

Policy Evolution and Development Prospects of Human Rights Education from the Four Editions of the *Human Rights Action Plan of China*

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Abstract: *As a public policy, the Human Rights Action Plan of China provides a clear roadmap for achieving the phased goals of human rights education development. The evolution of human rights education policies over the four editions demonstrates a clear and distinct logic of progression: human rights education in primary and secondary schools has shifted from fostering students' awareness of human rights to establishing human rights values; human rights education in higher education has transitioned from the construction of single human rights course to the systematic development of human rights disciplines; human rights knowledge training has evolved from disseminating basic human rights knowledge among legal and political workers to cultivating a human rights mindset among public officials; and the popularization of human rights knowledge has moved from enhancing communication effectiveness to strengthening cultural confidence in human rights. These shifts reflect the characteristics of the policy evolution of human rights education, which are unified in their gradual and continuous nature, responsiveness and forward-looking nature, and value-oriented and contemporary nature. Fundamentally, the gap between the current state of human rights education development and policy goals serves as the intrinsic driving force for the evolution of human rights education policies. While the external factors influencing the evolution of policy content mainly include the human rights cause's contemporary context, historical achievements, and current needs. Looking ahead to the future development of human rights education, it is essential to continuously innovate human rights teaching methods, enrich the content of human rights education, improve relevant institutional guarantee mechanisms, strengthen the construction of multi-stakeholder collaborative human rights education teams, compile and publish high-quality human rights textbooks, and increase the intensity of human rights knowledge training for journalists, in order to create a favorable public opinion atmosphere and cultural environment for the development of China's human rights cause in the new era.*

Keywords: Human Rights Action Plan of China ♦ public policy analysis ♦ human rights education
♦ human rights communication ♦ human rights culture

“Human rights education is enlightenment education about the rights that people should enjoy,”¹ and it plays an important role in promoting the healthy development of the human rights cause. According to the work requirements proposed by Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee: “We should advocate the right outlook on human rights; we should extensively publicize human rights and improve public knowledge of this

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¹ Wang Kunqing and Yue Wei, *Theoretical Framework of Educational Philosophy* (Beijing: People’s Education Press, 2022), 322.

issue through diverse formats, avenues, and forums, with a view to fostering a society-wide culture of respecting and protecting human rights.”² Since the implementation of the first edition of the *Human Rights Action Plan of China*,³ significant achievements have been made in the development of human rights education in China. However, many scholars unanimously believe that there are still some problems in the development process of human rights education. Specifically, human rights education in primary and secondary schools has problems such as outdated teaching content,⁴ lack of human rights cultural atmosphere and human rights practical teaching,⁵ and an unsystematic knowledge structure.⁶ Human rights education in higher education institutions has problems such as low academic status, limited penetration methods, complex course forms and content, a relatively small number of universities conducting human rights education,⁷ few human rights public elective courses,⁸ non-unified formulation of human rights course teaching outlines and textbook compilation,⁹ lack of professional human rights teachers,¹⁰ students’ insufficient sense of gain in courses,¹¹ a certain degree of lack of human rights literacy among university students,¹² a single teaching subject in the field of human rights, incomplete coverage of education targets, and solidified educational fields;¹³ therefore, human rights education in higher education institutions is still in the initial development or undeveloped stage.¹⁴ In the training system for public officials, there is a lack of human rights-related knowledge training,¹⁵ and human rights education for national public officials is often conducted in a simplified manner by issuing documents and books, with teaching content detached from work content; some enterprises conduct human rights education to avoid interest risks, and a few enterprises do not conduct human rights education for their employees,¹⁶ The general public has little understanding of the concept of human rights and

² Xi Jinping, *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*, vol. 4 (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2022), 271.

³ *Human Rights Action Plan of China*, hereinafter referred to as the *Plan*.

⁴ Wang Huan, “Present Situation and Introspection of Human Rights Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in China,” *Journal of Guangzhou University (Social Science Edition)* 9 (2016): 19; Li Hongbo, “Problems and Solutions in the Current Rule of Law Education in Primary and Secondary Schools,” *Curriculum, Teaching Material and Method* 11 (2020): 85.

⁵ Li Hongbo, “Human Rights Education from the Perspective of the Holistic Development of the Children,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 6 (2019): 5.

⁶ Wang Hui and Li Huanhuan, “Development, Problems and Suggestions of Human Rights Education in China,” *Theory and Practice of Education* 28 (2019): 14.

⁷ Chen Youwu, “Problems in Human Rights Education in China’s Universities and the Solution,” *Journal of Guangzhou University (Social Science Edition)* 1 (2010): 25-28.

⁸ Zhu Liyu and Yu Zhilun, “On Several Issues Regarding the Conduct of Human Rights Theory Research and Education in Chinese Universities,” *Leading Journal of Ideological & Theoretical Education* 1 (2011): 52.

⁹ Zhu Liyu, “Several Issues on Furthering Human Rights Education in Chinese Universities — Focusing on the Implementation and Formulation of the Human Rights Action Plan of China,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 3 (2012): 57.

¹⁰ Wang Hui and Li Huanhuan, “Development, Problems and Suggestions of Human Rights Education in China,” *Theory and Practice of Education* 28 (2019): 15.

¹¹ Pan Jun, “Reflection on Human Rights Education of Undergraduate Course: Undergraduate Course of Southwest University of Political Science and Law as a Sample,” *Journal of Southwest University of Political Science & Law* 5 (2019): 74.

¹² Zhu Liyu and Ye Chuanxing, *Introduction to Human Rights* (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2022), 10.

¹³ Li Liaoning and Zhang Jie, “On the Education of Marxism Human Rights Views in the New Era,” *Studies in Ideological Education* 1 (2024): 59-60.

¹⁴ Lu Guangjin, “Constructing Chinese Human Rights Studies: Cause, Cognition, and Paradigm,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 3 (2023): 5.

¹⁵ Wu Xiaochuan, “On the Five Unities in Human Rights Education,” *Journal of Langfang Normal University (Social Sciences Edition)* 3 (2023): 110.

¹⁶ Li Liaoning and Zhang Jie, “On the Education of Marxism Human Rights Views in the New Era,” *Studies in Ideological Education* 1 (2024): 59-60.

the status of human rights development;¹⁷ although some ordinary people and government officials are no longer unfamiliar with “human rights,” their understanding is still limited to the dimension of everyday discourse practice, “lacking a deeper grasp of the meaning of human rights.”¹⁸

As a “large-scale plan with goals, values, and strategies,”¹⁹ public policy refers to the process of activities adopted to address specific issues or affairs. “National planning guides national development,”²⁰ China adopts a “planning-oriented approach to human rights development,”²¹ and regards the *Plan* as a public policy guiding the development of the human rights cause, which clearly defines the specific indicators and priorities for the development of human rights education.²² According to the specific classification standards for the targets of human rights education, the four editions of the Plan released so far have respectively formulated specific goals for human rights education from the dimensions of primary and secondary school human rights education, university human rights education, human rights knowledge training, and human rights knowledge popularization. “The content of public policies is always evolving,”²³ while analyzing the basic laws of policy evolution helps lay a foundation for the formulation of subsequent policies.²⁴ Therefore, this paper follows the research approach of “policy analysis-policy evaluation-policy recommendations,” analyzes and explores the fundamental reasons and logical characteristics of the evolution of human rights education policy content in the four editions of the Plan. Combining the current actual situation of human rights education in China, it reflects on and evaluates the deficiencies of the existing policy content, and puts forward suggestions for formulating human rights education policies and promoting the development of human rights education in the future, so as to give full play to the positive role of human rights education policies in promoting the sustainable development of human rights education in the new era.

I. Human Rights Education in Primary and Secondary Schools: From Cultivating Human Rights Awareness to Establishing Correct Human Rights Values

Primary and secondary school students are still in the stage of immature mental development and the critical period for the cultivation of values. Conducting human rights education for these students is of great significance for their self-cultivation, mental maturity, social integration, and comprehensive development. The four editions of the Plan have put forward specific goals for human rights education in primary and secondary schools in terms of teaching requirements and content. The policy objectives have also shifted from focusing on establishing human rights awareness among primary and secondary school students to cultivating their human rights values,

¹⁷ Previous survey data on the human rights concept of the Chinese public shows that “about 6.9% of people have never heard of ‘human rights’.” Zhang Yonghe et al., *Survey of the Chinese Public’s Ideas on Human Rights* (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2016), 43.

¹⁸ Zhao Shukun, “Viewing Human Rights Situation in China from the Perspective of Two National Human Rights Action Plans,” *Modern Law Science* 2 (2013): 20.

¹⁹ Xie Ming, *An Introduction to Public Policy* (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2020), 4.

²⁰ Yin Dongshui and Zhou Guanghui, “National Planning Leads National Development — A Political Analysis Based on the National Five-Year Plan,” *CASS Journal of Political Science* 5 (2022): 99.

²¹ Wang Liwan, “Plan-based Human Rights Development Path: Starting from the National Human Rights Action Plan,” *Journal of Human Rights Law* 6 (2022): 116.

²² Chen Youwu, “On Human Rights Education in the Human Rights Action Plan of China,” *Academics* 9 (2010): 45-50.

²³ Yang Hongshan, *Public Policy (2nd edition)* (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2024), 178.

²⁴ Yang Daifu, “A Study of the Evolution of Western Policies: A Thirty-Year Review,” *Journal of Chinese Academy of Governance* 4 (2007): 104.

which is conducive to achieving the value orientation of promoting the comprehensive development of individuals through human rights education.

A. Teaching requirements: innovating methods and objectives of human rights education

First, the *Plan* calls for the use of a variety of teaching methods to carry out human rights education. Pedagogy is the fundamental pathway to achieving teaching objectives. To a certain extent, the choice of teaching methods and organizational forms is crucial to the realization of teaching goals. The entire pedagogical process involves interaction between teachers and students, while different teaching content, diverse student characteristics, and other varying teaching elements determine that teachers cannot rely on a single method or organizational form. Primary and secondary school students are still in the early stages of cognitive development, characterized by limited attention spans, a predominance of concrete thinking in understanding the world, and a reliance on unconscious memory. All four editions of the *Plan* propose that human rights education should be conducted in a flexible, diverse, vivid, and lively manner, tailored to the age characteristics of primary and secondary school students. This approach aims to spark their interest in accepting human rights knowledge, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of human rights education in primary and secondary schools.

Second, the *Plan* calls for the implementation of human rights education through practical activities. The first edition proposes that students enhance their awareness of human rights through experiencing and participating in equal and democratic relationships on campus, and the fourth edition further puts forward the requirement to expand educational practice activities to promote human rights education. Practical pedagogical activities allow students to truly experience teaching scenarios and deeply participate in the process. They are not only basic means to cultivate students' practical skills and the ability to apply knowledge but also conducive to achieving the goals of quality education, including knowledge transmission and value guidance. Human rights education practice activities can foster basic human rights literacy among primary and secondary school students, such as awareness of equality and rights, and enable them to truly feel the effectiveness brought about by the progress in human rights in life. Simultaneously, integrating human rights knowledge into practical activities of other themes facilitates communication and interaction between educators and children and adolescents, helps to build close emotional relationships, and leverages the positive role of emotions in educational practice. These aspects are beneficial for students to deeply comprehend human rights knowledge and to enhance the emotional recognition and internalization of human rights values among children and adolescents²⁵, and it is conducive to cultivating students' ability to observe and consider human rights hot issues using scientific thinking.

Finally, the *Plan* clarifies the value orientation of human rights education. As a social activity aimed at cultivating individuals, education's fundamental mission is "to gradually help students understand what constitutes reasonable and legitimate values, and to enable the educated to have a profound understanding of what is just, reasonable, and in accordance with human nature."²⁶ The fourth edition proposes the requirements to cultivate primary and secondary school students' awareness of rights, equality, and the rule of law, as well as collective concepts such as social and national consciousness. Human rights education in this phase should not only enlighten students' awareness of rights protection but also help them establish correct human rights values. Primary and secondary school students "are in the key period of comprehensively perceiving the world,"²⁷ "their cognition, personality, and individual socialization are still in an immature stage, urgently needing moral education and guidance by correct values. "The fundamental focus of human rights thought is

²⁵ Chen Ning et al., *New Exploration of Value Education: The Perspective of Emotion* (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House, 2024), 161.

²⁶ Yang Guorong, "A Philosophical View on Education," *Zhejiang Academic Journal* 3 (2023): 57.

²⁷ Du Wenjing and Zhang Maocong, "Implication of the Times, Realistic Tension and Path Selection in the Construction of the 'New Normal'," *Journal of Shandong Normal University (Social Sciences)* 3 (2022): 86.

to realize care for human beings themselves.”²⁸ The comprehensive development of individuals is an important part of Marxist educational thought.²⁹ Therefore, making students aware of the importance of caring for themselves, gradually form social character, and achieve personal comprehensive development is an essential value orientation of human rights education in primary and secondary schools.

B. Teaching content: in line with the requirements of the times for social development

On the one hand, the *Plan* requires that pedagogical objectives be adjusted in accordance with the progress of the times. The needs, demands, and interests of children and adolescents are the starting points for achieving recognition and internalization in values education. The needs of contemporary children and adolescents are characterized by diversity and sensitivity, and reflect the characteristics of the times,³⁰ such as the development of whole-process people’s democracy and the comprehensive construction of a country ruled by law, which makes their needs for democratic participation and legal rights protection more prominent. The fourth edition of the *Plan* proposes to include knowledge on “cherishing life, equality awareness, privacy protection, and the protection of minors’ rights and interests” in relevant courses. Although the first edition pointed out the need to incorporate legal and human rights education into primary and secondary school education, it did not specify the content. The second and third editions broadly stated “integrating human rights knowledge into primary and secondary school education” without specifying the particular content of human rights knowledge. This reflects the timeliness of human rights education and the state’s emphasis on cultivating the legal thinking and awareness of primary and secondary school students. “Education is a social phenomenon and activity that exists throughout human society,”³¹ and the content of human rights education should adapt in line with the development of the times and social changes. In recent years, issues such as privacy breaches, school bullying, campus violence, juvenile delinquency, and the protection of minors’ rights and interests have gradually become focal points in social development. These issues affect the actual enjoyment of rights such as the right to subsistence, the right to development, the right to participation, and the right to health of adolescents. “The shaping of consciousness and the shaping of consciousness with ideals”³² are the intrinsic processes of educational activities, and “equality, respect, and human dignity are the core of human rights education.”³³ Integrating human rights knowledge into relevant primary and secondary school courses not only enables students to establish self-protection and self-defense awareness but also helps them form a human rights consciousness that values human dignity and respects the rights of others. It also encourages them to actively understand, observe, and think about society, achieving the value-oriented goal of promoting the comprehensive development of individuals through human rights education.

On the other hand, the *Plan* calls for the continuous expansion of the scope of courses offering human rights education. The first edition proposes to make full use of the “Moral Education” course to carry out human rights education. In the subsequent three editions, it was proposed to conduct human rights education through “relevant courses” in primary and secondary schools. Among them, the third edition proposes to “incorporate human rights knowledge into the national education content,” indicating that the scope of courses for human rights education is continuously expanding.

²⁸ Zhang Yonghe, *Marx and Engels on Human Rights: Texts and Interpretations* (Beijing: Central Compilation & Translation Press, 2023), 196.

²⁹ Shi Peichen, *An Introduction to Marxist Educational Thought* (Chongqing: Chongqing University Press, 2023), 183.

³⁰ Chen Ning et al., *New Exploration of Value Education: The Perspective of Emotion* (Shanghai: Shanghai People’s Publishing House, 2024), 159.

³¹ *Principles of Education* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2019), 27.

³² Karl Jaspers, *What is Education*, translated by Chen Wei and Karl Kratz (Shanghai: Shanghai People’s Publishing House, 2022), 84-85.

³³ Bu Wei, “Understanding of the Nature of Bullying and the Prevention and Intervention on School Violence from the Human Rights Framework,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 5 (2016): 23.

“Courses,” as carriers of knowledge dissemination and means to achieve educational goals, are the sum of the educational content and its progress and employed by schools to realize their training objectives. The development of the times promotes the advancement of education, and the variety of courses offered in primary and secondary schools is also constantly enriching. From the previous editions of the *Plan* stipulation to use the “Moral Education” course for human rights education to the adoption of “relevant courses” in primary and secondary schools for human rights education, this transformation shows that the scope of human rights knowledge is extensive. It is critical to integrate human rights knowledge with the content of other courses, which helps students form an overall recognition of human rights knowledge and assists them in establishing correct human rights values from multiple perspectives.

II. Human Rights Education in Higher Education Institutions: From Single-Course Development to Systematic Discipline Construction

Higher education institutions, as important venues for the production and dissemination of human rights knowledge, are a key force in promoting the development of human rights education. In recent years, significant achievements have been made in the development of China’s human rights cause, and there has been a historic shift in the concept of human rights. The theoretical research on human rights also needs further innovation and development, while the construction of an independent knowledge system and discourse system for Chinese human rights studies is urgent. The four editions of the *Plan* have put forward specific requirements from the dual dimensions of the development direction and goals of human rights education in higher education institutions. The aim is to improve the level of human rights literacy among college students, enhance their sense of identification with the development of China’s human rights endeavors, promote the construction of an independent knowledge system for Chinese human rights studies, and cultivate senior talents for human rights practice.

A. Development direction: extension from human rights legal education to general human rights education

The *Plan* calls for higher education institutions to offer courses related to human rights. The first edition required that human rights elective courses be offered to undergraduate students and human rights law courses to undergraduate law students in higher education institutions. The third and fourth editions require that human rights general education courses be offered in higher education institutions, and the fourth edition proposes the introduction of human rights-related specialized courses. Thus, the state aims to use the general elective and general education courses offered by higher education institutions to carry out human rights education. The third and fourth editions place greater emphasis on the implementation of human rights general education in higher education institutions. General education focuses on the educational needs of students as responsible individuals and citizens, and aims to cultivate and shape the overall quality of individuals.³⁴ College students are in the transitional period from youth to adulthood and are also in the formative years of their worldviews, outlooks on life, and values. At this stage of life, they urgently need to develop civic qualities and must cultivate the abilities to think rationally, analyze, and make judgments. “Correct ideas in people do not come into being spontaneously, nor do they improve naturally; they must rely on external instillation, education, and practice.”³⁵ Some researchers have positioned general human rights education in higher education institutions as “aiming at the development of human nature and personality, with an emphasis on stimulating

³⁴ Li Manli, *General Education — A View of University Education* (Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 1999), 16; Zhang Dezhaohao, *General Education and Critique of Modernity* (Shanghai: Shanghai SDX Joint Publishing Company, 2021), 5.

³⁵ Zhang Zhi, et al. *A Study of the Ideological and Political Education Concepts of Marx, Engels, and Lenin* (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2023), 152.

intuitive knowledge of human rights and imparting rational knowledge of human rights.”³⁶ Therefore, the establishment of general human rights education courses in higher education institutions is not only an important vehicle for enhancing students’ knowledge and literacy in human rights but also conducive to the comprehensive development of students’ personalities and qualities. In addition, the scope of courses involved in human rights education is no longer confined to the field of law but has expanded to “human rights-related disciplines” or “human rights-related specialized courses,” reflecting the broad range of majors involved in human rights education in higher education institutions. Human rights civilization is closely linked with major civilizations, and the spirit of human rights has been reflected in the development of other civilizations as well, indicating that human rights have a strong interdisciplinary nature.³⁷ At the same time, in terms of the practical requirements for promoting the high-quality development of China’s human rights cause in the new era, “pure human rights legal education is difficult to meet the requirements of human rights professional development in the new era.”³⁸ This shift in policy objectives is conducive not only to promoting the construction and development of the Chinese human rights discipline but also to advancing the scientific, professional, and systematic development of human rights education.

On the other hand, the *Plan* calls for the development of human rights textbooks and related pedagogical materials. The first edition requires the advancement of the compilation of human rights law textbooks, while the fourth edition calls for the creation of textbooks related to human rights. This indicates that the state’s emphasis on human rights textbooks continues to strengthen. The shift from “human rights law textbooks” to “textbooks related to human rights” means that the compilation of textbooks is not limited to the field of “human rights law” but should also cover various areas related to the topic of “human rights,” in line with the practical requirements of general human rights education in higher education institutions. “Textbooks,” together with curriculum plans and standards, form an important vehicle for courses and serve as a basic medium to facilitate teaching and learning. At present, the positioning of human rights textbooks in Chinese higher education institutions is still in the initial development or undeveloped stage.³⁹ Specifically, first, human rights textbooks in higher education institutions are mostly confined to the field of human rights law, which does not meet the requirements for the development of the “human rights studies” discipline; second, there is a shortage of textbooks specifically designed for general human rights education courses in higher education institutions⁴⁰; third, recently published books and works in the field of human rights are mostly used to disseminate the latest academic research findings and are not directly applicable to pedagogy. “The discipline system is inseparable from the textbook system. Without the advancement of the textbook system, the discipline system lacks momentum.”⁴¹ Therefore, the *Plan* continuously updates the requirements for the compilation of human rights pedagogical materials in higher education institutions, promoting further development

³⁶ Guo Xiaoming, “Challenges of Human Rights Facing Our National Cultural Soft Power and the Strategic Visions on the Culture of Chinese Human Rights,” *Journal of Renmin University of China* 2 (2023): 38.

³⁷ Lu Guangjin, “Constructing Chinese Human Rights Studies: Cause, Cognition, and Paradigm,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 3 (2023): 9.

³⁸ Ha Guanqun, Chen Zhengtao and Li Shaoxuan, “Conceptual Updating and Pathway Optimization in Human Rights Law Education,” *Journal of Human Rights Law* 5 (2024): 124.

³⁹ Lu Guangjin, “Constructing Chinese Human Rights Studies: Cause, Cognition, and Paradigm,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 3 (2023): 5.

⁴⁰ Before submission, the author found that the book *Introduction to Human Rights* published by Renmin University of China Press clearly states that it is “a general education textbook compiled for non-law undergraduate students to take human rights public elective courses.” Zhu Liyu and Ye Chuanxing, *Introduction to Human Rights* (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2022), 14.

⁴¹ Xi Jinping, *Speech at the Symposium of the Work of Philosophy And Social Sciences (May 17 2016)* (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2016), 23.

and improvement of human rights textbooks, and thereby assisting in the construction of human rights courses and discipline systems in higher education institutions.

B. Development goals: from general course planning to promoting the sustainable development of disciplines

First, the *Plan* calls for strengthening the construction of human rights disciplines and professional development. The establishment of disciplines is a key player in the institutionalization of knowledge production,⁴² and building human rights disciplines is an essential prerequisite for promoting the development of human rights education in higher education institutions. The first edition proposed to “promote the formulation of human rights education plans in higher education institutions,” reflecting the overall planning and design of human rights education programs in higher education institutions and highlighting the significance of the development of human rights disciplines. The second edition proposed to “support the construction and development of human rights disciplines,” while the third and fourth editions call for “strengthening the construction of human rights disciplines and the cultivation of talents.” The shift from “support” to “strengthen” indicates that the state is continuously increasing its emphasis on the construction of human rights disciplines. China is currently facing the severe challenge of the politicization of human rights by some Western countries led by the United States, and it is necessary to address human rights issues in a scientific manner through the construction of human rights disciplines. Additionally, the difficulties and challenges that have emerged in the process of global human rights governance reform require the construction of human rights disciplines to provide scientific guidance and wise solutions.⁴³ It should also be noted that China urgently needs to build an independent knowledge system and disciplinary system for Chinese human rights studies. “The innovation and development of the knowledge system take place in the interaction between people’s spiritual activities and practical activities,”⁴⁴ and “the process of building an independent Chinese knowledge system is the process of transforming Chinese experience into Chinese theory in knowledge production.”⁴⁵ Contemporary Chinese politics “effectively solves multiple problems that have long plagued the development of human political civilization in terms of content, thus opening up new paths, providing new experiences, expanding new space, and creating new forms for the development of human political civilization.”⁴⁶ This provides a rich practical foundation for building an independent knowledge system for Chinese human rights studies. Therefore, General Secretary Xi Jinping proposed the goal and requirement: “Drawing on China’s rich experience of advancing human rights, we should formulate new concepts and develop systems of academic discipline, research and discourse.”⁴⁷ “A sound disciplinary system should have the characteristics of being multi-level and diversified.”⁴⁸ The main problem in the current construction of human rights disciplines is that all institutions with human rights disciplines have established them under the

⁴² Zhang Xuewen and Liu Yidong, “The Theoretical Logic and Possible Pathways for the Construction of the Power of Academic Discourse: A Typological Study Based on the Evolution of Knowledge-Discipline Relations,” *Educational Research* 5 (2025): 84.

⁴³ Chen Youwu and Li Buyun, “On the Human Rights Discipline in Contemporary China,” *Chinese Journal of Human Rights* 1 (2023): 67-69.

⁴⁴ Lin Shangli, “The Evolution of Philosophy and Social Sciences and the Construction of an Independent Chinese Knowledge System,” *People’s Daily*, December 9, 2024.

⁴⁵ Sun Zhengyu, “Specialization, Theorization, and Systematization: Academic Research on Constructing China’s Independent Knowledge System,” *Journal of Yanbian University (Social Sciences)* 5 (2024): 5; Sun Zhengyu, “Original Concepts and Iconic Concepts — Conceptual Foundations for Constructing China’s Independent Knowledge System,” *Social Sciences in China* 7 (2024): 48.

⁴⁶ Lin Shangli, “On the Historical Contribution of Contemporary Chinese Politics to Human Political Civilization,” *CASS Journal of Political Science* 2 (2024): 4.

⁴⁷ Xi Jinping, “Steadfastly Following the Chinese Path to Promote Further Progress in Human Rights,” *Qiushi Journal* 12 (2022): 9.

⁴⁸ Wu Haijiang, et al., *Chinese Path to Modernization and the Construction of an Independent Chinese Knowledge System* (Shanghai: Shanghai People’s Publishing House, 2024), 128.

category of law, and there are no institutions that have built human rights disciplines from non-law fields.⁴⁹ The field of human rights is all-encompassing and involves many aspects of the philosophical and social sciences. “Human rights studies is an emerging interdisciplinary subject with strong ideological, theoretical, and political characteristics.”⁵⁰ Against the backdrop of building an independent Chinese knowledge system, the construction of the human rights disciplinary system needs to shape an integrative way of thinking,⁵¹ that is, “actively overcoming the old habit of ‘scientific fragmentation’ caused by excessive theoretical branches and disciplinary divisions, with meta-concepts and meta-propositions as the starting point of the system.”⁵² It should be organically integrated with the ideological principles, knowledge structures, research paradigms, and academic standards of related disciplines, “to achieve multi-dimensional extension and deepening through intersection, dialogue, and integration,”⁵³ and to regard human rights disciplines as independent⁵⁴ in order to achieve the goal of their systematic development.

Second, the *Plan* calls for the cultivation and enrichment of the human rights education faculty. The fourth edition proposes the requirement to “establish human rights training centers in normal universities.” Its forward-looking approach is aimed at the actual situation of the shortage of high-quality human rights education faculty. Normal universities, as professional schools for teacher education and the cultivation of teachers, are the “main force in cultivating high-quality, professional, and innovative normal university talents.”⁵⁵ At the same time, “teachers are the first resource for the development of education,” and a high-quality teacher team is the key to high-quality education. Therefore, establishing human rights training centers in normal universities is of great significance. “A teacher’s understanding of human rights knowledge directly affects students’ learning attitudes and human rights awareness.”⁵⁶ Students in normal universities can combine their education-related knowledge of pedagogy, such as teaching and teacher quality, with the study of human rights knowledge to form a knowledge structure in which professional knowledge and human rights knowledge are integrated. This is conducive to improving teachers’ subject-based abilities and literacy,⁵⁷ and will help promote students’ acceptance and understanding of human rights knowledge in future teaching practices. Simultaneously, this will help enlarge the scale of the human rights teaching staff, which is of positive significance for expanding the scope of human rights education in China and improving the professional teaching level of the human rights teacher team.

Finally, the *Plan* calls for the continuous expansion of the construction scale of national human rights education and training bases. “National human rights education and training bases are the

⁴⁹ Lu Guangjin, “Constructing Chinese Human Rights Studies: Cause, Cognition, and Paradigm,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 3 (2023): 5.

⁵⁰ Lu Guangjin, “The Three-Dimensional Connotations of China’s Independent Human Rights Knowledge System,” *Chinese Journal of Human Rights* 3 (2024): 2.

⁵¹ Qian Jinyu, “On the Construction of Human Rights Discipline Direction with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era: Requirements of the Times, Principles and Approaches,” *Chinese Journal of Human Rights* 3 (2023): 38.

⁵² Zhang Donggang and Lin Shangli, “Building an Independent Chinese Knowledge System with Confidence and Self-reliance,” *China Higher Education* 12 (2024): 32.

⁵³ Baima Chilin, “Enhance Human Rights Studies and Construct China’s Autonomous Knowledge System of Human Rights,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 1 (2025): 5.

⁵⁴ Meng Qingtao and Yan Naixin, “Construction of the ‘Discipline of Human Rights’ from the Perspective of New Liberal Arts,” *Chinese Journal of Human Rights* 3 (2023): 20-21; He Zhipeng and Yu Runtian, “Discipline of Human Rights: Subject Connotation, Development Direction and Exploration Experience,” *Chinese Journal of Human Rights* 4 (2023): 3.

⁵⁵ Wang Changping and Wu Wenzhe, “Thoughts on the High-Quality Cultivation of Normal University Talents in the New Era,” *Educational Research* 4 (2022): 142.

⁵⁶ Huang Pin, “Marxist Human Rights View Education in Universities: Modern Significance and Implementation Paths,” *Academic Exchange* 7 (2012): 210.

⁵⁷ *Opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Promoting the Spirit of Educators and Strengthening the Construction of High-Quality, Professional and Innovative Teacher Teams in the New Era* (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2024), 7.

‘national team’ in the field of human rights, shouldering the important responsibility of carrying out human rights education and training work,”⁵⁸ and are also the “main force in driving the transformation of Chinese human rights knowledge and leading human rights thinking.”⁵⁹ Starting from the second edition, each edition of the *Plan* has specifically stated the number of human rights education and training bases to be built.⁶⁰ To date, China has established a total of 14 national human rights education and training bases in universities. These bases have played an important role in drafting national human rights documents, participating in policymaking suggestions, spreading Chinese human rights stories, and engaging in international human rights struggles, fully reflecting their mission to “promote human rights research innovation through human rights education and improve the quality of human rights education through human rights research.” The fourth edition proposes to support the establishment of human rights education and training bases in research institutions such as the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and party schools (administrative colleges), and to build an international human rights education exchange center based on national human rights education and training bases. A critical task of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences is to promote the Party’s innovative theories and work related to political cultural construction and development; a critical task of party schools (administrative colleges) at all levels is to continuously enhance the political theoretical literacy of the cadre team. At the same time, “universities, party schools (administrative colleges), military colleges, research institutes, and research institutions of party and government departments are the ‘five main forces’ that create new knowledge in the Chinese-characteristic philosophy and social sciences and are the supporting forces for the integration of knowledge systems.”⁶¹ Therefore, establishing human rights education and training bases in local research institutions such as the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and party schools is conducive to promoting the innovative development of the independent knowledge system of human rights studies, helps to guard against ideological security issues in the field of human rights, and is more conducive to enhancing the human rights literacy of national staff such as party and government officials.

Carrying out international human rights cooperation with other countries and promoting global human rights governance is also a key agenda in the development of China’s human rights cause at present. However, in the international public opinion arena, some Western countries led by the United States have pursued hegemonic acts through their monopoly on human rights discourse,⁶² wantonly accusing China of its human rights development. As a result, “human rights” remains a focal issue of contention among various parties.⁶³ Against this backdrop, building an International Exchange Center for Human Rights Education based on national human rights education and training bases not only is conducive to cultivating high-end talents who are familiar with international human rights rules and capable of telling the story of China’s human rights, but also

⁵⁸ Chang Jian, “Responsibilities and Working Mechanisms of National Human Rights Education and Training Bases,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 4 (2014): 12.

⁵⁹ Baima Chilin, “Enhance Human Rights Studies and Construct China’s Autonomous Knowledge System of Human Rights,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 1 (2025): 5.

⁶⁰ The second and third editions of the *Plan* both propose to establish five university-based human rights education and training bases in the next five years; the fourth edition proposes to establish three human rights education and training bases in the next five years.

⁶¹ Zhang Donggang, “Reflections on Constructing China’s Independent Knowledge System,” *Social Sciences in China* 5 (2024): 104.

⁶² Zhang Yonghe, “Striving to Construct a Chinese Human Rights Discourse System,” *Journal of Southwest University of Political Science & Law* 2 (2023): 7-9; He Hairen, “On the Greatest Human Rights: The Practice of the Right of the Communist Party of China in Governing the Country in the New Era and its Significance in the World,” *Hebei Law Science* 6 (2022): 14.

⁶³ Qian Jinyu and Guo Miao, “Training Talents for International Communication of Human Rights in the Age of Omnimedia: Strategic Positioning and Feasibility Analysis,” *Journal of Human Rights Law* 5 (2022): 100; Qin Enjie, “The External Communication of Human Rights Discourse with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era,” *Hebei Law Science* 6 (2022): 149.

helps promote relevant cooperation between China and foreign countries in the field of human rights education. This, in turn, enables human rights workers from other countries to gain a true and comprehensive understanding of the current state of China's human rights development, and enhances the influence and credibility of the international communication of China's human rights discourse.

III. Human Rights Knowledge Training: From Educating Legal and Political Workers' Common Sense to Cultivating Public Officials' Human Rights Thinking

Conducting human rights education for public officials and staff of enterprises and institutions can leverage the guiding role of education on people's behavior, promote the formation of a people-oriented governance philosophy and a human rights mindset that effectively safeguards citizens' legitimate rights and freedoms,⁶⁴ prevent public officials from abusing public power, and encourage enterprises and institutions to fulfill their social responsibility of respecting and protecting human rights, thereby enhancing the public's sense of human rights efficacy. The four editions of the *Plan* have expanded the scope of human rights knowledge training from the previous focus on practitioners in the legal and political fields to public officials, with greater emphasis on human rights knowledge training for enterprises and institutions, reflecting the characteristic of conducting human rights knowledge publicity and education in all fields. The policy also calls for the use of various institutional means to strengthen the intensity of human rights knowledge training for public officials in order to play the role of education in cultivating public officials' human rights thinking.

A. Target scope: conducting publicity and education on human rights knowledge in all fields

On the one hand, the scope of human rights knowledge training has been expanded from legal and political practitioners to public officials. The first edition of the *Plan* specifically emphasized the need to strengthen human rights education and training for specific law enforcement agencies and personnel, such as public security, procuratorates, courts, prisons, urban management, and administrative law enforcement institutions. It is evident that this edition did not include all public officials in the scope of human rights knowledge training, but rather focused on legal and political practitioners as the key targets. The second edition proposed to enhance human rights education and training for public officials. The expansion of the scope of human rights knowledge training from legal and political practitioners to public officials broadened the work areas of the training targets, indicating that the state's emphasis on human rights education for public officials is gradually increasing. The third and fourth editions have proposed making human rights education an important part of the legal education of national staff. Among them, the fourth edition explicitly states that "public officials" are the main target group for training.

Public officials, as defenders of the rights of others and representatives of the state in exercising public power, must understand the purpose and boundaries of their power.⁶⁵ This understanding serves to regulate the exercise of power by public officials and helps to achieve the crucial goal of "respecting and protecting human rights" under the comprehensive governance of the rule of law. Human awareness and cognition are shaped by the transmission of knowledge via education. This process establishes will and attitude, transforms the fixed patterns of thinking used to "understand, grasp, and evaluate objective objects in people's mental activities,"⁶⁶ and prompts a

⁶⁴ Guo Xiaoming, "Challenges of Human Rights Facing Our National Cultural Soft Power and the Strategic Visions on the Culture of Chinese Human Rights," *Journal of Renmin University of China* 2 (2023): 34.

⁶⁵ Zhao Yanqun, "Human Rights Education and Human Rights Awareness," *Journal of the Party School of the Central Committee of the C.P.C. (Chinese Academy of Governance)* 3 (2009): 72.

⁶⁶ Gao Qinghai, *Philosophy and Subjective Self-Consciousness* (Changchun: Jilin People's Publishing House, 2022), 175.

shift in worldview. Subconsciously, it “regulates what we do and do not do, and how we do and do not do things,”⁶⁷ thereby guiding human behavior. The power enjoyed by public officials is an important part of the national power system, and national power originates from citizens’ rights. The essence of citizens’ political rights is “the requirement of the common interests of members of society.”⁶⁸ Once established, public power forms a relationship of mutual dependence and opposition with citizens’ rights. Without external power-constraining mechanisms, if the public power controlled by public officials is too great, it may infringe upon citizens’ rights and violate the specific requirements of “respecting and protecting human rights” in the construction of a country governed by law. “Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the cultivation of civil servants’ national consciousness, legal consciousness, democratic consciousness, sense of responsibility, and service consciousness, and lay the foundation for fostering a healthy civil servant team culture.”⁶⁹ The *Plan* has expanded the target group for human rights knowledge training from legal and political practitioners to public officials, which is conducive to conducting human rights knowledge publicity and education in an all-round way, ensuring that all public officials receive human rights knowledge training, helping them to establish a way of thinking that respects and protects human rights, and preventing public officials from infringing upon citizens’ rights due to the abuse of public power in specific work practices.

On the other hand, the state supports, encourages, and promotes human rights knowledge training in enterprises and institutions, and the scope of human rights knowledge publicity and education also covers workers in enterprises and institutions. Enterprises may use cost-saving methods to achieve the development goals of minimizing costs and maximizing economic benefits, which may lead to an excessive focus on market activities and commercial profits and a failure to actively fulfill social responsibilities, thereby neglecting the legitimate rights that employees should enjoy. Starting from the second edition, the *Plan* proposes to carry out human rights education and training in enterprises and institutions, and to form a cultural atmosphere that respects and protects human rights. Such efforts are conducive to building a human rights culture in enterprises and institutions, and to playing the guiding, educating, cohesive, and constraining functions of the human rights culture of enterprises and institutions. It also actively promotes the fulfillment of the basic obligations of enterprises and institutions to ensure social rights and the implementation of the responsibility requirements to respect and protect human rights. The continuous development of economic globalization and the deepening cooperation of cross-border trade also require transnational enterprises and overseas Chinese enterprises to pay close attention to human rights protection issues. For the first time, the fourth edition of the *Plan* proposes to include human rights knowledge in the scope of human resources training and to strengthen the requirements for human rights knowledge training for overseas Chinese enterprises. This is not only conducive to shaping and enhancing the human rights awareness of managers in enterprises and institutions, and preventing managers from infringing on the legitimate rights and interests of workers, but also helps employees of enterprises and institutions to timely use scientific, rational, and legitimate means to protect their personal rights.

B. Strengthening measures: conducting human rights knowledge training with institutional means

Institutions, as a collection of rules with coercive characteristics, are a mechanism for constraining behavior and can establish a new order.⁷⁰ They are the basic norms for promoting the

⁶⁷ Sun Zhengyu, *The Gaze of Philosophy: My Intellectual Life* (Tianjin: Tianjin People’s Publishing House, 2024), 395.

⁶⁸ Wang Puqu, et al., *Principle of Politics (5th edition)* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2024), 122.

⁶⁹ Lin Shangli, *Building Democracy — China’s Theory, Strategy, and Agenda* (Shanghai: Fudan University Press, 2012), 286.

⁷⁰ Ma Xuesong, *Ten Lectures on New Institutional Political Science* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2023), 5.

development of the human rights cause. At the same time, “institutional construction can also provide a ‘rigid constraint’ of external discipline and a ‘reliable’ path dependence for the education of civil servants.”⁷¹ All four editions of the *Plan* have put forward specific requirements for using different types of institutional means to conduct human rights knowledge training. Evidently, this is an enhancement of the intensity of human rights knowledge training for national staff, fully reflecting the state’s emphasis on human rights knowledge training.

First, the *Plan* calls for the integration of human rights knowledge training into the training programs and required courses for administrative staff. The second and fourth editions propose to enhance the human rights education and training for public officials. The third edition suggests incorporating human rights knowledge into the learning content of party committees (party groups), as well as into the curricula of party schools, administrative colleges, and cadre training institutions at all levels. Human rights knowledge training courses are also required to be part of the mandatory training for new recruits in public security, procuratorates, courts, and judicial departments. These requirements are measures to promote human rights education among administrative personnel through organizational systems.

Second, the *Plan* requires the inclusion of human rights knowledge in the civil service examination system. The fourth edition proposes to add human rights knowledge to the civil service examination; initial training and position-related training should also focus on human rights knowledge, conducting annual human rights training in combination with actual work; and strengthen the human rights and rule-of-law education for national staff. The inclusion of human rights knowledge in the civil service examination content promotes human rights knowledge training at the “source” level of the national staff selection examination, forming a whole-process, full-chain human rights knowledge training link for national staff from “examination and selection

— entry into work — work implementation.” “Human rights are the fundamental mark of modern national governance.”⁷² Civil servants, as the administrative subjects of national and government governance, should implement the overall requirements of building a service-oriented government that satisfies the people and improving the modernization level of national governance capabilities, which include “serving the people, being responsible to the people, being subject to people’s supervision, innovating administrative methods, and improving administrative efficiency.”⁷³ However, a certain number of civil servants lack the spirit of modern public administration and face practical problems such as misaligned service targets and sub-optimal administrative behavior. The inclusion of human rights knowledge in civil servant recruitment exams and the focus on human rights and rule-of-law education in civil servant training reflect the state’s emphasis on establishing a human rights mindset and enhancing human rights literacy among public officials.

Finally, the *Plan* calls for the establishment of a regular human rights knowledge training system. Such a system would help to ensure the continuity of human rights education, thereby enhancing the self-awareness of public officials in learning knowledge. The first edition proposes the requirement for the institutionalization of human rights knowledge education; the third edition proposes to include human rights knowledge education in the “*Opinions on Improving the System of Learning and Applying the Law for National Staff*”; the fourth edition proposes the requirement to establish a permanent human rights training system. These contents are not only important measures to promote the comprehensive implementation and specific implementation of human rights

⁷¹ Yang Hailong, *A Study of the Timeliness of Ideological and Political Education for Civil Servants* (Beijing: National Academy of Governance Press, 2019), 187.

⁷² Hou Jian, “A Discussion on Human Rights Governance,” *Academics* 10 (2020): 101.

⁷³ *Decision of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee on Some Major Issues Concerning How to Uphold and Improve the System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Advance the Modernization of China’s system and Capacity for Governance* (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2019), 16.

knowledge training tasks, but also a vivid reflection of adopting institutional means to strengthen the intensity of human rights knowledge training.

IV. Popularization of Human Rights Knowledge: From Focusing on Enhancing Dissemination Efficiency to Strengthening Confidence in Human Rights Culture

The popularization of human rights knowledge, as an important part of human rights education, helps to enhance the public's sense of human rights efficacy and political identification, and is a key element in the construction of political culture. "Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development conditioned thereby."⁷⁴ The development of the human rights cause needs to be based on social development, and the advancement of human rights education should also be adapted to and coordinated with the overall situation of economic and social progress. Meanwhile, political culture, as a reflection of material living conditions and real social life, varies in different historical stages; while the goals of human rights development are different, the tasks and objectives of human rights education also have characteristics of being phased and dynamic. The rapid development of digital information dissemination technology and the formation of a deeply mediatized society have provided a rich and diverse range of communication vehicles for the popularization of human rights knowledge. The four editions have put forward specific requirements for the popularization of human rights knowledge from aspects such as topic content, media channels, and communication forms. The policy objectives have also shifted from focusing on improving the dissemination efficiency of human rights knowledge to strengthening confidence in human rights culture.

A. Topic content: keeping pace with the times

First, we need to focus on the synergistic effect between contemporary Chinese human rights views and economic and social development as well as human rights protection. Since the 18th National Congress of the Party, important discourses on respecting and protecting human rights have been put forward by General Secretary Xi Jinping, which "have formed a contemporary Chinese human rights view that originates from the 'two integrations' and reflects the common values of all mankind in theory,"⁷⁵ and "the contemporary Chinese human rights view, which takes people's human rights as the core, pays attention to the realization of human dignity, value and rights, and cares about the improvement of people's living quality, happiness index and development potential."⁷⁶ Therefore, the popularization of human rights knowledge should follow the following requirements: (1) The ideological sources, rich connotations, and practical achievements of the contemporary Chinese human rights view should be taken as the core elements of the popularization of human rights knowledge. (2) "The human rights view has a leading and dominant role in human rights practice."⁷⁷ As a result, the logical connection between the contemporary Chinese human rights view and the progress of economic and social development and the improvement of people's living standards is the focus of the popularization of human rights knowledge. (3) "Human rights, as a 'living' concept and a theory about human beings, not only lives in theory, but also in the daily lives of the masses."⁷⁸ Popularizing human rights knowledge should be close to the real life of the people, focus on the micro individuals in real society, and take

⁷⁴ Friedrich Engels and Karl Heinrich Marx, *Selected Works of Marx and Engels*, vol. 3 (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2012), 364.

⁷⁵ Jiang Jianguo, "Promoting and Practicing the Contemporary Chinese View of Human Rights," *Qiushi Journal* 19 (2023): 53.

⁷⁶ Lu Guangjin, "History, Concreteness and Reality: The Threefold Construction Logic of the Contemporary Chinese Outlook on Human Rights," *Journal of Human Rights Law* 6 (2023): 1.

⁷⁷ Lu Guangjin, "The Human Rights of the People: The Core Essence of the Contemporary Chinese Outlook on Human Rights," *Jilin University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 2 (2025): 92.

⁷⁸ Zhang Yonghe, *Human Rights Stories in the New Era* (Beijing: Central Compilation & Translation Press, 2023), "Preface," 2.

the happy life feelings of typical figures as the vivid cases of human rights knowledge dissemination, so as to enhance the public credibility of human rights knowledge dissemination.

Second, we should focus on the achievements of human rights protection and the construction of a country ruled by law. The legal protection of human rights is a key aspect of comprehensively governing the country under the rule of law and is related to fairness and justice throughout society. Naturally, it is also one of the key issues that greatly concerns the people. The fourth edition of the *Plan* initially proposes the requirement to “publish typical cases involving judicial protection of human rights.” In recent years, “China’s legislative bodies have prioritized human rights protection in legislative work, accelerated the enrichment and improvement of legal provisions on human rights protection, and formed a comprehensive set of laws and regulations covering all aspects of human rights protection”⁷⁹; “Judicial protection of human rights has been effectively strengthened, with more evident people-oriented and convenient judicial effects, significantly enhanced judicial transparency, a judicial technology system at the forefront of the world, and notable improvements in judicial quality, efficiency, and credibility.”⁸⁰ The public’s understanding of the development of human rights in China is the dominant variable affecting the sense of human rights efficacy.⁸¹ Therefore, it is necessary to inform the people of the remarkable achievements made in judicial protection of human rights and to timely release specific cases of such judicial protection. These efforts aim to enhance the people’s recognition of the judicial protection of human rights and their sense of efficacy regarding the development and progress of the human rights cause, thereby creating a sound cultural atmosphere for promoting the healthy development of the cause.

Finally, we should focus on the cutting-edge and hot issues in the development of domestic and international human rights causes. Respecting and protecting human rights is a universal consensus of the whole human society and a critical dimension reflecting the development and progress of human civilization. At present, the international environment is complex and volatile, and all mankind is jointly facing crises related to human survival and development, such as food security and ecological deterioration. Accordingly, the fourth edition of the *Plan* puts forward, for the first time, the requirement of popularizing human rights knowledge and disseminating authoritative information around domestic and international human rights hotspots. People of all countries in the world are becoming an interconnected “community with a shared future,” and the general public is always concerned about the survival and development of all mankind as well as the development and cooperation of various countries in the world. Therefore, the popularization of human rights knowledge should not only focus on the hot issues in China’s domestic human rights cause and the cutting-edge hot issues in the development of international human rights cause, but also disseminate authoritative information on international human rights hot issues to the people, so as to satisfy the public’s curiosity about human rights hot issues, and bridge the “information gap” caused by unauthoritative, inaccurate and incomplete information.

B. Communication methods: increasingly rich and diverse

First, digital media channels can be widely applied to enhance the dissemination of human rights knowledge. All four editions of the *Plan* emphasize the use of digital media as an important channel for the popularization of human rights knowledge, fully leveraging the unique advantages of digital communication media in terms of fast dissemination speed and wide coverage to improve the effectiveness of human rights knowledge dissemination. In the first three editions, the common point of the “popularization of human rights knowledge” work is to focus on the positive role of news media and its online platforms in the dissemination of human rights knowledge, concepts, and values, and to carry out human rights knowledge popularization work through methods such as

⁷⁹ *Constitutional Theory in the New Era* (Beijing: Higher Education Press, 2024), 183.

⁸⁰ Publicity Department of the Communist Party of China and the China Law Society, *Introduction to Xi Jinping on Rule of Law (2nd edition)* (Beijing: Higher Education Press, 2024), 55.

⁸¹ Yang Chunfu, “On Confidence in the Contemporary Chinese Outlook on Human Rights,” *Journal of Human Rights Law* 3 (2023): 59.

opening human rights channels and columns and creating human rights special programs. The integration of traditional media and new media in terms of technology and form has also promoted the renewal of human rights knowledge dissemination methods and channels. Therefore, the fourth edition points out the use of traditional media and new media channels to disseminate human rights knowledge to the public, and for the first time proposes the work requirement of “providing human rights-related literature and data resources.” New media platforms such as the internet, online databases, and news-information mobile clients have entirely changed the previous one-way communication mode. For the audience, this not only expands the channels and platform paths for obtaining human rights knowledge but also enables the audience to independently choose and search for human rights-related knowledge through new media platforms in a more targeted manner, which is conducive to deepening the understanding of human rights knowledge among different types of audience groups and thus helps to improve the popularization effect.

Second, public cultural venues should be used to expand the media space for the popularization of human rights knowledge. The fourth edition first proposes to disseminate human rights knowledge in public cultural venues such as libraries, science and technology museums, museums, and cultural centers. In recent years, the people’s demand for cultural life has been continuously increasing. In their spare time, many people choose to visit and study in public cultural venues to enrich their spiritual lives. Public cultural activity venues in the form of spatial-dimensional media such as museums, science and technology museums, and libraries have become gathering places for the production and interaction of modern social relations. “Within a certain social scope, the public communication situation formed by people’s joint participation in media activities and the public communication network aggregated in this situation mainly have the functions of information sharing, social interaction, emotional maintenance, and cultural identity.”⁸² Therefore, using public cultural venues to popularize human rights knowledge among the people is not only an expansion of communication channels in the spatial field, but also a logical necessity to enhance the public’s confidence in human rights culture. To disseminate human rights knowledge in public cultural venues, it is necessary to use material media carriers that represent the connotation and value essence of human rights culture, such as historical archives, cultural relics, and books. This method is conducive to reducing the sense of distance between the real life of the people and human rights knowledge, reflecting the close connection between human rights concepts and historical development and real life, and thus enabling the people to understand the basic knowledge in the field of human rights more deeply.

Finally, diversified communication forms need to be utilized to improve the quality of human rights knowledge popularization. In fact, communication is a way to present symbolic meaning, while the form and mode of expression of symbolic meaning are important factors affecting the audience’s accurate understanding of symbolic meaning. All four editions of the *Plan* have pointed out that various flexible forms such as training classes, exhibitions, lectures, and educational products should be used to popularize human rights knowledge to achieve the goal of education through entertainment and improve the quality of human rights knowledge popularization. In line with the current development requirements of the era and the actual situation of international human rights public opinion struggle, the fourth edition proposes to use forms such as press conferences, journalist briefings, news salons, government white papers, and special reports to provide authoritative human rights information to the public. News conferences and journalist meetings, representing the official position, can timely and accurately disseminate human rights knowledge. Journalists can also make inquiries about human rights issues of concern to the public to experts or government officials at the meetings, which can benefit the audience’s understanding of human rights knowledge and improve the effectiveness of human rights knowledge dissemination.

⁸² Guan Congyan, “Attribute Transfer, Boundary Elimination and Relationship Reconstruction: The Transformation of Contemporary Rural Media Space,” *Journal of Journalism & Communication Studies* 4 (2021): 61.

Although new media platforms are conducive to expanding the scope of information dissemination, they can also easily lead to the spread of unverified rumors and some “pseudo-knowledge,” affecting the normal order of the information dissemination environment. Therefore, the government and its news media institutions should use diversified communication means to timely clarify public opinion errors, release authoritative information, and interpret knowledge logic to prevent bad information from interfering with or destroying the stable order of the development of the human rights cause.

As an important element of political culture, human rights culture is “a comprehensive cognition of the thinking consciousness, value concepts, institutional framework, and practical models of the rights that people as social entities should have.”⁸³ The great achievements of the development of China’s human rights cause over more than a century of the CPC’s struggle constitute the practical foundation and realistic basis of human rights culture. “Advanced political culture plays a guiding and promoting role in the development of society and political culture, with the new values, ideals, and concepts it manifests.”⁸⁴ Therefore, under the guidance of the requirements of the times to build a strong socialist culture and promote high-quality development of the human rights cause, it is of great significance to enhance the public’s confidence in human rights culture. As a practical form of human rights culture,⁸⁵ the content and means of knowledge dissemination in human rights education are related to the specific effectiveness of education. The policy requirements for popularizing human rights knowledge, such as keeping pace with the times in topic content and the increasingly rich and diverse communication methods, aim to comprehensively improve the public’s understanding of the development of China’s human rights cause, enable the people to truly feel the practical effectiveness of the development and progress of the human rights cause and the scientific nature, effectiveness, and reality of the Chinese human rights civilization, enhance the public’s political, ideological, theoretical, and emotional recognition of the development of the human rights cause, and play a powerful spiritual driving role of cultural confidence in promoting the development of the human rights cause.

V. Reflection and Evaluation: Insufficiencies in the Content of Existing Human Rights Education Policies

Policy evaluation is a critical aspect of policy research and a crucial reference for determining the future development of policies. Generally, policy evaluation assesses policy outcomes from both factual and value-oriented dimensions. After the implementation of the four editions of the *Plan*, human rights education has made certain progress in textbook compilation, activity organization, and publication of reading materials, but there are still some problems. Therefore, the basic approach of conducting human rights education policy evaluation includes both combining the overall requirements of the human rights cause and the actual situation of human rights education development as well as reflecting on the insufficiencies in existing education content.

First, the existing editions of the *Plan* lack requirements for conducting human rights education among vocational education students. Vocational education is an indispensable part of China’s education system, supplying a large number of skilled personnel to the front line of economic and social development. The *World Programme for Human Rights Education (First Phase, 2005-2009)* proposes that human rights education should be included in vocational education and training. Vocational education students will mostly directly engage in or participate

⁸³ Lu Guangjin, “An Outline of Chinese Human Rights Culture in the New Era,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 2 (2021): 2.

⁸⁴ Wang Huning, *The Logic of Politics: Principles of Marxist Political Science* (Shanghai: Shanghai People’s Publishing House, 2016), 445.

⁸⁵ Lawrence M. Friedman, *The Human Rights Culture: A Study in History and Context*, translated by Guo Xiaoming (Beijing: China University of Political Science and Law Press, 2018), translation of “Preface,” 7.

in work that is highly professional, practical, and technically demanding. There are also some work tasks with higher risk coefficients in their work. For these students, it is especially necessary to carry out human rights education on occupational safety and compliance with professional ethics. When facing employment issues, they also need to understand or master some human rights knowledge related to the right to work, so that they can timely protect their legitimate labor rights when their work rights are infringed in the future.

Second, the four editions of the *Plan* lack requirements for conducting human rights knowledge training for journalists. “The greatest advantage of using media for human rights education is that it makes human rights a sustainable learning content.”⁸⁶ “News is a product of social institutions, embedded in relationships with other institutions,”⁸⁷ which means that news production is influenced by factors from other aspects of society. News is an essential way for people to understand the world, and the influence of other social factors on news production also affects the audience’s perception of the world to a certain extent. Other social institutions mainly affect audience cognition through the intermediary of “news frames.” “The definition of the situation is based on organizational principles, and organizational principles affect the involvement of events and subjects in these events, while frames refer to these identified basic elements.”⁸⁸ News reporting is the main body of the news frame (news producers) using news discourse to reproduce the connection between news facts and the social context, social relations, and other real-life social environments. Therefore, news frames run through the entire news communication activity and are the cognitive principles in the minds of news communication subjects⁸⁹, affecting the purpose of content production, the perspective of presentation, and the way of creation of news communication subjects. However, most journalists do not understand the relevant knowledge in the field of human rights. This situation leads to many news reports not being able to start from the human rights issue framework or perspective, affecting the positive effect of news media in disseminating human rights knowledge. The *World Programme for Human Rights Education (Phase III)* proposes the requirement to develop action plans to strengthen and promote human rights training for media professionals and journalists. The four editions of the *Plan* focus on strengthening human rights knowledge training for national public officials, but there are few requirements for conducting human rights education for journalists.

Finally, the existing editions of the *Plan* lack systematic planning and integrated design for human rights education curriculum construction. According to the principles of ideological and political education, the contradiction between the subject and the object leads to conflicts and opposition between new understanding and old knowledge, wrong ideas and correct thoughts, fallacies and truth. This situation requires the use of the specific requirements and practical methods of whole-process, all-member, and dynamic integration in education to solve the above problems. The third edition proposes the requirement to “include human rights knowledge in the scope of national education,” reflecting the practical requirements of whole-process and all-member integration in human rights education. In actual teaching, the dissemination of human rights knowledge should also be gradual and continuous. However, the current statements in the *Plan* only makes requirements on the content and form of human rights education; it does not propose specific requirements for the following aspects: the specific goals of human rights education at different stages, the overall planning of human rights courses at different educational levels, the connection and coordination of human rights education with professional education, ideological and political

⁸⁶ Bu Wei, “Media and Human Rights Education — My Views on Conducting News Reporting within a Human Rights Framework,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 5 (2013): 19.

⁸⁷ Gaye Tuchman, *Making News: A Study of the Construction of Reality*, translated by Li Hongtao (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2022), 10.

⁸⁸ Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*, translated by Yang Xin, Yao Wenyan and Nanyuan Feixue (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2023), 9.

⁸⁹ Xiao Wei, *Epistemology of News Frame* (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2015), 43.

courses, the ideal and belief education of public officials, and business training, as well as the construction of the human rights education evaluation system. Thus, problems have emerged in human rights education, such as a narrow coverage of the target audience, fixed teaching fields, repetitive and outdated teaching content, and an inability to meet the needs of learners. As a result, learners may have a weak sense of achievement and low participation in human rights education courses.

VI. Enhancement and Transcendence: Suggestions for Promoting the Sustainable Development of Human Rights Education in the New Era

At present, China is in a crucial period of comprehensively promoting the modernization of the country and the great rejuvenation of the nation through a Chinese path to modernization, which is also an important period for the development of China's human rights cause. To promote the sustainable development of human rights education in the new era, the following principles should still be adhered to.

First of all, human rights education should adhere to the “two integrations” and firmly grasp the principle of “upholding fundamental principles and breaking new ground.” General Secretary Xi Jinping has pointed out that: “In advancing the human rights cause, we have combined the Marxist outlook on human rights with China's specific realities and the best of traditional Chinese culture, reviewed our Party's successful experience of leading the people in respecting and protecting human rights, and learned from the outstanding achievements of other civilizations. This has allowed us to forge a path that is in keeping with the times and the conditions of China.”⁹⁰ Therefore, the “two integrations” in human rights development refers to “combining the Marxist view of human rights with China's specific realities and the excellent traditional Chinese culture,” which is the foundation for better promoting the development of China's human rights. With the basis of adhering to “two integrations,” we should firmly “uphold fundamental principles and break new ground”; “we will not lose our way or our political bearings as long as we adhere to these fundamental principles. We can keep up with and lead the times only if we consistently embrace creativity.”⁹¹ Human rights education should adhere to the guiding position of the Marxist view of human rights in the development of the human rights cause, stick to the “spiritual lineage” of the Marxist view of human rights, and the “root lineage” of the human rights thought in the excellent traditional Chinese culture. It should also insist on “using Marxism to activate the excellent factors in the excellent traditional Chinese culture and endow them with new contemporary connotations.”⁹² We should actively disseminate the Marxist view of human rights and the contemporary Chinese view of human rights centered on “people's human rights,” and deeply interpret the “benevolence” concept contained in the excellent traditional Chinese culture — “paying attention to the rights that people have and the universal values that everyone has,”⁹³ as well as the human rights thoughts of “people-oriented ontology, people-oriented purpose theory, people-oriented epistemology, and people-oriented methodology.”⁹⁴ The creative transformation

⁹⁰ Xi Jinping, “Steadfastly Following the Chinese Path to Promote Further Progress in Human Rights,” *Qiushi Journal* 12 (2022): 6.

⁹¹ Xi Jinping, *Speech at the Meeting on Cultural Inheritance and Development (2023-6-2)* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2023), 11.

⁹² Xi Jinping, “Accelerating the Process of Building China into a Leading Country in Culture,” *Qiushi Journal* 8 (2025): 6.

⁹³ Yang Guorong, “The Issues of Rights in Chinese Traditional Thought,” *Exploration and Free Views* 11 (2024): 72.

⁹⁴ Yang Lihua and Hu Bin, “The Four-Level System of Chinese Traditional People-Oriented Thought and Its Path of Transformation and Development,” *CASS Journal of Political Science* 5 (2024): 123.

and innovative development of human rights thoughts in the excellent traditional Chinese culture should be promoted to continuously shape a “new cultural life form”⁹⁵ in the field of human rights.

Second, human rights education should closely revolve around the central task of “Chinese path to modernization” and the overall requirements of “further deepening reform comprehensively.” “Respecting and protecting human rights is the basic spirit of modern civilization and is naturally an inherent part of modernization.”⁹⁶ Therefore, “the Chinese path to modernization” contains profound human rights logic, diverse human rights dimensions, and rich human rights connotations. The “Resolution of the Central Committee of the CPC on Further Deepening Reform Comprehensively to Advance Chinese Modernization,” reviewed and approved by the Third Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee, proposes the overall requirement: “Adhering to a people-centered approach. We must respect the principal position and pioneering spirit of the people and make our reform measures highly responsive to the call of the people, so as to ensure that reform is for the people and by the people and that its fruits are shared among the people.”⁹⁷ This statement embodies the value essence of respecting and protecting human rights. “The times and practice are constantly developing, and the needs of real life for theory are also constantly developing.”⁹⁸ On the one hand, human rights education should combine the “Chinese path to modernization” with the development of the human rights cause, and focus on the human rights achievements and values contained in further comprehensively deepening reform and strengthening institutional construction. It should interpret the internal mechanism and logical connection between “Chinese path to modernization” and the development of the human rights cause. It should also link the human rights issues in people’s livelihood protection, social security, and legal protection⁹⁹ the people are more concerned about with the specific measures and goals of further comprehensively deepening reform to enhance the public’s sense of identification with reform and development measures and their experience of human rights development achievements. On the other hand, human rights education should take the goal of constructing an independent knowledge system for Chinese human rights studies — by elevating the experiences and achievements of human rights practice into original and iconic human rights thoughts, descriptive and normative human rights concepts, and human rights principles with regularity and guiding significance — as the main orientation for cultivating high-level professional talents in the field of human rights.

Third, we should actively promote the integration of human rights education with the comprehensive quality education and ideological and political education of learners. Some researchers argue: “The morality and legality of human rights determine that human rights education is a comprehensive quality education that integrates moral education and legal education.”¹⁰⁰ To a certain extent, the premise of this view ignores the political and cultural attributes of human rights education. “Political culture is the subjective consciousness and psychological representation of political civilization. It is the political value-oriented pursuit of

⁹⁵ Han Qingxiang, *Roots and Soul: Chinese Path to Modernization and Cultural Subjectivity* (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2025), 154.

⁹⁶ Lu Guangjin, “The Justification Logic of Human Rights in Chinese Path to Modernization,” *The Journal of Human Rights* 6 (2022): 9.

⁹⁷ *Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) on Further Deepening Reform Comprehensively to Advance Chinese Modernization* (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2024), 5-6.

⁹⁸ Jiang Hui, “Deepening the Understanding of the Regularity of Theoretical Innovation,” *Red Flag Manuscript* 1 (2022): 6.

⁹⁹ Li Lin, “Chinese Modernization: New Connotations, Missions, and Requirements for Socialist Rule of Law with Chinese Characteristics,” *Modern Law Science* 1 (2025): 3.

¹⁰⁰ Guo Xiaoming, “Challenges of Human Rights Facing Our National Cultural Soft Power and the Strategic Visions on the Culture of Chinese Human Rights,” *Journal of Renmin University of China* 2 (2023): 37.

people's political behavior and action.”¹⁰¹ Ideological concepts are the most common form of content in ideological and political education. The essence of ideological and political education is the socialization activity of the dominant social ideology and values, aiming to improve people's ideological and political quality, promote individual socialization, and thus serve the comprehensive development and progress of society.¹⁰² “Education is an activity of inheriting civilization and also an activity of creating civilization, which has cultivated generation after generation of new people accompanying civilization.”¹⁰³ Therefore, in terms of value-effect attributes, human rights education is a combination of comprehensive quality education and ideological and political education. This requires that human rights education should not only disseminate scientific human rights knowledge to learners, actively cultivate moral and ethical concepts and democratic and legal awareness, and play the role of comprehensive quality education in shaping, changing, and developing individuals; but also actively interpret the contemporary Chinese view of human rights and its value core and philosophical foundation to learners, and play the role of ideological and political education in guiding, touching, and inspiring people. It helps people establish correct ideas and beliefs about human rights and the development of the human rights cause, continuously improve their value-oriented pursuits, enrich their spiritual world, and exert the positive function of human rights education in promoting the free and comprehensive development of individuals.

Finally, human rights education should focus on aligning with the development of the international human rights cause. At present, international human rights hot-spot issues such as “intensified human rights disputes and widening human rights gaps”¹⁰⁴ frequently occur, and global human rights governance faces severe challenges. General Secretary Xi Jinping once proposed his ideal of “safeguarding human rights with security, promoting human rights with development, advancing human rights with cooperation,”¹⁰⁵ which fully reflects the “symbiotic human rights view” with “a community with a shared future for mankind” as the overall strategy.¹⁰⁶ The concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind and promoting the common values of all humanity aims to break through the ideological barriers and human rights narrative approaches of traditional Western individualism, reject hegemonistic actions that ignore the fate of humanity and the ideology of “universal values,” and emphasize that “all human beings jointly enjoy human rights.”¹⁰⁷ Countries around the world should unite and cooperate based on the overall interests and well-being of all humanity, promote a humanitarian spirit, jointly safeguard the freedom and equality of all humanity, create a happy and good life for all humanity, and promote the free and comprehensive development of all humanity. It is necessary to introduce the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind and the practical significance of the common values of all humanity from the perspective of human rights, promote exchanges and dialogues among teachers and students in colleges and universities in the field of international human rights, disseminate the spiritual connotation of Chinese-style human rights civilization, enhance exchanges and mutual learning among different human rights civilizations, and introduce to the public the

¹⁰¹ Yang Hong and Liu Tong, *Foundations of Modern Political Analysis* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2004), 310.

¹⁰² Liu Jianjun, *Research on the Basic Theories of Ideological and Political Education* (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2025), 62 and 144-145; Chen Wanbai and Zhang Yaocan, *Principles of Ideological and Political Education* (Beijing: Higher Education Press, 2015), 53.

¹⁰³ Sun Zhengyu, “Education: Accompanied by Civilization,” *Educational Research* 2 (2025): 5.

¹⁰⁴ Sang Jianquan, “The Narrative Picture, Theoretical Transcendence and Times Significance of the Meaning of Human Rights in the Common Values of All Humanity,” *Studies on Marxism* 8 (2024): 103.

¹⁰⁵ Xi Jinping, “Xi Jinping Sends a Congratulatory Letter to the Forum on Global Human Rights Governance,” *People's Daily*, June 15, 2023.

¹⁰⁶ Han Qingxiang and Lou Junchao, “China's View of Human Rights and Its Philosophical Foundation in the New Era,” *Southeast Academic Research* 5 (2024): 11.

¹⁰⁷ Sang Jianquan, “The Narrative Picture, Theoretical Transcendence and Times Significance of the Meaning of Human Rights in the Common Values of All Humanity,” *Studies on Marxism* 8 (2024): 105.

concepts, measures, and achievements of China in dealing with global security crises and human rights hot-spot issues; these above-mentioned measures should become the key contents of human rights education.

Considering the importance of human rights education, in addition to adhering to the aforementioned basic principles, the following specific suggestions are made to improve the level of human rights education:

(1) We should improve the safeguard mechanisms for human rights education and strengthen the institutional construction of human rights education. Institutional construction is an important means of human rights protection and a strong guarantee for the development of human rights education. First, we should continuously formulate and improve the content of human rights education policies. Relevant state departments should timely formulate specialized human rights education policies, perfect the existing policies, and use legislation to form institution-based normative documents for the specific requirements and content of human rights education. This provides a mandatory normative-level guarantee for the implementation of human rights education. Second, we should keep promoting the normalization and institutionalization of human rights education for public officials and staff of enterprises and institutions. “The nature of a system is a form of human culture.”¹⁰⁸ Promoting the normalization and institutionalization of human rights education helps to play the role of the system in cultivating people through culture, thus functioning as a long-term mechanism in consolidating people’s consciousness and concepts through human rights education. Third, a scientific and effective human rights education evaluation and assessment system should be established. The evaluation and assessment system is a critical way to measure the effectiveness of human rights education and to enhance the intrinsic motivation of learners. It should meet the specific requirements of covering a wide range of content, building reasonable indicators, and having scientific methods of operation. For example, relevant departments can establish systems for evaluating the pedagogy of human rights courses, assessing the effectiveness of campus human rights cultural construction, and assessing the human rights literacy of public officials. Finally, the external restraint mechanisms for human rights education should be constantly strengthened. We should complete and enhance the implementation and supervision mechanisms of human rights education and introducing third-party platforms to carry out assessments and evaluations of the implementation of human rights education helps to ensure that educational entities fully implement the fundamental tasks of human rights education, thus promoting the specific implementation of human rights education policies.

(2) We should draw on the concept of subject-oriented ideological and political education¹⁰⁹ and focus on the participatory practice of learners in human rights education. Whether in school-based human rights education or social human rights training, educators should constantly innovate educational methods and knowledge transmission formats. It is advocated to conduct human rights education through channels such as special lectures, thematic debates, and topic-based seminars, changing the traditional classroom-based teaching format and increasing the interaction frequency between learners and educators. We also advocate for using issue-based, situational, seminar-based, guided reading, and analytical knowledge transmission formats in human rights education, while paying attention to the initiative and participation of learners in human rights education activities. The *Compulsory Education Curriculum Program* has put forward the requirement of “strengthening subject-based practice.”¹¹⁰ Therefore, school-based human rights education should also incorporate

¹⁰⁸ Zhong Qidong, *On the Ideological and Political Education Concepts of Marx and Engels* (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2023), 150.

¹⁰⁹ Subject-oriented ideological and political education “emphasizes equal communication between educators and learners, considers ideological and political education as a process where learners enhance their understanding and capabilities through information exchange, thereby forming a subject-oriented personality. Xiang Jiuyu, *On the Themes of Ideological and Political Education in the New Era* (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2023), 110.

¹¹⁰ “Strengthening subject-based practice” means “focusing on ‘learning by doing,’ guiding students to participate in subject-based exploration activities, experiencing the process of identifying, solving problems, constructing

human rights knowledge into various campus or social practice activities and focus on conducting human rights education through various practical activities to enhance students' sense of human rights in life. Teachers should let students participate in the organization and planning of human rights-themed practical activities to strengthen their sense of participation in the human rights education process. As an important part of teaching implementation, teaching evaluation has the functions of guidance, diagnosis, and feedback. The active participation of learners in human rights teaching evaluation helps teachers to identify problems in the teaching process in time, adjust teaching plans in time, and promote the further improvement of the quality of human rights education.

(3) We should strengthen the construction of human rights teaching staff and improve the comprehensive ability of human rights educators from multiple aspects. Teachers are an indispensable main body in educational activities, and a strong teaching force is also the key to ensuring the smooth development of educational activities. In order to further improve the level of human rights education and the awareness of the whole society to respect and protect human rights, it is necessary to strengthen the training of human rights teaching staff, pay attention to the comprehensive ability training of human rights teaching staff and the all-round improvement of their professional level, so as to cultivate a high-quality human rights teaching team. "Theory can grasp the masses as long as it can convince people; theory can convince people as long as it is thorough. By thoroughness is meant the grasping of the essence of things."¹¹¹ Teachers who are specifically engaged in human rights teaching should thoroughly explain the principles of human rights, clarify the logic of human rights, present the measures of human rights in a realistic way, vividly describe the achievements of human rights development, and clearly point out the shortcomings of human rights development, whether they are imparting knowledge to students or explaining knowledge to public officials or staff of enterprises and institutions. Educators should also pay attention to the use of teaching art strategies in school-based human rights education and knowledge training activities. The majority of the targets of school-based human rights education are young students from the post-2000 and post-2010 generations, who are characterized by their lively thinking, strong personalization, and wide-ranging interests. In particular, "the contemporary college student group places great emphasis on personal spiritual and cultural life, and the dominance of interests and hobbies has led to 'group differentiation,' making it difficult for others to enter their inner world."¹¹² In addition, human rights knowledge has a certain degree of abstraction, political nature, and seriousness. Some learners may find the content of knowledge dull and boring, thereby lacking the enthusiasm to actively learn about human rights. "To infect the youth in the ideological and political work of colleges and universities, it is necessary to use the language and activity methods that the youth like and accept."¹¹³ To this end, human rights educators should comprehensively employ teaching strategies and skills such as the art of knowledge explanation, the art of discourse expression, and the art of concept guidance. They should "draw on the concepts and principles of implicit education to subtly influence students"¹¹⁴ in order to enhance teaching effectiveness. Conducting basic human rights knowledge training, general history knowledge training, political literacy training, teaching art training, and interpersonal communication training for human rights educators is conducive to comprehensively

knowledge, and applying knowledge, and understanding the subject-based ideas and methods." *Compulsory Education Curriculum Program (2022 edition)* (Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 2022), 14.

¹¹¹ Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, *Collected Works of Marx and Engels, vol. 1* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2009), 11.

¹¹² Jin Nuo, "Accurately Grasp the Characteristics of College Students' Ideological and Behavioral Patterns in the New Era to Enhance the Targeted Nature and Attractiveness of Ideological and Political Courses in Universities," *China Higher Education* 19 (2024): 47.

¹¹³ Xi Jinping, *On Education* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Publishing House, 2024), 151.

¹¹⁴ Liu Fuxing, Tang Jingli, Zhang Jian, et al., *Research on the Innovation and Development of Marxist Education Theory in the New Era* (Beijing: Renmin University of China Press, 2021), 97.

strengthening their philosophical thinking ability, social observation ability, knowledge comprehension ability, historical connection ability, political judgment ability, identity guidance ability, and social interaction ability, thereby improving the overall quality of the human rights teaching staff.

(4) We should actively build a human rights education team that combines full-time and part-time staff to form a collaborative effect embedded with multiple educational entities. The Party and the state are constantly increasing their emphasis on human rights education. The wide range of educational audiences, the large number of knowledge-popularized targets, the high level of students' mastery, and the comprehensive content known to the public have become the high-level goals and requirements of human rights education. To achieve the above goals, relying solely on schoolteachers as human rights educators is far from enough. Therefore, actively building a human rights education team that combines full-time and part-time staff is an inevitable requirement for promoting human rights education. At present, the ideological and political education workforce in China is divided into a backbone team, a part-time team, and a volunteer service team.¹¹⁵ To promote the high-quality development of human rights education, schools should organize a human rights education team composed of ideological and political course teachers or human rights professional course teachers, student affairs counselors, Party and government cadres in government organs, and legal consultants to form a collaborative effect in school-based human rights education. National public organs or enterprises and institutions should form a long-term mechanism for human rights educators, government cadres, industry models, and experts to work together in human rights education. Urban and rural communities should continuously enrich and optimize the human rights education workforce, and public cultural space venues should expand the volunteer service team engaged in human rights education. The government should take appropriate incentive measures to continuously mobilize the public's enthusiasm and passion for participating in human rights education.

(5) We should accelerate the compilation and publication of high-quality human rights textbooks of various categories to meet the needs of front-line human rights teaching in a timely manner. "Textbooks are the main carriers of knowledge dissemination, reflecting the value system of a country and a nation. They are important tools for teachers to teach and students to learn."¹¹⁶ In terms of human rights education in primary and secondary schools, it is suggested that relevant departments should link the goals of human rights education with the existing core literacy and course objectives of political identification, moral cultivation, legal consciousness, healthy personality, sense of responsibility, and public participation in the formulation of curriculum standards for courses such as "Morality and Rule of Law" and "Ideological and Political Education."¹¹⁷ They should also organically integrate human rights knowledge into the compilation and revision of textbooks for other courses (such as history and labor courses),¹¹⁸ and organize the

¹¹⁵ "The backbone team consists of school ideological and political course teachers, school counselors and class teachers, Party and publicity cadres in government organs, political and mass cadres in enterprises and institutions, and urban and rural community workers. The part-time team is mainly composed of Party members and cadres, heroes and models, and public figures. The volunteer team is mainly composed of civilized practice volunteers." Tang Yayang, et al., *Research on Ideological and Political Education in the New Era* (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2023), 281.

¹¹⁶ Xi Jinping, "Cultivating All-Around Socialist Builders and Successors with Moral Integrity, Intelligence, Physical Fitness, Aesthetic Taste, and Labor Skills," *Qiushi Journal* 18 (2024): 10.

¹¹⁷ *Compulsory Education Morality and Rule of Law Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition)* (Beijing Normal University Press, 2022), 5-8; *Curriculum Standards for Ideological and Political Education in Ordinary Senior High Schools (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision)* (Beijing: People's Education Press, 2020), 4-7.

¹¹⁸ Human rights knowledge is closely related to content in history courses such as the "origin of Western humanism," "excellent traditional Chinese cultural thought," "history of the development of Marxism," "history of the Communist Party of China," and the "establishment of the socialist system." Incorporating human rights knowledge into the compilation of history course textbooks is conducive to deepening students' understanding of the historical logic of human rights knowledge. From the perspective of human rights theory, labor education aims

compilation of textbooks for students of different age groups that are conducive to achieving the emotional education goals of human rights values for young people. The China Society for Human Rights Studies and other relevant departments should actively promote the research and construction of Marxist theory in the field of human rights studies, and promptly compile and launch a “China Series” of original textbooks in this field. These textbooks should “explain the principles, academic principles, and philosophical principles behind the great achievements of the development of China’s human rights cause in the new era, and clarify the theoretical logic, practical logic, historical logic, and contemporary logic contained therein,”¹¹⁹ which can be used for professional or general education courses in colleges and universities. For human rights education for public officials and staff of enterprises and institutions, relevant departments should continuously compile and publish human rights knowledge training manuals, work guidelines, and study outlines of the type “theoretical interpretation + case analysis.” Relevant departments should also increase the compilation of popular human rights knowledge reading materials. They should update the content of publicity and education in a timely manner according to social development and human rights achievements, regularly publish the latest reading materials, and pay attention to the popularization, life orientation, socialization, and mass orientation of the compilation of popular reading materials.

(6) We should promote the multi-dimensional integration of human rights education to create a sound social atmosphere for the healthy development of the human rights cause. Human rights education is not an educational activity aimed at specific groups or classes, but should be directed at the general public to integrate human rights knowledge into all practical activities through education and promote the formation of a social environment that respects and protects human rights. Conducive connection-oriented education is a key measure to ensure the integration of human rights education. “Conducive connection-oriented education aims to achieve organic linkage and orderly development between various stages and links of ideological and political education through layer-by-layer transmission and vertical linkage between subjects.”¹²⁰ This requires that the formulation of human rights education curriculum standards, the design of teaching outlines, and the planning of teaching programs should all strive for progressive integration and actively promote the integrated construction of human rights education in primary, secondary, and higher education institutions. The integration method of conducive connection-oriented education effectively prevents the disconnection of human rights education in the process of personal growth and development, promotes the orderly connection of human rights course systems at different stages and the gradual deepening of teaching content. Such efforts are conducive to solving the problems of incomplete coverage of human rights education targets, unsystematic knowledge structure, and individual aversion to human rights education, and effectively unite the strong forces of human rights education. Promoting human rights education should also fully grasp and capture key integration nodes such as major historical events, political and social hotspots, and major public events, fully explore the human rights knowledge resources contained in them, enhance the actual effect of popularizing human rights knowledge to the general public, and achieve the integration of human rights education for all members of society. On this basis, human rights education should also adhere to the concept of “teaching students in accordance with their aptitude” and formulate different educational content and teaching standards according to different types of learners. When

to promote the comprehensive development of individuals, which is also the highest goal of the human rights cause. Therefore, it is reasonable to integrate human rights knowledge into the compilation of labor course materials. Yang Yanchun, *Research on the Anthropological Path of Value Education* (Nanjing: Jiangsu People’s Publishing House, 2023), 143.

¹¹⁹ Jiang Hui, “Adhering to the Right Path and Innovating to Promote High-Quality Development of Marxist Theory Research and Construction Projects in the New Era,” *People’s Daily*, December 20, 2024.

¹²⁰ Luo Yuting, *On the Integration of Ideological and Political Education* (Beijing: People’s Publishing House, 2023), 324.

conducting human rights education for specific groups such as women, minors, the elderly, and ethnic minority groups, it is more important to pay attention to the targeting, specificity, and service-orientation of educational content transmission, teaching plan arrangement, and teaching standard formulation.

(7) We should increase the intensity of human rights knowledge training for journalists and advocate for reporting news from the perspectives of human rights frameworks, logic, and connotations. Conducting human rights knowledge training for journalists is conducive to cultivating their awareness of human rights, helping them form a human rights-oriented way of thinking, and enhancing their sensitivity to human rights issues. It is advocated that journalists report news from the angle of human rights, clarify the human rights-related logic in news events, and interpret the human rights-related values in news events to prevent the occurrence of “framework fragmentation,” “logic loss,” and “value vacancy” in the news reporting of human rights-related topics and the dissemination of human rights knowledge.

Conclusion

The policy objectives of “human rights education” in the four editions of the *Plan* have changed in the following ways: First, human rights education in primary and secondary schools has shifted from cultivating students’ awareness of human rights to establishing correct human rights values. Second, human rights education in higher education institutions has shifted from the construction of a single human rights course to the systematic construction of a human rights discipline. Third, human rights knowledge training has shifted from focusing on the promotion of human rights knowledge for legal and political workers to cultivating a human rights mindset among public officials. Fourth, the popularization of human rights knowledge has shifted from focusing on improving the effectiveness of dissemination to enhancing confidence in human rights culture. These changes reflect the characteristics of the evolution of human rights education policies, which are unified in gradualness and continuity, responsiveness and foresight, and value and timeliness. The evolution of the content of human rights education policies reflects that the gap between the current state of human rights education development and policy objectives is the internal driving force for changes in the content of human rights education policies. The historical context, achievements, and current situation of the development of the human rights cause are the main external conditions affecting changes in the content of human rights education policies. Therefore, when formulating or improving future human rights education policies, relevant personnel should use factors such as the current state of economic and social development, the achievements of Chinese human rights practice, the objective problems that exist in development, and the gap between the ideal and actual implementation of human rights education as the basic references for policy formulation.

(Translated by *LI Donglin*)