

Investigation of corruption tolerance of contemporary college students

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Abstract. corruption tolerance of college students decides future anti-corruption effects to a large extent. If students hate corruption bitterly and have low tolerance to corruption, this means corruption cost and risk will be high in the future and people will tend to observe law and discipline and even refuse corruption. On the contrary, corruption will be rampant. Through investigations, we known that college students generally consider current corruption phenomena are serious in China. In the face of various corruption phenomena, they show low tolerance and high anti-corruption participation willingness. In our opinions, low tolerance and high anti-corruption participation willingness of college students are the foundation of future anti-corruption. So, we need to create conditions and make college students become an important force of anti-corruption.

Introduction

Rule by law is a civilized mark. It is an inevitable choice of human social development. Currently, the whole country has reached a consensus on building a socialist country under the rule of law. Aristotle - an ideologist in ancient Greek said, "rule by law should contain double meanings: established laws gain general obedience, while the laws all obey should be well-established laws." [1] Thus, if the public of a country and especially those grasping public power cannot well follow the established laws, phenomena of violating rule by law will occur. The most outstanding phenomenon is that the power is out of control. Just as Acton (British historian) said, "absolute power will lead to absolute corruption". [2] The consequence of power out of control is rampant corruption. Serious corruption will in turn weaken the foundation of rule by law. Under such vicious circle, a country under the rule of law is out of the question. So, to realize a country under the rule of law, anti-corruption must be carried out. There are many means for anti-corruption, including good legal system, strict anti-corruption, rulers' anti-corruption determination and strong anti-corruption will of the public. These are effective measures to restrain and eliminate corruption. Besides, public tolerance for corruption is also a key factor deciding the success of anti-corruption. In a society with high tolerance for corruption, since the public ignore or approve corruption, the corrupters will generate the sense of security. As a result, corruption will occur frequently; legal system cannot be well observed; rule by law is out of the question. In a society with low tolerance for corruption, people hate corruption bitterly and oppose corruption. Thus, legal risk and moral cost of corrupters are high. People will consciously or unconsciously refuse corruption and abide by laws. Under such circumstance, rule by law may be realized. College students are social elites. They receive higher education, own certain political quality and social experience and basically form their world outlook, social outlook and values. It is very important to know their cognition of anti-corruption, support degree of anti-corruption and anti-corruption participation willingness. Their tolerance for corruption decides future anti-corruption effect of the country and the government. So, the research group takes college students for example and tries to know their tolerance for corruption through questionnaire so as to reach the purpose of knowing the general trend.

Samples and main problems

He Qinglian considers the tolerance for corruption of the ruled can be observed through the following ways: 1) corruption penetration degree; 2) public opinion poll and public opinion; 3)

social turmoil rate.^[3] According to the theory of He Qinglian, to clearly know the tolerance for corruption of contemporary college students, the research group carried out contemporary college students for college students in Jinan, Shandong. A total of 1000 questionnaires were distributed, and 879 effective questionnaires were collected, with the recovery rate of 87.9%. Main conditions of the respondents are as follows: 1. 255 girls received public integrity education, including 164 undergraduate students and 91 junior college students, 150 students majoring in law and 105 students who did not major in law; 2. 231 boys received public integrity education, including 121 undergraduate students and 110 junior college students, 117 students majoring in law and 114 students who did not major in law; 3. 215 girls did not receive public integrity education, including 127 undergraduate students and 88 junior college students, 137 students majoring in law and 78 students who did not major in law; 4. 178 boys received public integrity education, including 90 undergraduate students and 88 junior college students, 86 students majoring in law and 92 students who did not major in law.

This survey in allusion to college students mainly knows their tolerance for corruption from the following aspects: 1) general perception of corruption; 2) tolerance for different corrupt behaviors; 3) anti-corruption participation willingness and influencing factors; 4) anti-corruption attitude and anti-corruption confidence. Based on knowing their tolerance for corruption, the further study purpose of the research group is to try to verify that: whether the college students receiving public integrity education have less tolerance for corruption than those who do not receive public integrity education? Whether the undergraduate students have less tolerance for corruption than junior college students? Whether the students majoring in law have less tolerance for corruption than the students who do not major in law?

Data statistics and problem analysis

(I) General perception of corruption of contemporary college students

According to the survey, college students generally consider corruption phenomena are serious in China. All respondents keep highly consistent view on this problem regardless of their educational background, reception of public integrity education and the major. Among all respondents, 82.35%-97.92% students think corruption phenomena are general in China. In terms of perceiving “corruption phenomena are very general and have been socialized”, the students receiving public integrity education are more optimistic than those who do not receive public integrity education on the whole, but the students majoring in law are less optimistic than those who do not major in law. Undergraduate students and junior college students are also the case.

(II) Tolerance of contemporary college students for different corrupt behaviors

In accordance with the survey data, college students hold very low tolerance for the following corrupt behaviors: “the government and businessmen collude to embezzle benefits of relocation households”; “officers serve as the umbrella for the gangdom or drug trafficking personnel”; “officers make backstage deals in public projects”; “officers keep concubines or lovers with the money corrupted”, but they hold high tolerance for the following corruptions; “officers receive gifts in festivals” and “parents give feasts and present gifts for their children”. To the surprise of the research group, college students hold low tolerance for the behavior that “officers keep concubines or lovers with the money corrupted”. This to some extent shows the importance of good personal virtue. In addition, apart from such corrupt behaviors that “officers receive gifts in festivals” and “parents give feasts and present gifts for their children”, over 82% college students show no tolerance for other corrupt behaviors. More than 40% college students show zero tolerance. Low tolerance of college students for corrupt behaviors is good foundation for the party and the government to energetically oppose corruption. In addition, the students receiving public integrity education regardless of the gender show hate of corrupt behaviors. Thus, we consider 6-year anti-corruption education has plays certain positive role in China.

(III) Anti-corruption participation willingness of contemporary college students and influencing factors

To test anti-corruption participation willingness of college students, the research group designed

the test question that “anti-corruption is a matter of the country and relevant organizations and is unrelated to me”. According to the test results, 66.66%-90.74% students chose “disagree”. This objectively shows students have high anti-corruption participation willingness. It’s a pity that the students receiving public integrity education do not have higher participation willingness than those who do not receive public integrity education. To further test their anti-corruption participation willingness and initiative in the face of specific corrupt behaviors, the research group designed the test questions to test their reporting willingness in the face of different corrupt behaviors. College students have high reporting willingness for any corrupt behavior. The reporting willingness degree basically presents positive correlation with their tolerance for corrupt behaviors shown in table 3, i.e. the reporting willingness degree is higher if they have less patience with the corrupt behaviors. Moreover, reporting enthusiasm of the students receiving public integrity education is higher than those who do not receive public integrity education. Reporting via network becomes their first choice. On the one hand, this shows network has become a life style; on the other hand, this points out the direction for us to occupy network anti-corruption base. Furthermore, 97.10% students select anonymity when reporting corrupt behaviors. The inverse proportion of high reporting willingness and low autonomy reporting indicates that the reporting system still has some problems. Besides, “the fear of attack and retaliation” and “worry about the reporting effects” become the primary causes for reporting with the autonomy.

(IV) Anti-corruption attitude and confidence of contemporary college students

It is known from the survey that over 94.74% college students firmly oppose any form of corruption. In terms of objection proportion, the proportion of students receiving public integrity education is higher than that of those who do not receive public integrity education; the proportion of those majoring in law is higher than that of those who do not major in law; the proportion of undergraduate students is higher than that of junior college students. In addition, what echoes with their firm objection of any form of corruption is that they hold approval attitude to national zero tolerance for corruption. As well, college students affirm the anti-corruption work of the party and the country. 50%-73.08% college students are confident in the success of anti-corruption. The confidence degree of the students receiving public integrity education is higher than that of the students who do not receive public integrity education.

Conclusions

We know through survey that there are differences in many aspects between the students receiving public integrity education and the students who do not receive public integrity education. In the face of current corruption situation, the students receiving public integrity education are more objective and rational. In the face of different corrupt behaviors, the students receiving public integrity education show less tolerance. Their reporting enthusiasm is also high and anti-corruption attitude is firmer. The students majoring in law have firmer attitude to anti-corruption and higher anti-corruption participation willingness than the students who do not major in law. They have no significant differences with the students who do not major in law in other aspects. Undergraduate students and junior college students also have no obvious differences, except firmer anti-corruption attitude of undergraduate graduates. In one word, all students consider current corruption phenomena are serious, regardless of their educational background, reception of public integrity education and the major. In the face of various corrupt behaviors, they show low tolerance and high anti-corruption participation willingness. Low tolerance and high anti-corruption participation willingness of college students are the foundation of future anti-corruption. We need to think that which conditions we should create for college students so as to let them become an important force for anti-corruption.

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