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Practicing Law for Students Through Legal Competitions

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Abstract: *The research identifies the increasing shift in legal education from theory-based curricula to practice-oriented methods, using competitions like moot courts, client consultations, and legal negotiations. The study combines qualitative and quantitative data through case studies, participant feedback, and experimental course designs to assess skill acquisition and student engagement. The research presents that legal competitions develop critical professional skills, such as oral advocacy, negotiation, and legal analysis, and foster resilience, teamwork, and effective communication. Moreover, structured coaching and preparation amplify these benefits, ensuring alignment with the needs of the professional legal community. The conclusion emphasizes integrating these competitions more formally into law curricula to balance theoretical and practical education, addressing gaps in traditional pedagogy while better preparing students for real-world human resources legal challenges.*

Keywords: *Legal Simulation; Practical Training; Advocacy Skills; Student Competitions; Coaching; Legal Education*

INTRODUCTION

Attractive and creative legal competitions, which can act as a bridge between theory and practice, help participants directly experience hypothetical situations, thereby improving their legal thinking ability and problem-solving ability in specific legal situations that are increasingly being held to become an effective tool for legal practice education, especially in developing legal human resources for society. Through competitions, learners are helped to consolidate and expand their knowledge, practice legal skills, create a competitive environment, and encourage research, learning, and practice of legal situations. Research shows that participating in legal competitions helps students improve their critical thinking, communication, and teamwork skills. Furthermore, students feel more confident in applying theory to practice. The results also showed that participants tended to receive better career opportunities after graduation, thanks to the experience and networking from the competitions. Legal competitions are an important tool in law education, helping students better prepare for careers in the legal field.

The paper uses qualitative research methods through surveys of different competitions to collect data on the experiences and outcomes of participating students. Besides, the article uses an empirical method, including description, comparison, and explanation, along with theoretical frameworks to analyze the effectiveness of legal competitions in education. The paper analyzes the role of legal competitions in educating and raising awareness and legal practice skills for participants. At the same time, surveying existing legal competition models, thereby evaluating the impact of legal competitions on the application of legal knowledge in practice, helping participants better understand the legal process, how to solve legal problems in daily life, etc. practicing legal skills, thereby recommending the development of legal

competitions to optimize the legal education process, ensure practicality and be associated with the demand for human resources in the legal profession of modern society.

The paper provides a solid theoretical basis and practical solutions to develop a legal practice education model through competitions, thereby improving the quality of legal education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Legal competitions have been held in many countries and have had a positive impact on improving participants' legal awareness and legal practice skills. Studies of mock trials at universities show that these competitions not only help law students improve their debate skills but also help them develop their ability to analyze and solve legal problems. Practicing law for students involves gaining practical experience in the legal field while still studying. This can include participating in moot court competitions (Bartenev et al. 2024), internships at law firms or legal organizations, legal clinics, and pro bono work. By engaging in these practical experiences, students can apply their legal knowledge in real-world situations, develop essential skills such as legal research, writing, and advocacy, and better understand the legal profession (Parsons 2018; Samorodova et al. 2023). Practicing law as a student helps prepare them for a successful career in the legal field by providing hands-on experience and networking opportunities (Samorodova et al. 2023).

Practical education of the legal profession through legal competitions is an innovative and attractive educational method to help students master law knowledge and develop practical skills in this field (Parsons 2018). "There is nothing better than mooting to test your oral advocacy and problem-solving skills, build your confidence, and ensure you can perform under pressure. These skills are highly transferable to everyday life and, hopefully, one day to careers as international legal professionals". These comments, made by a student who recently completed a moot competition, are typical of how law students describe their experiences in mooting competitions. In the interview, the student also highlighted other benefits she derived from the moot, mainly the "huge learning curve" and the "massive challenge to go from zero knowledge to argue [their] case in front of humanitarian law experts in court" (Bondies Win Accolades for Mooting and Student Support at Australian Law Students' Association Conference 2016).

Legal competition is not only competitive but also a platform to provide practical knowledge and skills to students, which plays an important role in developing and improving the quality of legal practice education (Parsons 2016). The legal competition creates a spirit of solidarity and consensus in the community. Students participating in the competition will compete and support and share knowledge. In a moot competition, the participating teams of students are provided with a hypothetical factual case that raises complex factual and legal issues. The facts will often involve an appeal of a fictional decision of a lower court. However, some moot competitions entail disputes in front of arbitral tribunals or courts with original jurisdiction. The teams must analyze and develop a deep knowledge and understanding of the facts of the case (Hayward 2014; Risse 2013). These are often complex and technical. Most competitions invite clarification questions from participants, and the answers to clarification questions compiled by the organizers often add significant facts to already voluminous factual

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problems (for example, in the Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Competition of 2016 (the Vis Moot), an additional 11 pages of facts were added to the original 53 pages (Twenty Third Annual Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Problem 2015). Students participating in the competition can learn from different opinions, perspectives, and effective legal practices.

Mooting is a practical legal exercise that mimics court or arbitration proceedings. It has been described as a discussion of a hypothetical case as an academic exercise (Wolski 2009) and as a specific form of simulation, "which enables students to practice and develop a range of professional skills by performing them rather than just learning about them. Law students learn through presenting the legal arguments in front of experts acting as competition judges or arbitrators, who interrupt and ask questions during the presentation of arguments" (Butler and Gygar 2012). Moots are frequently used as a form of assessment in law school, such as in-class moots within a specific subject (Wolski 2009). This article focuses on competitive mooting, where students voluntarily participate in externally organized moot competitions as selected team members. In this capacity, they officially represent their universities in national and international moot competitions.

Practicing the legal profession through legal competitions is an effective way for students and newcomers to hone their skills and apply the knowledge they have acquired in practice. Participating in legal competitions helps candidates practice the legal profession and improves the quality of officials and human resources. Participating in the competition will help candidates practice their skills, consolidate their knowledge, and discover their potential in law. Cassimatis and Billings (2016) point out that participating in mooting does not amount to vocational training; they particularly note that a broad range of transferable skills are developed. It is suggested that the learning outcomes derived from competitive mooting equipment graduates with high-level skills will give them an advantage in any profession, including the "new" legal practice (Pathak 2016). The skills developed in independent research, teamwork, and collaboration, the undertaking and successful completion of large volumes of work under stress and within time constraints while juggling other commitments, amount to significant personal skill development and growth transferable to any major professional or vocational projects. Nicolae (2015) opines that although the aim of a generalist degree appears to be in direct contradiction to a program that aims to produce "practice-ready" legal professionals, the contradiction is only an illustration. This is so because most, if not all, professions share similar requirements concerning the conduct of their members. Competitive mooting can play an important role in this endeavor. Some competitions are incorporated into the curriculum through electives. The first model appears to predominate in the US, although the incorporation of moots through upper-year students and moot competitions is also widespread. All law schools in Australia allow students to participate in moot competitions. This may be the only way students can participate in moots at some universities. Competitions may be intra-school, interschool, regional or state, interstate, national, and international.

The majority of the competitions are purely extra-curricular and not evaluated. However, some of them - the major international competitions - are treated as a choice, and students who successfully obtain one of the limited spots on the moot teams in these competitions are given

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credit and a grade as for any other course[1]. Accessing competitions held at home and abroad, from history to the present, with national, regional, and international competitions, the article analyzes the importance of realizing the legal profession through competitions. Competitions and challenges in practicing the legal profession and organizing legal competitions, thereby proposing solutions to build and improve the effectiveness of legal practice to meet the requirements of improving the quality of human resources in the legal industry.

Current studies have proven that legal education through competitions can help improve legal awareness, develop legal problem-solving skills, and improve learners' access to work after graduation. However, for these contests to be truly effective, there needs to be innovation in how they organize the content and form of the contest. It is necessary to have close coordination between educational agencies, legal organizations, and state agencies to develop this practical legal education model.

REQUIREMENTS AND TRENDS OF LEGAL PRACTICE EDUCATION

Aiming for practice and practical application: today's legal education needs to focus on providing opportunities for practical practice and application of knowledge to real-life situations. Learners must be trained to solve legal problems and apply knowledge to real work. Participate in real-life activities such as negotiations, coding legal documents, and even participating in simulated courts. The increased demands for lawyers to be involved in the "rain dance" and business development will continue to change the nature of the legal "profession" to the delivery of legal "services", and a change in the lawyer's professional identity from "wise counselor" to "slick marketer". The corporation of law firms will increase, and the increased "proletarianization" of lawyers will require adaptable and multi-talented legal professionals (Bagust 2013).

Diversifying teaching and learning methods: the trend of using methods such as problem-based learning, experiential learning, case-based learning, and technology in teaching to create a positive and engaging learning environment. Legal education often combines a variety of learning methods, such as hands-on learning, group work, interactive teaching, and experiential learning, to create a comprehensive and multidimensional learning experience. Adopting the hypothetical trial is an effective and balanced method of legal education, which is widely accepted in foreign educational institutions and is traditionally included in the curriculum (Fraser et al. 2013).

Legal education needs to focus on developing necessary practical skills for learners, such as communication skills, problem-solving, legal writing skills, the art of persuasion, and teamwork capacity, as well as developing legal thinking for students. This includes analyzing legal issues, reasoning logically, and presenting well-founded legal arguments. Qualitative research collects student feedback about their experiences in competitions like Willem C. Vis Moot through questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Qualitative responses, such as students'

[1]This seems to be a common approach for schools to integrate major mooting competitions into their curriculum. Competitions in this category include the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition, the ELSA Moot Court Competition on WTO Law, the Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot, and the International Maritime Law Arbitration Moot.

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feelings about improving critical thinking or facing failure, are quantified using Likert scales to assess their confidence and skill levels after participation.

Develop specialized training programs for special legal fields such as business law, international law, and technology law to meet the needs of the labor market, using technology in teaching and learning, such as the use of simulation software, mobile applications, and online platforms to create flexible and convenient learning environments useful for students. Implemented through pilot course design in programs such as "Client Consultation in English" pilot courses are designed based on case studies and student feedback. These courses are divided into stages: legal language training, interview practice, and analysis of simulated scenarios. The success of the courses is measured through quantitative surveys of students' confidence levels and qualitative responses from reflective sessions. A quasi-experimental design was used to compare the performance of two groups of students: the group that participated in the competition and the group that did not. Quantitative data from multiple-choice questions assessing legal skills and qualitative data from detailed student comments allow for a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of competitions. These applications provide specific skill development outcomes to help improve curriculum design and identify factors that promote effective learning in practical legal settings. Besides, legal practice education through legal competitions is the environment that trains students in professional ethics and social responsibility, encouraging them to work according to ethical principles and make positive contributions to the community.

Interaction with experts and real-world assessments: Connecting students with experts in the legal field is an important part of hands-on education. This may include presentations, seminars, or inviting lawyers, judges, and other legal practitioners to share their experiences and knowledge. Assessment and feedback from experts and practitioners are critical during the learning process. This helps students understand their strengths and weaknesses, improving and developing their legal skills more effectively.

With the development of global economicization, legal education needs to strengthen international cooperation to help students better understand different legal systems and participate in a global working environment. Legal practice education can also be closely linked to the community. This may include participating in community service projects, providing free legal services to disadvantaged people, and participating in other volunteer activities.

THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF LEGAL COMPETITIONS IN PRACTICING LEGAL EDUCATION

The Law Competition Program is an events-based program that aims to provide a successful pathway for law students to excel and benefit from participating in experiential learning events in a positive environment while creating a pathway for the community of lawyers and alumni to give back to their profession. Practicing legal education through legal competitions offers numerous benefits in training human resources for the legal profession, as elaborated below.

The legal competition provides opportunities for candidates to practice research and learn about current legal regulations. In preparing for the competition, contestants will have to look up legal documents, learn about legal cases that have taken place, and apply legal regulations to solve specific problems. It helps students expand their knowledge and

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understanding of different areas of law. The legal competition also creates opportunities for candidates to learn and approach real-life legal issues. By solving the competition's legal issues, contestants can better understand legal processes and regulations. This helps candidates get acquainted with the reality of work and prepare for a future legal career. The legal competition allows contestants to experience work and try out the role of a real-life legal practitioner. By solving complex legal issues and presenting them to a panel of judges, contestants experience the work and pressure of a professional legal career (as a lawyer). This helps them have a clearer view of the requirements and responsibilities of the law industry. Legal competitions also play an important role in encouraging the discovery of creative and groundbreaking solutions in the law industry. During participation, contestants can think of different approaches, offering new and groundbreaking perspectives on solving legal problems. This is necessary to promote the development and updating of law with the changes of the modern world. Experiential education or learning is defined as learning by "doing, reflecting, applying and evaluating" (Arifin 2019; Spiegel 1987; Vertsman 2023). It is essential for developing skills and an understanding of, and appreciation for, ethical standards, social roles, and the responsibilities that mark the profession. David Kolb describes experiential learning as a "sequential, recurring four-stage cycle" (Kolb 1984)consisting of concrete experience; reflective observation (collecting through analysis of the cognitive, performative, and affective aspects of the experience); abstract conceptualization (organizing the information into a theoretical framework and drawing out general principles for future use); and active experimentation (testing the generalizations in new situations) which leads the learner back to concrete experience (Boud et al. 2005; Weil and McGill 1989).

The legal competition creates an environment that promotes the learning and improvement of contestants' knowledge. Through research and preparation for the competition, contestants can access legal documents and deeper legal thinking. Many competitions include competitions for the best-written submissions. In several competitions, such as the Phillip C. Jessup International Law Moot Competition (Jessup) and the ICC Moot Court Competition (ICC Moot), written submissions for all parties are prepared and submitted simultaneously.

In other competitions, teams submit submissions for the claimant/appellant/applicant and a few weeks later respond to submissions of other teams provided to them by the organizers (for example, the Vis Moot). This helps candidates grasp and apply knowledge more proficiently, thereby improving the quality of future work when working in law. The legal competition is not just an event but a spirit, a philosophy of life. It is the passion, desire for justice, and responsibility of those who love and pursue legal research. Contestants compete to win and develop new ideas, create creative legal solutions, and contribute to building a better future for the community.

The legal competition creates a forum to exchange experiences between students, lecturers, and legal experts. This contributes significantly to the mooting experience, described as a powerful mixture of fear and elation (Lynch 1996). The objective is for participating students to engage and converse with the bench (Cassimatis and Billings 2016). Often, participating students will not have the opportunity to present prepared submissions but will be taken completely off guard. This allows students to learn from experienced professionals and receive feedback from experts on how to improve and perfect their legal knowledge and skills, enhancing their legal capacity. Contestants in the legal competition will not only be people who learn about law but also future quality human resources for the law industry. They will become

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talented lawyers, policymakers, excellent legal researchers, or even leaders in the field. The legal competition contributes to training and creating development opportunities for young people with passion and potential in the law industry.

Legal competitions often require students to learn and research specific legal issues in depth. The different competition organizations set the rules of moot competitions; these introduce many idiosyncrasies into the competition (including the length and style of written submissions and the size of teams). The moot problem is also crafted by or for the organizers. Moot competitions vary in difficulty levels, with some, like Jessup, the WTO Moot, and the Maritime Moot, only being suited to students at an advanced degree stage (Parsons 2016). This encourages students to learn and analyze the rights and responsibilities of relevant parties in legal cases and apply legal principles in practice. Providing substitute experiences with simulations: students can practice the skill in simulations and other experiential exercises. As an alternative to the instruction–demonstration/practice sequence, students might first attempt performance and then extract a model from their practice. At the same time, through the legal competition, contestants can see the changes and development of the law industry over time. Candidates can learn about existing legal regulations, ask questions, make suggestions, and contribute ideas to improve the current legal system. This helps create a large resource to improve updates and meet the actual needs of society.

The legal competition helps students practice necessary legal skills, including communication, time management, research, analysis, argumentation, and presentation. Students have the opportunity for candidates to build and practice skills in teamwork, drawing inspiration from others, solving complex legal problems, and working under time pressure. These are essential skills given that written submissions are considered the first, and perhaps the primary, tool of persuasion (Wolski 2009). Further, legal reasoning and analysis skills are continuously developed and enhanced over the entire period of the moot, and students are intensely challenged on their knowledge, analytical, and reasoning skills in the whole process by coaches, guest judges in practice rounds, and also judges in the actual competition (Butler and Gygar 2012). Create conditions for students to practice research, analysis, and reasoning skills, thereby developing logical and creative thinking abilities. The legal competition allows contestants to practice legal analysis and reasoning skills. During the competition, contestants will be placed in real-life situations and must apply the legal knowledge they have learned to make reasonable arguments. This is an opportunity for candidates to practice giving legal opinions and responding to opponents' arguments. During the exam, candidates must present and explain their prejudices to a panel of judges and the public. This helps candidates practice communication skills and present opinions clearly and convincingly. Through working with teammates and interacting with other contestants, contestants will learn and hone communication skills, listen, and work effectively in a team. These are important skills needed for work in agencies, business lawyers, and notaries, where they often have to work in groups and cooperate with many stakeholders.

Legal competitions encourage competition among students in researching and presenting their legal knowledge. Participation in moot competitions poses many challenges to students, including (Cassimatis and Billings 2016): i) the legal and factual complexity of the moot problem; ii) time constraints and challenges (moot competitions often conflict with set law school times for classes, assessments and exams); iii) the volume of work required demanding

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personal sacrifices (including moot preparation over university holidays); iv) the demands of independent research in areas of law that are new to the students, often without prior instruction or class work in the particular area; v) the extent of knowledge and understanding required to be able to deal with unpredictable questions from unknown competition judges in a competition environment; vi) working as a team over a prolonged period (ranging from 6 weeks to more than 6 months); vii) traveling to competitions and competing in unknown and foreign places; viii) funding concerns if the law school does not provide or arrange funding; ix) personal financial and emotional investment into the competition beyond the usual investment in studying; x) cultural and language differences in international competitions; and xi) pressures to preserve their university's reputation. Students also have the opportunity to receive feedback from others, which promotes personal development and progress in the legal field. Legal competitions can create a positive image of the university and its legal education program. Participating and achieving results in competitions helps students and universities build reputation and positioning in the legal community, helping to build pride and confidence in contestants. Participating and achieving results in legal competitions is a proud achievement, helping candidates affirm and enhance their confidence in their abilities in the field of law.

The legal competition provides opportunities for contestants to build a network of relationships and interact with experts and officials in the field of law. Competition judges are often practitioners, including barristers, retired judges, arbitrators, and academics, and in international competitions, judges come from a range of jurisdictions (Cassimatis and Billings 2016). A unique characteristic of a moot that distinguishes it from other oral advocacy, such as debates, public speaking, or oral presentations, is that moot judges will frequently interrupt participating students in the role of counsel with questions and requests for further information and clarification, and will actively (sometimes aggressively) challenge the arguments presented by participating students (Parsons 2016). This opens the door for candidates to meet and learn from experienced and successful people in the industry, facilitating growth and access to future career opportunities. Contestants can receive career-enhancing scholarships and internships at companies, law firms, and law enforcement agencies. Professional recognition through awards and writing contests. Financial support such as travel grants and scholarships. The legal competition is an important event to promote and honor talents in law. New ideas and solutions arising from the competition can contribute to improving and perfecting the current legal system. Outstanding contestants in the competition can attract the attention of businesses and legal organizations, creating recruitment and career development opportunities. For excellent candidates, a legal competition can be an opportunity to receive scholarships and be sent to attend international conferences or competitions. This helps expand knowledge, pave the way for personal development, and brings many career opportunities. At the same time, the competition is also an opportunity to create a playground and an environment for exchange and cooperation between individuals and organizations interested in law.

Furthermore, legal competition also brings good consequences for society. The legal competition brings cultural and ethical values to the contestants. Contestants must comply with rules and ethical principles during competition and problem-solving. This demonstrates ethics in practicing law and trains candidates with honesty, respect for human rights, and fairness. Besides, thanks to the professionalism and understanding of the contestants, everyone can find

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help and guidance in complex legal issues. This helps strengthen the rights and protect the rights of all citizens while contributing to building a fair and civilized society.

Legal competitions are not just for those who have studied and worked in the legal field. Everyone can participate and learn about legal rights and responsibilities. This helps create a society with law-conscious citizens who always comply and comply with regulations. This forms the foundation for the country's development and stability. The legal competition could also include educational activities and legal advice for the community. From creating informational materials, organizing legal training sessions for the public, and providing free legal advice, the competition can raise legal awareness of the law and provide legal assistance.

Legal service providers, legal research institutes, and legal training institutions worldwide have many competitions and challenges organized to promote competition and encourage the development of knowledge and skills for law students. Organizing legal practice through legal competitions is an important step in building and developing the field of law. That not only creates opportunities for candidates to practice skills and apply knowledge but also contributes to improving the quality and readiness of the law industry to meet the ever-evolving legal needs of society. The teamwork lessons learned in competitive mooting will stand law graduates in good stead in future collaborative environments. It is suggested that the educational outcomes of competitive mooting are of value to law graduates regardless of whether or not they are employed in the legal profession after graduation (Parsons 2016). Some law training institutions develop competition programs as mandatory content in students' study programs, such as Australian law schools, which are enthusiastic participants in domestic and international moot competitions, and Australian universities, which perform exceptionally well in international moot competitions. Mooting (not just competitive mooting) is also a "common feature of the law school curriculum" (Wolski 2009). In 2008, "moots offered within the curriculum in virtually all law schools [in Australia]" (Wolski 2009), most commonly as electeds but sometimes on a mandatory basis, e.g. at Griffith and La Trobe Universities (Fraser et al. 2013).

Some legal competitions conducted by law-making establishments:

Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition (Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition) (Kien Trung 2021), also known as Jessup Moot or The Jessup, founded in 1960, is a long-standing international debate competition oldest in the United States is an international court simulation competition on legal disputes. Organized by the International Law Association, this competition attracts the participation of teams from universities worldwide. With participants from nearly 700 law schools in 100 countries and jurisdictions. The competition is a simulation of a hypothetical debate between nations before the International Court of Justice, the judicial arm of the United Nations. Teams of law students face off against one another through oral and written advocacy presentations to promptly address public international law issues in a hypothetical legal dispute between nations. A compromise is an agreed set of facts about a dispute submitted to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the main United Nations tribunal for arbitration. After the Agreement was announced, students began researching and preparing arguments for both sides of the dispute, drafting and editing pleading documents, known as "Memoranda", and practicing presentations. Each team prepares two written memoranda and two 45-minute presentations, one for each disputing party ("Applicant" and "Respondent"). Teams debate alternately as Applicants and Respondents against competing teams before a panel of judges, simulating a proceeding before

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the International Court of Justice. Competitions such as the Moot Court or the Client Consultation Competition are used as a field study tool in which students practice debate, client counseling, and legal argumentation skills. For example, according to Vyushkina (2013), courses based on international competitions teach legal skills and integrate learning legal language into practical exercises. The effectiveness of this method is assessed through pre- and post-course competency tests (Vyushkina 2013).

International Investment Arbitration Moot Competition (Foreign Direct Investment International Arbitration Moot - FDI Moot) for law students worldwide. This is considered an annual and "traditional" activity for law students worldwide, focusing on foreign investment disputes. This competition allows students to understand and apply the rules and principles related to foreign investment. Participating in the competition, students can practice their sharp legal thinking and critical skills when solving complex legal details in international investment professionally and creatively. This is one of several pilot courses built on data analysis from previous research and student feedback, including sections such as practicing writing legal essays, practicing arguments in front of a panel of judges, and receiving feedback from faculty or lawyers. Student skill improvement is measured through post-course surveys and round performance results. A comparative experimental design was also applied to assess the impact between students participating in the law competition and those not participating. The results showed that the participating students improved markedly in applying the law in practice and teamwork. At the same time, the qualitative data from the learning diary provided a deeper context of personal development.

The Oxford International Media Law Moot Competition (also known as the Price Media Law Moot Court Competition or the Price Moot Competition) was established by the Program in Comparative Media Law and Policy at Oxford University in 2008. The competition challenges students to engage in comparative research on national, regional, and international legal standards and to develop their arguments (in written and oral form) on difficult questions on communications and information communication technology law. The competition currently includes seven Regional Rounds and selected International Rounds held in Oxford, bringing together participants from countries. The competition aims to raise the profile of freedom of expression by bringing effective and informed debate and discussion on important information flow and technology issues to many parts of the world. Events are often held before these rounds, such as human rights workshops and advocacy classes (Price Media Law Moot Court Competition, n.d.). By participating in this contest, contestants can access and learn to expand their knowledge in international communication, supporting their communication activities and the activities of agencies and businesses afterward.

Willem C. Vis Moot legal competition (Willem C. Vis East International Commercial Arbitration Moot, also known as Vis East Moot) is a mock trial competition following the international commercial arbitration model, with related competition content, to the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods (Vienna Convention 1980). This is a very prestigious competition, held annually in Vienna and Hong Kong, each year attracting more than 100 teams from leading universities worldwide. The goal of the competition is to create a healthy and rewarding academic playground for law students, help students practice their litigation skills at an international-class competition, and, at the same

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time, promote research on international commercial arbitration. Students practice writing, analysis, problem-solving, and litigation skills like professional lawyers.

Moot court competitions help law students practice trial representation skills, including writing a defense and arguing a fictional case. Teams compete against each other in qualifying rounds, and in the end, the best teams advance to the final round. Coming to this activity, students can role-play and experience the role of a lawyer arguing in front of a "hypothetical" Court. Competing teams will play the role of lawyers, preparing documents, records, and arguments to defend before a panel of judges (reputable legal experts) on issues in simulated real-life lawsuits. Candidates will participate in a mock court or arbitration proceeding, which often involves writing a defense. Depending on the competition, students may spend one semester researching and writing pleadings and the next semester practicing litigation or may prepare both in just a few weeks. While domestic moot competitions tend to focus on domestic law areas such as criminal law or contract law, regional and international moot competitions tend to focus on topics such as public law, international human rights law, international humanitarian law, international criminal law, international commercial law, international maritime law, international commercial arbitration, and foreign direct investment arbitration. Litigation issues relating to jurisdiction, *locus standi*, and choice of law to apply are also occasionally raised, particularly in arbitration moots.

International Moot competitions are generally aimed at students and only allow candidates not yet qualified to practice law in any jurisdiction to participate. However, several international moot competitions, such as the ECC-SAL Moot, are aimed at young lawyers. Participating in these competitions, students train themselves to write articles and argue in English about complex and in-depth issues of regional and international law.

Law students can participate in national practice skills competitions, honing their legal skills while rubbing shoulders with law students and practitioners nationwide. Some typical competitions associated with law practice activities organized by domestic law training institutions:

- "Spirit of Law" contest of Hanoi Law University (starting in 2020), "Legal Talent" contest (Lam Linh 2023) of Hue University of Law starting in 2021, "Student" Contest with Intellectual Property Law", "Hung Bien Lawyer", "Innovative Startup Ideas" of Hue Law University starting from 2022 will be held annually, the competition is organized to the purpose is to develop eloquence and presentation skills, contributing to training bravery when participating in social activities.

- "Engrave Law Talent" contest of the University of Economics and Law, Ho Chi Minh National University. The "Legal Paths" contest is an annual academic competition of Ho Chi Minh City Banking University. Ho Chi Minh City by the Faculty of Economic Law in coordination with the Faculty Youth Union. The "Legal Arena" contest is a contest to learn about the law organized by the Department of Inspection - Legal - Intellectual Property and the Youth Union of the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (The Fourth Thrilling "Legal Arena" Final Competition, n.d.).

- The "Sharp in Speech" debate contest (organized by the Academic Club of the Court Academy) is about the ability to use words flexibly and sharply, clearly and fully expressing each individual's opinion. The competition occurred in 3 parts: Confrontation, Hashtag, and Yourvoice

choice. In the contest, each pair of contestants competes for 10 minutes. Six contestants were divided into pairs and debated on three different topics (People's Court Magazine 2019).

- The "Law's Conquerors" contest is hosted by Ho Chi Minh City University of Economics and Finance (UEF). This is an opportunity for students to approach many areas of national law and practice their English in the final round of the competition.

Thus, it can be seen that through competitions, students have many opportunities to practice legal skills while strengthening their professional knowledge through the opportunity to participate in legal competitions.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LEGAL PRACTICE THROUGH LEGAL COMPETITIONS

Practicing legal education through legal competitions involves registering to participate, choosing a topic or case, researching and analyzing, and building arguments and legal basis. Students will be guided and supported by lecturers and experts in law. Finally, the competing teams will have the opportunity to present and present to a panel of judges comprised primarily of attorneys, legal experts, researchers, and law enforcement. From the practice of law competitions at domestic and international law training institutions, several challenges arise:

Firstly, cooperation exists in the domestic and international law training institutions network. Building a network of links and cooperation with domestic and international universities and legal research institutes is necessary to take advantage of resources and expertise. To promote the development of legal competition, We can create a network of experts and consulting resources to support and advise on legal competition. At the same time, building this relationship also creates opportunities for students and candidates to approach and learn from people with profound experience and knowledge in law.

Second, infrastructure and ensuring favorable conditions for the competition. With the strengthening and development of legal competition, attention needs to be paid to building infrastructure and ensuring favorable conditions for the competition. Thus, legal competitions can be highly organized and attract talented contestants. Creating a successful legal competition also requires cooperation and input from all stakeholders. Universities, government agencies, legal organizations, and experts in the field can all contribute knowledge, experience, and funding to build an attractive and quality legal competition.

Third, legal competitions also need to choose appropriate and diverse topics to reflect society's current legal situation and challenges, as well as the connection between school and district competitions, regional, national, and international. Issues such as environmental protection, human rights, information security, and labor dispute resolution are crucial topics that should be incorporated into legal competitions. Including these subjects fosters candidates' acumen and creativity and provides valuable opportunities for those passionate about the legal profession to engage in their areas of interest. This allows participants to deepen their knowledge, broaden their perspectives, and refine essential skills through practical experience. In addition, legal competitions need to create conditions for contestants to demonstrate problem-solving skills and develop reasonable solutions. Real cases or virtual situations can challenge analysis, reasoning, and decision-making abilities. This helps candidates practice their ability to apply legal theory into practice and become excellent lawyers. Legal competition can

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also create a warning about social problems that need attention and resolution. By focusing on topics such as domestic violence, cybercrime, or civil rights violations, the competition showcases the contestants' talents and brings important social values.

Fourth, about the team of experts participating in the jury. Examiners play an important role in evaluating and scoring exams. Organizing a legal competition also requires professionalism and fairness in the organization and scoring process. Processes and standards need to be established to ensure transparency and fair evaluation. Having a panel of judges with expertise and experience is important to ensure complete and accurate scoring criteria. They can provide contestants with direction, feedback, and direction during competition preparation and participation. At the same time, we also need to consider hiring specialized experts and subject matter to evaluate complex legal issues. Therefore, investing in knowledge and skills training for judges helps ensure the fairness and quality of the competition. The challenge of objectivity and fairness in providing assessments and determining the winning team ensures that the assessment process is free from bias or bias.

Fifth, many students are not interested in this law practice model. This model requires faculty and students' commitment, time, and effort to achieve the best results. Legal competitions also need to receive attention and support from the community. Encourage businesses, organizations, and individuals to sponsor the competition. This helps ensure the sustainability and development of the competition and shows concern and respect for the development of the law industry and the country's future. The legal competition needs to be widely advertised to attract the attention of many people. Through media, communications, and social media channels, we can introduce the competition and emphasize the important role of law in forming and developing society.

Promoting the participation of universities and students is essential. We can inspire and educate students about the important role of law in society through promotional activities and consultation sessions at universities. At the same time, we need to create opportunities for students participating in the competition to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned in practice.

Sixth, the legal competition is not just a competition but also a forum to exchange, learn, and create community. Extra-curricular activities, seminars, or discussions can be held parallel to the competition to enrich knowledge and help candidates interact and connect. The legal competition is not just for law students or legal enthusiasts but is also a case of expanding understanding and participation for everyone. Therefore, we must encourage and create conditions for everyone to participate in the competition and work together to build a fair and lawful society. The organization of events and side activities is not only limited to the offline space but also extends to the online environment. We can host webinars, live chats, and online courses on important legal topics. This creates favorable conditions for candidates in the same locality to participate remotely and learn from experienced experts and lecturers.

To increase community participation and interest, we can organize auxiliary legal activities. Discussion sessions, forums, or mini-courses may be organized to educate and explore specific legal issues. This brings new knowledge and creates a space for exchanging ideas and discussions, enhancing community understanding and interest.

Seventh, a successful legal competition requires an effective advertising and marketing strategy. We can use media, social networks, websites, and other communication channels to

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promote the contest to a large audience. The messages and images used should express the value and meaning of the contest, attracting people's interest and participation. At the same time, designing a consistent and professional image for the contest is also very important. A distinctive logo and outstanding brand identity will help the contest become recognizable and make a strong impression on the audience.

Furthermore, we must use modern communication tools such as videos, images, and articles to create excitement and connection with potential audiences. We do not just stop at advertising; we also need to create an interesting and creative experience for contestants and audiences. Competition performances, talks, or interactive activities can be engaging and unique, helping to create a sense of excitement and engagement with the audience. Creating an open and friendly playing field will encourage participation and create lasting interest in the competition. Creating a supportive and encouraging community is also important. We can use social networks, websites, blogs, and other communication channels to create a space for people to communicate, discuss, and share about the competition and related legal issues. Creating a positive and supportive community can instill confidence and motivation in contestants and pageant audiences.

Finally, maintaining and developing legal competition is a continuous and sustainable process. We need a long-term plan and commitment to maintain and improve the competition over time. This includes making improvements, hearing from participants, and conducting surveys to measure the effectiveness of the competition. From there, we can change and adjust to meet the needs and desires of the legal community.

CONCLUSION

Legal competitions serve as a transformative platform for students, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application in law. Through active participation, students refine critical skills such as legal analysis, argumentation, teamwork, and professional ethics, which are essential for their future legal careers. This study highlights the profound impact of such activities in enhancing students' readiness to practice law, demonstrating their potential to supplement traditional legal education effectively.

The findings underscore the significance of integrating legal competitions into the academic curriculum as a structured learning tool. By doing so, institutions can foster experiential learning environments that better prepare students for the complexities of legal practice.

Future research should investigate the long-term effects of participation in legal competitions on professional success while examining how diverse formats of these events can address broader legal challenges. Recognizing their value, educators and policymakers are encouraged to allocate more resources to enhance access and promote inclusivity in these enriching opportunities.

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CRediT AUTHOR STATEMENT

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