

Examination and Reform of Legal Practical Teaching System under the Background of Industry-Education Integration

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Abstract: In an environment where industry and education are integrated, the core objective of the construction of new liberal arts and higher education reform is to enhance students' practical abilities and achieve seamless alignment between talent cultivation and societal needs. Therefore, it is crucial to establish a scientific operation mechanism and an effective security system to facilitate the reconstruction of the legal practice teaching system in colleges and universities. From the perspective of "production-education integration," this paper proposes a novel understanding of the integration of production and education within the legal practice teaching system. Building upon this new understanding, the issues related to "production" and "teaching" in the integration of production and education are examined, and problems such as the absence of an integration dynamic mechanism, difficulty in guaranteeing cooperation funds, insufficient "double-qualified" teachers, and the lack of a security evaluation system are analyzed and reformed. Seizing the new opportunities presented by the integration of production and education, we aim to construct a more comprehensive operation and guarantee system to enhance the effectiveness of practical legal teaching.

The crux of industry-education integration lies in the profound integration between the industrial and educational sectors, harnessing the strength of industry to provide a practical platform for cultivating talent in higher education institutions. Universities serve as the breeding ground for talent development, furnishing industries with top-notch talent. At present, the central objective of establishing new humanities disciplines and reforming higher education is to bolster students' practical abilities and achieve a seamless alignment between talent cultivation and societal needs. Introducing the concept of "industry-education integration" enables proactive responses to the opportunities and challenges brought about by informatization in legal education. It involves scrutinizing and reconstructing the legal practical teaching system, establishing scientific operational mechanisms, and effective guarantee systems. This approach holds significant practical significance for cultivating high-quality, versatile, and application-oriented legal professionals who are adaptable to the development demands of the contemporary era.

1. Understanding and Exposition of Industry-Education Integration in Legal Practical Teaching

1.1 Traditional Understanding of Industry-Education Integration

What is Industry-Education Integration? Some scholars, based on a static perspective, regard "production" as an abbreviation for industry and "teach" as an abbreviation for education. ^[1]In "Shuowen Jiezi," it is pointed out that "Birth is also referred to as production, and the impact of the aforementioned is also denominated as teaching." From a dynamic perspective, "production" should have three levels of meanings: for enterprises, it is industry; for universities, it is the collaborative production process between schools and enterprises; for students, it is the process of practical production. As for "teach," on a macro level, it should refer to the entire process related to education, while on a micro level, it only includes the education industry.

In the context of industry-education integration, the "production" element does not merely signify internships. Although both involve varying degrees of direct practical engagement for students, they differ fundamentally. Firstly, industry-education integration emphasizes comprehensive enhancement of students' learning and economic benefits, with a primary focus on economic efficiency. Internships, on the other hand, primarily aim at improving students' practical skills, extending learning beyond the classroom.

Secondly, industry-education integration emphasizes mutual learning and promotion between enterprises and universities, aiming for win-win cooperation between academia and industry, leading to the cyclic upgrading of industry-education development. In contrast, enterprises play a supporting role in the internship model, primarily aimed at enhancing students' knowledge, skills, and experience.

Lastly, industry-education integration focuses on the integration of production, academia, and research, with universities and enterprises engaging in platform-based cooperation, sharing information, and efficiently integrating social resources. Internships, however, follow the traditional model of separation between academia and industry, with limited communication and cooperation between universities and enterprises.

1.2 Interpretation of Legal Practical Teaching System in the Context of Industry-Education Integration

Unlike traditional engineering fields, law is a highly practical discipline that combines humanities education with professional training.^[2] Consequently, within the framework of industry-education integration, it is challenging to merely replicate the training methods for engineering talent in legal practical teaching. In terms of career paths in law, there are primarily three directions: judicial, other legal departments, public service units, and law firms. For students aiming to enter law firms and enterprises, it may be prudent to reference the industry-education integration systems in engineering disciplines to directly align industry needs with professional training. However, for students intending to pursue careers in the judiciary or other legal institutions, such as through civil service examinations, merely replicating the teaching methods used in engineering disciplines is not feasible. A new interpretation of the industry-education integration system must be provided. The practical demands of legal education determine the positioning and objectives of legal talent cultivation. Establishing a legal education model oriented toward legal professional education is in line with the current realities of Chinese society and the national interest.^[3] Therefore, in the context of industry-education integration, practical legal teaching in law should prioritize the cultivation of professional skills. This ensures that graduates are proficient in practical skills upon entering the workforce, thereby shortening the training period for employers

and reducing costs.

2. Reevaluation of the Legal Practical Teaching System in the Context of Industry-Education Integration

2.1 The integration of "production" of production and education

2.1.1 The fusion power mechanism is lacking

In reality, there are disparities in the institutional functions and structures among various stakeholders, each with distinct interests and demands. This leads to a scarcity of practical teaching opportunities and an imperfect practical teaching model within the industry-education integration environment. Furthermore, it impedes the government's efforts to advance industry-education integration. Despite strong support for industry-education integration implementation, there is a lack of policy guidance at the macro level. In the absence of clear and actionable documents, relevant institutions are hesitant to participate in industry-education integration. Within legal professional organizations and companies, there is a preference for hiring experienced individuals who can immediately assume their roles. Consequently, undergraduate law students participating in internships may have deficiencies in their professional knowledge and practical skills. Schools then need to invest considerable time in guiding these students, thus reducing the operational efficiency of the organizations involved.

2.1.2 The lack of secure cooperation funding poses a significant challenge

The sufficiency of funding is a crucial factor limiting the further advancement of industry-education integration. According to academic research, the investment in vocational education is markedly higher than that of general education. Globally, vocational education investment is generally considered to be 2.48 times that of general education.^[4] Taking school-enterprise collaboration as a case study, this represents the primary method of integrating production and education within Chinese universities. A variety of approaches exist between educational institutions and businesses, with one of the more prevalent being the research facility established collaboratively by both parties. The development of any such base necessitates substantial investments in human resources, materials, and financial assets. Currently, the government encourages and promotes cooperation between universities and enterprises. However, there has been no corresponding adjustment in terms of bonuses or fund distribution. However, law firms operate for profit, so legal training may not bring immediate returns and carries significant uncertainty.

2.2 The loophole of the "teaching" of the integration of production and education

2.2.1 "Double-qualified" teachers are weak

The cultivation of high-quality legal professionals hinges on the expertise of teachers. Collaboration between higher education institutions and relevant units and enterprises should focus on constructing a high-caliber "dual-teacher" faculty team. These educators should possess not only solid theoretical foundations but also practical research experience. However, the proportion of "dual-teacher" legal professionals in the faculty team as a whole is relatively low. Most of these professionals are occupied with teaching and research within legal disciplines while simultaneously facing pressure for career advancement. Consequently, students lack professional guidance during extracurricular and practical activities.^[5]

2.2.2 The absence of the guarantee and evaluation system

Evaluating the effectiveness of industry-education integration cannot be achieved without the support of quality assurance and assessment systems. Some scholars argue that, based on the current implementation of industry-education integration, various aspects of university-enterprise cooperation, such as faculty development, classroom teaching, laboratory construction, internship training, and graduation projects, lack quality standards and standardized management systems that align with the cultivation of applied talents.^[6] Although higher education institutions have established management systems for teaching, experiments, internships, and graduation theses (designs) in the field of law, there are still some issues in practical implementation. Currently, internships in higher education institutions are primarily organized by students themselves, with the school merely acting as a facilitator, making it challenging to ensure the quality of internships. For instance, in the case of graduation internships, students often face pressure to secure employment or have already interned at intended companies, rendering it difficult for the school to uniformly arrange internship outcomes.

3. The reform path of law practice teaching system under the background of industry and education integration

3.1 Establish a sound industry-education integration system to safeguard the interests of all stakeholders

In the course of collaboration among various stakeholders, a lack of institutional guarantees has led to a "fireplace effect" among government departments, judicial sectors, and enterprises. Despite investing significant financial and material resources into training, these institutions struggle to retain students, resulting in a decline in the propensity of these subjects to cooperate. To address this issue, educational institutions must assume a pivotal role. In consultation with multiple stakeholders, the production-education integration system must be continually refined and enriched. This is essential to the successful execution of the integration of production and education. Additionally, a robust system can provide relevant norms and procedures for talent development while clarifying the rights and responsibilities between universities and partnering subjects. This prevents ambiguity and multiple management in the integration of industry and education. Furthermore, to effectively mitigate the "fireplace effect" and augment the cooperation intentions of each cooperative unit, higher education institutions employ a targeted training method during admissions. Upon enrollment, each collaborating entity participates in the entire talent development process, including course instruction, graduation internships, and employment. They must adhere to the cooperation principle of "who invests, who benefits" to avoid the risks associated with the "fireplace effect" and facilitate the smooth execution of "integration of industry and education."

3.2 Provide cooperation funds and subsidies to improve the enthusiasm of school-enterprise integration

In the realm of industry-education integration, universities focus on talent development, while enterprises aim to maximize their unit profits. Consequently, addressing the current low enthusiasm for cooperation necessitates enhancing the intrinsic motivation of participating entities. This can be accomplished by aligning the incentives, conditions, and risks of university graduates' employment and entrepreneurship with targeted cooperation funding subsidy policies. Firstly, tax relief measures should be introduced. Enterprises invest significant human, material, and financial resources in student internships and practical training, which increases their burden. Tax incentives can motivate enterprises to engage in industry-education integration. Establishing a tax refund system for

university-enterprise cooperation can offset enterprises' expenses during collaboration and establish a corresponding cost compensation mechanism to stimulate enterprise enthusiasm. Secondly, special subsidies can be provided. A certain degree of special allowances can be granted based on the contributions made to the collaboration, thereby mitigating economic burdens. Thirdly, policy preferences can be extended. Enterprises actively participating in cooperation can be suitably rewarded, and their contributions can be publicized in mainstream media to foster a positive social image. Performance in industry-education integration serves as a crucial criterion for evaluating the quality of enterprises. Hence, it should be given proper consideration in enterprises' applications for subsidies, credit support, high-tech enterprise identification, bidding, and other aspects.

3.3 Strengthen the key role of teachers, and establish a "double teacher and double ability type" team

In order to cultivate high-quality talents, higher education institutions should foster "dual-qualified and dual-capable" teachers who possess strong teaching abilities and practical problem-solving skills. Firstly, it is crucial to establish a correct policy orientation, focusing on the development of "dual teachers and dual ability" educators, and promoting the integration of production and education. The implementation of classified management for teachers, establishment of an independent evaluation system for social service teachers, and development of professional title evaluation standards tailored for growth and improvement are necessary to enable "dual-skilled and dual-abled" teachers to effectively participate in the production-education integration. By taking proactive measures, young and middle-aged teachers can be guided and supported to gain practical experience through the qualification certificate examination. Secondly, a planned approach should be taken to strengthen teacher development, involving the selection of educators for training and practice in relevant government departments, courts, law firms, and other units. This process can also facilitate the integration of science and education, and enable communication with government, industry, and enterprises through research projects conducted by teachers, such as cross-cutting topics. Gaining an in-depth understanding of the industry's talent requirements and incorporating the latest research findings into the classroom can not only enhance teacher abilities but also provide feedback for teaching and improve the quality of instruction. Lastly, an open and flexible employment mechanism should be established, utilizing both full-time and part-time teachers while also employing experienced practical personnel with both theoretical and practical expertise from political enterprises to collaborate in building an efficient and high-quality "dual teachers and dual abilities" teaching force.

3.4 Innovate the form of talent training and optimize the talent evaluation system

Considering the current state of single-talent training, it is essential to establish a new "learning, researching, and creating" talent training model in the context of the integration of production and education. This can be achieved through the collaboration of "government, school, department, and enterprise" and innovation through various methods and channels. Firstly, we should develop a "three real and one extension" talent training system, facilitating the transformation of curriculum learning into practice and application, and expanding talent training methods. Secondly, the university should integrate "double innovation" teaching and talent training, maximizing the use of the school's innovation and entrepreneurship education platform, enhancing "Entrepreneurship Law Practice", in order to cultivate interdisciplinary talents with theoretical knowledge, practical ability, innovative spirit, and professional quality. Thirdly, the university should promote learning through competition, regularly organizing legal professional skills competitions, establishing various competition activities, encouraging students to actively participate, and enhancing their understanding of theoretical knowledge and practical ability during competitions.^[7] Fourthly, through the establishment of independent research courses, students are able to engage in research

activities during their free time, thereby enhancing their command of legal theories.

Students undertake internships in various units, with internship content and dedication differing accordingly. Schools should establish distinct talent training norms, emphasizing the distinctiveness and relevance of students' internship outcomes and performance. Maintaining positive connections with the internship units where students are placed, understanding students' specific performance during the internship process, enables accurate evaluation of their internship. Teachers of law, practice instructors, practice unit employees, and student practice supervisors should conduct a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of practice evaluation and talent training evaluation, integrating it with students' self-evaluation to ensure comprehensive talent training evaluation. For instance, the talent training evaluation system construction of the Law Department of the School of Culture and Tourism of Heihe University. At present, the talent evaluation mechanism is primarily based on graduation theses (design), supplemented by practical training and internships. Additionally, differentiated internship evaluation mechanisms are established for various internship subjects such as government departments, judicial organs, industry associations, and enterprises, with corresponding talent training standards formulated. This effectively mitigates the issue of one-sided and inaccurate internship evaluation.^[8]

In the process of constructing a socialist rule of law country, the effective implementation of legal practice teaching is crucial for nurturing high-quality legal professionals. Strengthening the practical teaching of "industry-education integration" is a key and challenging aspect of the reform of legal education in universities. Under the background of industry-education integration, higher education institutions, government regulatory departments, enterprises, or relevant legal institutions should actively participate, fully leverage their advantages, establish sound operational mechanisms and guarantee systems for practical teaching systems, and continuously promote industry-education integration to enhance the effectiveness of talent cultivation.

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