

THE LEVEL OF LEGAL CULTURE IN STUDENTS OF A NON-LEGAL UNIVERSITY

O NÍVEL DE CULTURA JURÍDICA EM ESTUDANTES DE UMA UNIVERSIDADE NÃO JURÍDICA

EL NIVEL DE CULTURA JURÍDICA EN ESTUDIANTES DE UNIVERSIDAD NO JURÍDICA

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of the article is to describe the theoretical and applied aspect of the problem of increasing the levels of legal culture of students. The study was conducted with students of the Balashovsky Institute (branch) of the Saratov State University named after N.G. Chernishevskii. The total sample size was 270 students. The study was conducted using the following methods: observation, interview, questionnaire, and analysis of the data obtained. The survey was carried out using an author's questionnaire consisting of three blocks. The materials of the article can be useful for higher school teachers, psychologists, sociologists, law enforcement officers, specialists of social protection institutions for organizing legal education activities, overcoming legal nihilism, and raising the level of legal culture among young people.

KEYWORDS: Legal culture. Legal education. Student youth. Nihilism. Legal competencies. Norms of behavior.

RESUMO: O objetivo do artigo é descrever a vertente teórica e aplicada do problema de aumento dos níveis de cultura jurídica dos alunos. O estudo foi conduzido com alunos do Instituto Balashovsky (filial) da Universidade Estadual de Saratov em homenagem a N.G. Chernishevskii. O tamanho total da amostra foi de 270 alunos. O estudo foi realizado utilizando os seguintes métodos: observação, entrevista, questionário e análise dos dados obtidos. A pesquisa foi realizada por meio de questionário do autor composto por três blocos. Os materiais do artigo podem ser úteis para professores do ensino superior, psicólogos, sociólogos, policiais, especialistas de instituições de proteção social para organizar atividades

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de educação jurídica, superar o niilismo jurídico e elevar o nível de cultura jurídica entre os jovens.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Cultura jurídica. Educação jurídica. Juventude estudantil. Niilismo. Competências jurídicas. Normas de comportamento.*

RESUMEN: *El propósito del artículo es describir el aspecto teórico y aplicado del problema de incrementar los niveles de cultura jurídica de los estudiantes. El estudio se realizó con estudiantes del Instituto Balashovsky (sucursal) de la Universidad Estatal de Saratov que lleva el nombre de N.G. Chernishevskii. El tamaño total de la muestra fue de 270 estudiantes. El estudio se realizó utilizando los siguientes métodos: observación, entrevista, cuestionario y análisis de los datos obtenidos. La encuesta se realizó mediante un cuestionario de autor compuesto por tres bloques. Los materiales del artículo pueden ser útiles para profesores de educación superior, psicólogos, sociólogos, agentes del orden, especialistas de instituciones de protección social para organizar actividades de educación jurídica, superar el nihilismo jurídico y elevar el nivel de cultura jurídica entre los jóvenes.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Cultura jurídica. Educación jurídica. Jóvenes estudiantes. Nihilismo. Competencias legales. Normas de conducta.*

Introduction

Modern social transformations, characteristic of both Russia and the whole world, associated with the updating of legislation, make the need for the formation of a rule of law state even more acute. The reform of the legal system associated with the recognition of human rights as the highest value, the development of the foundations of the state and civil society, the search for optimal ways to overcome legal conflicts indicate the task of forming a legal culture of young people for the pedagogical community. It is the rule of law that presupposes the formation of a socially developed person who is aware of his/her interests and needs, who knows his/her rights and fulfills his/her duties, knows how to protect his/her rights by available legal means and respects the rights and legitimate interests of other people.

The problems of overcoming legal nihilism, the development of legal awareness, ensuring legal education, increasing legal competence are the reason for the close attention of the higher education system. The relevance of the presented research has been determined by the need for the formation of a high level of legal culture of students of non-legal universities.

The National Doctrine of Education in the Russian Federation until 2025 defines the main tasks, which include the duties of the education system to ensure the upbringing of young people in the spirit of high morality and respect for the law, capable of socialization in civil

society, respecting the rights and freedoms of the individual, countering negative social and illegal processes.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation (adopted by popular vote on December 12, 1993, as amended during the all-Russian vote on July 1, 2020) is of particular importance in addressing the issue of legal awareness of citizens, which defines not only the foundations of society and the state but also the rights and freedoms of man and citizen (RUSSIA, 2020). This normative legal act is the fundamental basis for the development of legal culture.

One of the principles of the state educational policy is the formation of the legal culture of the individual. Concerning the younger generation, this principle is reflected in the Federal Law of the Russian Federation of December 29, 2012, No. 273-FL "On Education in the Russian Federation" (ed. of February 17, 2021).

To date, the educational process includes huge flows of various legal information. Accordingly, young people are obliged to observe, use and execute the norms of law in this area. Federal Law No. 149-FL of July 27 (as amended on March 09, 2021) "On Information, Information Technologies and Information Protection" (RUSSIA, 2020) is aimed at regulating relations arising in the exercise of the right to search, receive, transmit, produce and distribute information, the use of information technologies, and ensuring information protection.

The need for a high legal culture of citizens for the development of the rule of law is considered in the "Fundamentals of state policy of the Russian Federation in the development of legal literacy and legal awareness of citizens" (approved by the President of the Russian Federation April 28, 2011, No. PR-1168).

Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of June 28, 1993, No. 966 (ed. of March 22, 2005) "On the concept of legal informatization of Russia" reveals the task of forming single information and legal space in Russia, providing legal awareness and legal education not only of all society and each citizen individually.

Despite the emergence of new federal and regional legal acts, the general level of right-wing culture of the population, including young people, remains low.

Literature review

The education of legal culture is focused on creating conditions for the development of civil and legal activity, legal awareness of students, mastering the basics of legal literacy and legal culture, skills of legal behavior that are necessary for the effective performance of social roles in society.

An important role in the development of the theory of the rule of law belongs to the ancient Roman (Cicero) and ancient Greek (Plato, Aristotle) thinkers who defined the relationship between the state and law, politics and law in the interpretation of the state as a public legal obligation.

In the philosophical context, the problems of moral and legal education of the individual were presented in the works of foreign authors such as V. F. Hegel, T. Hobbes, I. Kant, Montesquieu, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (KARTASHOV; BAUMOVA, 2008).

Aspects of legal culture began to be considered in the 60s of the 20th century in Western legal literature. For the first time, there is a specialized work by K. Cissen, devoted to the role of legal culture in British society. In 1963, R. Almond and S. Verb's famous work "Civic Culture" was published, in which legal culture is interpreted through the prism of politics and includes such components as legal consciousness, legal norms, legal institutions, and forms of behavior of legal entities (ALMOND; VERBA, 1963)

In foreign legal discourse, issues of legal culture are also considered in the works of M. S. Bilder, A. Giddens (2014), T. Kelsen (1949), R. Cotterell (1997), N. Luhmann (1971), W. Rostow (1990), F. Tonnies (1991), L. Friedman (1975), F. Hayek (1979), H. Hard (1961).

In the late 80's – early 90's of the 20th century there was a new interpretation of the concept in foreign political sociology, which was determined as the identification of legal culture with civic education (KARTASHOV; BAUMOVA, 2008; KEAN, 2013).

The problems of legal culture, legal consciousness, and legal education have not been ignored by Russian scholars in the field of law and pedagogy.

The topic of education of legal culture and legal consciousness as a social phenomenon has been studied in sufficient detail in the works of S. S. Alekseev, V. S. Nerseyants, I. E. Farber (2010).

Certain aspects of the methodology for the formation of the legal culture of youth were developed by T. Budilina, V. V. Golovchenko, E. A. Zorchenko, A. V. Mitskevich (IBRAGIMOVA, 2017).

The features of legal education of students of educational institutions are considered in the studies of N. A. Pleshakova (2012), L. N. Smotrova, P. A. Shatskov (2007; 2015), T. A. Yumasheva (2019).

The essence, levels, the significance of legal culture in modern society, as well as legal consciousness as a special form of social consciousness are considered by A. S. Pigolkin, Yu. A. Dmitriev, A. N. Golovastikova, Yu. V. Pushkarev, E. A. Pushkareva (2018), A. N. Khalturina (2010), I. B. Umnyashova (2019), I. A. Egorov.

The need to use the ethical and legal approach as the basis for the formation of the legal culture of the younger generation in modern society is noted by S. V. Shiro, N. G. Levkovskaya (2007).

Special attention is paid to the problems of forming the legal culture of students of secondary vocational education in the works of N. V. Korchagin, A. A. Mamkin, M. G. Sergeeva, K. S. Yadryshnikov (KORCHAGIN, 2009; YADRYSHNIKOV, 2017).

The works of domestic teachers such as P. P. Blonsky, I. P. Ivanova, B. T. Likhachev, A. S. Makarenko, L. F. Nikitin, V. A. Sukhomlinsky, S. T. Shatskiy are devoted to the study of the problem of education of legal culture among the younger generation (IBRAGIMOVA, 2017).

Research by E. E. Boykina and N. Yu. Evplova is devoted to issues of youth sense of justice and its characteristics. The authors, studying the specific features of the legal consciousness of modern youth, note the low level of their legal awareness, skepticism in assessing the activities of law enforcement and judicial bodies, atrophied will (BOYKINA, E.E.; CHERNOV, 2019; EVPLOVA, 2000).

The relationship of legal nihilism among young people with incompetent criticism of law, legal mythology, legal infantilism, and political radicalism is revealed in the works of V. B. Tkachenko (2000).

High interest in the problem of the formation of students' legal culture in the system of higher non-legal education is manifested in the works of S. P. Zaitseva, N. V. Nuriakhmetova, S. D. Reznik, G. I. Sarantsev, V. S. Shilov. The authors define the socio-cultural conditions of its formation, note the relationship between the level of legal culture of young people, the stage of formation of civil society, and, in general, the prospects for the development of democracy in the Russian state (NURIAKHMETOVA, 2012; REZNIK; CHERNIKOVSKAYA, 2019; ARANTSEV, 2016; SHILOVA, 2015).

G. R. Shamenova (2020) examines the principles of the formation of legal culture in the framework of the implementation of educational work with students, E. G. Shikhanov (2018) – patterns.

In the field of pedagogy (L. N. Nikolaeva), an approach to the formation of the legal culture of student youth through pedagogical influence on the individual, due to which the necessary level of legal culture is formed, is considered. As a pedagogical category, the legal culture of an individual is considered from the point of view of a component of the general culture, and its essence is in the unity of intellectual, motivational, value, and regulatory characteristics (KARTASHOV; BAUMOVA, 2008).

The analysis of the scientific and pedagogical literature on the problem of research allows concluding that the issues of the legal culture of students have been studied very widely at various levels. However, the authors unanimously conclude that the main difficulties in the formation of legal culture are associated with insufficient legal awareness, low level of legal responsibility, lack of skills for analytical assessment of legal situations.

The discussion on the issues of legal culture has not been completed at the moment.

Methods

The research work was carried out based on the Balashov Institute (branch) of the Saratov State University named after N. G. Chernishevskii. The study involved 270 first- and second-year students aged 18 to 21 years.

The purpose of the research is to scientifically substantiate and develop a program for improving the level of legal culture of students based on the study of students' ideas about the importance of legal culture in their daily life and professional activities.

Tasks:

- scientific substantiation of the problem of legal culture of students;
- selection of diagnostic tools for the study;
- development of an author's questionnaire aimed at identifying the level of legal culture of students;
- surveying students of the first and second courses;
- development of a program to improve the level of legal culture of students.

The level of legal culture of junior students was studied based on the theoretical analysis of the problem. The following methods were used to achieve the research goal: observation, conversation, questionnaire, and analysis of the obtained data. The survey was conducted using an author's questionnaire consisting of three blocks.

The first block "General data" contains questions of socio-demographic characteristics of the personality of the subjects: gender, age, faculty, training profile, socio-economic status.

The questions of the second block allow identifying the attitude of students to legal culture; finding out how they interpret the "legal culture", "legal norm" terms; indicating the main source of obtaining legal information; determining their level of legal culture and youth in general; identifying difficulties and gaps in obtaining and applying legal knowledge; assessing the system of Russian legislation for the protection of citizens' rights and their capabilities for the protection and representation of rights and interests.

The third block "Determining the direct level of legal culture of students" reveals the legal literacy of students, the need for the formation of legal culture, identifies ways to improve it.

The questionnaire contains 50 questions, is continuous, consists of open and closed questions, 45 questions provide a point assessment, for each of which the respondents can score from 0 to 5 points.

The content of questions allows distinguishing five levels of legal culture: low, below average, average, above average, and high. Each of the presented levels has its characteristics.

Low – from 0 to 45 points. Characterized by a lack of knowledge of Russian legislation, an unformed ability to define the concept of a legal norm, an inability to identify gaps in legal knowledge, ignorance of value and legal guidelines, and the presence of a clearly expressed need for the formation of legal culture.

Below average – from 45 to 90 points. Determined by partial knowledge of Russian legislation, shows fragmentary skills to define the concepts of a legal norm and partially identify gaps in legal knowledge, knowledge of individual value-legal guidelines, the presence of a persistent need for the formation of legal culture.

Average – from 91 to 135 points. Revealed by the presence of ideas about legislative acts at the domestic and international levels, a certain fragmentary knowledge, the lack of cognitive activity in the field of law, the existing need for the formation of legal culture.

Above-average – from 136 to 180 points. Characterized by a sufficient level of knowledge about state-level legislative acts, as well as local normative legal acts regulating the behavior of a person and a citizen, awareness of the role and principles of legal responsibility, certain gaps in legal knowledge, a certain need for the formation of legal culture.

High – from 181 to 225 points. Conditioned by an excellent knowledge of normative legal acts of various levels, existing ideas about the innovations of legislation, having an active legal position, understanding the correct choice of legal actions in a certain situation, the formation of legal culture.

The data were calculated using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS), a professional computer data analysis tool (NASLEDOV, 2013). This statistical package is a set of programs for data processing and allows using the most modern methods of information processing (separately or jointly), flexibly changing the data structure, and also getting visual results.

The interpretation of the data obtained allowed drawing reasoned conclusions that formed the basis of the developed program for improving the level of legal culture.

Results

The analysis of the results of the survey to identify the level of legal culture showed that most respondents (64%) have such levels as low (16.9%) and below-average (47.1%). The main reasons for such levels are their low moral culture, legal nihilism and insufficient amount of legal knowledge, lack of skills to apply them correctly.

The average level of legal culture was revealed in 27% of students. The respondents point to the need to increase the level of legal culture, since this indicator is a conscious decision caused by the need to fill legal gaps associated with the desire to protect their rights, relying on the laws, to fulfill duties without violating the law.

The indicator "above average" is noted in 7.7% of respondents who have a full amount of legal knowledge, but their projection in specific situations is insufficient. They note the importance of legal education of young people, the formation of the ability to act within the legal framework, considering the rights of others.

The high level of legal culture observed in 1.3% of respondents and is characterized by the fact that students know international, federal, and regional legislation, see ways to improve legal culture, know the main sources of obtaining legal information, can determine not only a legal problem but also solve it competently.

In the description of the results of the study, we will focus on examples of some questions of the questionnaire that demonstrate the attitude of students to the legal culture and reveal its level.

The following responses were received to the key question of the questionnaire "How do you assess your level of legal culture?":

- 1) low – 20.5%;
- 2) below average – 26.3%;
- 3) average – 36.1%;
- 4) above average – 12.8%;
- 5) high – 4.3%.

These indicators determine the fact that most respondents assess their level of legal culture in the range from low to medium. The results obtained are confirmed by the answers to the question "Do you have gaps in legal knowledge?", to which 70% of students answered positively. Moreover, 25% of them found themselves in situations where they felt a lack of legal knowledge.

The students highlighted the lack of clear legal information, the ability to realize the need to respect the rights and freedoms of the individual provided for by law, motivation for constant updating of legal knowledge among the reasons for the lack of legal knowledge, in addition to legal nihilism.

The need to improve their level of legal culture was noted by most students (72.4%). As a result, the reasons that cause the students' need for legal knowledge are:

- 1) the desire to skillfully circumvent the law – 0.9%;
- 2) to live safely in society – 62.3%;
- 3) not to be deceived, to preserve personal security – 18.9%;
- 4) to do the right thing in various situations – 8.5%;
- 5) to protect their rights, relying on certain laws and regulations, to know their duties – 9.4%.

The third set of questions of the questionnaire, aimed at identifying the objective level of the respondents' legal culture, also confirmed that most students have a level of legal culture no higher than average. Particular attention was paid to the answers to the lack of knowledge of regulatory and legal documentation in various areas of life. The importance of legal education was noted by 86.1% of students.

The respondents indicated the following as the main ways to improve the legal culture: self-education, legal education in the family, examples of legal behavior of parents, popularization of legal knowledge through the media, multimedia, teaching law in educational organizations.

The overwhelming majority of students (96.7%) answered positively to questions about the mandatory study of law in non-legal universities.

Discussion

The results of the survey formed the basis for the development of a program to improve the level of legal culture of young people.

The regulatory framework of the program consists of documents of various levels.

The international normative legal acts in the system of Russian sources of legal education include the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (New York, December 16, 1966), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (adopted on November 20, 1989).

The federal level is represented by such normative legal acts regulating the formation of legal culture as the Constitution of the Russian Federation (adopted by popular vote on December 12, 1993 with amendments approved during a nationwide vote on July 1, 2020), Federal Law of the Russian Federation of December 29, 2012 No. 273-FL "On education in the Russian Federation" (as amended on March 24, 2021), Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of June 28, 1993 No. 966 (as amended on March 22, 2005) "On the concept of legal informatization of Russia", Order of the Government of the Russian Federation dated November 29, 2014 No. 2403-r "On Approval of the Fundamentals of State Youth Policy of the Russian Federation for the Period until 2025", the Code of the Russian Federation on Administrative Offenses dated December 30, 2001 No. 195-FL (as amended on February 24, 2021), the Civil Code of the Russian Federation of November 30, 1994 No. 51-FL (as amended on December 08, 2020), the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation of June 13, 19 1996 No. 63-FL (as amended on February 24, 2021), the Family Code of the Russian Federation of December 29, 1995 No. 223-FL (as amended on February 4, 2021), the Tax Code of the Russian Federation of July 31, 1998, No. 146-FL (as amended on February 17, 2021), "Fundamentals of the state policy of the Russian Federation in the development of legal literacy and legal awareness of citizens" (approved by the President of the Russian Federation on April 28, 2011, No. PR-1168), the Concept of countering terrorism in the Russian Federation (approved by the President of the Russian Federation on October 5, 2009), Strategy for countering extremism in the Russian Federation until 2025 (approved by the President of the Russian Federation on November 28, 2014, No. Pr-2753).

The documents of regional legislation in the field of formation of legal culture of youth include Law No. 215-ZSO of November 28, 2013 "On Education in the Saratov region" (as amended on July 27, 2020).

Program objectives: improvement of the system of formation (*raising the level*) of the legal culture of students at the university based on creating information and legal space for conscious and active lawful behavior.

Program objectives:

- formation of students' needs and skills of conscious execution of normative legal acts;
- strengthening the role of the university in the work to eliminate gaps in the legal knowledge of students and the formation of their value and legal guidelines;
- organization of complex interdepartmental interaction;

- introduction to socially useful activities and involvement in various student events on legal education;

- education of spiritual and moral values through the system of curatorial activity.

Areas of work:

1. Organizational and managerial direction:

- organization of conditions for the implementation of all activities within the framework of the program;

- identification and study of work experience to improve the level of legal culture of students;

- organization of interdepartmental interaction on issues of legal culture.

2. Content and activity direction:

- development of theoretical material and content of educational activities;

- implementation of educational and pedagogic technologies and methods.

3. Educational and pedagogic direction:

- conducting a complex of educational and pedagogic events.

Forms of work:

- educational talks and lectures;

- interactive discussions in the context of raising the level of legal culture;

- simulation games, situational tasks (case tasks), practice-oriented tasks;

- round tables, contests, and social events on legal topics;

- educational activities within the framework of curatorial hours.

Expected results:

- high level of knowledge of normative legal acts of various levels;

- the presence of ideas about the innovations of the legislation;

- having an active legal position;

- understanding the correct choice of legal actions in a certain situation;

- the formation of legal culture.

The analysis of the conducted research clearly shows that students of non-legal universities have a predominance of a low level of legal culture. In this regard, we believe that it is necessary to introduce a comprehensive program into the practice of the university, in the development of which the results and opinions were taken into account, noting the strengthening of the block of legal disciplines in the first courses of study, the activation of

lawful behavior through a cycle of educational activities, the use of interactive forms of work aimed at the formation of a civil legal position and the development of legal awareness.

The review of scientific works on the studied problems confirmed the need to address the issues of forming a legal culture of student youth based on legal awareness, legal responsibility, and law enforcement skills.

Conclusion

The research results presented in this article can be useful to specialists of social protection institutions, scientific and pedagogical workers of higher education, law enforcement agencies, and other interested persons and serve as the basis for building a model of interdepartmental interaction.

The obtained results were discussed at the scientific and methodological commission of the university, meetings of departments, at meetings and seminars with representatives of law enforcement agencies, prosecutor's offices, which allowed outlining further ways to implement the program developed.

Further prospects for the implementation of the presented scientific research are connected not only with the introduction of the developed program for improving the level of legal culture of students but also with the assessment of its effectiveness and the conduct of a control sociological study.

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