PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISM OF THE AUDIENCE OF LEGAL EDUCATION

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Abstract
The ultimate goal of legal education is to make all the people know, understand and obey the laws, laying the basis for law-based governance. This paper aims to design suitable measures to promote legal education based on the psychology of the audience. To identify the psychological status of the audience in legal education, a questionnaire survey was carried out among urban residents, some of whom have served in the judicial department. Then, the psychological mechanism of the audience was analysed from the aspects of cognitive process, emotional process and will process. The results show that the main problems with legal education lies in the dominance by the government, the lack of systematicity, and the outdated education methods; the problems with the audience are their insufficient psychological needs and passive acceptance. The research findings shed new light on how to improve legal education from the angle of audience psychology.

Key words: legal education, audience psychology, psychological mechanism, countermeasures.

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INTRODUCTION
Law-based governance is the essential requirement of socialism with Chinese characteristics. It is an important guarantee for building a well-off society in an all-round way, and also a wide and profound revolution in the field of state governance. This requires not only to improve China’s existing legal system, law implementation system, supervision system and security system, but more importantly, enable the whole people to know the law, understand the law, and abide by the law. Therefore, law popularization education is particularly important.

Started in 1986, China’s law popularization education has had a history of more than 30 years. So far, China’s research on the ontology of law popularization education can be divided into three stages (Kennedy, 1982): at the first stage ranging from 1983 to 1999, the research focused on the legal advocacy; at the second stage between 2000-2010, more in-depth study was conducted, involving the specific implementation of the law, and the operational system etc., and at that time Feng Xiang is a typical research scholar; at the third stage from 2011 to the present, the researches have emphasized on the innovative reform of the law popularization paradigm, mainly related to the concept and nature of law popularization education. Regarding the value of law popularization education, scholars have not reached a consensus. Some believe that the law popularization education is formalistic, and far from the goal, while others believe that it can raise citizens’ legal awareness (McLear, O’Neil, Epperlein et al., 1981). The most popular research on legal education is its specific method, path and efficiency, but not deeply enough. In addition, many scholars have carried out research on the sub-fields of law popularization education such as rural, corporate and campus...
law popularization, which still focus on the effects, ways, and methods. Through the relevant literature, it’s found that most of the previous researches have been carried out from the main body of law popularization education (the grassroots units and staffs), and also the content and form. Professor Wang Taixian discussed the role of law popularization education from the perspective of the recipient (Speisman, 1968). These studies were mainly based on the theories of communication and education, but few studies have been performed on the audience (recipients) of law popularization education from the psychological perspective.

Based on the above, this paper attempts to analyse the psychological mechanism and strategy of law popularization education from the perspective of psychology. It firstly defines the concepts related to law popularization education. Then, a survey was conducted on the current psychological status of the audience for law universal education using the questionnaire method. Finally, it summarizes the problems existing in the current law popularization education, and put forwards corresponding countermeasures.

ANALYSIS OF LAW POPULARIZATION EDUCATION AND ITS AUDIENCE PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISM

Concept definition of the law popularization education

(1) The subject of law popularization education

The subject of law popularization education refers to the organization that enacts the goal of universal education in law, and implements and completes the task of universal education in law (Petra, 2004). Generally, the national organs, governments and their authorized organizations in China are the organizer and implementer of law popularization education.

(2) The audience of law popularization education

If the mental and intellectual conditions permit, all citizens who have the receiving ability should be the audience of law popularization education. However, in different periods, the key audience of law popularization education also varies. For a long time, the teenagers, leading cadres at all levels and civil servants have always been the key targets of legal popularization. With the progress of society, the scope of audience has gradually expanded, and more attention has been paid to the law popularization education of urban floating population and rural population.

(3) The goals of law popularization education

The cognition of legal knowledge, the spirit of law, and the legal personality are the three elements for the goal of law popularization education.

1) Cognition of legal knowledge

The most basic goal of law popularization education is to enable the citizens to have the most basic understanding of legal knowledge, that is, the study of common knowledge in law.

2) Spirit of law

The legal system needs the guidance of the spirit in law. The spirit of law is the understanding and recognition of the core concepts and basic values in law. The spirits of the law advocated in different social contexts also vary. Therefore, the spirit of law should be built with the times, so as to determine the specific connotation of the socialist law spirit.

3) Legal personality

First of all, the full consciousness of the legal subjects is the basis of forming the legal society. Limiting the arbitrariness of power to the maximum extent, and gradually gaining freedom and dignity is the process of legal social production. To awaken the freedom of the subjects, the cultivation and establishment of their legal personality are necessary. In addition, the development of individual freedom is the essence of legal personality. Individuals have strong legal consciousness and can protect the dignity and rights of themselves and others according to the law. This conscious and universal legal personality is the goal of law popularization education. Therefore, the legal personality is the ultimate goal of law popularization education (Mackintosh, 1903).

Figure 1. Specific division of psychological phenomena
Analysis for the audience psychological mechanism of law popularization education

The internal structure and process of psychological events are called psychological mechanism (Tapp, 1976). For this, we must first study the psychological research framework in the general sense. Figure 1 shows the specific division of psychological phenomena. In this framework, this paper analyses the audience psychology of law popularization education.

(1) The audience’s cognitive process of law popularization education

Feeling, perception, attention, memory, thinking, and imagination are the main cognitive processes of objective things by individuals and also the basis of individual psychological activities (Farnsworth, 1936). Feeling and perception together affect the acceptant attitude of the educatees to the law popularization education; attention can make the audience have a purposeful choice for the education content; the memory activity is the process of encoding, storing and extracting the content of law popularization education so that the audience can accumulate experience and transfer past experience to the current learning (Kerr, 2009); through the indirect and generalized thinking the audience can become cognitive of things outside the senses; imagination can improve the foresight ability of the audience, and help them recognize things that have never been felt.

(2) The audience’s emotional process of law popularization education

The emotions of the audience directly affect the popularization effect of law popularization education. If the audience has doubts or conflicts, it will hinder their acceptance of law popularization education, while moderate-intensity stress is beneficial to accepting activity.

(3) The audiences’ will process of law popularization education

The will can help to adjust the audience’s emotions, eliminate the interference, and rationally grasp their own emotions, as well as ensure the implementation and maintenance of the law popularization education (Plante, 1999). For instance, some audiences may have doubts about the effectiveness of the law when affected by the bad social atmosphere. However, under the influence of their willpower, they can reasonably analyse that the bad social atmosphere is only a small part, and rule by law is the right path to protect themselves. In this case, the acceptance of the law popularization education can be guaranteed.

In addition, the personality, temperament and hobbies of the audience will also affect their cognitive psychology and behaviour towards legal education.

AUDIENCE’S PSYCHOLOGICAL STATUS OF LAW POPULARIZATION EDUCATION AND RELATED COUNTERMEASURES

Survey on the psychological status of the audience of law popularization education

In order to further understand the current situation of law popularization education and audience psychology in China, a random sampling method was used in this study to collect 1000

Table 1. Survey sample basic statistics

| Item               | Category       | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender             | Male           | 483       | 50.31%     |
|                    | Female         | 477       | 49.69%     |
| Age                | Under 15 years old | 79     | 8.23 %     |
|                    | 15-25          | 204       | 21.25 %    |
|                    | 26-45          | 301       | 31.35 %    |
|                    | 46-65          | 322       | 33.54 %    |
|                    | 65 years old or older | 54   | 5.63 %     |
| Education level    | Junior high school  | 144      | 15.00 %    |
|                    | High school     | 202       | 21.04 %    |
|                    | Specialist      | 393       | 40.94 %    |
|                    | University and above | 221 | 23.02 %    |
| Career distribution| Worker         | 317       | 33.02 %    |
|                    | Farmer          | 216       | 22.50 %    |
|                    | Student         | 218       | 22.71 %    |
|                    | Civil servant   | 42        | 4.38 %     |
|                    | Teacher         | 33        | 3.44 %     |
|                    | Private owners  | 25        | 2.60 %     |
|                    | Professional skill worker | 14   | 1.46 %     |
|                    | Service industry practitioner | 95 | 9.90 %     |
citizens from a certain urban population, or residents who handled business in the judicial department. 960 valid questionnaires were recovered, with the effective rate of 960%. Table 1 shows the basic situation of the survey samples.

(1) Satisfaction of audience with the law popularization education

Figure 2 shows the survey results of the audience's satisfaction with the law popularization education. Only 23.1% were very satisfied with the law popularization education, 33.8% were satisfied, 17.4% were generally satisfied, and 15.7% of the residents were not satisfied. This indicates that for the audience, there still exist many deficiencies in the process of popularizing education in law.

(2) Survey on audience psychology of law popularization education

Figure 3 shows the survey results of the motivations of residents to participate in law popularization education. It can be seen from the figure that 60.2% of the respondents voluntarily participated in law popularization education according to their own needs or intentions, indicating that most residents have begun to be aware of the importance of legal knowledge; 22.3% respondents said that the reasons for their participation in the legal education were both out of their own will, and the mandatory regulations; in addition, 14.3% of the respondents participated because of the conformity psychology.

Figure 4. How to solve the dispute

Figure 4 shows the results of the survey on how residents resolve the dispute. It can be seen from the figure that about half of the residents chose to solve the problem through legal channels; 23.1% and 22.2% residents chose the negotiation and human relationship, indicating that most residents have legal awareness and prefer legal weapons for protecting themselves, but there are still many residents who tend to solve problems through the rule by man, since they do not trust or understand the law.

Figure 5 shows the survey results of the legal education propaganda forms that the audience likes. It can be seen from the figure that the top three were the internet media such as WeChat official account etc., the support hotline, and literary performance, accounting for 84.5%, 78.4% and 45.3% respectively. Among them, the internet media such as WeChat are the most widely used tools in people's daily life, which makes it convenient to learn legal knowledge; the hotline for legal consultation can provide advice at any time when residents have legal problems in a targeted manner, so it is also very popular among residents; the literary performance transforms the boring legal knowledge into lively forms such as easy-to-
understand songs, dances and opusculum etc., so as to stimulate residents' interest in legal knowledge.

Figure 5. The legal education propaganda form that the audience likes

Figure 6 shows the results of the survey on the legal fields that residents most want to know. It can be seen from the figure that 80%-90% of residents chose the Laws of on the Protection of Minors, Marriage Law, Food Hygiene Law and Road Traffic Safety Law. This indicates that the law closely related to life is a hot spot of concern for residents. Therefore, the law should be popularized based on the actual needs of the residents in order to effectively improve the effectiveness of law popularization education.

Figure 6. The legal field that residents want to know most

Countermeasures for improving the law popularization education

1) Problems in the subject of law popularization education

First of all, the law popularization education in China is still dominated by the government at present. Although the government with powerful rights can guarantee the smooth implementation of law popularization education, it also limits the participation of social forces in the process of law enforcement. Therefore, the government as the only subject of universal legal education does not conform to the spirit of the times in China’s legal propaganda. Secondly, the law popularization education in China is in lack of institutionalization. Usually, once receiving the notice from the higher authorities, the related departments shall carry out the intermittent law-popularization and mobile law-popularization in full swing. Soon afterwards, it will be smothered. Just because of this, legal education activities are often considered to be formalistic, and the audience has a low level of acceptance. Finally, the means of popularizing education in law cannot keep pace with the times, since it still uses traditional propaganda pictures and manuals, ignoring the huge impact of new media technologies such as mobile phones and networks on people's lives.

2) Problems in the audience of law popularization education

Firstly, the psychological needs of the audience are insufficient for the law popularization education. Under the practical rationality, the weakening of the residents' trust in law reduces the legal needs of the residents, and even some residents refuse to accept the law popularization education. Secondly, in the process of law popularizing education, the audience is mostly the passive recipient, and the goal set by the subject of law popularization education is deviated from the psychological needs of the audience, resulting in poor feedback of the audience’s needs.

(3) Problems in the law popularization education

1) Problems in the subject of law popularization

As the main subject of law popularization education, the government should firstly formulate the objectives, tasks and contents of law popularization education in light of the actual needs and cognitive abilities of the audience. Secondly, the form of law popularization education should follow the development of the times. On the basis of previous propaganda manuals, publicity lectures, etc., various forms of education such as legal lectures and law theatres should be taken, and combined with the emerging media such as WeChat.
public account, QQ, Weibo, etc., a dedicated legal education website should be established, to facilitate the communication with the audience. Finally, we should establish a normalized law popularization education system, improve its evaluation management system, and promote the public participation policy in the process of law popularization, so that the popularization of law education is no longer the government’s expertise, and we can truly realize the law popularization education of the whole people.

(2) From the perspective of the audience
The audience should first learn legal knowledge, establish legal beliefs, incorporate their own behaviour into the track of the rule of law, form an authoritative recognition of the relevant laws and regulations of the country from the depth of the heart. Secondly, they should cultivate their own consciousness of rights and law-abiding habits, learn to think about, analyse and solve problems through legal knowledge from the perspective of jurisprudence, and choose to use laws to protect themselves and resolve disputes when encountering disputes and illegal things. Finally, they must consciously safeguard the authority and dignity of socialist law. They must not only learn the law and understand the law themselves, but also help others to eradicate the wrong ideas of the power over the law and dare to fight against illegal crimes.

CONCLUSIONS
The law-popularization and law-abiding of the whole people is the long-term basic work for realizing the rule of law in China. This paper studies the psychological mechanism of the audience in law popularization education. The specific conclusions are as follows:

(1) The concepts related to law popularization education were defined, and the audience psychological mechanism of the law popularization education was analysed from three aspects: cognitive process, emotional process and will process.

(2) A survey was conducted on the audience’s psychological status of the law popularization education using the questionnaire method. The results showed that the main problems with the subject of law popularization education include the government-dominance lack of institutionalization, out-dated education means; the problems with the audience are mainly their insufficient psychological needs and passive acceptance.

(3) Based on the survey results, the countermeasures for improving the effectiveness of law popularization education were proposed from the perspective of the subject and audience of law popularization.

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