

# Research on Judge's Decision-making Factors and Judicial Justice Evaluation from the Perspective of Legal Psychology

Yaya Liu

Hubei Xiantao Middle School, Xiantao, China

## ABSTRACT

From the unique and often overlooked lens of legal psychology, this paper delves deep into the intricate web of factors that shape and influence judges' decision-making processes. It meticulously examines how, while legal knowledge and professional experience form the bedrock of judicial rulings, they are not the sole or even the primary determinants of judicial outcomes. Instead, the paper argues that a judge's decisions are often subtly, yet profoundly, influenced by psychological factors and their deeply ingrained personal social backgrounds. These factors, ranging from unconscious biases to societal pressures, can have a significant impact on how a judge interprets the law and applies it to specific cases. This nuanced understanding of the judges' decision-making processes underscores the inherent complexity of evaluating judicial impartiality. The study posits that a truly comprehensive assessment of judicial fairness demands a multifaceted approach that goes beyond surface-level critiques and encompasses a wide range of standards, methodologies, and perspectives.

## KEYWORDS

Legal Psychology; Judge's Decision; Judicial Impartiality; Evaluation Study; Influencing Factor.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Legal psychology, as a discipline that studies the interaction between law and psychology, provides a unique perspective for in-depth understanding of judges' decision-making. As a core role in the judicial system, judges' decision-making process is not only constrained by legal provisions and evidence, but also influenced by multiple factors such as personal psychology, emotion, experience and values. From the perspective of legal psychology, this paper deeply analyzes various influencing factors in the judge's decision-making process and discusses how these factors affect the realization of judicial fairness. Through this study, we expect to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for improving judicial fairness and optimizing the mechanism of judge selection and training.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF LEGAL PSYCHOLOGY

### 2.1. Definition and Development of Legal Psychology

Legal psychology is a unique interdisciplinary subject, which combines the theories and methods of law and psychology and focuses on the study of psychological phenomena and their influencing factors in legal activities. Since the mid-20th century, with the wide application of psychology in social sciences, legal psychology has gradually emerged and become a new field of legal research. The development of legal psychology is inseparable from the in-depth exploration of individual

psychological activities. In judicial practice, judges' decisions are often influenced by many psychological factors, such as cognitive bias and emotional response. Through empirical research, legal psychology reveals how these factors affect the judge's decision-making process, which in turn affects judicial fairness. For example, in the face of complex cases, judges may have cognitive bias due to the limitation of information processing ability, leading to the judgment result deviating from justice. In addition, legal psychology also pays attention to the group psychological phenomena in the legal environment, such as the public's views and attitudes towards legal events. These group psychological phenomena not only affect the public's trust in the judiciary, but also indirectly affect the decision-making process of judges. Therefore, the study of legal psychology involves not only individual psychology, but also the interaction between group psychology and judicial justice. With the deepening of research, legal psychology has gradually formed its own theoretical system and research methods. It comprehensively uses psychological experiments, case analysis, questionnaires and other means to explore the complex relationship between law and psychology from multiple angles. These studies not only enrich our understanding of judicial fairness, but also provide important theoretical basis and practical guidance for judicial reform.

## **2.2. The Application of Legal Psychology in Judicial Decision-making**

From the perspective of legal psychology, the judge's decision-making process is not only the interpretation and application of legal provisions, but also a complex psychological process involving cognition, emotion and motivation. The application of legal psychology in judicial decision-making is mainly reflected in the in-depth understanding and grasp of judges' psychological activities. When making decisions, judges will not only follow the legal principles, but also be influenced by their own cognitive bias, emotional reaction and social pressure. Legal psychology helps to reveal how these potential factors affect judicial decision-making by studying the psychological process of judges, thus improving the fairness and accuracy of decision-making. Legal psychology can also provide scientific evaluation methods and tools by analyzing the cognitive processing process of judges, and help judges identify evidence, logical reasoning and legal application more clearly when facing complex cases. In addition, legal psychology can also study how to keep the stability and consistency of decision-making when judges cope with stress, fatigue and other psychological States, which is of great significance to ensure judicial justice. In the evaluation of judicial impartiality, legal psychology can provide objective and scientific evaluation standards and methods. Through the monitoring and analysis of judges' psychological activities, we can evaluate whether judges are improperly influenced in the decision-making process, so as to find and correct the phenomenon of judicial injustice in time.

The application of legal psychology in judicial decision-making not only helps to deeply understand the decision-making process of judges, but also provides scientific evaluation methods and tools to promote the realization of judicial justice. In the future judicial practice, we should pay more attention to the application and development of legal psychology.

## **3. ANALYSIS OF JUDGE'S DECISION-MAKING FACTORS**

### **3.1. Legal Knowledge and Experience**

From the perspective of legal psychology, the core of the judge's decision-making factors is legal knowledge and experience. The two are closely linked and together form the basis of judge's decision-making. Legal knowledge is the premise of a judge's decision-making, which requires a judge to have a deep understanding and mastery of legal provisions, legal principles and legal spirit. This is not only a literal understanding of the legal provisions, but also a profound understanding of the concept of social fairness and justice behind the law. Judges need to have a solid legal foundation, be able to accurately interpret and apply the law, and ensure that every decision is in compliance with the law. Experience is another important support for judges to make decisions. Compared with legal

knowledge, experience pays more attention to accumulation and perception in practice. Judges will encounter all kinds of situations and problems when trying cases, which require judges to make judgments and decisions with rich experience. Experience can help the judge to understand the essence of the case more deeply, grasp the psychology and needs of the parties more accurately, and make a more just and reasonable judgment. Legal knowledge and experience interact in judge's decision-making, and jointly affect the judge's decision-making process. On the one hand, legal knowledge provides the theoretical basis and guiding principles for judges to make decisions; On the other hand, experience provides practical reference for judges. When making decisions, judges need to comprehensively apply legal knowledge and experience to ensure that every decision not only conforms to the provisions of the law, but also reflects social fairness and justice. Such a decision can not only safeguard the dignity and authority of the law, but also win the recognition and respect of the society.

### **3.2. Psychological Factors and Judge's Decision-making**

From the perspective of legal psychology, the judge's decision-making process is not purely based on the logical deduction of legal provisions, but is deeply influenced by its internal psychological factors. These psychological factors include cognitive bias, emotional reaction and motivation, which invisibly shape the judge's ruling tendency. Cognitive bias is an unavoidable psychological phenomenon for judges in the decision-making process. Due to the limited ability of human brain to process information, judges may be influenced by previous experience, stereotypes or information processing errors when interpreting the facts of cases, evaluating evidence and applying laws. For example, judges may hold preconceived views on certain types of cases, or tend to believe some seemingly more convincing information and ignore other key evidence when weighing evidence. Emotional reaction also plays an important role in judge's decision. As a legal person, although judges are required to remain objective and neutral, it is difficult to completely avoid emotional resonance and conflict in the face of complex cases and vivid characters' stories. This emotional reaction may affect the judge's cognition and judgment of the facts of the case, and even lead to the deviation of decision-making from legal principles in some cases. Motivation-driven can not be ignored. As a professional group, judges are driven by multiple motives such as maintaining professional honor and enhancing personal reputation. These motives may affect the judge's choice of behavior in handling cases, including whether he is willing to take risks and how to balance the interests of all parties.

Psychological factors play an important role in the judge's decision-making process. In order to ensure judicial justice, it is necessary to strengthen the research and intervention of judges' psychological factors, improve judges' psychological quality and professional accomplishment, and ensure that they can exercise their functions and powers objectively and fairly in the decision-making process.

### **3.3. Social Background and Influence**

At the intersection of sociology and psychology, the judge's decision-making process is not only a simple process of logical reasoning and legal application, but also deeply influenced by the social background in which the judge lives and its cultural, economic and political factors. These social background factors further influence the judge's decision-making in court through his personal cognition, emotion and values. As a member of society, judges' growth, education and professional experience have shaped their world outlook and judicial concept to some extent. For example, a judge who grew up in an economically developed area may have significant differences in sensitivity and handling of commercial disputes with a judge who grew up in a poor area. These different social backgrounds make judges have different psychological reactions and decision-making tendencies when facing similar cases. In addition, the overall cultural atmosphere of society will also have an impact on judges' decision-making. In a society that emphasizes harmony and stability, judges may prefer to use mediation to solve disputes, while in a society that emphasizes efficiency and competition, they may pay more attention to the quickness and clarity of judgments. The political

environment cannot be ignored. As a part of the judicial system, judges' decisions reflect the political will and judicial policies of the country to a certain extent. For example, in countries with a high degree of rule of law, judges may pay more attention to the strict application of laws when making decisions, while in countries with a low degree of rule of law, they may be subject to more administrative intervention and political influence.

The influence of social background on judges' decision-making is complex and far-reaching. In order to improve judicial fairness, judges not only need to have solid legal knowledge and noble professional ethics, but also need to have a deep understanding of social background and the ability to think independently. Only in this way can judges make more just and reasonable judicial decisions under the complicated social background.

## **4. RESEARCH ON THE EVALUATION OF JUDICIAL JUSTICE**

### **4.1. Definition and Standard of Judicial Impartiality**

Judicial impartiality means that in judicial activities, judges should follow the principles of fairness, justice, equality and neutrality when trying cases, ensure that the legitimate rights and interests of the parties are fully guaranteed, and realize the fair value and goal of the judicial system. The standards of judicial fairness are mainly reflected in the following aspects: First, procedural fairness. This requires judges to follow legal procedures in the trial process, to ensure that the litigation rights of the parties are equally protected, and to avoid any form of procedural discrimination or improper restrictions. When exercising judicial power, a judge should be open and transparent, allow the parties to fully state, give evidence and argue, and ensure the legitimacy of the verdict. Substantive justice. Substantive justice means that when trying a case, a judge should accurately apply the law to ensure that the facts of the case are accurately ascertained and the judgment results are fair. A judge should comprehensively and objectively examine the evidence according to the rules of evidence, and make an independent and fair judgment without any external interference and influence. Third, the image is fair. Image justice means that a judge should maintain good professional ethics and ethics in trial activities and appear in front of the public with a fair, honest and civilized image. Judges should respect the personal dignity of the parties, avoid any form of prejudice and discrimination, and safeguard judicial authority and credibility. The result is fair. Justice of result means that the judge's judgment result should conform to the concept of social justice and the expectations of the people, and realize the organic unity of legal effect and social effect. The judge should fully consider the social impact and consequences of the case, and ensure that the judgment results conform to the legal provisions, social justice and moral and ethical standards.

The definition and standard of judicial justice is a complex and multidimensional concept, which requires judges to follow the principles of procedural justice, substantive justice, image justice and result justice in trial activities to ensure the realization of judicial justice.

### **4.2. Evaluation Method of Judicial Impartiality**

The evaluation method of judicial impartiality is a complex and meticulous process, involving knowledge in multiple dimensions and professional fields. When evaluating judicial impartiality, quantitative and qualitative methods are usually used to ensure the objectivity and comprehensiveness of the evaluation results. Quantitative evaluation methods mainly rely on data analysis and statistical techniques, such as the efficiency of case handling, the quality of judgment documents, and the satisfaction survey of parties. By collecting a large number of case data and judicial activity data and analyzing them by using statistical principles, judicial impartiality can be objectively evaluated. For example, the average time from filing a case to closing it can be analyzed to evaluate judicial efficiency; By comparing the quality of judgment documents of different courts or judges, the judicial professionalism can be evaluated. Qualitative evaluation methods rely more on expert review and

case studies. Expert review is usually composed of jurists and psychologists with rich experience and professional knowledge. They make a subjective evaluation of judicial fairness by reviewing judgment documents, listening to court recordings and observing court behavior. Case study is an in-depth analysis of specific cases to reveal the problems and shortcomings of judicial fairness in actual operation. In addition, there are some comprehensive evaluation methods, such as judicial justice index and judicial trust survey. These methods combine quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods, and comprehensively evaluate judicial fairness by constructing an index system or conducting a questionnaire survey. These methods can reflect many aspects of judicial fairness more comprehensively and provide strong support for improving judicial work. Generally speaking, the evaluation method of judicial impartiality needs to use a variety of methods and means to ensure the objectivity and accuracy of the evaluation results. At the same time, these methods also need to be constantly improved and innovated to adapt to the continuous development and changes of judicial practice.

#### **4.3. The Relationship between Judicial Impartiality and Judge's Decision-making**

There is a close and subtle relationship between judicial impartiality and judge's decision. Judicial impartiality is not only the core goal of judges' decision-making, but also an important criterion to evaluate the rationality and legitimacy of judges' decision-making. When making a decision, a judge not only needs to consider the specific facts and legal provisions of the case, but also needs to measure the fairness in his heart. This measurement is not simply black and white, but involves legal interpretation, legal reasoning, discretion and other considerations. The decision-making process of judges is essentially a process of interweaving cognition and emotion. On the cognitive level, judges need to use professional knowledge to analyze the case in depth to ensure the scientific and accurate decision-making. On the emotional level, judges' professional ethics, personal beliefs and values will also have a subtle influence on decision-making. This influence is not negative, but helps judges to make more humanized decisions in complex situations. Judicial fairness requires that judges' decisions not only reflect the universality and fairness of law, but also take into account the diversity and complexity of society. Therefore, judges need to constantly balance various conflicts of interest in the decision-making process to ensure the fairness and rationality of decision-making. This balance is not only a test of legal professional knowledge, but also a test of judges' personal quality and professional ethics.

The relationship between judicial impartiality and judge's decision-making is a kind of mutual influence and promotion. The judge's decision-making process is not only an important means to realize judicial justice, but also an important way to test judicial justice. Therefore, it is of great significance to strengthen judges' professional quality training and professional ethics education and improve judges' decision-making ability and justice consciousness for promoting judicial justice and maintaining social stability.

### **5. SUMMARIZE**

From the perspective of legal psychology, this study deeply discusses the influencing factors of judges' decision-making and their evaluation of judicial fairness. It is found that judges' decision-making is influenced by legal knowledge, experience, psychological factors and social background. As the core value of justice, the evaluation of judicial fairness depends not only on legal standards, but also on the perception of social justice. The research provides theoretical support and practical suggestions for improving judicial impartiality, but there are still some shortcomings, such as the limitations of research methods and sample representativeness. In the future, we can further expand the research field and improve the evaluation methods.

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