
Teachers	90%
Legal Experts	70%

5.5 Summary of Findings

The findings clearly reveal a significant lack of legal knowledge among students, which can potentially lead to unintentional legal violations or vulnerability to injustice. A large majority of all stakeholders – students, guardians, teachers, and legal professionals – support the inclusion of law and crime education at the secondary level as a preventive and empowering strategy.

Chapter 6: Interpretation of Findings

This chapter offers an in-depth interpretation of the key findings, aligning them with the research objectives. The study primarily sought to assess the extent of legal awareness among secondary school students in Bangladesh and to understand the perceptions of stake holders including students, guardians, teachers, and legal experts regarding the inclusion of legal education in the secondary school curriculum. The responses collected reveal a range of insights that shed light on the current educational deficiencies and the broader societal demand for legal literacy.

6.1 Students' Perspectives and What They Reflect

A significant portion of student respondents approximately 80% demonstrated a lack of basic legal awareness. Although many could name serious crimes like murder and rape, their understanding of these offences was largely superficial. Few were able to explain the legal definitions, consequences, or the procedural steps to follow when witnessing or experiencing such incidents.

This widespread lack of awareness indicates that secondary school students are ill-equipped to navigate real-life legal situations. It reflects an educational gap where academic knowledge in traditional subjects takes precedence, while critical life skills such as understanding rights, responsibilities, and legal protections remain neglected. The findings underscore vulnerability among youth that may expose them to manipulation, false allegations, or even unintentional criminal behavior due to ignorance of the law.

6.2 Guardians' Views and Emerging Parental Concerns

Around 73% of guardians acknowledged that their children lacked legal knowledge and expressed a strong preference for the integration of basic legal education into the school curriculum. Their responses reveal a deep concern for their children's preparedness to face legal and social challenges beyond the classroom.

Guardians appear to perceive legal education not merely as an academic addition but as a protective necessity. Their support represents a shift in public expectation an emerging awareness that legal literacy is essential in today's complex society to safeguard the next generation. Parents are increasingly seeking proactive measures from the education system to prepare their children for responsible and lawful citizenship.

6.3 Teachers' Insights on Classroom Realities

Nearly 90% of the teachers expressed strong approval for introducing legal education at the secondary level. They observed that many students struggle to distinguish between moral wrongdoing and legal offences. Students often lack the confidence to speak up when mistreated, and they are unfamiliar with how to seek help or report criminal conduct through formal channels.

The educators' responses point to a moral and civic vacuum within the current system. Their support suggests that legal education could play a formative role in shaping students' sense of justice, discipline, and social responsibility. Teachers see the subject not only as a means of imparting knowledge but also as a platform to foster civic engagement and ethical maturity.

6.4 Legal Experts' Evaluations and Cautions

Approximately 70% of legal experts supported the integration of legal education into the secondary school system. They emphasized that ignorance of legal norms is a major contributing factor to juvenile offences. They argued that early legal education could help curb minor crimes and instill a long-term respect for the law.

However, the support among legal professionals was not unanimous. A few experts refrained from expressing a strong opinion, while some raised critical concerns regarding the practical challenges of implementation. They questioned how the system would accommodate the new subject, particularly in the absence of trained legal educators at the secondary level. Concerns were also raised about the recruitment and training of specialized teachers and the risk of misinforming students if law is taught by unqualified personnel.

These nuanced perspectives reflect both strong endorsement and practical foresight. While the majority recognizes legal education as a preventive tool against future criminal behavior, there is a concurrent call for strategic planning to overcome institutional and logistical challenges.

6.5 Collective Insights and Cross-Stakeholder Consensus

Despite varying degrees of enthusiasm, a strong consensus emerged across all respondent groups: the absence of legal awareness among secondary school students is a significant gap that must be addressed. There was broad agreement that incorporating legal education could empower students to make informed decisions, protect themselves from legal risks, and develop into law-conscious citizens.

This consensus lends weight to the argument for curriculum reform. The data suggest that legal education could serve dual purposes prevention of juvenile crime and promotion of civic responsibility. Moreover, the stakeholders' collective voices underline the need for a contextually relevant, well-structured legal education program tailored to the realities of the secondary school environment.

The interpretation of findings confirms a widespread recognition of the value of legal education at the secondary level. Students' vulnerabilities, guardians' concerns, teachers' classroom experiences, and legal experts' assessments collectively build a compelling case for the inclusion of legal education. However, the implementation process must be handled thoughtfully, addressing structural challenges such as teacher availability, curriculum development, and pedagogical training. If executed properly, legal education has the potential to become a transformative force in promoting lawful behavior and reducing youth crime in Bangladesh.

Chapter 7: Recommendations and Conclusion

7.1 Recommendations

7.1.1 Inclusion of Legal Education in Secondary Curriculum

It is imperative that legal education be made a compulsory part of the national curriculum at the secondary school level. This inclusion would not only promote legal awareness but also foster responsible citizenship and reduce tendencies toward juvenile delinquency. Therefore:

1. The Ministry of Education should introduce a separate subject on Basic Legal Studies for students from Class VIII to Class X.
2. The curriculum should be age-appropriate, using simple language and real-life case examples.
3. The subject should include foundational legal topics such as Fundamental Rights, Duties of Citizens, Juvenile Justice, Cybercrime Awareness, Women and Child Rights, and Consequences of Criminal Offences.
4. Legal education should be graded and examined, just like other academic subjects, to ensure seriousness among students.

7.1.2 Beyond the Textbook – Practical Legal Education

Introducing legal education in schools should not be limited to books only. To make students truly aware of the real-world consequences of crime, the following experiential and visual methods should be incorporated:

Workshops and Seminars

1. Interactive workshops conducted by legal experts, police officers, and social workers should be arranged at least once per academic term.
2. Topic-based seminars like “Cyber Crime Awareness”, “Consequences of Drug Abuse”, or “Know Your Rights” will foster deeper engagement.

Court and Jail Visits

Educational field visits to local courts, police stations, or even permission-based jail visits will help students visualize real-life legal procedures.

Dramatization and Role-play

Schools can organize mock trials and dramas portraying the journey of a juvenile delinquent from arrest to court proceedings to jail life and its impact on family and future. Visual learning techniques such as videos, animated clips, and documentaries should be introduced to show how justice is administered and how crimes affect victims and offenders alike.

Psychological and Moral Guidance

Legal education should also embed moral values, emphasizing empathy, ethics, and responsibility. Teachers should discuss how a single mistake can ruin not just the individual's life but also bring long-term consequences to their family and society.

7.1.3 Overcoming Challenges in Implementation

It is expected that introducing legal education into the secondary curriculum will face certain institutional and cultural challenges. Below are practical strategies to address these obstacles:

Lack of Trained Teachers

The government should launch specialized teacher training programs on legal education in collaboration with law universities. In-service training modules should be designed and provided to selected secondary school teachers.

Curriculum Overload

Legal education can initially be introduced as a half-credit elective or integrated within subjects like Social Science, Moral Education, or Civics to reduce pressure. Content should be interactive and concise, not legalistic or overly academic.

Budgetary Constraints

Collaborations with non-governmental legal aid organizations and development partners (such as UNICEF, Save the Children, BRAC) can provide resource support for training, materials, and visual tools.

7.2 Conclusion

This study critically examined the role of legal education in reducing crime among secondary school students in Bangladesh. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research explored the existing level of legal awareness among students and assessed stakeholder perspectives on introducing legal education into the secondary curriculum. The findings revealed that the lack of structured legal instruction in the current education system has left students vulnerable to various legal risks, including juvenile delinquency, cybercrimes, and drug abuse. Both students and relevant stakeholders including teachers, guardians, and legal professionals strongly supported the inclusion of legal education, citing its potential to build responsible, law-abiding citizens. The research also aligned itself with Sutherland's Differential Association Theory, emphasizing how legal knowledge during adolescence can counteract exposure to criminal influences within peer groups and social circles.

Drawing inspiration from global practices in countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, Finland, and China, the study argues for a comprehensive, interactive legal education framework. In these countries, legal awareness starts from an early age through not only textbooks but also seminars, workshops, field visits, visual simulations, and mock trials. The study strongly advocates that Bangladesh adopt a similar multidimensional strategy: introducing legal education as a compulsory subject in the secondary curriculum, complemented by experiential learning opportunities. Visual exposure to the real-life consequences of crime such as arrest procedures, judicial trials, and the emotional toll on families was found to be particularly effective in shaping student understanding and empathy. Recommendations included subject-wise integration, development of simplified legal textbooks, collaboration with law enforcement and NGOs, and teacher training modules to ensure proper delivery.

While acknowledging potential challenges such as teacher shortages, curriculum overload, and financial constraints, the study provides actionable strategies to overcome these hurdles. These include phased implementation, piloting in selected schools, seeking partnerships with legal aid organizations, and developing cost-effective training programs. Ultimately, this research concludes that integrating legal education into secondary schools is not just a curricular innovation, but a preventive intervention against rising youth crime. By equipping students with knowledge, critical thinking, and moral reasoning, legal education can empower the next generation to build a just, equitable, and law-conscious society. Therefore, legal literacy should be treated as a foundational component of nation-building and crime prevention in Bangladesh.

Bibliography

1. Books

Akers RL, *Social Learning and Social Structure: A General Theory of Crime and Deviance* (Routledge 2009).

Becker G, *Crime and Punishment: An Economic Approach* (University of Chicago Press 1968).

Braithwaite J, *Restorative Justice and Responsive Regulation* (2002).

Dalbert C and Sallay H, *The Justice Motive in Adolescence and Young Adulthood: Origins and Consequences* (Routledge 2004).

Hirschi T, *Causes of Delinquency* (University of California Press 1969).

Macfarlane J, *Legal Education and Professionalism* (Oxford University Press 1992).

Rahman A and others, *Education in Bangladesh: Policy and Practice* (Dhaka University Press 2010).

Starkey H, *Citizenship Education, Democracy and the Global Dimension* (Institute of Education 2005).

Sutherland EH, *Principles of Criminology* (4th edn, J.B. Lippincott 1947).

Sutherland EH, *Principles of Criminology* (Lippincott 1960).

2. Journal Articles and Research Papers

Amin R, 'Juvenile Justice and Legal Awareness in Schools' (2024) 14(1) *Dhaka Legal Journal* 33–45.

Begum S and Ahmed A, 'Urban Slums and Crime' (2015) *Journal of South Asian Development Studies*.

Chowning JT and others, 'Civic Education and Student Engagement' (2012) 14(3) *Journal of Civic Learning* 45–61.

Cohen LE and Felson M, 'Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach' (1979) 44(4) *American Sociological Review* 588.

Gane C and Huang L, 'Legal Literacy through Curriculum Innovation' (2017) 5(1) *Global Legal Education Review* 33–47.

Goldsmith M, 'Street Law: Legal Literacy as Empowerment' (2006) 35(3) *Journal of Law and Education* 437.

Harris R and Jones S, 'Citizenship and Legal Literacy: The Role of Schools' (2017) 43(2) British Educational Research Journal 259.

Hauser D, 'Youth Civic Engagement and Legal Awareness' (2000) CIRCLE Working Paper Series.

Islam A, 'Legal Literacy as a Foundation for National Progress' (2022) Bangladesh Education Review.

Islam MZ et al, 'The Impact of Familial and Economic Factors on Juvenile Delinquency in Bangladesh' (2024).

Kamvounias P, 'Civics and Legal Education in Australia' (1994) 23(2) Journal of Law and Education 231–245.

Khuda KE, 'Juvenile Delinquency and the Justice System in Bangladesh' (2019).

Li L and Sun W, 'Legal Awareness and School Reform in East Asia' (2022) Asia Pacific Education Review.

Lochner L and Moretti E, 'The Effect of Education on Crime' (2004) American Economic Review.

Machin S, Marie O, Vujić S, 'The Crime Reducing Effect of Education' (2011) The Economic Journal.

Mahmud HM and Rabbi MF, 'Inclusion of Legal Education in Secondary and Higher Secondary Education in Bangladesh: An Appraisal' (2025) 5(1) Indonesian Journal of Education (INJOE) 9–24.

Torney-Purta J and others, 'Trust in Government-Related Institutions and Civic Engagement among Adolescents' (2004) Civic Education Longitudinal Studies.

3. Relevant Laws and International Instruments

The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh 1972, arts 11, 17.

The Children Act 2013 (Bangladesh), ss 3, 4, 40.

National Education Policy 2010 (Bangladesh), Sections 2.2, 3.5.

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, arts 28, 29.

UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (Beijing Rules) 1985, rr 1.1, 5.

UNESCO, 'Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives' (UNESCO 2017).

UNESCO, Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action (UNESCO 2016).

UNESCO, Global Education Monitoring Report: Education for People and Planet (UNESCO Publishing 2016).

UNICEF Bangladesh, Legal Literacy and Child Empowerment in Education (2021).

UNODC, Education for Justice: Impact Assessment Report (2019).

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Education for Justice: Good Practices and Lessons Learned (2020).

United Nations, 'Sustainable Development Goals – Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions' (2015) <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16>.

4. Reports and Policy Documents

Ahmed M et al, Education Watch Report 2018: Quality with Equity (CAMPE, Dhaka 2018).

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), Juvenile Justice Status Review, 2023.

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), Legal Literacy Initiative Report 2022, Dhaka, Bangladesh (on file with author).

BANBEIS, Education Sector Performance Review 2020 (Ministry of Education, Dhaka 2020).

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), Youth Development in Bangladesh: Challenges and Opportunities (2020).

CAMPE, Education Watch Report 2019: Rights in the Classroom.

Campbell D, Civic Education in the United States: Results from the IEA Civic Education Study (IEA 2006).

Daily Star Report, 'Legal Literacy for Youth Urged by Experts' (The Daily Star, 2023) <https://thedailystar.net>.

Ministry of Education (Bangladesh), National Education Policy 2010, <https://moedu.gov.bd> accessed 2 July 2025.

Ministry of Education and Culture (Finland), Civic and Citizenship Education in Finland (2019) <https://okm.fi/en/frontpage> accessed 2 July 2025.

Ministry of Education, ICT in Education Policy 2019.

NCERT, Guidelines on Human Rights and Civic Education (Central Board of Secondary Education, India 2018).

OHCHR, 'SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions' (United Nations 2023)
<https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal16>.

UNICEF Bangladesh, Adolescent and Youth Wellbeing in Urban Slums (2019).

UNICEF Bangladesh, Children Without Classrooms: Risk Factors and Vulnerabilities, 2022.

'Include Legal Education in School Curriculum' (The Daily Observer, 2024)
<https://observerbd.com>.

'Legal Education for the Future' (Harvard Law School Center on the Legal Profession, 2023)
<https://clp.law.harvard.edu>.