

# Research on the Innovative Path of College Students' Context-Based Law Popularization Model of We-Media Based on 5W Theory

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## Abstract

The current flourishing development of various new media technologies and platforms has had a significant impact on people's lives. In the context of the "Eighth Five Year Plan" legal education, fully utilizing new media technologies and new models to carry out precise legal education has become an inevitable requirement to adapt to people's demand for the rule of law from "whether there is" to "whether it is good". This article takes solving the problems existing in the current legal education model in China as the starting point, creatively proposes the innovative legal education concept of "situational legal education", and is based on Lasswell's 5W theory perspective. The important value of 5W theory lies in the fact that only when the communication subject clarifies their own communication goals, accurately grasps audience preferences and needs, and disseminates appropriate content through appropriate channels can good communication effects be achieved. From five aspects such as "Who" and "Says What", this article conducts research and analysis on the situational legal education model of self-media for college students, and points out its important role in improving the pertinence and effectiveness of legal education. It analyzes its important significance, and provides useful information for innovating legal education models and accelerating the construction of a rule of law society. Countermeasures.

## Keywords

5W Theory, College Students, Situational, We Media Law Popularization

## 1. Introduction

Lin (2018) believes that with the rapid development of new media technologies and platforms, in addition to the government law popularization and commu-

nication field dominated by the government, schools and mainstream media, a public law popularization and communication field based on the Internet and new media has been formed. At present, the relevant researches in the field of law popularization in China are mainly concentrated in the field of law popularization and we-media law popularization, with relatively rich research results. However, there are few researches on the work of “we-media law popularization” carried out by college students, and there are few researches on the new mode of law popularization combining “situational mode” and “we-media law popularization” and how to further innovate the mode of law popularization by we-media. Based on Lasswell’s 5W theory, this study aims to study and analyze the construction of a new mode of law popularization in which college students participate with social forces, use we-media context-based law popularization works as the content of law popularization, and use we-media platforms for efficient communication and interaction, so as to promote the theoretical innovation of the new mode of law popularization and improve citizens’ awareness of the rule of law. We will accelerate the development of a society governed by law.

## **2. Explanation of 5W Theory and Situational Education Theory**

### **2.1. 5W Theory**

First, In 1948, American scholar H. Lasswell (formally proposed the 5W theory in his book *The Structure and Function of Communication in Society*. The 5W is the first letter of the five interrogative pronouns in English, which respectively represent the five basic elements of the communication process and arrange them in a certain order. Who (disseminator), Says What (communication content), In Which Channel (channel media), To Whom (audience) and With What Effect (communication effect). For the first time, this theory clearly describes the communication activities that people engage in every day as a process consisting of five elements. Its important value lies in that only when the communication subject clearly defines its own communication objectives, accurately grasp the preferences and needs of the audience, and disseminates the appropriate content through appropriate channels can it bring good communication effects. The 5W theory provides a systematic communication analysis framework and methodology for law popularizing activities, which helps communicators to plan, implement and evaluate law popularizing activities more scientifically, constantly optimize the contents and methods of law popularizing activities, and further improve the pertinency and effectiveness of law popularizing activities.

### **2.2. Situational Education Theory**

Situational education theory is a theory based on the learner’s situation, which means that the learning of relevant knowledge should take place in a meaningful and relevant situation. John Dewey, an American educator, is one of the pioneers of the theory of situational education. He believes that any education should be connected with the life and social environment, and the correspond-

ing learning situation should be designed according to the cognitive level and development stage of students, so as to learn in practice and real situations, so as to better meet the personalized learning and all-round development of students, rather than only accepting abstract and obscure knowledge. With the passing of time, the theory of situational education has been further developed and improved, and has been widely promoted and applied in business management, medical education and other fields by virtue of its characteristics of effectively stimulating learners' interest in learning and improving learning efficiency. At the level of law popularization, based on the theory of situational education, various we-media and network platforms can be used to carry out law popularization work, such as making short videos of law popularization and carrying out legal knowledge questions and answers, etc. By constructing certain legal situations, legal knowledge can be conveyed to the public in a vivid and vivid way, and the enthusiasm of the public to study law can be stimulated.

### **3. Analysis of the Existing Dilemmas and Causes of Popular Law in China**

#### **3.1. The Main Body of Law Popularization Is Not Fully Equipped and Its Role Is Not Fully Played**

At present, the power of popularizing law in our country is relatively weak. Under the requirements of the responsibility system of "who will enforce the law and who will popularize the law", the burden of law popularization work mainly falls on the shoulders of the leading group and professional legal personnel (Wang, 2022). However, in most of the law popularization groups, especially the grassroots law popularization groups, most of the law popularization personnel have not received professional training and do not have enough legal literacy. In some places, the leading cadres in the ideological attention to the work of law popularization is not enough, that the publicity work of law popularization is only a soft task, often just a formality, still satisfied with pulling banners, issuing leaflets and other forms, and did not implement the publicity of law popularization to the actual place. Professional law popularizing personnel can not carry out law popularizing publicity with the team for a long time, and legal aid activities once or twice a year can not meet the purpose of law popularizing publicity.

#### **3.2. The Content of Law Popularization Is Lack of Innovation and Lack of Targeted Law Popularization**

The lack of pertinence and innovation in the content of law popularization is the common problem of traditional media and new media, and the competition of content homogenization is gradually serious, which can not meet the daily needs of the public. Ma (2023) thinks most of the previous activities focused on how many legal provisions citizens learned and whether they remembered the contents of the law, but ignored the understanding of the spirit of the law. As of June 2022, the scale of short video users in China has exceeded 900 million, many of which have joined the law department. However, the content released

in most areas is mostly related to the work of the unit, or only at some important time points, such as the Constitution publicity Day, the release of the publicity dynamics of law popularization, which cannot reflect its own characteristics. According to incomplete statistics, the current majority of the videos released by the French account are no lack of around the theme of “fraud”, “personal information”, “traffic safety” and other topics, and the audience’s interest in such short videos is declining.

### **3.3. Lack of Diversity in the Form of Popular Law and Poor Combination of New and Old Media**

Traditional law promotion activities mostly take the form of indoctrination, such as: pulling banners, Posting propaganda slogans, gathering legal publicity and so on. However, under the situational experience of new media, the audience is no longer satisfied with the traditional extensive mode of law popularization, and the previous extensive mode of law popularization can no longer fill the public’s acceptance channels. With the blessing of Internet technology, the audience can accept the popularization of law through the media platform, such as: game answers, law popularization videos, public accounts, etc., but at present, most of the law popularization accounts are basically in the form of news information, law interpretation and other forms of law publicity, and the boring mode of law popularization is difficult to mobilize the interest of the audience. The frequency of the main body of law popularization using the form of plot popularization, case reappearance, live broadcasting and so on still needs to be improved.

With the continuous development and updating of Internet media, short video, a new form of media communication, has entered the public’s vision, and has become one of the most popular forms of media use for the current audience. The form of short videos makes legal education more down-to-earth. Compared to long and dry expressions, using short videos to promote legal education can get closer to the audience faster, make it easier for them to accept, feel the humanistic care of legal education, and make them more willing to actively learn legal knowledge.

### **3.4. The Law Is Not Targeted at Specific Audience Groups, and Work in Remote Areas Is Limited**

Zhang (2009) thinks the difference of the age and cognition of the audience will lead to the difference of the content of law popularization, and the inability to improve the pertinence of law popularization is one of the dilemmas in our current law popularization. Ren (2022) thinks considering the particularity of different groups, it is not suitable to adopt a uniform mode of legal education, but should carry out special and targeted legal education according to the psychological and physiological characteristics of different educational objects. On the one hand, the legal thinking of vulnerable groups such as minors and the elderly is weaker than that of other adult groups. Due to factors such as natural condi-

tions, cultural atmosphere, and traditional habits, the tentacles of legal publicity in remote rural areas have not been effectively extended, and there is a lack of corresponding platforms. The form and content of legal publicity need to be further expanded. Information in rural areas is relatively closed, cultural activities are relatively scarce, and the content and form of legal publicity are single, mostly limited to street stalls, legal courses, online legal education, and other forms. The content mainly introduces judicial functions, written cases, etc., lacking targeted and attractive content.

### **3.5. The Effect of Law Popularization and Communication Is Not Significant, and the Working Mechanism Needs to Be Improved**

At present, the effect of law popularization in our country only has a hard fixed standard, there is no flexible soft standard, and the work of law popularization lacks a clear assessment mechanism (Fu & Xiao, 2017). Based on the current platform of law popularization by traditional media and new media, the single output mode of law popularization lacks communication and interaction with the audience. Some law popularization subjects only pay attention to the audience's understanding of the law information, or only stay at the stage of information release, and can not provide a good guide to whether the public understands the concept and spirit of the content. In many places, the work of popularizing the law is just a formality, and the mechanism of popularizing the law cannot be made according to the psychology of the audience. In addition, at present, both traditional media and new media can not break the embarrassing situation of the fragmentation of legal information. Due to the limitations of objective conditions such as time, the audience often can only understand the surface of legal information, but cannot truly understand the connotation of legal information, and it is difficult to transform legal provisions into a weapon to safeguard their own rights and interests.

## **4. Solution—Build a Context-Based Law Popularization Model of College Students' We-Media**

As the representative of the young generation, the university group's activity on various social media can make the information of law popularization spread more quickly and have a wider impact. Based on the adaptability and flexibility of the application of 5W theory for different propaganda objects and purposes, combined with the wide application of current situational education in different fields, this paper aims to build a situational mode of "we-media" popularization through the power of college students, so as to put forward countermeasures against the existing difficulties in our country.

### **4.1. Who—Building a Law Popularization Team with University Students as the Main Force**

Compared with other subjects of law popularization, college students have ob-

vious advantages in law popularization, which are mainly reflected in the following aspects: first, the ability to accept knowledge is strong. Firstly, college students are in their youth and have a strong ability to accept knowledge. Usually, they have strong knowledge acceptance and learning abilities, and can easily understand and absorb legal knowledge, which can have a good effect in the process of legal education and publicity. Second, a strong sense of social responsibility. Most college students have a strong sense of social responsibility and participation, pay attention to social problems and actively participate in public welfare activities. Third, it is highly academic and professional. College students have a certain degree of academic and professional in their professional fields, and can better popularize and publicize legal knowledge through the study and mastery of professional knowledge. Fourth, it is active and innovative. With active thinking and strong innovative spirit and exploration consciousness, college students are more likely to accept new concepts and ways of law popularization, and can make full use of the we-media platform to carry out situational law popularization.

Therefore, the construction of a law popularization team with college students as the main force can give full play to the significant advantages and positive role of college students in the law popularization work of we-media, effectively solve the problems of insufficient and professional law popularization team in our country, and further improve the quality and level of law popularization work.

#### **4.2. Says What—Creating a Variety of Context-Oriented Law Popularization Content with Short Videos as the Core**

Huang (2022) thinks in recent years, short videos have rapidly risen due to factors such as length, convenience, high entertainment level, and strong social interaction, and have become one of the mainstream entertainment and information dissemination methods. As Bates and others have said, social media thus provides a contemporary social space for the free expression of an identity or idealised self to a broad audience (Bates et al., 2020). The creation of diversified situational content of law popularization with short video as the core mainly focuses on script compilation, personnel participation and post-editing, which plays an important role in the construction of this new mode of law popularization. The short video script source integrates legal theoretical knowledge and relevant legal case adaptation, focusing on the creation of life themes of public concern such as consumer rights protection, labor disputes, marriage and family inheritance, and the protection of minors. This creation method not only makes legal knowledge more vivid and easy to understand, but also closer to the actual needs of the people. The participants mainly cooperate with other social groups such as government agencies, primary and secondary schools, and law firms to achieve situational participation in the production of short videos of law popularization. While participating in the creation, they learn legal knowledge and improve the concept of rule of law, so as to achieve a better effect of law popularization. Post video generation is mainly composed of short video post pro-

cessing processes such as editing, transition, dubbing, special effects and subtitles. With the help of new media technology, post editing carries information processing in the digital era, and the addition of various special effects and tool attributes makes short video more situational.

At the same time, in the production process of situational short video, such as language style situational style, narrative mode situational style, post-editing situational style, etc., to stimulate the audience's curiosity, make the audience get the sense of immersive experience, subtly guide the audience to regulate their own behavior, and then improve the effect of law popularization. The situational style of post-editing refers to the use of new media technology, parallel editing, cross editing, contrast editing and other methods, the use of logical force reflecting facts to reason, enhance the integrity and logic of the narrative, and bring strong contrast through the interactive switch of the picture, so that the audience can feel the conflict tension more intuitively, and better arouse the emotional resonance of the audience.

### **4.3. In Which Channel—Constructing the Communication Mode of Multi-Center Cracking Communication**

The development of mobile Internet provides an opportunity for the rapid growth and expansion of we-media platform application production content represented by short video, and the use of short video has increasingly become a new Internet lifestyle for Chinese netizens. In order to achieve good communication effect, Wu (2021) thinks it is also necessary to seriously consider how to get through the key communication nodes in the entire media ecosystem to form a geometric communication effect. The communication mode of “multi-center cracking communication + multi-platform interactive communication” should be built for the popular short video, and the radiation and interactivity of new media information transmission should be used to pay attention to user needs and improve the initiative of audience communication. We will disseminate high-quality legal content faster, wider and more effectively, so that legal knowledge related to people's livelihood is well-known and known to all (Song & Wang, 2020).

Multi-center cracking propagation means that information begins to spread from a central point, and then gradually splits into multiple centers in the process of transmission, and then forms multiple transmission nodes, and finally realizes the wide dissemination of information. After the short video is released in the initial release center, users can share, forward or comment through various ways. These users can be ordinary netizens, legal workers, social groups, etc., and they re-publish short videos of law popularization in their social networks, thus forming multiple fission propagation nodes. Through the continuous forwarding and sharing of fission propagation nodes, the dissemination range of short video has gradually expanded, forming a wide coverage of the dissemination network. In this process, the speed and scope of information dissemination have been significantly improved, attracting more users' attention and participa-

tion. At the same time, the multi-center cracked communication mode has the characteristics of continuous communication. Once a stable communication network is formed, information will continue to spread in the network and produce continuous influence and effect, which will spread the short video of popular law to the public quickly and efficiently, and improve the popularity and acceptance of legal knowledge.

#### **4.4. To Whom—Innovate a Benign Interactive Communication Mechanism to Achieve a Dynamic Balance between the Demand for Rule of Law Culture and the Supply of Law Popularization**

In the current digital society, we-media platforms represented by Douyin short video are playing an increasingly important role. As Valkenburg and Peter (2013) said: “Young people are also Agents on social media platforms in the sense that they develop their personal goals, values, and purpose in life on social networking sites”. With the help of these popular we-media platforms, the work of law popularization can further innovate the benign interactive communication mechanism, adapt to the people’s demand for rule of law from “no” to “good”, improve the quality of law popularization, and achieve a dynamic balance between the demand for rule of law culture and the supply of law popularization.

Douyin, a popular short video app, has a huge user base, covering all age groups and social groups. As a mobile short video social platform, Tiktok’s interface is mainly dominated by short videos, and interactive functions are distributed around videos in a small area, including five interactive functions: Posting, liking, commenting, forwarding and following. After the release of the short video of situational law popularization, its situational and life-oriented experience of law popularization can more arouse the psychological identification and emotional resonance of ordinary users, resulting in more praise, and narrow the psychological distance between video works and Douyin users in the interaction process. At the same time, users can comment on the works, and the public comment area is the second stage of the short video performance, reflecting the feedback and suggestions of users on the video itself. The forwarding function of the Douyin platform can expand the scope of interaction. The second communicator can send his views on short videos to other platforms or users together with the short videos, add interactive links with users of other platforms, and further expand the influence of contextual short videos.

#### **4.5. With What Effect—Meet the Multi-Faceted Needs of the Audience for the Rule of Law and Achieve a Good Effect of Law Popularization**

The communication essence of the context-based law popularization mode of college students’ we-media has become the creative cognitive thinking generated by the subject of law popularization from the standpoint of the audience—consensus

dialogue, which satisfies the multi-faceted legal needs of the audience, including three dimensions: emotional needs, cognitive needs and social needs. Young people's social experiences and relationships play a crucial role in their decision to use certain social media platforms and their modes of engagement in these spaces (Brough, Literat, & Ikin, 2020).

One is to meet the emotional needs of the audience. The short duration of the situational style of short video can meet the needs of the audience for diversification and fragmentation of information, and help the audience create a more pleasant and relaxed emotional state. The second is to meet the audience's cognitive needs. According to the diversity of audience needs, situational short video for law popularization uses artificial intelligence algorithms to differentiate users' individual needs—to analyze users' preferences according to their age, behavior and video browsing habits to push videos, and to create content optimization of situational short video for law popularization based on the endogenous logic of short video platforms. The third is to meet the social needs of the audience. The we-media platform provides the audience with the functions of commenting, forwarding and sharing. When the audience sees a short situational law popularization video that is interesting or practical, they can send real-time bullet screen to interact with others or @their friends in the comment area and remind their friends how to solve legal problems. At the same time, most audiences choose to communicate and interact with strangers directly. For example, some audiences will directly share their relevant experiences or opinions to gain recognition from others. The social and psychological utility generated by this self-display further promotes the influence mechanism of social identity, thus promoting the emotional connection among different audiences. Meet people's social belonging needs.

## 5. Conclusion

To sum up, in the context of the rapid development of new media technologies and platforms, the context-based law popularization mode of college students' we-media can give full play to the positive role of college students in law popularization education, achieve accurate law popularization with the help of we-media platform, and effectively solve the problems existing in the current law popularization mode, such as single form of law popularization content and weak main body strength. Based on the research and analysis of the 5W model of college students' we-media situational mode of law popularization, this study deeply recognizes the great role and significance of this new model in improving the pertinence and effectiveness of law popularization, fills the research gap in this field, and provides useful methods and strategies for the innovation of law popularization model and the construction of a society ruled by law.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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