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TEACHING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW IN VIETNAM: HOW TO MAKE THIS SUBJECT ATTRACTIVE TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract

Human Rights are one of the achievements of the historical development of mankind, characteristic of civilized society, and also part of the basic and important legal values. In the context of international integration of education and higher education, teaching is important for undergraduate students to identify and understand the responsibility of achieving these rights in society. Human rights teaching aims to help learners orient and understand noble values, common voices, goals, and the means of all humanity to safeguard and advance dignity and happiness. In the face of globalization, the education has attracted the attention of domestic and foreign scientists and many international organizations. In Vietnam, teaching international human rights law has been implemented at universities. Therefore, this study aims to provide an overview of the teaching of International Human Rights Law in Vietnam by exploring why students are not amenable and interested in the subject. The curriculum in law universities was surveyed to make judgments and assessments about the teaching situation in Vietnam. Based on analysis and evaluation of the content, and learning materials, the study proposes solutions to enhance the attractiveness and attract students' interest, from solutions for compiling the content of textbooks and documents to active teaching methods. Even though progress has been made in the past two decades, teaching international human rights law in Vietnam has not caught up with the general development trend. The main obstacles are related to issues such as it is not a compulsory subject in the curriculum framework of the government, the teaching content is still limited, lecturers are not specialized and limited in foreign languages, the lack of reference materials, and outdated teaching methods.

Keywords: *human rights, teaching international human rights law, attracting students, active teaching methods*

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I. INTRODUCTION

International human rights law is a set of rules affirming the rights and dignity of all human beings, women, men, and children, without discrimination. It was formed after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and is supported by several global and regional instruments, such as The International Covenant on

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).¹

Human rights education has been focused on and developed rapidly in recent years with democracy and social progress in Vietnam. It is a broad concept that includes school-based activities, training sessions, and information dissemination outside the national education system. Training sessions and propaganda outside the school boundary are not systematic and formal but contribute significantly to educating people. Therefore, this study discusses a small content of human rights education in Vietnam and teaches related international law. Since Vietnamese students are not interested in this subject, it is necessary to research some solutions before presenting an explanation. In conclusion, teaching international human rights law needs to achieve sustainable development through comprehensive reforms by the government, schools, and universities.

II. SOME THEORETICAL ISSUES ON HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION AND TEACHING OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHT LAW

Education is necessary to develop knowledge, skills, and values of human rights. The United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) defined this term as “training, dissemination, and information efforts aimed at building a universal culture through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the molding of attitudes directed to the strengthening of respect and fundamental freedoms, full development of the personality and the sense of dignity, promotion of understanding, respect, gender equality, friendship among nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups, enabling of persons to participate effectively in a free society,

¹ Areas of expertise in international human rights law include:
International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
Convention on the Rights of the Child
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
International Convention for the Protection of Persons from Forced Disappearance

and the activities of the United Nations for the Maintenance of Peace.”²

A. THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW IN TEACHING ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Teaching international human rights law is an important activity in the human rights education of countries. This activity brings great value, increased interest, and awareness of human rights. The values are described as follows:

Awareness of human rights will ensure that people’s basic needs are met

Everyone needs access to medicine, food and water, clothes, and shelter. This is a minimum amount of respect that should be accorded to every human being, hence it is included in the list of human rights. However, millions of people still lack necessities, but it empowers activists and others to fight toward obtaining them as a matter of human rights.

Human rights awareness will protect vulnerable groups from abuse

The Declaration of Human Rights was created largely because of the Holocaust.³ The most vulnerable in society were targeted with the Jewish population, including those with disabilities and LGBT. Organizations concerned focus on members of society most vulnerable to abuse from powerholders instead of ignoring them.

Human rights awareness enables people to stand up against the corruption of society

The concept of human rights allows people to speak up when experiencing abuse and corruption. Therefore, the rights to assemble are crucial because no society is perfect.⁴ The concept empowers people, showing the level of deserved dignity in society.

² Adapted from the Plan of Action of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004), paragraph 2

³ The Holocaust, also known as the Shoah, was a genocide carried out by Nazi Germany and its factions that resulted in the deaths of approximately 6 million Jews including 3 million men, 2 million women and 1 million children.

⁴ Nguyen Dang Dung; Vu Cong Giao; La Khanh Tung Theory and legal textbook on human rights ; National Political Publishing House 2015.

Human rights awareness encourages freedom of speech and expression

Human right encompasses ideas and forms of expression that not everybody will like or agree with. It protects people who want to debate or argue with certain ideas expressed in their society.⁵

Human rights awareness gives people the freedom to practice their religion (or not practice any religion)

Religious violence and oppression have occurred throughout history, from the Crusades to the Holocaust to modern terrorism in the name of religion. Human rights acknowledge the importance of religion, and the freedom to not hold any belief.⁶

Human rights awareness promotes equal employment opportunities

The right to work and make a living allows people to flourish. People endure abuse or insufficient opportunities without acknowledging that the work environment can be biased or downright oppressive. The concept guides how workers should be treated and encourages equality.⁷

Awareness of human rights to better protect the environment

The connection between human rights and environmentalism is becoming stronger due to climate change and its effects on people. The right to clean air, soil, and water are all as important as the others included in this list.⁸

B. IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL LAW TEACHING ON HUMAN RIGHTS

1. Positive Impact on Students and The School Environment

⁵ Nguyen Dang Dung; Vu Cong Giao; La Khanh Tung Theory and legal textbook on human rights ; National Political Publishing House 2015.

⁶ Nguyen Dang Dung; Vu Cong Giao; La Khanh Tung Theory and legal textbook on human rights ; National Political Publishing House 2015.

⁷ Do Duc Hong Ha, Purpose, role, meaning, scope of human rights education, Reference book Human rights education - theoretical and practical issues, Publishing House Social Sciences, 2011

⁸ Ha Mai Hien, Building a human rights strategy in Vietnam in terms of international integration, Reference book Human rights education - theoretical and practical issues, Publishing House. Social Sciences, 2011,

Children's attitudes, ideas, and learning are formed at a young age and are heavily influenced by their environment, including school education. Human rights education in school is an effective means of incorporating values into children's attitudes and behaviors. Assisting young people to incorporate these values into their daily lives is a concrete way to prevent bullying and discrimination and promote inclusion and respect for diversity. These rights provide a valuable framework for good interpersonal relations and making informed and proportionate decisions from the playground to government and public policy.

2. Creating a Human Rights-Respecting Culture.

A 'human rights respecting culture' seeks to embed respect and responsibility for realizing rights through all levels of society. The education fosters a rights-respecting culture where human rights become integrated at many personal and institutional levels. It is also about embedding an understanding and values as a cornerstone of the social fabric and national ethos.

3. Fulfilling National and International Commitment to Human Rights Education

The delivery of human rights education in schools also fulfills international and domestic human rights commitments. At the international level, these commitments are detailed in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

C. TEACHING OBJECTIVES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW ON HUMAN RIGHTS

The goal of teaching international law is to help people understand human rights, value human rights, and have a responsibility to respect, protect and promote the concept. An important outcome is empowerment, a process through which people and communities increase control of their lives and decisions. Human rights education's ultimate goal is to bring justice and dignity.

1. Teaching international human rights law provides people with information about the concept.

This includes learning about the inherent dignity of all people and their right to be treated with respect about human rights principles, such as the concept's universality, indivisibility, and interdependence. It promotes participation in decision-making and the peaceful resolution of conflicts about the history and continuing development of international law, like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the Convention on the Rights of the Child about the regional, national, and state. Furthermore, local law reinforces international human rights law to call violators to account for their actions, such as torture, genocide, or violence against women and the social, economic, political, ethnic, and gender forces.

2. Teaching international human rights law also gives people a sense of responsibility to respect and protect the concept and empowers them through skill development for appropriate action.

Classroom study requires that a culture of mutual respect and compassion is engendered where teachers and learners can exchange ideas thoughtfully and respectfully, conflicts are addressed comprehensively and peacefully, multiple perspectives are encouraged and shared in a supportive classroom climate, and tentative conclusions are developed in light of new ideas and evidence.

Skill development in education through human rights includes recognizing that the concept may be promoted and defended on an individual, collective, and institutional level, developing a critical understanding of life situations, analyzing situations in moral terms, realizing that unjust situations can be improved, recognizing a personal and social stake in defense of human rights, analyzing factors that cause violations, being able to use global, regional, national, and local human rights instruments and mechanisms for the protection of human rights. strategizing appropriate responses to injustice, acting to promote and defend these rights.

3. Teaching international law helps people to feel the importance of human rights while codifying and modifying values into their way of life.

These human rights values and attitudes include “strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms” (UDHR Article 30.2), nurturing respect for others, self-esteem, and understanding the nature of human dignity and respecting the dignity of others

III. REASONS WHY STUDENTS DO NOT LIKE LEARNING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

A. THE STATUS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE VIETNAMESE LEGAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

The legal education system in Vietnam is academically oriented because graduates do not necessarily become lawyers. The system provides the government with a “legitimately qualified human resource.”⁹ Therefore, the state is concerned and closely manages the legal education work. This can be considered a unique feature of the Vietnamese legal education system, inherited from the Soviet legal education system (Pham Duy Nghia, Do Hai Ha, 2019). Law schools’ curriculum is standardized and based on the framework set forth by the Ministry of Education. According to the program, law subjects are divided into compulsory and elective. Compulsory subjects oriented towards fundamental laws are integral to legal education in Vietnam. Under the framework, public and private international law are compulsory subjects. Therefore, law schools are obligated to offer these courses to their students as a prerequisite for completing their legal education. The International Law on Human Rights is an elective, not an independent and compulsory subject of the training curriculum.

There are more than 70 law schools in Vietnam, both public and private. Due to historical and socio-political reasons, Vietnam’s most established law schools are all public institutions. The leading law schools in Vietnam are Hanoi Law University (HLU) and Ho Chi Minh City Law University (HCMUL). The HCMUL campus was formed based on merging the former Southern Branch and the Law Faculty of Ho Chi Minh City University of Social Sciences and Humanities in

⁹ Resolution 08/NQ-TW issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, 2002.

1996. These two campuses, with the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam (DAV) and the Faculty of Law of Vietnam National University, Hanoi (VNU), and Hue University of Law (HUL), play key roles in the teaching and research of international law.

International law is found in the curriculum of law schools in Vietnam. At HLU, HCMUL, DAV, VNU, and HUL, undergraduate students can also take more specialized courses, such as treaty, international organization, sea, and maritime law. Courses in public are taught to second and third-year law students who have studied most public law subjects, such as constitutional law, theory of the state, and criminal law. In economic integration, private international law has become an important component of Vietnamese legal education. The subjects have been included in the curriculum taught at most law schools across the country. Specialized subjects such as international commercial dispute resolution, international investment, international maritime, and commercial remedy are also taught at some Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City law schools.

The legal education system has slightly changed since the National Assembly promulgated the new Law on Higher Education in 2018¹⁰. Under the new law, legal institutions can design their curriculum based on needs. It is observed that most private law faculties started to significantly reduce the time for teaching international law.

Currently, very few law schools offer post-graduate programs on international law. Only HLU, HCMUL, and VNU offer a specialized Master's program in international law.

B. LEARNERS HAVE ACCESS TO THE RIGHT TO BE TAUGHT (RIGHT TO LEARN) ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS LATE.

In 1989, the International Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted, and mandatory teaching was introduced into a binding document of universal scope. According to Article 29, Article 4, and Article 42 of the Covenant, "States Parties agree that the education of the child should be directed towards Development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms." Furthermore, Article 29 recognizes

¹⁰ Law 34/2018/QH14.

the right to be taught about human rights. Article 4 stipulates that the Member States should “take all legislative, administrative, and other measures necessary for the exercise of recognized rights.” Meanwhile, Article 42 provides that they should “make the principles and provisions of this convention widely known for adults and children.” In conclusion, a real right to human rights teaching has been recognized in the international arena. Teaching human rights has followed two distinct paths of international law, including the principles and content countries have agreed to and recorded in the Conventions. The second is the law on human rights, which will include the content of the concept in specific fields and be recognized in the branches of the Constitution, criminal, civil, labor, and commercial trade. These roads intersect in some content, but the difference is still huge. Furthermore, human rights teaching is the subject of legal and political measures.

In Vietnam, legal documents have not officially recognized the right to be taught about human rights. These are guidelines and regulations in the Constitution and branches of law protecting human rights, not regulations on the right to be taught.

Since the establishment of the Communist Party and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the whole political system of the country has strived to ensure human rights at the highest possible level. In 1946, the first democratic Constitution was established, marking an important step forward in implementing democracy and human rights. Respecting and defending human rights has been the continuous policy of the Party and State. Human rights standards are further strengthened and developed, improving all aspects of the country.¹¹

To have a legal basis to promote, protect and ensure human rights, the State of Vietnam has constantly tried to build and perfect the legal system. Vietnam has built a national legal system that actively internalizes international principles and human rights standards, ensuring harmony.

The 2013 Constitution, with the promulgated laws and codes, creates a legal framework for respecting, promoting and protecting

¹¹ Minh Huong Ngo “Opportunities and constraints on human rights education when academic freedom is not guaranteed: the case of Vietnam” Human Rights Education Review – Volume 2(2)

human rights. It establishes a legal basis for the holder's rights but also sets obligations for state agencies, officials, and non-state organizations to raise the spirit of social and legal responsibility.¹²

On September 5, 2017,¹³ the Government of Vietnam approved the Scheme to include human rights contained in the educational curricula in the national education system to propagate, popularize and educate people. This creates a change in the awareness of learners, teachers, and educational administrators about the importance and sense of self-protection. Furthermore, it creates the comprehensive development of Vietnamese to meet the country's integration and sustainable requirements. The project was developed to implement the recommendations on improving education and raising awareness accepted by Vietnam in UPR cycles. In this project, the government targets that by 2025, 100% of educational institutions in the national education system will organize human rights education for learners.¹⁴

The above shows that Vietnam has actively tried to recognize and protect basic human rights. The most important part should be the provision to be taught about human rights. Article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child points out that States Parties agree that children's education should be directed towards Developing respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. This provision seems to honor the right to be taught about human rights, but the Vietnamese legal system should specify the right to be taught. Early access to this right presents a full and comprehensive awareness of the concept.

C. THE LIMITATION OF CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK AND THE SCOPE OF TEACHING CONTENT

Human rights education in Vietnam universities aims to train experts to protect and promote the concept in specialized training universities. At current law universities, human rights are integrated into several

¹² Dinh Van Chi "Ho Chi Minh's Thought on Human Rights" International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE) Volume 7, Issue 3, March 2020, PP 73-79

¹³ Decison No.13009/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister.

¹⁴ Nguyen Thi Hong Yen; La Thi Minh Trang "Tuyên truyền, giáo dục nâng cao nhận thức về quyền con người ở Việt Nam" Legislative Research Journal No. 21 (421), November 2020.

subjects such as Constitutional, Administrative, Criminal, Criminal Procedure, and International Public Law. The final report evaluating human rights teaching at the Diplomatic Academy and universities in Vietnam by the national advisory group in December 2013 provided a detailed analysis and assessment of the teaching and learning process in universities.

- Faculty of Law (Hanoi National University) is a training institution with its official course on human rights. In addition, this institution also develops a master's program with the support of the Norwegian Center for Human Rights of the University of Oslo.
- Hanoi Law University has a course on human rights under the school's international law curriculum.

The bachelor's degree programs of Vietnamese law universities include subjects on domestic law, but the content is closely related to the aspect of human rights education, such as civil, prosecution proceedings, civil litigation, judgment enforcement, marriage, intellectual property, state compensation, housing, secure transaction registration, civil insurance, gender equality, domestic violence prevention, and children's rights law.

Even though human rights education in general and teaching international law has become a topic of interest in many universities in Vietnam, the level of instruction, content, methods, and approaches are not uniform. The content is integrated into the subjects but is mainly considered a topic within the scope of international law. This leads to the lack of a close connection between the subjects.

In principle, training programs at universities should be consistent with the qualification framework program of the Ministry of Education and Training.¹⁵ The total training time is four years, divided into eight semesters, corresponding to about 120 to 140 credits. The training program consists of general and professional education knowledge courses. The professional education knowledge course has general and specialized training. Even though all the above training is compulsory

¹⁵ Decision No. 29/2005/QĐ-BGD&ĐT dated September 16, 2005 of the Minister of Education and Training promulgating the set of higher education framework programs in the social sciences at university level

for students, specialized training has both compulsory and optional programs.¹⁶

The entire compulsory training program at Law schools stated that “There is no International Law on Human Rights as an independent and compulsory subject. Therefore, human rights education and teaching international law in Vietnam are not important in society. Regarding the training programs’ framework, subjects are compulsory in favor of commercial business, Law of the Sea, and International Treaties.”

However, programs at law schools do not provide training on human rights issues. This issue is treated from the perspective of citizens’ basic rights and duties taught in Constitutional Law. In addition, depending on the specificity of the subject’s matters, other subjects at different levels refer to human rights. For example, issues in Marxist - Leninist philosophy, national issues in the process of building Socialism, civil rights of citizens, freedom in business, freedom of employment, social security for citizens, and criminal liability for violating the rights of citizens.

The content of international human rights law is rarely mentioned in public law. For example, the population in International and Human Rights Laws are two chapters that deal with human rights.¹⁷ However, the quantity and quality of the relevant content have certain differences because the curriculum is designed directly by the schools. For instance, in the textbook of International Law of the Law University, Hue University, the content is shown in the chapter Population. This discusses the issue of human rights protection in international law, which mainly introduces several conventions.¹⁸

¹⁶ See Decision No. 29/2005/QĐ-BGD&ĐT dated September 16, 2005 of the Minister of Education and Training promulgating the set of higher education framework programs in the social sciences at university level.

¹⁷ Textbook of International Law, Hanoi Law University, Publishing House. People’s Police, Hanoi, 2021

¹⁸ According to “The Final Report on Evaluation of Human Rights Teaching at Diplomatic Academy and Universities in Vietnam” of the national advisory group in December 2013, Ho Chi Minh City University of Law, International human rights law is a subject in the international technology program of the Faculty of International Law (including 5 topics: international organization law, law of the sea, law of aviation, law of diplomatic immunity and leadership, and law. international human rights).

International Human Rights of Law appear in the curriculum framework of some universities as an elective subject. In the specialized training program, only the major has an elective topic titled International Human Rights Law. The three largest formal law bachelor training institutions are Hanoi University of Law, Ho Chi Minh City University of Law, Faculty of Law, and Vietnam National University, Hanoi. These schools have elective topics for students majoring in International Law.¹⁹ However, at Hanoi University, the elective program has only been implemented since 2003. After the Faculty of International Law changed its name, the training program issued in 2006 no longer applies to the electives. The international human rights course at the Ho Chi Minh City University of Law as an elective is 30 lessons, covering 3 major topics, namely (i) Development of human and civil rights history, nature and scope of human and civil rights, international human rights law system, (ii) Legal recognition of human and civil rights in Vietnam, (iii) Ensuring the implementation of human rights and civil rights (iii) Implementing the concept.

Based on the training program of the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam, it can be seen that the Ministry's framework does not have an independent subject but is only included in the elective program for specialized law in some schools. Therefore, the number of students enrolled in this course is also very limited.²⁰ It can be deduced that the international lecture on human rights in Vietnam is very low with the general understanding and interest of society.

D. PURELY THEORETICAL TEACHING METHOD, BORING FOR STUDENTS

The number of schools with independent subjects of international law on human rights is limited. Most of the remaining topics are part

¹⁹ The subject of International Law on Human Rights at Hanoi Law University, is an elective subject designed in 20 lessons with the following contents: 1. An overview of the national law on human rights; 2. Civil - political rights of people; 3. The economic - social - cultural rights of people; 4. Regulate the rights of vulnerable groups in society.

²⁰ Minh Huong Ngo "Opportunities and constraints on human rights education when academic freedom is not guaranteed: the case of Vietnam" Human Rights Education Review – Volume 2(2)

of the subject, and the teaching content is limited. In human rights subjects, lecturers give more presentations and practice less. Vietnam has transformed teaching methods into student-centered, but the transformation is incomplete, and teachers still take the initiative to more theory.²¹

In Vietnam, the content of international human rights presentations and practices is still more than domestic practices. The teachers use examples of rights abroad, as in the Vietnamese case. Despite students' enthusiasm for human rights education, the lack of problem-solving experience limits their effectiveness. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the rights of education personnel regarding the method of enforcement.

Teaching, reading comprehension, case studies, and book knowledge testing are the main methods of courses on International Human Rights Law in Vietnam. There are no legal aid centers to ensure human rights at the grassroots level. Furthermore, there are no places for the legal practice of knowledge. In summary, teaching international law on human rights in Vietnam is more theoretical than practical. This is an extremely important reason why students are not interested in and care about subjects related to international human rights law.

E. INADEQUATE INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

In Vietnam, there is a deficiency in the instructional materials for the International and rights law courses. There is no Vietnamese university that has published textbooks on International human rights law. Students are provided with most learning resources for this course using self-compiled lectures, articles, websites, and a few documents from abroad.

There is only one document on human rights named "Theoretical and Laws on Human Rights Textbook" by Prof. Dr. Nguyen Dang Dung - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vu Cong Giao – Dr. La Khanh Tung, National Political Publishing House, 2015. This textbook was first published in 2009 and then edited and reprinted in 2011. In recent years, national, regional, and

²¹ Nguyen Thi Hong Yen; La Thi Minh Trang "Propaganda and education to raise awareness of human rights in Vietnam" Legislative Research Journal No. 21 (421), November 2020.)

international laws and practices have experienced significant changes. Therefore, the School of Law, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, continues to organize reprints with amendments and updates with new knowledge and information to make the textbook more complete.²²

Currently, no lecturers specialize in teaching human rights law at universities in Vietnam. In most universities, lecturers are from related majors, such as Constitutional and Criminal law. Most lecturers teaching International human rights law are not well equipped with the knowledge and practical experience. There are no lecturers or specialized curricula on International human rights law in Vietnam.²³

The lecturers' foreign language proficiency limitation makes this module less appealing to students. This is because these languages are the means for lecturers to access rich learning resources from universities worldwide.

IV. SEVERAL MEASURES TO OVERCOME LIMITATIONS IN TEACHING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW IN VIETNAM

After analyzing the limitations in teaching International human rights law in Vietnam, this section suggests that there should be changes in teaching ideas and methods. This essay tries to give solutions to solve all the reasons leading to students' lack of interest in this module.

²² The course includes the following chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction to Human Rights Theory and Law

Chapter II: An overview of human rights

Chapter III: Overview of international human rights law

Chapter IV: Civil and Political Rights in International Law

Chapter V: Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in International Law

Chapter VI: International law on the rights of certain vulnerable groups

Chapter VII: Mechanisms for the protection and promotion of human rights

Chapter VIII: History of development and basic viewpoints and policies of the Vietnam Party and State on human rights

Chapter IX: Laws and mechanisms for the implementation of human rights in Vietnam

²³ Minh Huong Ngo "Opportunities and constraints on human rights education when academic freedom is not guaranteed: the case of Vietnam" Human Rights Education Review – Volume 2(2)

It ensures the teaching activities of International human rights law in Vietnam a sustainable development.

A. MAKING THE MODULE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW A COMPULSORY MODULE IN THE PROGRAM OF STUDY OF LAW-RELATED UNIVERSITIES

The educational environment is one of the most important and effective factors in transmitting knowledge and shaping human personality. Therefore, making international human rights law a compulsory subject is very necessary. This increases the position in general and international human rights law in Vietnam

Compiling curriculum, books, and instructional materials

Vietnam does not have a common and unified curriculum for universities. Additionally, the lack of teaching materials is also why international human rights law courses are less attractive to students. For schools with independent modules, the compilation of curricula is more urgent. The translation of textbooks from foreign universities is also to enrich students' learning resources. Schools can also compile and service human rights cases around the world that have been resolved or are being resolved to provide additional practical knowledge to students.

B. CORRECT IDENTIFICATION OF FORMATIVE FORMS, RESULTS OF TEACHING METHODS

It is necessary to improve teaching methods of international human rights law. Teachers should reduce the number of monotonous lectures and translations related to international human rights documents. Furthermore, they should give some practical exercises for students to solve. The goal of teaching the laws is to obtain information and know how to defend and develop human rights in their lives and raise awareness of them.

This is beneficial when students take an active role in discovering their human rights realities. Improved teaching approaches can increase students' interest and excitement for these courses. Teachers should employ participatory, interactive, and research approaches to assist students in learning about human rights.

Furthermore, it is necessary to establish legal aid centers to put human rights knowledge into practice while serving the community. These centers allow students to practice and supplement their practical knowledge. The research and training institutes should provide legal assistance to vulnerable populations and distribute human rights information. The teaching of international law should be conducted in parallel with programs and government action. Additionally, teaching in schools should be closely linked with legal aid centers to supplement practical knowledge for learners.

C. SPECIALIZED TEACHING TRAINING

International teachers should have specialist human rights knowledge and skills. They are expected to enjoy teaching the courses, commit sufficient time and effort, and have a sound theoretical foundation. The teachers should naturally grasp international human rights legislation and English or other foreign languages due to the globalization of education. Furthermore, increasing connections and cooperation with foreign academic or educational institutions strengthen teachers' credentials in international human rights law. Human rights education knowledge and teaching methods for elementary and secondary school students should differ from those in university.

Currently, Vietnam has no instructors who are experts in international human rights laws.²⁴ Full-time teachers should be promptly trained from the available teaching relevant courses to address the urgent demand.

D. CHALLENGES IN TEACHING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHT LAW AT HUE UNIVERSITY OF LAW (HUL) AND SOME EXPERIENCES IN PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

International and human rights law has been considered an important subject in legal education in Vietnam. Along with the integration process, society and the media seem to appreciate the role of international law more highly. However, international law teaching and research are

²⁴ Nguyen Thi Hong Yen; La Thi Minh Trang "Propaganda and education to raise awareness of human rights in Vietnam" Legislative Research Journal No. 21 (421), November 2020)

facing increasing challenges.

Firstly, there is a shortage of lecturers specializing in international law. In most law schools, lecturers who teach international law are also required to teach other subjects. The subject is taught only at the introductory level. This hinders lecturers' focus on studying international and human rights law.

Second, with economic integration, international legal issues have been discussed more in society. However, students show more interest in private law fields because they perceive opportunities to work in the private sector. At HUL, about 80% choose commercial and civil law faculty, while 20% study at the faculty of international law (HUL Academic Department Report, 2019). It is quite difficult to attract students' interest in the topic of international public law unless this subject is required. There can be different reasons for this phenomenon, including students' difficulty applying the law in practice and their particular context. They may also find it difficult to understand the content of many legal doctrines originating in Western culture. Many law students consider international law careers more complex and less promising.

Third, access to good-quality textbooks and materials in international and human rights law is one of the biggest concerns for Vietnamese law schools. Due to the language barrier, lecturers and students often rely on translated foreign textbooks. The number of these books is also very limited and can only be found on the bookshelves of libraries. There are several issues with translated textbooks, including translation quality. Additionally, several Vietnamese scholars have compiled general theoretical human rights textbooks. They also have few references to developing countries and Vietnamese practices. Therefore, attracting students to the course will not be easy in their home country. One of the challenges in teaching international human rights law is to develop Vietnamese cases and documents.

The role and significance of international and human rights laws cannot be denied in the current globalization process. To increase student interest, the faculty has increased its cooperation with law firms and private businesses to engage more private practitioners in teaching and discussion with students. This can explain the practical applications

of international law in their daily work. Students were also motivated to participate more actively in class discussions by increasing the scoring rate based on class discussions at seminars and midterm assignments. Simulation competitions or debates were conducted internally within the class or among the entire group. Furthermore, the competitive nature of debate motivates students to research and study the subject more enthusiastically. The faculty also spend more time identifying local areas of interest and designing courses/issues for their discussion.

International and human rights law interests can also increase as the expert community grows. Creating more places where academics and professionals may meet and share knowledge is one method to promote the growth of this type of community. Therefore, several networks have been actively developed, including the Vietnam Association of International Law (VSIL). This forum has provided opportunities for Vietnamese international legal scholars.

To attract students' interest in international and human rights law, Vietnam needs to improve the quality of teaching by attracting the participation of qualified lecturers. Within the framework of these projects, lecturers may have the opportunity to work with international experts, travel abroad, and present at conferences. Furthermore, online materials are read to improve their foreign language skills, especially English. International instructors who can teach law in English can also be paid more. To promote faculty to research and publish internationally, conferences and seminars should be held regularly to focus on developing academic report writing skills and be highly rewarded for articles published in Scopus/IS. Journals.

V. CONCLUSION

Since the Vietnam reform, teaching international human rights law has achieved considerable progress, but this course has not been popular among students. The factors originate from problems with course content, teaching materials, curricula, teachers' skills, and teaching methodologies. There should be solutions to draw students' attention and educate international human rights law in Vietnam. Based on an analysis of current material, raising awareness of the entire society about respecting and safeguarding human rights, attaching value, and learning the concept are all important. Curriculum revision, course content expansion, teaching method innovation, and boosting the quantity and quality of instructors are useful strategies.

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