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PECULIARITIES OF THE APPREHENSION OF ECONOMIC
OFFENCES BY LEARNERS

Diana Pshenichnyuk (a)*, Irina Pogozhina (b), Marina Sergeeva (c)

*Corresponding author

(a) Lomonosov Moscow State University, Department of Psychology, Mokhovaya st., 11/9, Moscow, 125009, Russia; psdiana@yandex.ru

(b) Lomonosov Moscow State University, Department of Psychology, Mokhovaya st., 11/9, Moscow, 125009, Russia; pogozhina@mail.ru

(c) Lomonosov Moscow State University, Department of Psychology, Mokhovaya st., 11/9, Moscow, 125009, Russia; kayture@mail.ru

Abstract

Timeliness of the present research is determined by the overall trend – the increasing growth of the legal consciousness of learners. This tendency is denoted in the Federal State Educational Standards of secondary (complete) and general education. The purpose of this research is to analyze relationships between learners' knowledge about economic offences, a skill to distinguish them and learners' attitude towards offences. The research is carried out on the basis of Moscow schools by means of valid test techniques developed by the authors in 2013-2017. The diagnostic methods employed aim to determine the level of development of the apprehension of economic offences and at the diagnostics of the developmental level of skill to distinguish such offences and attitude towards offending behavior. Our first hypothesis is about that the attitude of senior pupils towards unlawful behavior in the sphere of economics is interconnected with the level of development of knowledge about the content of economic offences. To identify the nature of this offence, our second hypothesis assumes that the attitude of high school learners towards illegal behavior in the sphere of economics is interconnected with the level of development. We have managed to confirm both of the hypotheses. Thus, through the development of learners' cognitive sphere, it is possible to widen their perception about the nature and harmful consequence of offending behavior, in this way forming negative attitude towards it.

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Keywords: Legal consciousness, ability to recognize economic offences, learners, logical operation, summarizing the concept, corruption/corruptive behaviour.



1. Introduction

1.1. Connectivity of learners' apprehension of economic offences and their attitude towards offending behaviour.

The development of a social group of modern learners is described as a cybersocialization (Nesmeyanova, 2017; Pleshakov, 2010) and characterized by an intensive usage of digital technologies and uncontrolled aggressive and illegitimate Internet content consumption. This fact causes risks of a possible deformation of motivating human needs and moral values. One of the ways to overcome such deformations is to form legal consciousness. Under the conditions of juridical literacy increase in population as a general tendency, modern Russian learners get involved in the process of education (Kubyshko, 2017). By the end of schooling, the basics of juridical literacy should be formed (Federal State Educational Standards of secondary (complete) and general education) (Federal State Educational Standard for Secondary General Education..., 2012). The basic laws and regulations of the Russian Federation and International laws ratified in Russia are studied by students in terms of such disciplines as Social studies, National history, World history, Economics and Economic geography. In some educational institutions of secondary (complete) education, there is a discipline of Jurisprudence science. During the lesson of the abovementioned disciplines learners become familiar with such notions as "crime", "offensive behavior" and "offence". They come to know the content and examples of the notions. The purpose of the study is the formation of apprehension about such manifestations of human behavior and negative attitude towards them as the term "apprehension" comprehends the subject's stance towards the knowledge he or she receives (Lectersky, 2010). Along with this, the research on the efficiency of juridical study by learners has not been held, and it remains an actual challenge. Our research is mostly about Moscow senior learners' apprehension of such economic offences as "blackmail", "bribery", "profiteering", "abusive exercise of power", "negligence", "stealage", "nepotism", "corruption", etc. Crimes and offending behavior are chosen purposely. It is important to study learners' apprehension about economic offences at the stage of their studentship when learners are not drawn into criminal corruptive relations, hence, it is easier to explain and vividly demonstrate all the negative consequences of participation in it.

2. Problem Statement

- Recognition of the level of development of learners' perceptions of economic offences (for example, corruption-related crimes: bribery, illegal enrichment, nepotism, favouritism, illegal lobbying).
- Recognition and definition of the connectivity (determination) between the existence of a link between the level of development of ideas about economic violations and the attitude of schoolchildren towards manifestations of corruption behaviour.
- Recognition and definition of connectivity between the level of development of pupils' ideas about economic offences and the ability to recognize unlawful situations.

3. Research Questions

1. Is learners' attitude towards illegitimate behaviour connected with the level of development of the apprehension of economic offences?

2. Is learners' attitude towards illegitimate behaviour connected with the level of development of the ability to recognize situations of such behaviour?

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is to determine the nature of the relationship between the level of development of pupils' ideas about economic violations and their attitude to the manifestations of these offences.

5. Research Methods

5.1. Subjects.

The sample consisted of 103 respondents (46 boys and 57 girls). All of them were students of three schools in Moscow aged 15 to 18 years old.

5.2. Methods

Diagnostic methods: 1) the "Open Questions" technique - diagnostics of the level of development of learners' views on economic offences; 2) the modified technique for diagnosing the level of development of logical operations on the basis of legal concepts on economic offences (ibid.); 3) the case-method is to diagnose the level of development of the ability to recognize the situations of corruption interaction (Pogozhina, Pshenichnyuk, 2014; Pshenichnyuk, 2015, 2016).

Statistical data processing of the experimental data was carried out using statistical software package SPSS 22.0 and included descriptive statistics, statistical hypothesis testing, correlation analysis for connected samples (Spearman (ρ), Sign test, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test) and procedures of content analysis.

5.3. Procedure

The subjects under test performed diagnostic tasks for nearly 1 hour 30 minutes. All the diagnostic material was presented at the same time. The obtained data (results) underwent the procedures of statistical analysis and content analysis.

6. Findings

6.1. Results of the diagnosis of the level of development of the learners' ideas about economic violations (on the example of the concept of "corruption").

In accordance with the wording of the concept of "corruption" in the law of the Russian Federation (Federal Law of the Russian Federation of December 25, 2008 N 273-FZ "On Counteracting Corruption", 2008), among the survey respondents it is determined in full $\approx 50\%$ of all the respondents. We have analyzed the learners' answers to the tasks of the "Open questions" methodology using content analysis tools. The word indicators that the respondents use to define the concept of "corruption" and give the examples of the situations of corruption interaction are singled out: illegal, benefit and bribery. The number of references in the protocols of the respondents' responses to word-markers is presented in Table 01.

Table 01. The word indicators that respondents used to define the concept of "corruption" (tasks of the "Open questions" method)

The words indicators	Total number of references in the protocols of answers
Illegal	104
Self interest	50
Bribe	42

As it can be seen in Table 01, the learners suggest that a crime of corruption is an illegal act that entails obtaining benefits, usually by giving/receiving bribes. This indicates that the learners have a correct idea of corruption-related crimes. However, their ideas remain incomplete and unilateral and do not contain any knowledge about other forms of corruption interaction, such as "nepotism", "illegal enrichment", "abuse of power", etc.

6.2. Results of the diagnosis of the level of development of the logical operation under the concept of a material on justice submissions of economic violations.

The results of the diagnosis of the level of development of the logical operation of bringing the notion of economic offences to the concept of material on the material have shown at what level the respondents have the ability to compare, analyze and classify the legal concepts of "blackmail", "fraud", "nepotism", "corruption", "illegal enrichment", "embezzlement", "rollback", "bribery", "favouritism", "lobbyist". Most successfully the respondents cope with the tasks determining the content of the concepts of "blackmail" and "nepotism", as well as with the classification of the concepts "corruption", "nepotism", "rollback" and "bribery". About 60% of the respondents successfully coped with these tasks.

The greatest difficulty is caused by the tasks aimed at defining the concepts of "fraud", "illegal enrichment", "favouritism" and "lobbyist". Only 40% of the respondents could successfully cope with these tasks. The verbal results are presented in Table. 02.

Table 02. Proportion of the correct answers given by the respondents for the definition and classification the legal concepts of economic crimes (method 2)

Defining term	Proportion of correct answers (%)
Blackmailing offences	57
Swindling	31
Stealing	29
Corruption	44
Bribetaking	49
Lobbyist	14
Illicit enrichment	38
Nepotism (or rent-seeking behaviour)	44
Kickback	49
Favouritism	44

The results indicate that more than half of the respondents have a full understanding of the content of the economic crime concepts under study, and also have logical analysis, comparison and classification

operations. From our point of view this knowledge is a basis for the formation of learners' ideas about the regulatory justice submissions for such crimes and negative attitude to such manifestations of behavior.

6.3. Results of diagnosing the level of development of the ability to recognize situations of economic violations (on the basis of potentially corrupt situations).

The results of the diagnosis of the ability to recognize (Galperin, 2017) unlawful situations have shown that the most successful learners have learned such concepts of economic violations as "bribe" and "negligence". The least successful is the majority of respondents who recognize the situation of extortion of money.

About 30% of learners gave reasons for their answers, which were analyzed using the content analysis method. We identified 4 words-identifiers for characterizing crimes of an economic nature. These words are catch, blackmail, illegal, abnormal. How often they were used by the respondents is reflected in Table. 03.

Table 03. The words indicators that respondents used to define the concepts of economic crimes

The words indicators	Total number of references in the protocols of answers
Illegal	22
Self-interest	15
Blackmailing offences	6
Anormal	6

The data obtained indicate that we can draw such conclusions: learners use the basic words when characterizing unlawful actions. These words: "benefit" and "illegal." Therefore, we say that learners are associated with crimes by obtaining some benefit through a way that is contrary to the law. This means that such crimes learners are called deviating from the generally accepted norms of behaviour, namely they consider them forms of deviant behaviour. From our point of view, this conclusion has a positive connotation. testifies to the negative attitude of schoolchildren towards illegal behaviour.

6.4. Studying the relationship between the level of development in learners' perceptions of economic violations and the ability to recognize unlawful situations.

Table 04 presents the results of statistical analysis of the relationship between the level of development of the learners' perceptions of economic violations and the ability to recognize unlawful situations.

Table 04. Indicators of the correlation between the ability to summarize legal concepts and the ability to recognize the situation of corruption interaction (Diagnostic methods 2 & 3)

			Median of the case-method results (Diagnostic method 3)
Spearman (ρ)	LC1.1 (Diagnostic method 2)	Correlation coefficient	,203**
		AS	,004
		N	103
	LC1.2 (Diagnostic method 2)	Correlation coefficient	-,078
		AS	,268
		N	103
	LC1.3 (Diagnostic method 2)	Correlation coefficient	,074
		AS	,290
		N	103
	LC1.4 (Diagnostic method 2)	Correlation coefficient	,188**
		AS	,007
		N	103
	LC1.5 (Diagnostic method 2)	Correlation coefficient	,217**
		AS	,002
		N	103

Прим.: LC – diagnostic of the ability to summarize legal concepts (Diagnostic method 2). Median of the case-method results – diagnostic of the ability to recognize the situation of corruption interaction (Diagnostic method 3).

Significant correlations ($\rho \leq 0,01$) between the level of development of knowledge about economic crime among the schoolchildren (by the example of corruption) are obtained. These are the isolation of the characteristics of the concept, reduction of the examples of illegal behaviour and level of development of the ability to recognize situations of unlawful interaction. As a result of processing, we have obtained significant correlation ($\rho \leq 0,05$) between the level of development of logical operations of the knowledge about economic crime and the level of development of the ability to recognize situations of unlawful interaction (by the example of corruption). We believe that this shows that the basis for the formation of negative attitudes (rejection) of criminal behaviour among the schoolchildren is the knowledge about economic violations, their types, the ability to recognize them by the schoolchildren.

7. Conclusion

1. We have identified the level of development of learners' perceptions of economic violations (for example, corruption-related crimes: bribery, illegal enrichment, nepotism, favouritism and illegal lobbying). The schoolchildren define the concepts of "blackmail" and "nepotism" correctly, i.e. in full accordance with law. Schoolchildren have no fully formed knowledge of such concepts of economic crimes as "fraud", "favouritism" and "lobbying".

2. We have determined the nature of bilateral direct links between the level of development of the pupils' ideas about economic violations and the schoolchildren's attitude towards manifestations of corruptive behaviour. The development of negative attitude to criminal behaviour in the sphere of regulation of economic norms is possible. For this purpose, it is necessary to expand learners' views about the content and harmful consequences of such behaviour.

3. We have proved the existence of direct links between the level of development in the schoolchildren's perceptions of economic offences and their acquisition of the ability to recognize unlawful situations.

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