

WHY LEGAL AWARENESS FOR ALL?

India has seen the application of laws since the Vedic Ages. It evolved from the religious prescriptions to the current constitutional and legal system we see today. It has had a rich history of legal developments and has had to go through a lot of change to cater to such a large diversity. The changes we see in the laws of our country have sometimes come about easily with large public demand or dissent and yet other times have been a struggle to achieve. The important thing to note here is that the public opinion and sentiment is an important aspect in framing the laws for the country. Thus it becomes imperative for the public to be aware of their laws or inculcate legal consciousness. Legal awareness or legal consciousness is nothing but the empowerment of the individuals in issues related to the law and the promotion of legal culture in the society.

To start with, we should do away with the generalization that laws are meant for lawyers or people from the legal profession and that the common public doesn't require legal knowledge. The point we miss in making such a hasty assumption is that without the basic legal knowledge we might not even recognize our *fundamental rights* which are the basic blocks of human development and essential for maintaining human dignity, let alone fight for it. The ignorance of the law makes one vulnerable and easily exploitable in the society. Hence it's only wise that we know what governs and us. Laws like the *Right to Information* encourage and work on public participation for the oversight of the government but if the public stopped making applications and queries, the law would gather dust. So, to completely engage with and feel like the part of our society which is banded together for a common purpose, we must fulfill these minimum requisites.

The law also gives us the sense of oneness since it treats the rich and the poor alike and is blind to all types of biases. It is especially important for the underprivileged and marginalized sections of the society to know what the law has to offer them so that they challenge and fight injustice with confidence. It is all the more necessary for the youngsters to know their laws since in the experimental age of adolescence, youngsters might commit acts which they wouldn't even realize is wrongful in nature. Hence it is not required for everyone to be thorough with the nitty-gritty of the law but a basic level of knowledge is a must for everybody's growth and well being.

Inculcating the legal culture therefore has benefits for all. Either it becomes useful for us or helps us fight any type of injustice done to others. The law penalizes all types of wrong in the society so that we do not take the law in our own hands. It punishes the perpetrator and protects the victim. Law teaches us to distinguish between legal and illegal or right and wrong. We must learn to respect the laws of the land and submit to its authority for the protection it provides us with.

To help implement the laws better and bring about progressive changes in the society we must promote legal awareness programs taken up by the government and the NGOs and be actively involved. Like other streams of education we must also encourage and introduce the kids to the legal world for instilling the sense of righteousness in them from the start. All in all, the laws are meant for us and it's in our benefit to know them.

Knowledge is what sets us apart. Our constant endeavor to enrich ourselves with more and more knowledge in diverse fields of life makes it all the more meaningful and exciting. Happy Learning!

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