Formation of Legal Awareness as a Component of the Professional Identity of Specialists in the Social Sphere at the Stage of Study at the University

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The analysis of works in pedagogy, psychology, sociology, philosophy and jurisprudence allows us to state the presence of certain problems in professional training, in particular, in the formation of legal consciousness of future specialists in the social sphere at the stage of university education. The array of studies of legal consciousness in the humanitarian fields of knowledge shows that the general scientific discourse is focused on understanding the phenomenon as a significant factor in the formation of professional identity, as well as the analysis of real and potential opportunities to create conditions for the development of students’ legal consciousness in the conditions of universities. The aim of the study, the results of which are presented in the article, was to investigate the impact of the formation of legal consciousness on the professional identity of students. The article describes the stages of the experimental study, presents the sample, the tools, describes and interprets the results, as well as outlines the prospects of the study.

Ключевые слова: legal awareness, professional identity, social sphere, students of higher education.

Формирование правосознания как компонента профессиональной идентичности специалистов социальной сферы на этапе обучения в университете

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Анализ работ в области педагогики, психологии, социологии, философии и юриспруденции позволяет констатировать наличие определенных проблем в профессиональной подготовке, в частности в формировании правосознания будущих специалистов социальной сферы на этапе обучения в университете. Массив исследований правосознания в гуманитарных областях знания показывает, что общенаучный дискурс ориентирован на понимание феномена как значимого фактора становления профессиональной идентичности, а также на анализ реальных и потенциальных возможностей создания условий для развития правосознания у обучающихся в условиях университетов. Целью исследования, результаты которого представлены в статье, было изучение влияния формирования правосознания на профессиональную идентичность у студентов. В статье описаны этапы экспериментального исследования, представлены выборка, инструментарий, даны описание и интерпретация результатов, а также обозначены перспективы исследования.

Keywords: правосознание, профессиональная идентичность, социальная сфера, студенты высших учебных заведений.


Introduction

Within the framework of modern humanities, it is customary to consider the dynamics of the development of ideological paradigms of certain communities of human individuals as forms of social awareness. One of these forms is legal awareness. At present, researchers in the field of psychology, pedagogy, sociology, philosophy, theory of state and law, and other branches of humanitarian knowledge state the emergence of a multitude of studies devoted to the formation of legal awareness and raising the level of legal culture of future specialists [2; 4; 10; 31]. It should be noted that historically, the view on legal awareness has changed, and until now among specialists there is no
single definition of the concept of “legal awareness”, as well as clear ideas about its structure and content.

In the context of legal, sociological and philosophical sciences, legal awareness in their works was considered by L.M. Gantseva, Yu.I. Grevtsov, I.A. Ilyin, D. Chuikov, V.V. Kasyanova, V.N. Nechipurenko, B.C. Nersesyants, V.P. Malakhov, A.A. Moiseev, V.C. Samigullin, V.G. Safonov, A.L. Fursov and others.


According to L.A. Yasyukova, legal awareness should be viewed as “... a system of ideas that are based on understanding the role of law, legal norms in regulating relationships between members of society, between an individual and the state, under the influence of which attitudes towards these norms are formed ...” [26, pp.1—13]. The merit of O.A. Gulevich is the isolation of the structure of the components of legal awareness, characterized by certain attitudes (social attitudes) in relation to the law and to the judicial system (components of legal awareness) [7]. Some researchers believe that professional legal awareness can be determined in different professional groups [13; 14; 27].

Research results show that the legal awareness of a particular stratum or group has features that are determined by the position of this group in society and its interests. For example, the legal awareness of professional lawyers will differ from the legal awareness of such a social group as laborers or managers [6; 16]. In this paper we focus on the main complexity and versatility of the phenomenon of legal awareness. In contrast to a good knowledge of law and a positive attitude toward it, a person does not always observe it in his/her personal behavior [12].

In addition to the levels of development, there are also functions of legal awareness, which are an external manifestation of its properties. According to the theoretical concept, which is shared by many scientists, these include cognitive (function is to provide the subject with legal knowledge), evaluative (function provides the correlation of legal norms with his own views of law) and regulatory functions (consists in ensuring the correlation of human behavior with the system of legal norms operating in society) [9, pp. 35—56].

The majority of citizens, according to T.I. Zaslavskaya, obtain information about the legal system and their own rights not from official documents, but from past social experience, fragmentary messages in the media, from communication with the closest social environment. That is why the formation of the legal awareness of citizens in the process of education, starting from the earliest stages of education, is of great importance [20]. Legal awareness is formed in the process of development and growing up of the individual, the development of personality and subjectivity (A.R. Ratinov, L.A. Yasyukova), as well as in the process of forming his self-awareness and self-concept [32]. Other scientists agree that the foundations of legal awareness as a phenomenon are laid in the social process — legal socialization (O.A. Gulevich, E.O. Golynchik, A.R. Ratinov, L.A. Yasyukova, etc.) [5; 19; 20].

The psychological aspect of the study of legal awareness involves taking into account the laws of awareness and self-awareness as special phenomena of the individual, capable of regulating the behavior and activities of the individual at various levels of its development. In this regard, the importance of the formation of professional legal awareness among specialists in the social sphere (for example, future police officers, legal psychologists, social educators, lawyers, social workers, etc.) and the interiorization of the values of the legal culture of Russian society in the educational process of cadets, students of educational institutions of the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of
Russia, students of legal specialties, students and undergraduates studying in the direction of training pedagogy and psychology of defiant behavior. Otherwise, the professional legal awareness of a young specialist in the social sphere is threatened with what is commonly called a "deformation" of professional legal awareness [29]. Accordingly, for researchers and practitioners, the need for solving the indicated problem in order to increase the effectiveness of professional education and socialization of future specialists.

**Current Study**

In the works of Russian researchers I.A. Egorova and F.S. Safuanov, the main directions of the formation of students’ legal awareness are highlighted: “… legal knowledge as such; attitude of students to law in general; attitude to the existing legal reality, to law enforcement practice; value orientations that regulate behavior; freedom of lawful behavior” [11, pp. 1—3].

Legal awareness at a student age can experience various deformations that lead to contradictions in the ratio of cognitive and emotional components of legal awareness: legal infantilism, legal nihilism, legal idealism, marginal legal awareness, reborn legal awareness, a kind of breakdown of legal stereotypes (corruptive behavior, violation of legal duties, violation of human rights etc.) moral and legal conformism, speculative, negative legal radicalism. This is reflected in the perception of the legal reality by young people and the formation of readiness or unpreparedness for lawful behavior [18; 22; 24; 28].

The legal awareness of students develops along with the development of their personality and manifests itself in activities, behavior and in relations with the outside world. It is during his studies at the university that the student is both a bearer of an ordinary sense of justice and a bearer of a not yet fully formed professional sense of justice. During training, there is a gradual transition from ordinary legal awareness to professional [1; 5; 17, pp. 92—94; 30].

The legal awareness of a particular professional group is a reflection of their practical activities, which includes a social community. For example, some higher educational institutions of the Russian law enforcement system, according to researchers, are designed to prepare in the process of vocational training a free, creatively thinking, versatile educated person — a self-confident citizen, open to people, able to be successful in professional activities [3, pp. 6—9; 15; 21]. In the formation of professional legal awareness on the example of law students, a special role is played by higher legal education, which has common features inherent in higher education in general, as well as features of legal education [16].

The aim of our research was to study the influence of the formation of legal awareness on the professional identity of students of a university with major in Pedagogy and Psychology of Defiant Behavior. The experimental study was carried out on a sample of 200 people. The study involved two groups — control and experimental, 100 people in each group. The age of the study participants was from 18 to 21 years old, they were students of two universities in Moscow.

As material for research at the ascertaining and control stages of the experiment, we have chosen the following methods:
1. Methods for studying professional identity (MIPI);
2. Unfinished sentences (modified by OA Gulevich);
3. Questionnaire “Legal Awareness”;
4. Methods for studying the professionally lawful orientation of the personality [8; 23; 25; 26].

**The ascertaining stage.** Initial assessment that was conducted by administering tests, questionnaires, and surveys.
The second stage of our research is a formative experiment, which involves the development and implementation of a training program on the formation of the legal awareness of students. This experiment is carried out in only one (experimental) group.

Characteristics of the client group for which the program is designed. A group of law students from universities in the amount of 10 to 25 people, mixed by gender. Age of participants in the training: from 18 to 21 years.

Scope of the program. The program is designed for 18 lessons. The duration of one training day is 1.5 hours, depending on the efficiency and speed of the group’s work. A more detailed description of the structure of the training program is in possession of the authors.

The third — the control stage of our research — is the secondary assessment of the results of the implementation of the training program for the formation of legal awareness. Assessment is carried out using the same material as in the first stage of the study in both groups of students of legal directions.

Results

Statistical data processing using the student’s t-test showed that there were no significant differences between the experimental and control groups before the experiment.

After the experiment, the situation changed. We found the following statistically significant differences:

1. The level of development of legal awareness in the experimental group according to the method “Unfinished sentences” (modified by O.A. Gulevich) significantly increased both relative to the control group (p > 0.05) and relative to the initial results (p > 0.05). Prior to the formative experiment, no significant differences were observed. At the primary assessment, 34% of students in the control group were at the level of lawmaking, in the experimental group — 23%.

After the experiment, the situation changed. In the control group, 30% of law students were at the level of lawmaking, and in the experimental group — 34%. The percentage difference between the groups decreased according to the third level of development of legal awareness. In the control group, the number of subjects with the third level of legal awareness decreased, thereby increasing the number with the first level of development of legal awareness (obedience). In the experimental group, there were fewer students with the first level, thereby increasing the number of subjects with the second and third levels of legal awareness.

2. The general level of development of legal awareness, as well as the level of legal awareness on the scale “legal knowledge” according to the method of L.A. Yasyukova in the experimental group increased both relative to the control group (p > 0.01, p > 0.01) and relative to the initial results (p > 0.05, p > 0.01). At the primary assessment in the control group of respondents with a well-developed level of legal awareness was 22%, and in the experimental group the number of subjects with a well-developed level of legal awareness was 12%. Legal nihilism in the control group was 26%, and in the experimental group, the indicators were two times less and amounted to 12%.

The smallest number of points in both the experimental and control groups was found in the social and civil sphere. The control group scored the greatest number of points in the field of legal knowledge (high level), and the experimental group — in the business sphere (medium level).

After the formative experiment in the experimental group, the number of subjects with the level of legal awareness “legal nihilism” decreased by 7%. It should be noted that in the control group, this amount, on the contrary, increased from 26% to 34%.
A high level of legal awareness according to the method of L.A. Yasyukova was not noted, both in the control and in the experimental group, both in primary and secondary assessment. In the experimental group, 12% of the subjects had a good level of legal awareness; after the experiment, this percentage was already 29%.

The level of development of professional identity according to the method of research of professional identity (MIPI) LB Schneider in the experimental group increased both relative to the control group (p > 0.05) and relative to the initial results (p > 0.05). The calculation and comparison of data in the SPSS Statistics program was carried out according to the level of "achieved positive identity". There were no particular differences in the percentage ratio for a given level of identity between the control and experimental groups at the primary assessment. In the control group, according to the results of primary assessment, a distortion of professional identity is also traced. In this group, the majority of students have a “moratorium” identity status.

The level of pseudo-identity in the experimental group decreased from 67% to 39%. And in the control group it increased from 17% to 26%. But, at the same time, the level of identity moratorium in the experimental group increased from 6% to 18%, as did the level of subjects with diffuse identity, which increased from 7% to 12%, respectively. After the formative experiment, the number of subjects with achieved positive identity reached 34% in the experimental group. In the control group, this indicator decreased to 13%. In the control group, the percentage of subjects with diffuse identity practically did not change, the changes were only 1%.

**Significant differences in the data from SPSS Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method/scale</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Control group n=25</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Experimental group n=25</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>t (CG/EG)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfinished sentences (as modified by O.A. Gulevich)</td>
<td>Before</td>
<td>2,04±0,806</td>
<td>-0,768</td>
<td>&gt; 0,05</td>
<td>2,22±0,808</td>
<td>2,644</td>
<td>&lt; 0,05</td>
<td>-1,424</td>
<td>&gt; 0,05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After</td>
<td>2,17±0,868</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,56±0,639</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-2,506</td>
<td>&lt; 0,05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods for studying professional identity (MIPI) L.B. Schneider</td>
<td>Before</td>
<td>3,33±1,239</td>
<td>-0,500</td>
<td>&gt; 0,05</td>
<td>1,50±0,857</td>
<td>-2,566</td>
<td>&lt; 0,05</td>
<td>-1,275</td>
<td>&gt; 0,05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After</td>
<td>3,50±1,445</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2,67±0,907</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-2,455</td>
<td>&lt; 0,05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire “Legal Awareness” L.A. Yasyukova / General level</td>
<td>Before</td>
<td>15,63±3,118</td>
<td>1,195</td>
<td>&gt; 0,05</td>
<td>16,33±2,657</td>
<td>-2,452</td>
<td>&lt; 0,05</td>
<td>1,982</td>
<td>&gt; 0,05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After</td>
<td>15,92±3,586</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18,50±3,240</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-3,186</td>
<td>&lt; 0,01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire “Legal Awareness” L.A. Yasyukova / Legal knowledge</td>
<td>Before</td>
<td>6,38±0,970</td>
<td>0,674</td>
<td>&gt;0,05</td>
<td>6,22±1,166</td>
<td>-3,681</td>
<td>&lt;0,01</td>
<td>-0,123</td>
<td>&gt;0,05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After</td>
<td>6,17±1,007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7,69±0,979</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-3,557</td>
<td>&lt;0,01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. According to the methodology of the professionally legitimate personality orientation (PPNL) of the authors T.G. Khashchenko and M.M. Shpak no significant changes were noted. Despite this, some quotative changes are present. On the primary assessment, the number of subjects with an average level of professionally legitimate personality orientation in the control group was 20%, and in the experimental group — 10%. The high level in the control group was 78%, and in the experimental one — 88%.

On secondary assessment, the percentage of subjects with an average level decreased almost twice and amounted to 12% and 5% in the control and experimental groups, respectively. High level — 86% and 93% in the control and experimental groups, respectively. A low level was not detected, both in primary and secondary assessment.

5. To identify the relationship between the level of professional identity and the level of formation of legal awareness, a correlation analysis was carried out (calculation of the Spearman’s rank correlation coefficient for the experimental group). For this, the levels of formation of professional identity and levels of formation of legal awareness were identified:

1 — low level; 2 — middle level; 3 — high level.

The calculation carried out in the SPSS Statistics program showed that there is a direct correlation (Rs = 0.328 at p < 0.05 (before exp.), Rs= 0.47 at p < 0.01 (after experiment).

Discussion of the Results and Conclusions

A comparative analysis of the research results using statistical data processing (including correlation analysis) made it possible to determine the effectiveness of the formation of legal awareness program in law students with the help of socio-psychological training and the influence of such an impact on the formation of the professional identity of a person at a student age. After the formative experiment, the indicators for the "Unfinished sentences" methodology changed significantly. According to this methodology, the level of legal obedience is not interpreted by the author of the methodology as a low level. In addition, the authors of the theory J. Tapp and F. Levin, on the basis of which a modification of the original method was created, argued that the sequence of levels of legal development was not set initially and the levels can follow each other in different sequences. Based on the many options for the interpretation of the results of this methodology by the authors of various studies, in our study we adhere to the generally accepted interpretation and correlate the levels of development of legal awareness according to the model of J. Tapp and F. Levin with high, medium, and low levels of legal awareness (lawmaking, legal support and law abidance, respectively).

Students with a level of legal awareness of law abiding are distinguished by law-abiding behavior, they deny the possibility of changing and breaking the law under any circumstances, even if the law violates moral and social principles, since the concepts of law and morality are merged into one. For subjects at this level, laws perform a punitive function.

The second level is the level of credibility. Students with this level of legal awareness believe that the law can be violated, but only if it interferes with the normal and effective life of society. An individual at this stage of legal development correlates existing laws with the requirements of society.

The third level is lawmaking. A person at this level is distinguished by a high moral and ethical development, he considers a person to be the highest value. This level belongs to subjects with a fully mastered code of laws that are subject to a code of ethics. The transition to this level occurs in the process of legal socialization of a person and adherence to legal norms.

Based on the results obtained by the method of L.A. Yasyukova, the indicators for the general level of development of legal awareness in the experimental group are very reliable (p < 0.01). Al-

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so, significant changes are visible on the scale of legal knowledge and are also very reliable (p < 0.01). Therefore, the results of the research suggest that an application of additional programs that aim development of legal awareness may have positive outcome among students.

**Future Perspectives**

The problem of forming the legal awareness of specialists in the social sphere at the stage of study at the university requires further study by conducting a more detailed interdisciplinary empirical study. The results of the study, as well as the developed training program, have indisputable practical significance for the professional training and socialization of specialists in the social sphere and can be implemented in educational institutions of higher education for use by the teaching staff of universities, curators of study groups, course officers, psychologists, etc.; when organizing the educational process, when building psychological work with students (cadets, listeners, undergraduates, as well as graduate students and adjuncts), not only in an experimental format, but also on an ongoing basis.

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