

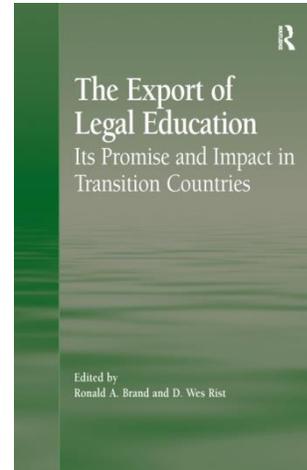
Book Review

Title of the Book: The Export Of Legal Education:
Its Promise And Impact In
Transition Countries

Name of Editor: Ronald A. Brand & D. Wes Rist

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‘The Export of Legal Education: Its Promise and Impact in Transition Countries’ is a very self-explanatory title, and yet intriguing at the same time, the idea of an education being exported and crossing borders is enrapturing. All over the world, the manner in which students are trained while accruing legal education has a direct impact on the way in which they practice their profession. In this book, the authors have eloquently described the phenomena of how an education, (emphasis on legal education) is exported from the United States of America to countries that are experiencing social, governmental, economic or legal transition, or are less developed in the field of legal education. The concept of export of legal education stems from the practice of foreign students who arrive at the US in order to obtain degrees in professional education, after completion of which, they then revert back to their native countries, taking all the training and education they acquired with them to their country and implementing it to help their country progress. The person obtaining a degree of LLM from US, when goes back to his own country has numerous doors of opportunity widely open for him, which puts him in a position to make a difference in his homeland.

In this book, the authors have amalgamated the personal experiences of some students who came from different under-developed or developing countries that are going through transition with the goal of achieving stability and development. These students came to the US in order to obtain their LLM degrees from the University of Pittsburg, and after the completion of their LLM, went back to their countries. There is a detailed analysis written by each of them about their own personal experiences after returning to their respective countries, and their opinion about how their international legal education aided them in affecting the legal system or legal education system in their country in the best possible way. They further discussed the deficiencies that their respective nations face, but are oblivious to their presence because of lack of exposure, but with their experience at an international university they had the insight to realize that other developed



countries have surmounted these issues, which they still face only due to lack of awareness which renders them incapable of conquering said issues.

The authors have given a deep insight into how a person, who got his legal education from the US, has superior intellectual and academic standard when compared to the people who study at local institutes. Furthermore, according to the authors; people with a legal education from the US are much more likely to end up in a position of power in their own country, owing to the superior academic exposure, they end up being legislators, technocrats, law professors, and on some occasions the head of states. There have been a few instances where an American graduate after going back to his own country became the head of the state, and sometimes the advisors to the head of the state. This is the ultimate position of power that a citizen might possess and can then strive to bring about positive changes in their systems that would make the transition much more efficient. However, it is not apparent whether after their rise to power, they managed to change the system using their “superior intellect” or not. It is my view that even if a person becomes a law professor and try to in still all that he learned abroad and incorporate their teaching standards at his own country, that has the potential to slowly make a great change, because that professor will be shaping young legal minds who are going to be an integral part of that country’s legal system. Furthermore, according to the authors, it has been noted that people after studying in the US and going back to their own countries, prefer democracy and favour it as a system that their country should abide by. They become firm believers of democracy after observing the system of checks and balances in the US, and have a common belief that democracy is indeed the best system of governing a nation. The question then arises that; if the US holds such a power to train young professionals who might one day become the head of their state, should they not focus on training them with the utmost care, and with the vigilance that ensures that they understand all the aspects of right and wrong, and be better equipped at governing a country.

Channell describes a person who studies abroad as a bridge between what is and what can be. It is without a question that as a person progresses in his academic endeavours, his chances of better understanding the world and making a difference in the redundancies of the system increases. In the book, while all these students shared their anecdotes, their experiences of studying abroad and how it affected their thought process and helped them in thinking rationally about what their respective countries need to thrive. What really catches the eye is the discussion pertaining to language barriers and how so many of them discussed it. It has now morphed into one of the biggest challenges that a transitioning country faces. Naveed Ahmed gives a very detailed analysis on how the language plays an integral part in being one of the root causes of the chaos that is the legal system of Pakistan. The lack of expertise in English language makes it highly improbable

for a law student to succeed in professional life because the language used in the legal profession is English. This is not just an issue faced by Pakistan, but it also plagues other developing nations, and the premise that if the professors at law universities were to be people who studied abroad and have a firm grasp of English language, it would ultimately help in changing the course of that nation's legal system, because they would then be in the position to influence young minds.

All this power that the US yields, if it is indeed true that people studying in US have a higher chance of being in a position of power when they return to their own country, burdens it with great responsibility. Training the world leaders will in no way be a walk in the park and a botched job has the potential to bestow chaos instead of peace and development to the whole world. Having said that, my thoughts on the matter are; that the opinion of the students discussed in this book, who are now back at their countries and working as professionals, is somewhat anecdotal, and although it does shed light on how a student after studying abroad can make a difference in his own way, it does not conclusively prove that it does change a country or even make it more susceptible to change towards betterment. In conclusion, this book helps in better understanding how studying abroad can equip a person to better understand the issues and work on improving the transitioning state of his country. This book provides real life experiences of people, and not just mere speculation which makes it a source of inspiration for young individuals if they want to pursue legal education abroad.

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