



## THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF FORMING STUDENTS' LEGAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND CULTURE THROUGH COOPERATIVE PEDAGOGY

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**Abstract.** The formation of students' legal consciousness and culture is one of the most urgent educational tasks in the era of globalization. Under the conditions of complex social, political, and ethical challenges in society, the legal literacy, legal culture, and civic responsibility of the younger generation are becoming key factors of sustainable development. This article explores the theoretical and methodological foundations of developing students' legal consciousness and culture through cooperative pedagogy.

The study applied pedagogical experiment, questionnaire, and statistical analysis methods. Results revealed that students involved in cooperative learning demonstrated deeper understanding of legal knowledge, greater independence in decision-making, and a stronger sense of social justice compared to peers taught through traditional methods. Statistical analysis confirmed that legal consciousness indicators increased by **27.3%** in the experimental group, while the control group showed only a **7.4%** growth. This research provides scientifically grounded recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of legal education and fostering civic responsibility through the broad application of cooperative pedagogy.

**Keywords:** legal consciousness, legal culture, cooperative pedagogy, civic education, methodology, students.



**Introduction.** The formation of students' legal consciousness and culture is a vital condition for building a democratic society and ensuring the protection of human rights. Legal culture is not only defined by knowledge of laws but also by respect for justice, civic responsibility, and commitment to resolving social relations through legal means. According to UNESCO (2023), countries that prioritize civic and legal education at the school level demonstrate stronger democratic institutions, lower levels of juvenile delinquency, and higher social stability. In Uzbekistan, strengthening students' legal awareness is recognized as a pressing task. The "Concept of Legal Education of Youth" (2021) **emphasized the importance of introducing innovative pedagogical methods into the educational process. One such effective approach is cooperative pedagogy.**

Unlike traditional authoritarian teaching methods, cooperative pedagogy ensures students' active participation, dialogue, and collaborative problem-solving. Johnson & Johnson (2019) highlight that cooperative learning significantly enhances students' understanding of legal norms and their ability to apply them in practice. Group projects, case studies, and role-playing activities not only help students memorize legal knowledge but also apply it in real-life situations. However, theoretical and methodological foundations in this area are still insufficiently studied. In many schools where traditional teaching methods dominate, students' legal knowledge remains superficial and disconnected from practice, preventing it from evolving into genuine legal culture.

**Research aim:** to study the theoretical and methodological foundations of forming students' legal consciousness and culture through cooperative pedagogy.

**Research questions:**

1. What are the theoretical foundations of cooperative pedagogy in legal education?



2. How can cooperative methods be effectively applied in teaching law?
3. What do empirical results reveal about the effectiveness of cooperative pedagogy in shaping legal consciousness and culture?

**Methodology.** Research design . The study was conducted in three secondary schools in Namangan region during the 2023–2024 academic year. A total of 180 students (aged 14–15) participated.

**-Experimental group (90 students):** taught using cooperative pedagogy.

**-Control group (90 students):** taught using traditional methods.

Data collection tools.

1. **Questionnaire** – to measure knowledge of legal concepts, rights, and responsibilities.
2. **Case-study tasks** – to assess ability to apply legal knowledge in real situations.
3. **Observation checklists** – to record students’ participation and activity in group discussions.
4. **Pre-test and post-test** – to compare changes in legal consciousness between groups.

Evaluation criteria for legal consciousness and culture

1. **Knowledge** – understanding of legal norms, rights, and duties.
2. **Skills** – ability to apply legal knowledge to problem-solving.
3. **Values/attitudes** – respect for law, sense of justice, and civic responsibility.



Statistical analysis. Data were processed using SPSS software. Mean scores, variance, percentage growth, and t-test values were calculated. The significance level was set at  $p < 0.05$ .

### Results.

Table 1. Students' legal consciousness indicators (experimental vs. control groups)

Group	Pre-test (%)	Post-test (%)	Growth (%)
Experimental	48.6	75.9	+27.3
Control	47.8	55.2	+7.4

**Graph 1.** The experimental group showed a sharp increase in legal consciousness, while the control group showed only modest improvement.

-Experimental group growth: **+27.3%**

-Control group growth: **+7.4%**

Reliability and validity.

**-Validity:** all research tools were validated by three experts in pedagogy and legal education.

**-Reliability:** Cronbach's alpha coefficient = **0.82**, indicating high reliability.

**-Ethics:** parental consent obtained, confidentiality and voluntary participation ensured.

**Conclusion (based on methodology):** The applied research design allowed for a scientifically sound assessment of cooperative pedagogy's effectiveness in shaping students' legal consciousness and culture.



1. Knowledge outcomes.

-Experimental group: increased from **49% to 78%** (+28.9%).

-Control group: increased from **48% to 56%** (+7.8%).

2. Skills outcomes.

-Experimental group: improved from **45% to 74%**.

-Control group: improved only from **46% to 53%**.

**Graph 2.** The experimental group demonstrated significant growth in applying legal knowledge to real-life tasks.

3. Values and attitudes outcomes.

**-Respect for law:** Experimental 82% | Control 57%

**-Sense of justice:** Experimental 79% | Control 54%

**-Civic responsibility:** Experimental 84% | Control 59%

4. General analysis

-Experimental group: legal consciousness and culture improved by **25–30%**.

-Control group: only **5–8%** growth.

-T-test confirmed significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Conclusion (based on results):** Cooperative pedagogy is an effective method not only for strengthening legal knowledge but also for developing legal skills, values, and civic responsibility.



**Discussion.** Findings confirm that cooperative pedagogy is a highly effective approach in forming students' legal consciousness and culture. The 27–30% growth in the experimental group clearly demonstrates its advantages. These results are consistent with Johnson & Johnson (2019), who found that cooperative learning enhances both knowledge and democratic values, and with UNESCO (2023), which reported that countries adopting cooperative teaching methods experience lower youth delinquency and greater social stability.

#### **Advantages of cooperative pedagogy:**

1. **Active participation** – students become active participants, not passive listeners.
2. **Practical application** – legal knowledge is applied to real-life situations.
3. **Collective decision-making** – group work fosters respect for others' opinions and justice.
4. **Civic responsibility** – students become more law-abiding and socially responsible.

In contrast, **traditional methods** focus on memorization, leaving students unable to apply legal knowledge in practice, which explains the minimal improvement (7–8%) in the control group.

**Scientific novelty:** This study clarifies the theoretical and methodological foundations of cooperative pedagogy specifically in legal education, supported by empirical data. While earlier studies focused on social skills, this research demonstrates its effectiveness in shaping legal consciousness and culture.

**Practical significance:** Recommendations include:

-integrating group projects, role plays, and case studies into legal education;



- using interactive methods to foster civic responsibility;
- linking theoretical knowledge to real-life contexts.

**Conclusion.** The study confirmed that cooperative pedagogy is an effective methodological foundation for developing students' legal consciousness and culture. The experimental findings (+27–30% improvement) highlight that cooperative learning methods:

- strengthen legal knowledge;
- promote legal values and civic responsibility;
- foster collective decision-making;
- enhance the ability to apply legal knowledge in real-life contexts.

The scientific novelty lies in the systematic development of theoretical and methodological foundations of cooperative pedagogy in legal education, verified through empirical evidence. Therefore, the broader application of cooperative pedagogy and interactive methods is strongly recommended for increasing the effectiveness of legal education.

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