



## THE CURRENT STATE OF DEVELOPING LEGAL AWARENESS AND LEGAL CULTURE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TEACHERS IN THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

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**Abstract.** *This scientific article analyzes the current state of developing legal awareness and legal culture among pedagogical staff working in the public education system. The study examines the content of legal education within the teacher professional development system, its forms and methods, as well as the regulatory and legal foundations aimed at shaping legal knowledge. In addition, factors influencing the level of teachers' legal awareness are identified through the analysis of existing scientific research, textbooks, laws, and subordinate legal acts in the field. Based on practical analysis, the article reveals existing problems related to the development of legal culture within the professional development system and proposes scientific and practical recommendations to address them. The research results demonstrate that teachers' legal culture plays an important role in improving the quality of education in the public education system.*

**Keywords:** *legal awareness, legal culture, public education, teaching staff, professional development system, legal education.*

### **Introduction**

Today, in the process of social development, building a legal democratic state, and developing civil society, the human factor—especially the legal literacy and legal culture of teachers working in the education system—has become particularly important. Teachers in the public education system are not only providers of knowledge but also key social actors who shape respect for the rule of law, as well as an understanding of rights and obligations among the younger generation. From this perspective, the level of teachers' legal awareness and legal culture is directly related to the effectiveness of their professional activities, compliance with legal regulations in the educational process, and adherence to norms of pedagogical ethics. The professional development system, along with updating teachers' professional knowledge, serves to develop their legal knowledge and skills [1].

In the Republic of Uzbekistan, large-scale measures are being implemented to reform the education sector and to train and retrain teaching staff. In particular, the Law “On Education” and related subordinate legal acts clearly define the rights and obligations of teachers and the legal support of their professional activities [2]. This creates the necessity to systematically organize the development of teachers' legal awareness and legal culture. Practical analysis shows that in some cases, insufficient mastery of legal knowledge



by teachers leads to various legal problems in the educational process. This requires revising the content of legal education within the professional development system and developing scientific approaches aimed at improving its effectiveness.

Therefore, this article aims to analyze the current state of developing legal awareness and legal culture among public education teachers, to reveal the role and importance of legal education within the professional development system, and to formulate scientific conclusions aimed at eliminating existing problems in the field.

### **Research Methods**

In conducting this research, a комплекс approach using general and special scientific methods of cognition was applied. The methodological basis of the study consists of scientific views related to legal relations in education, legal support of pedagogical activity, and the formation of teachers' legal awareness and legal culture. First, the normative-legal analysis method was applied. Through this method, laws, subordinate legal acts, resolutions, and decrees of the Republic of Uzbekistan related to education were studied. In particular, the legal status of teachers, their rights and obligations, and norms related to organizing legal education within the professional development system were analyzed. This made it possible to identify the legal foundations for shaping teachers' legal awareness and legal culture.

In addition, the method of scientific literature analysis was widely used. Textbooks, manuals, monographs, and scientific articles in pedagogy, law, and educational management were examined. Special attention was paid to scientific studies, dissertations, and abstracts devoted to the development of teachers' legal culture, and existing scientific approaches were generalized [3]. This strengthened the theoretical foundations of the research topic. A comparative-analytical method was also used. Different approaches to organizing legal education within the professional development system and methods of forming teachers' legal knowledge were compared. National educational practices were compared with certain foreign experiences, and their similarities and differences were identified [4], which played an important role in substantiating scientific conclusions.

Furthermore, a systems approach was applied. The professional development system was considered as an integrated system encompassing teachers' professional, methodological, and legal training. This approach made it possible to analyze the development of legal awareness and legal culture in close connection with educational content, curricula, teaching methods, and the pedagogical environment. Generalization and conclusion-drawing methods were also used. Based on the synthesis of scientific sources, normative documents, and practical analysis results, well-grounded conclusions were formulated regarding the current state of developing teachers' legal awareness and legal culture.

The combination of these methods ensured a comprehensive disclosure of the research objectives and tasks, as well as the reliability and scientific validity of the results obtained.



## Results

### **Current State of Legal Education Content in the Professional Development System**

The research results show that the issue of developing legal awareness and legal culture among teachers in the public education system is reflected to a certain extent within the professional development system. In recent years, the improvement of normative-legal documents regulating the education sector has contributed to strengthening the legal status of teachers.

Analysis revealed that professional development course curricula include topics related to legal knowledge, such as education-related legislation, teachers' rights and obligations, labor relations, and child protection issues [5]. This creates a theoretical foundation for ensuring legality in teachers' professional activities. However, these topics are often general in nature, and the practical aspects of legal knowledge are insufficiently covered. Teachers tend to be limited to knowing legal norms without fully acquiring skills to apply them in specific pedagogical situations, which hinders the deep formation of legal awareness.

### **Analysis of Teachers' Level of Legal Awareness**

The study found that teachers' legal awareness levels depend on various factors, including work experience, educational background, frequency of participation in professional development courses, and the level of independent learning of legal information [6]. Observations show that teachers who regularly attend professional development courses demonstrate a higher interest in legal knowledge. However, the predominantly theoretical nature of course content in some cases is insufficient for fully shaping teachers' legal awareness, indicating the need to revise the content and forms of legal education.

### **Existing Problems in Forming Legal Culture**

The analysis identified several problems in developing teachers' legal culture. First, the number of hours allocated to legal education within the professional development system is limited. Second, interactive and practice-oriented methods for forming legal knowledge are not sufficiently used. In addition, some teachers consider legal knowledge secondary and focus primarily on subject content, which indicates insufficient understanding of the importance of legal culture in pedagogical activity. In reality, a teacher's legal culture is crucial for professional responsibility, interaction with students, and lawful organization of the educational process.

### **Opportunities for Improving Legal Education in Professional Development**

The research identified opportunities to improve legal education within the professional development system. In particular, introducing methods such as case studies, analysis of problematic situations, and independent work with normative-legal documents could effectively enhance teachers' legal awareness and legal culture. Moreover, expanding online platforms, electronic resources, and legal information databases through information and communication technologies would enable continuous updating of teachers' legal knowledge, serving as a modern mechanism for developing legal culture.



## Discussion

The analysis of the results shows that although the issue of developing teachers' legal awareness and legal culture has been sufficiently studied theoretically, there are difficulties in its full practical implementation. In particular, there is a mismatch between the content of legal education and the forms of its implementation within the professional development system.

Scientific literature indicates that many researchers view teachers' legal culture as an integral part of professional culture, emphasizing that without legal knowledge, teachers cannot ensure legality in the educational process [7]. This approach aligns with the study's findings, confirming that teachers' legal awareness levels determine the quality of their professional activities.

At the same time, some studies associate the formation of legal awareness mainly with mastering theoretical knowledge. However, this research shows that theoretical knowledge alone is insufficient to form stable legal culture. Linking legal knowledge to specific pedagogical situations and reinforcing it through practical training is essential. Foreign experience also supports this conclusion, as in many developed countries legal training is a distinct component of teachers' professional development, requiring not only knowledge but also practical application skills.

Furthermore, the study found that measures aimed at developing legal culture are often limited to short-term courses, which complicates ensuring continuity of legal knowledge. Since legal awareness formation is a long-term, step-by-step process, it requires ongoing support. The role of educational institution leadership and administration is also crucial; prioritizing legality and legal responsibility positively influences teachers' legal awareness [8]. Thus, developing legal culture requires not only an individual but also an institutional approach.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The research results indicate that teachers' legal awareness and legal culture play a decisive role in determining the effectiveness of their professional activities. The professional development system is important for developing teachers' legal knowledge and skills, but its current effectiveness is limited by several factors. First, although theoretical legal knowledge is provided, practical training and interactive methods are insufficiently applied, reducing teachers' ability to effectively use laws and regulations in practice. Second, the limited duration of professional development courses and the small number of hours allocated to legal education hinder continuous and systematic development of legal knowledge. Third, the role of leadership and administration in educational institutions is critical; prioritizing legality and responsibility encourages teachers to apply legal knowledge more actively.

Based on the research, the following scientific and practical recommendations are proposed:

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1. Reorganize legal education within the professional development system in a practice-oriented manner, using interactive methods such as case studies and problem situation analysis [9].
  2. Use electronic platforms, online courses, and legal information databases to ensure continuous development of teachers' legal knowledge.
  3. Ensure regular monitoring and programs by educational institution leadership and methodological councils to develop teachers' legal culture.
  4. Introduce a step-by-step system for developing teachers' legal awareness and legal culture based on foreign experience.

Implementing these recommendations will significantly improve the effectiveness of developing teachers' legal awareness and legal culture and contribute to improving the quality of education.

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