

Study on the Current Situation and Strategies of Cultivating Rule of Law Literacy Among Primary and Secondary School Students

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doi:10.56397/JARE.2024.01.06

Abstract

Through the investigation of the current situation of the rule of law literacy of primary and secondary school students, this study finds that the overall level of the rule of law literacy of primary and secondary school students is on the low side, and that the rule of law literacy of senior high school students is on the low side in comparison with that of students in the compulsory education stage. It is suggested that the teaching method of rule of law education in primary and secondary schools should be revolutionized, the teaching content of rule of law education in primary and secondary schools should be enriched, and a sound system of rule of law education in senior high schools should be established to connect with the compulsory education stage, so as to effectively cultivate primary and secondary school students' rule of law literacy.

Keywords: primary and secondary school students, rule of law education, rule of law literacy

1. Introduction

In recent years, as China's strategy of governing the country according to the law has been comprehensively deepened and advanced, at the macro level, education on the rule of law in primary and secondary schools has been increasingly emphasized by the State and the Government. The Fourth Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee pointed out that education on the rule of law should be incorporated into the national education system, starting with young people, and that courses on knowledge of the rule of law should be established in primary and secondary schools. This puts forward specific tasks for promoting

the establishment of a sense of the rule of law in society as a whole. on June 28, 2016, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Justice, and the National Office for the Popularization of the Law also jointly issued and implemented the Outline of Rule of Law Education for Young People, which puts forward different goals for the rule of law education at different stages, such as compulsory education, senior high school education, and higher education, and refines the content and requirements of the teaching in terms of segments of the school year. Rule of law education in primary and secondary schools has been put on the agenda as an important strategic initiative for the rule of law, and has gradually

become a major strategic issue in the reform and development of education in China. In this context, exploring the current situation of the rule of law literacy of primary and secondary school students, discovering the problems existing in the process of cultivating the rule of law literacy of primary and secondary school students, and trying to put forward the cultivation strategies and suggestions of the rule of law literacy of primary and secondary school students are of great practical value for the improvement and development of the rule of law education in primary and secondary schools in the new era.

2. Literature review

2.1 Study on the Concept and Content of Rule of Law Literacy

Academic research on the concept and connotation of rule of law education, a view that, in order to define the rule of law literacy, we should first clarify the relationship between the rule of law literacy, legal literacy, legal literacy and other groups of similar concepts. The first thing we need to note is that we should distinguish "rule of law literacy" from what we used to call "legal literacy" and "legal literacy" and other concepts, the rule of law literacy of citizens should be the sum of the role of the rule of law, the concept of the rule of law, the awareness of the rule of law, the way of the rule of law, the culture of the rule of law, the rule of law and other aspects of the rule of law belief (Liu Lian, 2017). Some studies believe that although there are similarities in the meaning of the three concepts of citizens' rule of law literacy, legal literacy and legal literacy, there are still non-negligible differences among them, and they give their own definition of the concept of rule of law literacy after specifying the respective differences and connections among the three (Li Changzu & Zhao Yulin, 2015). Another viewpoint is not eager to make a distinction between similar concepts such as rule of law literacy, legal literacy, and legal literacy, but to define the concept of rule of law literacy on the basis of summarizing and summarizing the relevant policy documents and academic literature. For example, studies have pointed out that the full name of rule of law literacy should be citizens' rule of law literacy, and its core should be the word "rule of law", and they believe that rule of law literacy is a kind of attitude and conviction towards the rule of law that citizens have mastered through training and

practical learning (Yang Zhongming & He Zengyan, 2017).

2.2 Study on the Current Situation and Problems in the Cultivation of Rule of Law Literacy

On the study of the status quo and problems of the rule of law literacy, representative views believe that in the process of cultivating the rule of law literacy of young people, there are still problems such as only focusing on the inculcation of legal knowledge but neglecting the cultivation of the concept of the rule of law, and in the curriculum of the rule of law education in the school and the teaching of the rule of law education, such as the curriculum system and the structure of knowledge is not independent and incomplete, as well as the teaching mode is rigid and single and lack of practice and other problems (Fang Fang, 2017). There is also a study on the status quo mapping of national rule of law literacy through the distribution of questionnaires, and he pointed out that at present, in the process of the acquisition of rule of law literacy by Chinese nationals, there are problems such as legal beliefs are not fully established, the authority of the law is not recognized in place, the basic knowledge of the law is weak, and there is a lack of understanding of the scope of the law's application (Wang Yingying, 2016).

2.3 Study on the Paths and Strategies for Cultivating Rule of Law Literacy

In terms of research on the cultivation path and strategy of rule of law literacy, the relevant literature generally puts forward corresponding cultivation strategies according to the different objects of research, mainly involving four aspects: consolidating basic legal knowledge, changing traditional thinking, building a culture of the rule of law and cultivating the concept of the rule of law. Some studies mention the current status of the rule of law literacy of the counselor team, pointing out that the rule of law literacy of the counselor team must be promoted and cultivated through the legal knowledge training before the counselor joins the team, the regular rule of law thematic exchange and training after joining the team, the rule of law practice in the usual work, and the further education and learning at the academic level (Xia Lingling, 2016). Some studies believe that the rule of law literacy of college students should be enhanced through the effective path of "three-in-one" theoretical education, practical

education and cultural inculcation, that is, through the establishment of a sound system of rule of law theoretical education, rule of law practical education and rule of law cultural inculcation system to promote college students to improve their self-rule of law literacy (Qi Linlin, 2016). Some studies have also mentioned that teachers should be fully prepared to respond to the vigorous development of rule of law education by improving their own rule of law literacy, and he believes that efforts can be made to cultivate and improve teachers' rule of law literacy by starting from the five dimensions of the principles of jurisprudence, the concept of the rule of law, the laws and regulations, the rule of law resources, and the educational methods (Pan Haidong, 2017).

2.4 Research on Issues Related to Rule of Law Education as It Relates to Rule of Law Literacy

The first is a study on the nature and objectives of rule of law education. The main viewpoint of this type of research is that the enhancement and cultivation of rule of law literacy is the ultimate goal of rule of law education activities. Some studies believe that the purpose of rule of law education is not only the inculcation of legal knowledge, but also the cultivation of rule of law literacy, including the establishment of legal beliefs, rights awareness and other concepts (Sun Xiaobing, 2017). There are also studies that believe that improving the rule of law literacy of college students in terms of basic knowledge of law, awareness of the rule of law, etc., is the main goal of rule of law education for college students (Zhang Xiaomin & Li Coco, 2017). The second is the research on the curriculum and content of rule of law education. By adjusting the structure of the rule of law education curriculum or reforming the rule of law education curriculum based on the core literacy theory, the structure of the rule of law education curriculum can be optimized to effectively cultivate students' rule of law literacy. Some studies believe that cultivating students' rule of law literacy through school rule of law education is an inevitable requirement for the implementation of comprehensively promoting the rule of law, and the high school politics classroom has an obvious role in the cultivation and shaping of students' rule of law literacy (Liu Hua, 2017).

In the past, some studies on rule of law literacy in the academic community have focused on studying some of the problems that exist in the

teaching process of teachers in rule of law education and putting forward suggestions and strategies for improvement, so as to improve the quality of the rule of law education program and enhance the rule of law literacy of students. Excessive reinforcement of the teacher's teaching of the rule of law knowledge will, to a certain extent, ignore the students' own rule of law literacy acquisition and development. As an important subject in the teaching process of rule of law education, primary and secondary school students as a specialized research object and the study of issues related to rule of law literacy, can enable us to better understand the physical and mental development of primary and secondary school students and cognitive development level, to understand the current status of their rule of law literacy, and to provide them with a comprehensive and systematic rule of law education with strong relevance.

3. Survey on the Current Status of Rule of Law Literacy Among Primary and Secondary School Students

3.1 Questionnaire Composition

Based on the Outline of *Rule of Law Education for Youth* formulated by the Ministry of Education in 2016 and the corresponding curriculum content in the rule of law education textbooks for each section of primary and secondary schools, and on the basis of the four core elements of rule of law literacy of primary and secondary school students, such as knowledge of the law, thinking about the rule of law, legal ability, and belief in the rule of law and their basic contents, the questionnaire for this study was formulated — *Survey on the Current Situation of Rule of Law Literacy of Primary and Secondary School Students*.

The questionnaire consists of two main parts:

The first part is the basic personal information of primary and secondary school students, such as gender, current school level, and the main ways of receiving rule of law education, etc. The second part aims to understand the current situation of rule of law literacy among primary and secondary school students. The second part aims to understand the current situation of rule of law literacy of primary and secondary school students, and mainly takes the core elements of rule of law literacy of primary and secondary school students, such as legal knowledge, rule of law thinking, legal ability, rule of law belief, etc., as four different dimensions, as a basis, and

according to the different contents of rule of law education in each school section and the differences in the degree of physical and mental development of the students in order to distinguish between the level of difficulty to set up the problem, through the pen and paper test method and the subjective feeling assessment. The paper-and-pencil test and the subjective

perception assessment are used to comprehensively reflect the real situation of the rule of law literacy of primary and secondary school students. Excluding the students' personal information, this questionnaire has 20 questions, which are distributed as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Dimensions of the questionnaire and the number of questions covered

Dimension	entry (in a dictionary)	quantity of questions
Legal knowledge	6.7.8.9.16	5 questions/dimension (20 questions in total)
Rule of law thinking	10.11.12.13.14	
Legal competence	5.17.18.19.20	
Belief in the rule of law	4.15.21.22.23	

3.2 Questionnaire Implementation and Statistics

(1) Questionnaire Distribution

In order to carry out the survey research smoothly and guarantee the authenticity and validity of the obtained data, three schools in X city of Shaanxi province, an area better known to the author, were selected for questionnaire distribution in this study. The three schools included a municipal nine-year system school, a municipal general high school and a county general high school, covering three different school segments, including elementary school, middle school and high school, to ensure the adequacy of the sample size and the richness of the sample. In order to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, before the students of each school section filled in the questionnaire, there were teachers in charge of the questionnaire to explain the precautions for filling in the questionnaire.

(2) Questionnaire Recovery

A total of 660 questionnaires were distributed and 652 were recovered, excluding 12 invalid questionnaires, resulting in 640 valid questionnaires, a recovery rate of 98.78% and a validity rate of 96.96%. After the questionnaires were recovered, the data related to the valid questionnaires were sorted and analyzed.

3.3 The Overall Situation of the Survey on the Rule of Law Literacy of Primary and Secondary School Students

A total of 640 primary and middle school students participated in filling out the questionnaire of this survey, of which 378 were

boys, accounting for 59.06% of the total number, and 262 were girls, accounting for 40.94% of the total number. Among them, the sample sizes of three different school segments, elementary, middle and high school, were evenly distributed, with a total of 229 elementary students, accounting for 35.78% of the total, 202 middle school students, accounting for 31.56% of the total, and 209 high school students, accounting for 32.66% of the total. The specific distribution of the sample in each school section is shown in Figure 1.

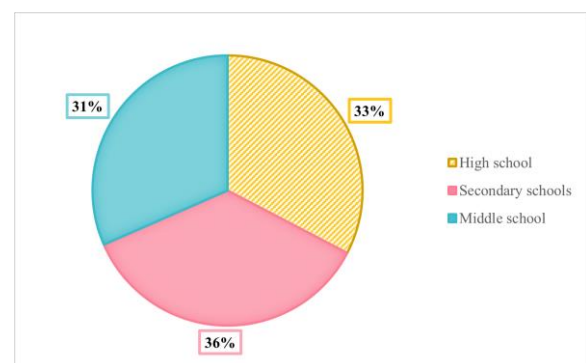


Figure 1. Sample Distribution by Elementary, Middle, and High School Sections

The implementation of the rule of law education program in primary and secondary schools is the main way to cultivate the rule of law literacy of primary and secondary school students, and the teaching method of the rule of law education program directly affects the formation of students' rule of law literacy. As shown in Figure 2, the data show that the main ways to cultivate

the rule of law literacy of primary and secondary school students include teacher teaching (77.34%), independent learning (45.63%) and group discussion (43.91%), and there are also other ways to cultivate students' rule of law literacy, such as case discussion and analysis (21.09%), publicity activities for the popularization of the rule of law (23.44%), and

rule of law on campus (29.84%). There are also other ways to cultivate students' rule of law literacy, such as case discussion and analysis (21.09%), publicizing the law (23.44%), and activities to promote the rule of law in schools (29.84%), which are not common in the practice of rule of law education in primary and secondary schools.

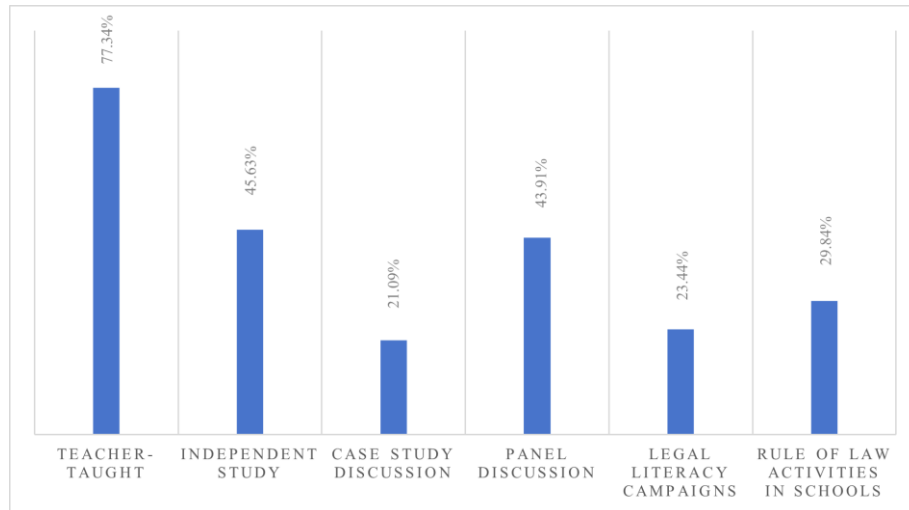


Figure 2. Various ways to cultivate rule of law literacy among primary and secondary school students

4. Problems

4.1 The Overall Level of Rule of Law Literacy Among Primary and Secondary School Students Is Low

From the perspective of each school section, the rule of law literacy of students in the compulsory education stage is significantly better than that of students in the high school stage, and within the compulsory education stage, the rule of law literacy of junior high school students is better than that of students in the elementary school stage. From the viewpoint of all dimensions, the overall level of rule of law literacy among primary and secondary school students is low, which is specifically manifested in the lack of basic knowledge of the law, the unsatisfactory effect of rule of law thinking in guiding legal behaviors, the insufficiency of the ability to practice the law, and the serious lack of faith in the rule of law. In accordance with the objectives of the *Youth Rule of Law Education Program* for the rule of law education for primary and secondary school students and the requirements of the teaching materials for the rule of law education for primary and secondary school students, primary and secondary school students, after receiving professional and systematic education on the rule of law, should

have formed the rule of law literacy that corresponds to their own stage of growth and level of learning, but the results of the survey of the primary and secondary school students' rule of law literacy show a certain degree of tension with the progress of the rule of law education for primary and secondary school students in the current stage of our country. The progress of the rule of law education for primary and secondary school students shows a certain degree of tension, the current vigorously promote the rule of law education at the same time the overall level of the rule of law literacy of primary and secondary school students is on the low side.

4.2 The Rule of Law Literacy of High School Students Is on the Low Side Compared to that of Students in the Compulsory Education Section

Through the organization of survey data, we systematically compare the comprehensive level of students of various school segments in different dimensions such as legal knowledge, rule of law thinking, legal ability and rule of law beliefs, etc. The rule of law literacy of high school students is lower than that of students of other school segments in all dimensions. In terms of institutionalized school education as a

whole, at the theoretical level, the formation of rule of law literacy among senior high school students is based on the systematic learning and accumulation of the primary and junior high school stages, and should therefore be higher than that of primary and junior high school students. However, because the senior high school stage is in the transitional stage between compulsory education and higher education, facing the stratification and streaming of post-compulsory senior high school education and the specialization in arts and sciences of senior high school education prior to higher education, it lacks the same specialized and mandatory rule of law education teaching materials as the compulsory education stage, and is burdened with the enormous pressure of competition for access to higher education and the stratification and streaming of employment and schooling. As a result, the rule of law literacy of upper secondary school students is low compared to that of students in compulsory education.

5. Countermeasures

5.1 *Innovate the Teaching Method of Rule of Law Education in Primary and Secondary Schools*

The teaching method of rule of law education should also go through the process of cognition, judgment, behavior and other continuous deepening, this process contains the interaction between teachers and students, interaction between students and students, interaction between teachers and students and the environment subject-object interaction, this process is not a cycle of active and passive between teaching and receiving. The rule of law itself as a social activity, as with education, inherently contains the above three interactions or interactions, the traditional classroom teaching and the relationship between teaching and receiving can not present a complete picture of these three interactions, can not stimulate, induce students in the rule of law education in the subjectivity and its growth. Therefore, schools should have the courage to innovate the teaching methods of rule of law education in primary and secondary schools.

5.2 *Enriching the Teaching Content of Rule of Law Education in Primary and Secondary Schools*

First of all, the importance of constitutional education in the whole rule of law education should be reaffirmed, in the current teaching content of the rule of law education in primary

and secondary schools to reaffirm the importance of constitutional education is not only the implementation of the spirit of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), and comprehensively promote the rule of law in accordance with the meaning of the title, but also is the reality of primary and secondary school students to foster the cultivation of rule of law literacy requirements. Secondly, the status and role of socialist core values in primary and secondary school rule of law education should be emphasized. Socialist core values as a generalization and mapping of the spirit of the times, from the state, society and individual level of each citizen has made the corresponding requirements, as a new era of socialism, primary and secondary school students should take it as a code of conduct and spiritual support. Finally, the rule of law literacy should be incorporated into the cultivation system of civic literacy, combining the restraining power of the law, the sense of the bottom line and the concept of the rule of law, and organically unifying the concept of the state, the sense of rules, and the contractual spirit of primary and secondary school students.

5.3 *Establishing a Sound System of Rule of Law Education for Senior High Schools that Is Connected to the Compulsory Education Stage*

The current teaching materials should be based on at the same time, and actively research and development of special high school rule of law education materials. At present, to improve the overall level of the rule of law literacy of high school students, it is necessary to be based on the existing ideological and political teaching materials at the same time, actively research and development of the rule of law education teaching materials specifically for the cultivation of the rule of law literacy of high school students. Existing ideological and political textbooks are divided into economic life, political life and philosophical knowledge of three plates, in addition to the philosophical part of the economic life and political life are scattered knowledge of the rule of law education, in the specialized rule of law education teaching materials before the development of the success of the textbook can continue to maintain the use of the textbook. More importantly, a committee for the construction of high school rule of law education materials should be set up as soon as possible to actively research and develop specialized rule of law education materials that

address the current state of rule of law literacy among high school students. In addition, the effective connection and seamless linking of rule of law education at the compulsory education level with that at the senior high school level should be actively promoted.

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