The practice: Field of law has range of opportunities

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*Emerging areas in the various fields of law have created a range of opportunities for students in this field.****Aditya Harikrishnan****reports.*

From litigation cases of civil and criminal nature to settling disputes over intangible assets such as intellectual property and copyrights, law as a profession has witnessed a major change in offering a multitude of options to practitioners. They now have the option to serve either as a legal counsel or pursue litigation and work in law firms and corporates, or even set up an independent practice. Several popular options are available for graduates to choose from.

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The work of a civil lawyer entails drafting sales deeds, gift deeds, relinquishment deeds, partition deeds and contracts for clients. These lawyers also take up litigation in civil courts, high courts and the Supreme Court. Amit Mandgi, senior partner, Mandgi Associates, says that candidates looking for a career in this field have to dedicate long hours of work, read different laws, study different cases and track new developments . "They will further have to bear in mind that it can take a few years for their skills and aptitude to be recognised in the industry," he adds. Lawyers in the field of corporate law take up non-litigation work or the role of in-house counsels for corporates. Their work entails drafting, negotiation of documents and contracts, enabling restructuring, mergers and acquisition, and rendering legal advice on corporate issues such as investments in capital markets, private equity, borrowing, lending, etc. Mumbai-based Vidya Rao, employed formerly with a financial company and currently in the process of setting up an independent practice, says, "Those interested in this field should possess a thorough knowledge of relevant laws such as company law, corporate finance and taxation ." She further adds, "Depending on whether you are employed with a law firm or a corporate house, you could become a partner of your legal firm or head of the legal department of your company."

"With the advent of technology, civil law has now broadened its horizons to include intellectual property rights. The development of international jurisprudence in this arena has also led to the creation of Copyrights Act, Patents Act, Trademark Act and Designs Act," informs Mandgi. Intellectual property rights protect the rights of people in intangible assets and may refer to one's research, ideas, knowledge and innovations.

Family law not only deals with the legal nuances pertaining to marriage and divorce, but also includes litigation and advisory work for cases of dowry and child adoption in India. Cases related to wills/property disputes also fall under its purview. Experts in criminal law, which involves litigation work, must be ready to source documents and keep track of police records, eyewitnesses, etc.

VK Singh, advocate and partner, Leges Juris Associates, says, "The work of a criminal lawyer becomes difficult because facts are not documented and lawyers find themselves in a predicament with very little material to work with. Identifying witnesses and other material requires hours of work."

Options in the field have increased with a rise in white collar crimes. "Advances made in the field of civil law attract law graduates today," says Singh.

**Career course**

Candidates taking up litigation have the choice of becoming designated senior counsellors. They may also choose to become a judge of lower courts, high courts, or the Supreme Court. Those looking to become the solicitor general of India and/or the attorney general of India are required to put in some years of work either as an advocate or as a judge of the lower courts. Candidates with a BALLB degree become eligible to be a magistrate of lower courts by taking a judiciary exam conducted by the high court of a particular state. An advocate practicing in the high court and with at least 10 years' experience is eligible to become a high court judge. With a range of options, the sheen of a law degree reflects possibilities of a lucrative career.

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**Emerging options**

Corporate law Family law Consumer Law Tax law Criminal law Intellectual Property Rights Cyber Law.

Sourcess: <http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-12-23/news/45509087_1_company-law-law-firm-intellectual-property-rights>