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Legal self-education of youth as an element of civil society creation

The development of civil society in Ukraine requires a thorough analysis of factors, conditions of formation, subjectivity. Undoubtedly, the focus should be youth as a basic force, as the main consumer of the benefits of a developed civil society.

Civil society is a category that is constantly moving. It does not exist in the "perfect state", it changes and develops together with the people who make it. Therefore, the formation of a genuine civil society can only take place when its members improve themselves.

The priority in a civil society of an individualized attitude towards a person and the development of humanistic tendencies in education is to raise the issue of forming an active law-conscious citizen, creating conditions for his self-realization, and continuous improvement, including through legal self-education. At the center of our attention is not all the population of the country, but only student youth - the intellectual basis of future democratic transformations. The effectiveness of legal self-education of students depends, in particular, on the quality management of this process, for the improvement of which it is necessary to analyze the state of the investigated process, to identify existing problems in its implementation, and to outline ways of their solution¹.

The objectives of the study are to identify effective methods and tools for legal self-education, to determine the level of readiness for students. The answers to these questions were reflected in the results of our sociological research among students and teachers of one of the institutions of higher education of Ukraine in march 2019.

¹ *Осташова В. О. Правове самовиховання студентської молоді в умовах формування громадянського суспільства в Україні : монографія. Полтава : РВВ ПДАА, 2012. С. 89.*

In the course of the testing of two groups of respondents were interviewed using the questionnaire: 20 students and 20 teachers. Basic quotas for students: gender, participation in student self-government bodies, work experience. Basic quotas for teachers: gender and age. The research toolkit contained 9 questions of a wide range of information on legal self-education, the latter of which was open type, which included an indication of its own answer. When answering a separate questionnaire, it was allowed to select several variants.

The research included 15 men (37.5%) and 25 women (62.5%). Among teachers, men comprised 45% of men, women 55%; among male students - 30%, women - 70%. The average age of the students surveyed is 19.5 years, teachers are 39 years old. Three persons (15%) are part of student self-government bodies. Only higher education enrolls 25% of the interviewed students, 50% - from time to time, 25% - combine work with education.

The first question of the questionnaire concerned the assessment of the level of legal knowledge by students, which respondents generally consider to be satisfactory (52.5%) and good (32.5%). At the same time, the vast majority of teachers determined the level of legal knowledge of modern students as satisfactory (75%), and students - as kind (55%). In general, the results indicate a lack of self-criticism of modern students, which may be one of the factors that hinders the process of legal self-education.

As students in their composition are heterogeneous social group, the need to reveal the peculiarities of legal self-education of youth on the grounds such as gender, participation in student self-government bodies and work experience is updated.

Most female students describe their level of legal knowledge as good (64.3%), while among men the opinion about their satisfactory and good condition (33.3%) prevails among men. We find such answers to be adequate to the current state of affairs, since women are really more responsible with regard to teaching, more accurately they perform the tasks assigned to them by teachers. At the same time, unlike male students, among female students, there were not those who would consider their level of legal knowledge to be low or excellent.

All respondents who are members of the student self-government, evaluate the level of their own legal knowledge as good (100%), which correlates with the general results of the analysis of answers to the first question of the questionnaire, but this indicator is much higher than the average.

Self-assessment of knowledge of respondents engaged only in studying, and those who work from time to time, does not differ

significantly. The vast majority of such respondents appreciate the level of their legal knowledge (80% and 60% respectively). Among working students, 60% consider their knowledge to be satisfactory, 20% unsatisfactory and 20% good. We explain this by the fact that the latter group is more likely to go through the process of socialization, understands the lack of existing legal knowledge for professional activity, and at the same time, slow down their assimilation through changing life priorities.

The second question of the questionnaire was intended to reveal the opinion of respondents as to whether there will be enough legal knowledge for students, skills and abilities for professional and personal self-fulfillment. So half of the students (50%) believe that the higher education gives them a sufficient level of legal knowledge, skills and abilities that will be enough for future life. A smaller number of students (35%) is convinced in the reverse. Among the other responses (15%), the thesis was "partially" prevailing. 95% of teachers say that knowledge, skills and abilities are not enough. At the same time, respondents comment on their response, referring to the reform of education, which involves the acquisition of students not only knowledge but the formation of competencies. In accordance with clause 13 part 1 of Art. 1 of the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" competence is a dynamic combination of knowledge, skills and practical skills, ways of thinking, professional, ideological and civic qualities, moral and ethical values, which determines the ability of a person to successfully carry out professional and further educational activities and is the result of training at a certain level of higher education².

Consequently, the content of modern education laid the need to teach to learn, update knowledge throughout life, self-education. However, if not all teachers realized the priority of the given task, then it is hardly possible to expect it from the students.

At the same time, the participants of the student self-government bodies interviewed found the opposite opinion from other respondents. All of them (100%) believe that they will not have enough legal knowledge and skills acquired during their studies in the future. These results, in our opinion, testify that, firstly, these are the responses of students who study well and have an idealized idea of knowledge as such. Secondly, participants in student self-government bodies, actively engaged in extra-curricular work, are more clearly aware of the dynamism and transience of

² Закон України «Про вищу освіту» від 01.07.2014 р. Відомості Верховної Ради України. 2014. № 37-38. Ст. 2004. URL: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1556-18/print> (дата звернення: 22.03.2019 р.)

legal knowledge, skills and abilities, since their application is already a prerequisite for self-government activity. Thirdly, this can be explained by the great experience of law-making and law-enforcement activities of student self-government members, during which, in the minds of young people, there were contradictions between the existing and necessary legal knowledge and skills acquired in higher education in young people's minds. The presence of such contradictions can become a driving force in the process of self-development, self-improvement and legal self-education of students.

The third question of the questionnaire has helped us to find out what place self-education is among other forms of legal education. Students in the most effective form of legal education called legal education (70%), and teachers - self-education (80%). Among the other responses of all respondents (7.5%), the various combinations of the proposed variants-legal education, legal propaganda, legitimate social activity, or behavior and self-education are prevailed.

Interestingly, among the oldest teachers, the answer was "legitimate social activity or behavior", and among the youngest - "legal education".

In our opinion, the responses of students with work experience are those that correspond to modern trends in understanding the essence of man and his right, their social value and their relationship. They almost in equal proportions prefer legal education, and lawful social activity, and legal self-education. Indeed, each of these forms of legal education is an integral part of it, and underestimation of any of them will result in a decrease in the effectiveness of legal activity as a whole. Positive is also the election of a sufficiently large number of these categories of interviewed option "another answer" (15%), which indicated mainly a combination of different forms of legal education. This testifies to the understanding of the socially mature youth of the usefulness and effectiveness of all forms of legal education and, accordingly, the importance of each of them in building a legal, democratic, social state with a developed civil society.

In analyzing the answers to the question "Who do you think should ensure a high level of citizens' legal awareness?" The following results were obtained: 1) educational institutions (30%); 2) competent authorities (17.5%); 3) citizens themselves (45%). Among the other responses (7.5%) were the media and the combination of our proposed alternatives.

It should be noted that the students who have experience of work mainly assign this responsibility to the citizens themselves (25%), the second place is shared by the answers "educational institutions" and "competent authorities" (by 20%). All students engaged exclusively in training indicated that the level of citizens' legal awareness depends on

educational institutions (25% of the total number of students interviewed). The overwhelming majority of the polled teachers are convinced that the level of legal consciousness depends primarily on the citizens themselves (65%), to a lesser extent - from educational institutions and competent authorities (by 15%). Deviations in the responses of men and women have no significant differences.

Participants of student self-government, in contrast to other respondents, give educational institutions a leading place among those who "must ensure a high level of citizens' legal awareness," the second - to the citizens themselves. Such results have once again confirmed our thesis about the idealistic attitude of these people to the educational institutions, which is explained by the personal privileges received - the respect in the team, including pedagogical and other benefits, for example, the experience of management and self-management that young people acquire when participating in a student self-government. At the same time, such students, while communicating with non-academic teachers, with representatives of the administration and students of the student self-government of other educational institutions, more than others, understand the potential of universities in law-making activities, see the resources that can be used in it.

According to the results of I. Osyka questionnaire survey among representatives of different groups of population - from ordinary citizens to heads of state executive bodies, - regarding the political and legal culture of the population, the following conclusions were obtained. According to respondents, citizens should be provided with political education: employees of state authorities (25%), citizens independently (84%), mass media (25%), educational institutions (25%). To raise the level of legal and political culture of citizens, one should: raise the general level of legal knowledge (84%), increase the level of information provision on political and legal issues (34%), improve legislation (78%), make more liability for offenses committed (81%). Respondents noted that it was precisely young people who should, first of all, raise the level of political knowledge and political and legal culture (83%)³.

Since the polling principles and the characteristics of the sample do not coincide with our research, the results we obtained are different from those given by I. Osika. But in general it should be noted their similarity.

In view of the dialectical link between the development of legal self-

³ Осика І. В. *Правова культура у формуванні правової, соціальної держави : дис. ... кандидата юрид. наук : 12.00.01 «Теорія та історія держави і права; історія політичних і правових учень»*. Київ, 2004. 194 с.

education and the formation of civil society, the next issue was to clarify what would contribute to the development of civil society in Ukraine. Before the wording of the question, we made an explanation about the essence of the key concept.

We got the following results. All questioned teachers noted that the development of civil society will promote compliance with all its members of the legal norms. Answers of students differed. This is the same answer to the most votes of students (40%), in the second place - "change of power" (35%), in the third - "improvement of legislation" (25%).

Thus, the most important element in the development of civil society respondents consider the human factor, which includes all citizens of the state and person who have power. Moreover, the proportion of such responses is chosen by respondents who have a somewhat higher work experience. In our opinion, this is a manifestation of life experience, the realization that changes for the better depend not so much on the quality of laws, but on respect for the right of all citizens, including government officials.

From the point of view of gender, it should be noted that female students see the way to the formation of civil society in the steadfast adherence of all its members to legal norms (42.9%), and male students - mainly in the "change of power" (66.7 %), and then in compliance with the norms (33.3%). Among male students, there were no such expectations as to improve legislation. Among female students, women were 35.7%. Consequently, men are less critical of themselves, of their actions and, in our opinion, underestimate their own role in the process of forming a civil society and a rule of law in Ukraine.

The questionnaire question "Which of the characteristics, in your opinion, best defines a law-conscious citizen?" Was intended to reveal the opinion of respondents about the significant qualities of the individual, the availability of which requires a developed civil society. Thus, the overwhelming majority of respondents described this characteristic as a combination of the proposed answer options - "high level of legal knowledge" and "strict compliance with legal norms" (55%). Among students, this answer was 40%, and among teachers 70%. The least votes were given to the students by the "steady observance of legal norms" (25%).

According to our results, I. Omelchuk was identified in the analysis of students' legal awareness, which states: "Young people agree that theoretically legal knowledge is needed, but practical interest is

demonstrated only by a small part of youth"⁴.

Participants of student self-government indicated "another answer" (100%), which consisted of combining the first two options. This is evidence of the understanding of such respondents of dialectical unity, the importance and necessity of observance of legal norms based on their awareness and knowledge.

The results of analyzing the answers to the question "What prevents students to practice self-education?" They are: 1) no need (17.5%); 2) lack of skills in organizing such a process (12.5%); 3) laziness (60%). Among other responses (10%), there was a "lack of time" and "nothing prevents." I am engaged in legal self-education. " Note that the answer to the "laziness" ranks first among students (70%), and among teachers (50%). In the second place among the students, the answer was "lack of skills" (15%), and teachers - "no need" (25%).

For students who combine work with education, the main obstacle to legal self-education is the lack of organization skills (60%), in the second and third places - laziness and lack of time (by 20%). In our opinion, this indicates a more serious attitude of working students to their own development and legal self-education as one of the areas of self-improvement. Also, in the analyzed category of students there is objectively more needs in raising the level of legal culture due to the diversity of communicative connections that require knowledge and skills in different areas of legal reality.

Our thesis that women are more responsive to their education and education, are confirmed by the following data: women are confessed to inability to organize work on legal self-education (20%), while men restrain the absence of need (33.3%). However, for women and for men, the main brake is laziness (68% and 60% respectively).

The largest deviations from the average indicators were obtained by analyzing the responses of students participating in student self-government. Anxiety highlighted the high percentage of choosing a "laziness" option (100%). After all, this category of people is characterized by an active life position and is an example for imitation of other students, because it represents their interests in relations with the administration of higher education institutions and other bodies and organizations.

The eighth issue, "The Distribution of legal knowledge, in what way do you consider the most effective way to raise the level of legal culture of

⁴ *Омельчук І. А. Правосвідомість молоді в сучасних умовах: порівняльний аспект. Вісник Хмельницького інституту регіонального управління та права. 2003. №3-4. С. 42.*

modern youth (can two answers be indicated)?" Was aimed at comparing the views of students and teachers as representatives of different generations on this issue. In general, the most popular was the answer "social networks" (33.75%), slightly less votes received the answer "educational institutions" (31.25%), in the third place "television" (16.25%). Among the students, the first place was the answer "social networks" (47.5%), the second - "education institutions" (25%). Teachers consider it most effective to increase the legal culture of youth through educational institutions (37.5%), through social networks and television (by 20%). At the same time, no teacher under the age of 39 has mentioned the answer to "television," and only one teacher older than 39 years pointed out the answer to "social networks." According to other criteria, the answers did not differ significantly from the general indicators.

The analysis of responses of respondents indicates the need to pay special attention to social networks as the most promising source of dissemination of legal information, a means of forming a legal culture. In a context of weakening old social communications, social networking tools are becoming increasingly effective channels of communication between members of civil society, passive youth, educational institutions, authorities, etc. Therefore, logically, in our opinion, will be a combination of the most popular answers in one - the dissemination of legal knowledge through institutions of higher education, using the opportunities of social networks.

The last question of the questionnaire was of an open type, that is, it was intended to indicate its own answer. With the proposed task "Try to outline a promising plan for your legal self-education", 30% could not be solved, 45% could partially be identified, 25% of respondents mentioned a sufficiently detailed plan. Substantially different answers among students and teachers. So half of the students (50%) could not cope with the task, partly outlined the plan for self-legal self-education 35% and provided a detailed plan of 15%. Most of the teachers (55%) only partially fulfilled the tasks, were able to describe the plan 35%. The fact that 10% of teachers do not represent the essence of the process and the organization of legal self-education is disappointing.

Among students who combine work with education is a much higher percentage of those who could not outline a plan for legal self-education (60%). In our opinion, in addition to the lack of experience in organizing the process of self-education, this is due to the fact that the latter have less experience of pedagogical controllability of their independent work, deprived of pedagogical influence in extra-curricular time, are not motivated to such activity.

The majority of male students failed to cope with the task of

outlining a long-term plan of legal self-education (66.7%). Among female students, in equal numbers, there were those who could not make a plan or only partially (42.85%). Approximately the same number of students of women and men were able to provide a comprehensive plan for legal self-education (14.3% and 16.7% respectively).

The obtained results show the general tendencies of the gender characteristics of youth. Girls are characterized by a higher degree of responsibility, a more serious approach to learning and upbringing, diligence, regardless of the communication received by them in classroom and non-audiences with everyday life and existing needs. Boys often occupy extreme positions, falling into legal idealism, infantilism or nihilism.

Among respondents-representatives of student self-government, those who provided a detailed plan of legal self-education, more than among students not included in such bodies (50% and 11.1% respectively). In view of the above, one can conclude that students of the student self-government are better than others when they are oriented toward different tasks, which is not least due to the predominance of students in their ranks, who are characterized by greater success in learning, active life and civic position, experience in self-organizing activities. At the same time, the indication of laziness as the main obstacle to legal self-education shows, in our opinion, the lack of motivation in raising the level of legal culture, a lower degree of legal socialization, since it deals solely with students in full-time education and those who mostly do not have a family, children, permanent work.

So, having conducted a sociological research among students and teachers about the status of legal self-education, we can draw conclusions about the following negative trends: young people overestimate their level of legal knowledge, considering them sufficient for all of their subsequent life; only a tenth part of them calls self-education the most effective form of legal education, and the task of raising the level of legal awareness students primarily relies on educational institutions. Only a quarter of the interviewed students believe that the development of civil society in Ukraine will contribute to compliance with all its members legal norms. The main problems in implementing this process of legal self-education are laziness, lack of organization skills and lack of need. Therefore, in our opinion, attention should be paid to the guidance of legal self-education taking into account the identified features of different categories of student youth, which includes clarifying its meaning, teaching a set of methods, techniques, means, mastering the forms of implementation of such a process, etc. As the analysis showed, the information society in which we

live requires both the students and the teachers to use the latest technologies for the achievement of their tasks, to use social networks not only for personal, but also for professional communication, knowledge transfer, the formation of a legal culture and legal consciousness. young people Qualitative assistance of the teacher in planning and organizing a student of legal self-education, effective work on the student's motivational field is the key to self-affirmation and self-development of the latter in civil society.

It should be noted that legal self-education depends on sex, participation in student self-government, work experience. Among the main factors influencing this process are the internal - personal qualities of young people (the ability to form and achieve goals, persistence, motivation, faith in the mechanisms of protection of human and citizen rights and freedoms, etc.), and external, related to efficiency leadership of legal self-education of students, state of law and order in the state, etc. Thus, the problems associated with the need to intensify the legal self-education of citizens, and especially student youth, must be addressed at various levels - social, including the state, and personal.