

# Legal Value Orientations as Basic Category of Law Students' Legal Culture

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**Abstract.** An obvious connection of legal culture, value orientations and legal consciousness was established by cross-disciplinary analysis. Legal culture is considered as a whole in relation to legal value orientations. The necessity of forming legal value orientations is proved, as without them it is impossible to achieve a high level of legal culture and to ensure a student's behavior within the framework of the law. This component is analyzed as a compulsory element of a law school student's legal consciousness. The concept of legal value orientations is defined from the standpoint of different approaches and from the point of view of various authors, wherein these orientations are studied through the cognitive-volitional component. The relation of legal value orientations and legal beliefs is analyzed. It is offered to comply with a number of pedagogical conditions, to apply certain methods and techniques, which will influence the educational process and will promote forming legal value orientations. The need for developing value orientations in students is proved; it is shown that without value orientations it is impossible to reach a high level of legal culture, to engage in civic activities and to become a law-abiding citizen. Legal value orientations are studied as a construction material of legal culture and govern a student's legal behavior. **Keywords:** law students' legal culture, students' legal consciousness, students' legal value orientations, legal thinking, traditional values, human rights

## 1 Introduction

The existing reality and a number of studies show that law is not always regarded as an absolute value in the perception of students' community, which obviously results from a certain level of legal culture in society. The younger generation often demonstrates legal nihilism, antisocial behavior, delinquent deformation of moral and value reference points and purposes. The reason for this is the low level of legal culture that provides for the existence of solid legal knowledge and a positive attitude towards it, creating premises for their transformation into legal values and value orientations, which form law compliance attitudes shown in students' legal skills and acts. For today, the existing patterns of forming students' value orientations have a general character and create mostly a procedural behavioral element.

## 2 Problem Statement

In today's world, which is multilaterally developed, constantly improving, containing competing processes within itself, the level of training of law students should be as close as possible to the necessary realities of society. A teacher, giving students an opportunity to

obtain legal knowledge, should not forget that a student not only "hears" this knowledge, but also internalizes legal information, makes an opinion about legal processes, the degree of protection and respect for the rights and legitimate interests of a person and citizen in society, in order to be able later to transform knowledge and emotions related to knowledge into lawful behavior.

Scientists considering the phenomenon of legal culture from the point of view of the axiological approach, such as Firsova and Fomina, say that legal value orientations promote improvement of legal beliefs which are aimed at forming the personality's legal attitudes [1, 2]. Law students are not an exception. In the future, they will become the basis on which the constitutional state will repose.

Studying students' legal culture from the perspective of the system and structural approach also shows the presence of cognitive, volitional and instrumental components. The second of these components is also represented by value orientations.

## 3 Research Questions

A subject of investigation of this work is law students' legal value orientations, their content and the specifics of forming.

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## 4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to reveal the essence, to determine the content of legal value orientations and the need for forming them in law students.

## 5 Research Methods

The main research methods used in this work are the comparative method and the method of analysis.

Students' legal culture is a component of the personality's basic culture and characterizes the quality and depth of legal knowledge, the level of perception of the moral and legal sense of legal regulations, the quality of legal beliefs which are implemented in all spheres of life activity and are shown in steady respect for rules of law, upholding the personal rights and freedoms, and lawful behavior; therefore, the emotional component, connected with experiences and the subsequent forming of legal value orientations in perception of the law, is also not excluded.

Let us address legal consciousness which is responsible for the volitional emotional component of a student's legal culture. Legal consciousness of the younger generation is first of all the emotional and cognitive element of legal culture representing the aggregate of the mobile, constantly changing concept of legal knowledge formed by means of legal thinking. Under the influence of will, legal knowledge becomes legal beliefs, outlook, determines evaluations of legal phenomena, and so creates legal value orientations, legal attitudes coordinating a citizen's lawful behavior in the constitutional state.

The stated thesis is also confirmed by the fact that the institute of a student's legal culture has an evaluation function. The axiological function of legal culture is expressed in the personality's emotional perception of different legal institutions and phenomena. Legal culture promotes forming a citizen's individual, inherent only to him or her value requirements and orientations [3].

This function gives an opportunity to objectively assess if the behavior is legal or illegal; it forms a certain attitude towards the law, legal reality. The existence of this activity area indicates the importance of the emotional component of legal culture and the role of legal value orientations in it. In an ideal context, law students' legal value orientations should subsequently form legal attitudes and legal habits [4]. These two components are interconnected and complement each other. According to Stolyarenko, a legal habit is a habit of civilized behavior [5]. This once again proves that a legal habit, resulting from the development of a legal value orientation, can arise in a citizen of a rule-of-law state as an internal necessity, a habit to follow the letter of the law.

A legal attitude also promotes the development of legal value orientations. It is a type of a social attitude and implies a person's ability to somehow react to certain manifestations of legal life. According to Rabinovich, "the main bearer of respect for the law in ensuring legal behavior is the value and attitude complex of legal

consciousness – evaluations of the law and legal attitudes" [6]. Surely, legal attitudes affect citizens' acts, but, being completely in the sphere of legal consciousness, they are an element of legal consciousness, not the behavioral element. Legal attitudes show an individual's potential orientation towards "maintaining the law" or "against the law" or "in opposition to the law". That is why a positive emotional attitude, accompanying the assimilation of legal knowledge, contributes to the formation of positive feelings, motives, attitudes, and beliefs [7]. These components, along with relationships, the value orientations of an individual, gradually become the guidelines for a student's behavior, making him or her to evaluate his or her actions in accordance with the rules of law and legislation. Consistent with this, Eliasberg rightly includes legal value orientations in the structure of legal culture and distinguishes the following components: a) a body of scientific legal knowledge, b) a person's legal value orientations, c) a person's mindset focused on legal behavior, protection of rights and freedoms, d) socially active behaviour [8]. An attitude and perception hold a prominent place in the formation of beliefs, motives, and relations to legal phenomena, thereby forming a student's legal value orientations.

If we refer to legal consciousness, it can also be studied using the evaluative approach, which is connected with axiology, focused on forming the attitudes towards the law through emotions, feelings and experiences. This approach to legal consciousness implies consolidated interpretations of this concept. In them, the complex of knowledge and emotions is obvious, but the status of behavior regulators belongs only to value legal orientations, but not feelings in their emotional perception. Thus, within this approach, the volitional emotional area is the mechanism which forms a student's legal values.

Therefore, if we study legal consciousness through the integrative characteristic, then, according to it, the process of cognition includes axiological actions and the will of a citizen [9]. It turns out that in this interpretation legal consciousness includes legal knowledge, which by means of the analysis of legal thinking, and the sensual sphere takes a form of beliefs and value orientations in students.

Studying the presented approaches gives us an opportunity to define the younger generation's legal consciousness as an informative and emotional element of legal culture focused on forming students' value orientations, on which legal culture directly depends. As a result of the formation of legal consciousness, legal knowledge accumulates, which under the influence of the emotional sphere is transformed into beliefs, worldview, value orientations, and legal attitudes.

Thus, as a result of the formation of legal culture, the emotional sphere to a large extent performs the evaluation function. Vygotsky considered emotions as a result of assessing a person's relation to the environment [10]. In the unity of emotions and thought processes, value orientations, determining the lawful behavior of a citizen who actively uses legal norms, are formed.

But not all authors support this position regarding value orientations. In some publications, their circumstantial aspect is studied, and they are considered as relations to values [11]. Experts in the field of psychology, as a rule, study value orientations from the functional perspective. According to their studies, legal value orientations perform the inducing function in relation to a person's practical activities and actions [12]. In such interpretation, the content of value orientations recedes into the background.

At present, value orientations are the main component of citizen's views and outlooks, play an orientation role, that is, they settle in consciousness as social and legal attitudes which prepare the subject for action according to legal provisions [13]. Legal value orientations are formed as a result of the formation of legal culture and direct a student's lawful behavior.

There is a position that legal value orientations, together with legal beliefs, constitute the system of a student's legal attitudes [14]. In a number of studies, the formation of legal value orientations is represented as a set of legal knowledge, legal attitudes and legal values [15]. But in all cases, the aggregate and connection of legal value orientations exert impact on the options of behavior of law students, as their training promotes staying in various legal situations, influences their security.

## 6 Findings

Students' value orientations are implemented in lawful behavior which is a basis of the activity and practical component of legal culture. This component is obligatory as a part of a student's legal culture. Its work gives an opportunity to develop legal abilities, skills of lawful behavior, legal habits which stimulate obstacles to violations in the field of the law.

Developing legal value orientations is an important task for the teacher. The means and methods of its formation can be different: cognitive-creative, discussion, facilitating the formation of images, technical, in the form of a role-playing game (a comic trial with a thorough analysis of the situation), individual or collective, in the form of abstracting the original sources, problematic presentation of the material. The main thing is that the pedagogical conditions of the process of forming legal value orientations should be observed. To do this, it is necessary to make the maximum use of the potential of the educational institution, exercise periodic monitoring of the student's knowledge and perceptions, provide a deep understanding of legal knowledge and, whenever possible, use an individual approach to each student for the development of his or her professional identity. According to Ivanova and Popova, professional identity as a complex personal characteristic is formed in the process of activity and related interaction and manifests itself in emotionally colored knowledge of one's own correspondence to professional activity and the professional community [16].

The base of the emotional and value component of legal culture is created by value orientations. On the basis of a set of value orientations in the field of law, legal beliefs are formed, which as a result are implemented in the form of legal attitudes regarding the choice of lawful options of behavior in society. Legal attitudes regulate a person's behavior in habitual situations of use of the same precepts of law.

In the unity of students' legal knowledge and feelings, legal beliefs are formed. They become the basis for developing value orientations, attitudes, legal abilities, and skills of solving similar legal problems, which determine legal activity.

The comparative analysis of various approaches allows drawing a conclusion that legal value orientations are the top of development of students' legal culture. They represent a system of views, relations of the personality defining beliefs, ideals, the principles of lawful activity and behavior. Legal value orientations are formed on the basis of legal knowledge, attitudes towards precepts of law, legal attitudes. In everyday life, professional and everyday activity, legal value orientations perform a function of the leading motives of a student's lawful behavior.

## 7 Conclusion

The basis of the emotional-value component of legal culture is formed by means of legal value orientations and attitudes. As a result of the work, we can identify their relationship to all other components: the platform of the value orientation system in the sphere of law creates legal beliefs that are embodied in the form of legal guidelines for the choice of legitimate options for a student's behavior with a bundle of legal knowledge in society. Legal value orientations regulate a person's behavior in stereotyped situations of using the same legal norms: either it will be behavior directed solely at maintaining law and order in the society, implementing the principles of a democratic rule-of-law state, or knowledge will be realized in the opposite direction.

It is obvious that today the main legal values in a democratic rule-of-law state are: human life, its legal status, justice, freedom of choice, equality of everyone before the law and the court, law abidance, responsibility, the ability to compromise, respect for the right of private life, property, etc. These and other values must be taught to students in the process of teaching legal disciplines.

Legal value orientations are realized in lawful behavior, which forms the basis of the activity-practical component of legal culture. This component is the top of the formation of a student's legal culture. Its proper implementation gives an opportunity to develop legal skills, skills of lawful behavior, legal habits, social and legal activity that stimulate counteraction to negative manifestations in the field of law. The logical component of lawful conduct provides for phased observance, execution, use, and active advocacy of legal norms.

Thus, we can formulate mechanisms that influence the formation of legal value orientations and, as a

consequence, a student's legal culture: 1) conscious abiding by the law; 2) avoidance of adverse consequences that may result from violation of legal norms; 3) legal activity.

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