
MANAGEMENT STATUS AND OPTIMIZATION STRATEGIES OF THE ICOURT LEGAL PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM IN BEIJING

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Abstract

This study aimed to evaluate and improve the management of the professional competency training program for lawyers offered by Beijing iCourt, with particular attention to key elements such as curriculum planning and design, teaching resources and support. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining a questionnaire survey (133 valid responses from 150 distributed, yielding an 88.7% response rate) and semi-structured interviews (with 5 course managers and 5 trainees) to comprehensively assess the strengths and weaknesses of the iCourt training program. The findings indicated that the average satisfaction score across all dimensions of the training program is 3.32 out of 5, reflecting a moderate overall satisfaction level. According to the evaluation criteria established in this study, the main issues included insufficient personalized curriculum design (mean = 3.36), inadequate integration of online and offline teaching (mean = 3.29), and low learner engagement (mean = 3.29). These scores suggested that while the training program generally meets expectations, several key aspects had not yet reached the optimal satisfaction benchmark (3.51–4.50), indicating the need for further improvement. Based on the CIPP evaluation model, the study proposed a set of recommendations to optimize the management of legal professional training programs, including enhancing personalized learning pathways, strengthening legal technology courses, increasing practical training components, and improving evaluation systems. This research not only offered insights for improving China's legal training systems but also provided practical suggestions for future reforms in legal professional education.

Keywords : Professional Training Program, Course Management, CIPP Evaluation Model

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Introduction

With the rapid development of the legal industry, lawyers are now required to possess stronger theoretical knowledge and practical skills. According to the Ministry of Justice (2023), China has over 650,000 registered lawyers, yet less than one-third participate in ongoing practical training annually, indicating a structural gap between academic preparation and workplace demands. Although traditional legal education plays a significant role in talent development, it has gradually shifted from purely theoretical instruction to a practice-oriented approach (Song & Fan. 2024: 201). However, most law schools still prioritize theoretical teaching, resulting in graduates requiring extensive practical training upon entering the workforce (Pallathadka & Pallathadka. 2022: 278). Prior studies have proposed improvements at the content and delivery level—for example, Liu and Zhang (2021: 123) emphasized the role of interactive mock trials in bridging the theory-practice gap, while Wang (2022: 88) advocated for the integration of legal technology platforms to increase student engagement.

Against this backdrop, market demand for legal practice training has increased. Beijing iCourt, through its blended learning model, practice-driven curriculum, and digitalized system, aims to address the gaps in practical skill development left by traditional education. Its courses cover hands-on content such as case analysis, mock trials, and contract drafting, attracting significant attention. Nevertheless, existing research predominantly focuses on legal training content and instructional models, while studies on curriculum management systems—particularly systematic management of course design, implementation, and evaluation—remain inadequate. In contrast, this study concentrates on the curriculum management dimension—specifically how training institutions manage course design, implementation, and evaluation. There is a lack of in-depth empirical research that explores how curriculum management frameworks, such as the CIPP model, can be applied to legal training. Current literature lacks in-depth analysis regarding how legal professional training institutions can efficiently allocate teaching resources and establish scientific management evaluation systems. Academic research shows obvious deficiencies, especially concerning how to maximize training effectiveness through management optimization (Yu. 2024: 55).

International studies emphasize strengthening practical orientation in legal education through case-based teaching and mock trials to enhance students' practical abilities. For instance, Suartha and Martha (2020: 45) demonstrated how blended learning and mock trials enhance legal trainees' readiness in Indonesia, while Voskobitova (2021: 519) analyzed European models of legal education that combine academic rigor with case-based training. Yet within China's legal training sector, substantial gaps persist between these concepts and their operational implementation. Examples include: absence of dynamically updated course content, insufficient personalized learning design, and disconnects in online-offline integration. These specific issues remain systematically unstudied and unresolved (Tian & Zhao, 2024:12).

Compared to these global approaches, China's legal vocational training is still in its early stages of systematic integration and institutional innovation. Consequently, this study's research gap lies in the absence of systematic empirical research examining the "current state of curriculum management" and its "optimization pathways" within legal vocational training institutions. Particularly within the CIPP framework, no scholarship has thoroughly explored optimizing management models for lawyers' professional competency training through the four dimensions of background, input, process, and outcomes. Therefore, based on the CIPP evaluation model, this paper will systematically assess iCourt's curriculum management status through questionnaires and interviews, identify existing problems, propose optimization strategies, enhance the scientific rigor and effectiveness of legal training, and provide reliable theoretical support and practical foundations for legal vocational education reform.

Literature Review

1. Relevant Theories

1.1 CIPP Theory

The CIPP evaluation model (Context, Input, Process, Product) is an important tool for course and project evaluation, which can be used for the management and optimization of training courses (Suri&Hariyati. 2024: 44). CIPP can evaluate the following aspects:

(1) Context evaluation focuses on the industry demand, policy support, and market demand and development of lawyer training courses to ensure that course objectives align with the trends of legal career development. (2) Input evaluation focuses on aspects such as course design, faculty allocation, and teaching resources to ensure that the course has high-quality teaching content and resource support. (3) Process evaluation mainly focuses on the implementation of the course, including teaching methods, learning feedback mechanisms, and monitoring of student participation to ensure the effectiveness of the training. Process evaluation can ensure the smooth implementation of training courses as expected and adjust teaching strategies in a timely manner to improve learning outcomes. (4) Product evaluation focuses on the effectiveness of the course in enhancing students' professional abilities, including course completion rates, student feedback, and students' practical application abilities in the legal profession.

In conclusion, by applying the CIPP model to the field of lawyer training, institutions can more effectively identify specific issues related to goal alignment, resource allocation, instructional implementation, and trainee outcomes, thereby enabling targeted improvements. This evaluation model has been widely adopted in international legal, medical, and engineering education, demonstrating significant effectiveness in enhancing training quality and adapting to industry developments (Zhu, 2021:214). Therefore, utilizing the CIPP model as the core framework for evaluating and managing the Beijing iCourt lawyer professional competency training program is a crucial step toward promoting scientific, systematic, and evidence-based training management.

1.2 Blended Learning Theory

This theory emphasizes the integration of the flexibility of online learning with the interactivity of face-to-face instruction, creating a more adaptive and efficient learning experience (Singh & Thurman, 2019:2). Blended learning not only accommodates learners' diverse schedules and personalized paces, but also enhances the flexibility of resource allocation and learner engagement (Singh & Thurman, 2019: 9). In practice-oriented legal training programs, blended learning can significantly improve immersion and practical relevance, effectively complementing the "Input" and "Process" dimensions of the CIPP model, and further advancing the scientific management of training programs (Alammary. 2022: 958).

2. Relevant Foreign Literature

Research Status on International Legal Professional Training

Internationally, the legal professional training system has become relatively mature. Many countries have established systematic mechanisms to ensure that legal practitioners possess both professional knowledge and practical abilities. The iCourts study from the University of Copenhagen in Denmark points out that legal training should be practice-centered, enabling trainees to accumulate practical experience during their studies and better adapt to professional demands (The Making of iCourts, 2022). The legal training methods in European and American countries are also highly instructive. For instance, law schools in the United States usually require students to participate in legal clinic programs,

providing legal services to real clients under the guidance of senior lawyers and directly exercising their practical abilities (Kharitonova & Sannikova. 2022: 101).

In recent years, digital learning has developed rapidly in legal education. Law schools around the world have widely adopted technologies such as distance teaching, MOOCs and VR mock courts to enhance the flexibility and interactivity of learning (Xiong, Ling & Li. 2021: 66). Studies show that online courses help to flexibly arrange time, reduce costs, and increase the opportunities for legal practitioners to receive quality training (Multazam. 2020: 28). Meanwhile, research in countries such as those in Europe and the United States emphasizes that "global legal literacy" is an indispensable core competence for contemporary lawyers, encompassing cross-cultural communication skills, the ability to understand international rules, and the capacity to adapt to legal diversity (Simons & McGuinness. 2015: 120).

In addition, artificial intelligence and big data are gradually being applied to legal training. Law schools and institutions have developed AI case analysis and contract review tools to help trainees understand the practical application of legal provisions. Research has found that these technologies not only enhance trainees' legal research capabilities but also improve their practical skills and enable personalized learning (Volosova & Sabitaeva. 2023: 44).

Therefore, building upon the existing literature, this study proposes a novel perspective - adopting the CIPP model as the analytical framework to systematically analyze the management status of the Beijing iCourt lawyer professional competency training courses (encompassing background requirements, resource investment, process control, and outcome evaluation) and propose targeted optimization strategies. This research thereby addresses a critical theoretical gap in the domain of legal professional training management within China, while simultaneously responding to the pressing practical demands associated with the modernization and internationalization of legal education.

Objectives

1. To investigate the overall management status of the iCourt training courses in Beijing in terms of course design, resource allocation, course implementation, and learning outcomes.
2. To analyze the problems existing in various dimensions of the management of the iCourt training courses.
3. To propose recommendations for optimizing the management of the iCourt training courses in order to enhance the effectiveness of course management.

Research Framework and Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach combining questionnaire surveys and semi-structured interviews to systematically analyze the current management status and optimization strategies of iCourt's professional competency training courses for lawyers.

The questionnaire consists of two parts: (1). Basic information of participants. (2). Curriculum management evaluation, covering content design, teaching models, resource allocation, management mechanisms, course assessment, and career development support. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale. Interviews focused on curriculum development, resource support, implementation processes, and outcomes to obtain in-depth management perspectives.

To ensure the scientific validity of the tools, five educational management experts from Chiang Rai Rajabhat University with over 10 years of experience were invited for evaluation. Finally, items with an

IOC (Index of Objective Congruence) value >0.8 were selected to guarantee the validity and reliability of the research tools.

The study participants included iCourt trainees and course administrators. The trainee group comprised lawyers with varying years of legal practice, while the administrators were primarily responsible for course design, operation, and management. To ensure representativeness, We distributed 150 questionnaires and received 133 valid responses, resulting in a response rate of 88.7%, covering trainees from different legal specializations. Additionally, five course administrators and five trainees were selected for interviews to capture nuanced insights that the survey might not reveal.

Data analysis involved both descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) and inferential statistical methods. Specifically, independent samples t-tests assessed differences in course satisfaction based on participant background (e.g., years of legal practice, region), while one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) examined variations in course evaluations across different job positions (partner, senior lawyer, trainee lawyer). A significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ was established for all inferential tests to ensure the reliability of the findings.

Regarding data analysis, we performed statistical analysis on the questionnaire data to calculate the mean values and standard deviations of course satisfaction. The analytical methodology followed the computational formula proposed by Sucharitha (2024:63), specifically:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{n}$$

Here, \bar{X} represents the mean value, $\sum X$ denotes the total score of all respondents' ratings, and n indicates the sample size. The data interpretation criteria were as follows:

- 1.00-1.50 = extremely severe problems/obstacles
- 1.51-2.50 = significant problems/obstacles
- 2.51-3.50 = moderate problems/obstacles
- 3.51-4.50 = minimal problems/obstacles
- 4.51-5.00 = no problems/obstacles

Additionally, thematic analysis was applied to the interview data to identify participants' key perspectives. These qualitative findings were triangulated with the questionnaire data through comparative analysis to further examine the strengths and weaknesses of course management.

This paper conducts an analysis from three aspects: the current situation of iCourt course management, existing problems, and optimization suggestions. The research focuses on factors such as course content, teaching mode, course resources, course management and services, course assessment, and trainees' career development. Through the statistical analysis of questionnaire data and interview research, this paper systematically assesses the management effectiveness of the iCourt training course and puts forward specific suggestions for course optimization, hoping to provide feasible references and improvement directions for the future professional training of lawyers.

Research Results

1. Survey on the current management status of iCourt's professional competency training courses in Beijing

1.1 Demographic characteristics of iCourt training participants

Table 2 Demographic Profile of iCourt Training Participants

Background Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	74	55.64
	Female	59	44.36
Province	Beijing	37	27.82
	Guangdong	24	18.05
	Chongqing	15	11.28
	Shanghai	14	10.53
	Fujian	8	6.02
	Hubei	6	4.51
	Jiangsu	4	3.01
	Other provinces	25	18
Age group	41-50 years old	62	46.62
	31-40 years old	54	40.6
	51 years old and above	9	6.77
	20-30 years old	8	6.02
Years of practice	Over 10 years	70	52.63
	4-7 years	27	20.3
	8-10 years	21	15.79
	Less than 1 year	8	6.02
	1-3 years	7	5.26
Position	Senior partner/partner	69	51.88
	Senior lawyer	41	30.83
	Law firm director	17	12.78
	Inter lawyer	6	4.51

As can be seen from Table 2, the proportion of male is 55.64%, which is higher than that of female at 44.36%, indicating that male have a higher participation rate in professional training. The trainees are mainly aged between 31 and 50 (87.22%), mainly middle-aged and young lawyers, and are at a critical stage of career development. Those who have practiced for over 10 years account for 49.63%, indicating that the course is recognized by senior lawyers. Practitioners with 1–3 years of experience account for only 5.26%, and the participation of junior lawyers is relatively low. In terms of professional positions, the participants were predominantly senior partner/partner (51.88%) and Senior lawyer (30.83%), reflecting the program's focus on mid-to-senior level legal professionals.

1.2 Statistical analysis of the current management status of iCourt's professional competency training courses in Beijing

This study categorizes the factors influencing the management of training courses into four key dimensions, with the statistical results as follows:

Table 3 Survey and Statistical Analysis of Satisfaction with the Curriculum Content and Instructional Resources of iCourt Training Courses

Survey items	Mean	SD	Level
1.External professors, former judges, practicing lawyers, and interdisciplinary experts are engaged as lectures or consultants.	3.41	0.65	Moderate
2.Well-structured curriculum modules with systematically designed learning schedules	3.39	0.67	Moderate

3.A user-friendly and fully functional online learning platform is provided.	3.38	0.7	Moderate
4.Personalized learning modules are provided based on participants' level and legal specialization.	3.36	0.69	Moderate
5.The training course is designed around the enhancement of lawyers' professional competencies.	3.33	0.64	Moderate
6.Multi-functional venues and modern teaching equipment support various instructional methods.	3.32	0.58	Moderate
7.Complete course materials are provided (e.g., syllabus, preview materials, case studies, courseware)	3.31	0.78	Moderate
8.Adequate hardware supports group interaction and discussion.	3.29	0.68	Moderate
9.Lecturers are equipped with both legal theoretical knowledge and practical experience.	3.27	0.71	Moderate
Total	3.34	0.68	

As shown in Table 3, the overall satisfaction with the curriculum content and instructional resources of the iCourt training courses is relatively stable, with a mean score of 3.34 and a standard deviation of 0.68, indicating that participants generally recognize the course structure and resource allocation. Among the survey items, the highest-rated was "External professors, former judges, practicing lawyers, and interdisciplinary experts are engaged as lectures or consultants" (mean = 3.41), reflecting positive feedback on the inclusion of external experts. The lowest-rated item was "Lecturers are equipped with both legal theoretical knowledge and practical experience" (mean = 3.27), suggesting that participants have higher expectations regarding instructors' practical competence and teaching performance. Overall, the course structure, curriculum modules, online learning platform, and course materials were well received, showing sufficient resource investment. However, the relatively low score for "Lecturer background and experience" indicates room for improvement in terms of practical teaching depth and instructor selection. In addition, items such as "Personalized learning modules" and "Complete course materials" also reveal a lack of differentiated support tailored to various legal fields and learning stages.

To further examine the differences in satisfaction scores among different groups of trainees, this study conducted inferential statistical analyses. A one-way ANOVA was used to compare satisfaction levels among trainees in different professional positions. The results showed that the "Senior Partner" group reported significantly higher satisfaction with "Personalized Learning Modules" than the "Intern Lawyer" group ($F = 3.84, p < 0.05$), indicating that trainees at different career stages have varying expectations for course design, and that differentiated strategies should be reflected in curriculum planning.

In addition, an independent samples t-test revealed a significant difference in satisfaction with "Course Implementation Effectiveness" between trainees with more than 10 years of practice and those with 1–3 years ($t = 2.17, p < 0.05$). This suggests that the current training program is more aligned with the needs of senior lawyers, while junior trainees may encounter challenges in course comprehension or adaptation.

Table 4 Survey and Statistical Analysis of Satisfaction with the Management and Service Delivery Systems of iCourt Training Courses

Survey items	Mean	SD	Level
Execution capability of the course service team	3.39	0.55	Moderate

Survey items	Mean	SD	Level
Completeness of the course syllabus (including objectives, outline, instructors, schedule)	3.38	0.62	Moderate
Reasonableness and feasibility of course content and arrangement	3.37	0.66	Moderate
Rationality of training period and class schedule design	3.34	0.71	Moderate
Clarity, scientific basis, and effectiveness of the curriculum evaluation system	3.32	0.8	Moderate
Establishment of a dedicated teaching and research unit for lawyers' professional development	3.26	0.78	Moderate
Enhance the system for extracurricular practice and peer exchange	3.24	0.71	Moderate
Total	3.33	0.69	

As shown in Table 4, the overall satisfaction with the management and service delivery systems of the iCourt training courses is relatively stable, with a mean score of 3.33 and a standard deviation of 0.69, indicating that trainees generally acknowledge the course system, but there is still room for improvement. The highest-rated item is "Execution capability of the course service team" (mean = 3.39), showing that participants positively evaluated the team's efficiency and support throughout the training. The lowest-rated item is "Enhance the system for extracurricular practice and peer exchange" (mean = 3.24), suggesting that while such mechanisms exist, they are not yet fully aligned with trainees' needs in terms of implementation safeguards and role clarity. Overall, the iCourt program performs well in areas such as syllabus completeness, course content design, and team execution. However, the relatively low scores for the extracurricular practice system and the establishment of a dedicated teaching and research unit (mean = 3.26) indicate the need to further strengthen practical engagement mechanisms and ensure that teaching and research efforts are more closely integrated with the realities of legal practice.

Table 5 Survey and Statistical Analysis of Satisfaction with iCourt Training Courses Implementation

Survey items	Mean	SD	Level
1.Completion of the training course as scheduled	3.34	0.61	Moderate
2.Integration of theoretical knowledge with practical application	3.32	0.65	Moderate
3.Learning outcome presentations and peer exchange activities	3.29	0.65	Moderate
4.Curriculum planning and teaching standards	3.29	0.63	Moderate
5.Learning records and assessment system	3.29	0.73	Moderate
6.Students' independent learning and reflection during the course	3.28	0.71	Moderate
7.Industry-related exchange activities relevant to the course	3.26	0.66	Moderate
8.Participation in at least one professional practice course	3.25	0.66	Moderate
Total	3.29	0.66	

As shown in Table 5, the overall satisfaction with the implementation of the iCourt training courses is relatively stable, with a mean score of 3.29 and a standard deviation of 0.66, indicating that the course execution is generally well-received but still has room for refinement. The highest-rated item is "Completion of the training course as scheduled" (mean = 3.34), showing that the training schedule was well managed and largely adhered to. The lowest-rated item is "Participation in at least one professional practice course" (mean = 3.25), reflecting a lack of sufficient engagement or depth in practice-oriented modules. Other relatively lower-scoring items include "Industry-related exchange activities relevant to the course" (3.26) and "Students' independent learning and reflection during the course" (3.28), suggesting that although the course supports knowledge delivery, its capacity to foster deeper interaction, applied thinking,

and real-industry immersion remains limited. Overall, the course planning and learning environment are considered adequate, but the findings highlight a need to further strengthen experiential learning opportunities, especially through richer case simulations, collaborative tasks, and cross-sector exchanges. Enhancing the depth and accessibility of practice courses would improve the overall learning experience and ensure better alignment with lawyers’ real-world competency needs.

Table 6 The overall satisfaction survey statistics of iCourt training courses on the improvement of trainees’ professional qualities and abilities

Survey items	Mean	SD	Level
1.Lecturers’ use of case-based teaching and practical guidance	3.4	0.65	Moderate
2.After-course industry exchange and sharing activities	3.37	0.65	Moderate
3.Learning in emerging industry sectors	3.34	0.68	Moderate
4.Applied relevance of faculty-delivered instructional content in professional legal training	3.34	0.68	Moderate
5.Specialization and Structural Stability of the Curriculum Framework	3.34	0.68	Moderate
6.Contribution of course development to industry knowledge sharing	3.33	0.59	Moderate
7.The courses improve student’s professional qualities and abilities	3.31	0.68	Moderate
8.Professional quality of In-Class simulation project outcomes	3.26	0.76	Moderate
Total	3.34	0.67	

As shown in Table 6, the overall satisfaction with the effectiveness of iCourt training courses in improving trainees’ professional qualities and abilities is relatively high, with a mean score of 3.34 and a standard deviation of 0.67, indicating that the courses are generally recognized for their professionalism and practical relevance. The highest-rated item is “Lecturers’ use of case-based teaching and practical guidance” (mean = 3.40), suggesting strong approval of instructors’ applied teaching methods and real-world insights. The lowest-rated item is “Professional quality of In-Class simulation project outcomes” (mean = 3.26), reflecting concerns over the depth and realism of simulated legal practice. Other high-scoring items include “After-course industry exchange and sharing activities” (3.37) and “Learning in emerging industry sectors” (3.34), showing that the program is responsive to evolving legal trends. Overall, the data indicate that while the curriculum structure is sound and application-focused, it still leans heavily on practitioner experience and lacks sufficient integration of legal research, theoretical updates, and interdisciplinary innovation. To improve, iCourt should enhance the design and delivery of simulation projects, broaden exposure to complex legal scenarios, and balance practical teaching with academic depth and innovation capacity.

2. Problem analysis of iCourt's professional competency training program management in Beijing based on interview findings

This study supplemented the quantitative survey research with in-depth interviews of iCourt program administrators (5 persons) and trainees (5 persons) to better understand existing challenges and potential improvements in the training program's management and implementation. The interviews were structured around four core dimensions: curriculum development, teaching resources and support, program implementation process, and implementation outcomes. Key interview findings are summarized as follows:

Module	Key Interview Points	Problem Analysis	Direction of Improvement
Curriculum Development	Course Design Concept: The iCourt curriculum is centered on	The current research mechanism lacks	Establish a dynamic feedback mechanism

Module	Key Interview Points	Problem Analysis	Direction of Improvement
Foundations	<p>the practical needs of legal professionals, combining theoretical foundations with practical skills, with a strong emphasis on applicability and professional orientation.</p> <p>Coverage of Emerging Fields: The curriculum is gradually expanding into domains such as AI law and digital transformation; however, insufficient depth is observed in specialized areas like data privacy and blockchain..</p>	<p>responsiveness to emerging practitioner needs.</p> <p>Course design in emerging fields remains too broad, lacking detailed case studies and deep exploration.</p>	<p>to continuously refine course content through regular surveys and industry input.</p> <p>Strengthen the development of specialized courses in emerging legal domains, incorporating industry-based case studies and in-depth analysis.</p>
Teaching Resources and Support	<p>Quality of Resources: The program offers abundant teaching materials, including experienced instructors and practical case studies, which collectively ensure the achievement of instructional objectives.</p> <p>Personalized Support: Courses are recommended via the learning platform based on participants' professional backgrounds and learning progress, facilitating the construction of personalized learning pathways.</p>	<p>Lack of personalized course recommendations increases students' burden in course selection.</p> <p>Some technical components, such as the online learning platform, were found to be limited in functionality, with concerns raised about system stability and user-friendliness.</p>	<p>Enhance the learning platform with intelligent recommendation features that suggest suitable course modules based on learners' professional backgrounds and learning objectives.</p> <p>Improve the platform's technical performance to ensure smooth operation and user-friendly experience.</p>
Program Implementation Process	<p>Instructional Monitoring: Learning progress is tracked through surveys and assessments, though the lack of real-time monitoring remains a limitation</p>	<p>Real-time monitoring and interaction are insufficient to support immediate learning needs.</p>	<p>Introduce additional real-time interaction tools, including live Q&A sessions and online discussion forums.</p>

Module	Key Interview Points	Problem Analysis	Direction of Improvement
	Teaching Format: A hybrid model combining online and offline instruction is widely preferred—online sessions support knowledge transfer, while offline sessions emphasize case analysis and practical skill development.	Online and offline content are not well integrated, resulting in fragmented or repetitive learning experiences.	Improve the integration between online and offline sessions to ensure content continuity and eliminate redundancy.
Implementation Outcomes	<p>Skill Enhancement: Participants report significant improvement in practical competencies, particularly in contract review, litigation strategy, and negotiation skills</p> <p>Learner Experience: There is a strong demand to increase the proportion of practical sessions and simulation cases, as well as to extend time allocated for post-session reflection and discussion.</p> <p>Learner Experience: There is a strong demand to increase the proportion of practical sessions and simulation cases, as well as to extend time allocated for post-session reflection and discussion.</p>	<p>The limited quantity and depth of practical case studies restrict participants' opportunities for hands-on training.</p> <p>Group review sessions are too short, limiting reflective discussion and feedback.</p> <p>Enhance the design of career development modules by incorporating planning guidance and industry trend analysis.</p>	<p>Enhance the number and complexity of simulation cases, incorporating scenario-based analysis to deepen practical engagement.</p> <p>Extend group discussion and review sessions to allow more opportunities for peer exchange and learning consolidation.</p> <p>Enhance the design of career development modules by incorporating planning guidance and industry trend analysis.</p>

3. Recommendations for optimizing the management of iCourt's professional competency training program in Beijing

Through in-depth interviews with iCourt course managers and students, this article further analyzes the main problems in the management and implementation of current lawyer professional competence training courses based on a questionnaire survey. Based on the CIPP evaluation model framework, this study summarizes the key shortcomings in training course management and proposes the following optimization strategies to enhance the scientificity, practicality, and occupational adaptability of course management.

(1) Optimizing the dynamic research mechanism for curriculum development: At present, iCourt has initially established a course system guided by professional needs in course development, but its response to industry changes and emerging legal fields is not sensitive enough. Although the course content has covered fields such as artificial intelligence law and digital transformation, it still shows

weakness in specific areas such as data privacy and blockchain compliance. Therefore, it is recommended to establish a systematic dynamic research and feedback mechanism, regularly collect emerging demands and practical issues in the legal industry, and adjust the course design direction in a timely manner. Meanwhile, external experts with industry-specific backgrounds or practitioners providing case studies should be incorporated to enhance the depth and practical relevance of courses in emerging fields.

(2) Enhancing intelligent matching of teaching resources: While iCourt currently maintains a high-caliber faculty team and instructional resources, there remains room for improvement in personalized recommendation systems and technical support capabilities. Suggest introducing an intelligent system based on learning behavior analysis to help students efficiently match course modules that are suitable for their own growth path; At the same time, optimize the interface design and operational stability of the learning platform to ensure its convenience and interactivity, and enhance the learning experience for students.

(3) Optimizing the course implementation process: Interviews show that students generally recognize the combination of online and offline teaching modes, but also point out problems such as poor connection and weak interactivity between the two. In response to this phenomenon, it is recommended to strengthen the structural coordination between online content and offline practice in the course design stage, ensuring logical coherence of knowledge points and tight connection of links. Further more, the online platform's interactive functionalities should be enhanced through the implementation of real-time Q&A sessions, group discussion modules, and simulated practical exercises to improve learner engagement and immersion.

(4) Expanding career development module: Training courses have achieved significant results in helping students improve their professional abilities, but the systematic guidance for career development is still insufficient. It is recommended to add modules such as career planning, industry trend analysis, and job search guidance to the curriculum system to help students make clearer judgments on legal career path selection and enhance the long-term value orientation of the course.

Conclusion

This paper systematically analyzes the management status of iCourt lawyers' professional ability training course, and finds that it has some advantages in the cultivation of legal practice ability. The course content is obviously oriented to practice, the teaching staff is strong, and the training effect is generally recognized by students. However, the study also found that the iCourt course still has room for improvement in terms of course personalization, interactive learning experience, cross-border industry cooperation, internationalization, etc.

The study suggests that iCourt should further optimize the course structure, strengthen the application of legal science and technology and digital teaching, improve practical training and industry cooperation, and establish a scientific course evaluation system to improve the effectiveness of lawyer training.

Moreover, the future development of legal vocational education should pay more attention to interdisciplinary integration and international cooperation, so as to enhance the global competitiveness of legal talents and make legal training more in line with the needs of the modern legal market.

The conclusion of this paper not only has practical guiding significance for the optimization of iCourt curriculum management, but also provides a reference for the reform of legal vocational education in China.

Discussion

The results of this paper validate the positive role of iCourt's training courses in the cultivation of lawyers' professional capabilities, and further reveal the optimization directions in terms of curriculum management and teaching resources. The research shows that although iCourt's courses perform well in practical training, industry exchanges, and the enhancement of professional qualities, there is still room for improvement in curriculum personalization, digital teaching support, and interactive learning experiences. The research findings are consistent with the theory of the CIPP evaluation model (Suri & Hariyati. 2024: 45), indicating that the effectiveness of a curriculum not only depends on the curriculum content but is also closely related to the input, implementation process, and outcome evaluation of the curriculum. This study further indicates that in practical training management, the CIPP model is not just an evaluation tool, but more like a "feedback system" for continuously optimizing courses.

Compared with international legal professional training standards, it is found that iCourt's courses still have certain gaps in practical orientation, digital learning, and course evaluation. For example, the UK's Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) system explicitly requires passing practical skills assessments, emphasizing professional abilities such as simulated cases, client interviews, and legal writing (Kharitonova & Sannikova. 2022: 34). American law schools generally establish legal clinics, mock courts, and legal practice programs, where trainees complete practical training tasks in real legal service scenarios (The Making of iCourts. 2022: 12). By comparison, iCourt's current practical modules mainly focus on case analysis and online simulations, lacking practical training opportunities involving real clients or courtroom environments.

Furthermore, from the perspective of digital teaching standards, legal training institutions in Europe and America commonly adopt LMS systems integrating AI-driven functions including learning tracking, real-time feedback, and intelligent recommendations (Ignjatović. 2024: 91), while iCourt's online platform still primarily emphasizes traditional course presentations and material downloads, deficient in dynamic learning path management and personalized feedback mechanisms.

Regarding course evaluation mechanisms, European and American legal education standards typically combine formative assessment with summative assessment, and regard trainees' practical performance as the core indicator for course evaluation (Acosta et al.. 2024: 55). However, iCourt's current evaluation system still mainly relies on student satisfaction surveys and course completion status, having not yet fully established a systematic evaluation model based on practical performance.

The research results also align with international legal education trends that emphasize practice-oriented and interdisciplinary integrated training models (Belov. 2023: 212). In the future, iCourt should draw on international experience by: introducing more interdisciplinary content (such as legal technology and international commercial rules) into its course design; strengthening practical training in real scenarios; and improving its digital learning platform to achieve convergence with world-class legal training institutions.

Research Recommendations

Recommendations from this study

(1) Optimize the curriculum structure and personalized learning paths: The current course setup is relatively fixed, while the learning needs of students vary. It is suggested to establish a more flexible course module system, combine the students' professional background and development needs, provide personalized recommendation services, and enhance the pertinence and practicality of learning. Special attention should be paid to the professional growth paths of lawyers in specific legal practice fields. The

courses should be divided into beginner, intermediate, and advanced development channels, and the platform system should intelligently guide students to plan their learning paths.

(2) Enhance practical training and industry cooperation: There is still room for improvement in the practical training of the current curriculum. It is suggested to add practical training programs such as mock courts, legal clinics, and corporate legal services, and establish long-term cooperation mechanisms with law firms, legal service companies, courts and other institutions to help students better understand legal practice and improve their practical operation skills (Anna, 2021:88). It is recommended to regularly develop cross-platform training tasks based on "simulations of real lawyer business", and invite practical mentors from corporate legal departments, judges, and senior partner lawyers to provide guidance, further narrowing the gap between training and actual business operations.

(3) Improve the course evaluation and feedback mechanism: the current course evaluation method is relatively simple. It is suggested to establish a data-driven course feedback system, optimize teaching strategies through students' learning behavior analysis, improve the quality of the course, and continuously adjust the teaching content according to the students' feedback. Specific measures can include: building a dynamic course evaluation system, introducing students' learning trajectory tracking, comprehensively analyzing multidimensional data such as course completion, participation and interaction frequency, and issuing a course optimization briefing after each course, forming an optimization process of "closed-loop feedback +continuous iteration".

Future research directions

(1) Exploration of interdisciplinary legal training: the legal industry is integrating with technology, economy and other fields. Future research can explore how to integrate emerging technologies such as AI, blockchain and digital economy into legal training courses, improve lawyers' interdisciplinary practical ability, and make them better adapt to the needs of the future legal market (Breidenbach. 2020: 112).

(2) Internationalization path of legal vocational education: at present, domestic legal training is mainly based on local laws, and the degree of internationalization is low.

(3) Future research can explore how to cooperate with international legal education institutions to promote the cultivation of global legal talents, enhance the international competitiveness of domestic legal training institutions, and make domestic lawyers have a more international perspective (Acharya. 2021: 64).

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