

Research on the Path of Social Work Participation in Juvenile Procuratorial Work

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Abstract

The revised two major laws have introduced social work into juvenile judicial protection and crime prevention, which can play a positive role in alleviating the pressure on juvenile prosecution departments and improving service effectiveness. This paper analyzes the collaborative practice between social work agencies and procuratorial departments in City Z. It finds that social work possesses unique strengths and can exert remarkable effects in juvenile prosecution work, which are reflected in four dimensions: protecting and assisting juvenile victims, educating-rehabilitating juvenile offenders, preventing juvenile delinquency, and safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of minors. Meanwhile, this study identifies prominent challenges for social work engagement in juvenile prosecution, including imperfect institutional mechanisms, unstable participation opportunities and inadequate social support systems. Accordingly, policy suggestions are put forward to optimize top-level design and construct a sound social support system.

Keywords

social work, minors, juvenile prosecution work, social support

1. Introduction

Since the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, all sectors of society have paid increasing attention to the protection of minors, and relevant legal systems for the protection of minors have been continuously improved, providing continuous safeguards for the healthy growth of minors. In 2018, the Supreme People's Procuratorate and the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League jointly issued the "Cooperation Framework Agreement on Constructing a Social Support System for Juvenile Procuratorial Work", which recommended that Communist Youth League organizations at all levels vigorously support juvenile judicial social work service agencies, build specialized social work assistance teams, and assist in completing assistance and education, social investigation, and appropriate adult presence [1]. The revised "Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Minors" and "Law of the People's Republic of China on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency" (hereinafter referred to as the "Two Laws") in 2021 further drew on practical experience in juvenile judicial work in recent years, explicitly proposing to leverage professional social forces to help guardians of minors involved in cases improve their guardianship capabilities and establish mechanisms for the protection of minors [2]. Procuratorial departments across the country have actively responded to policy calls by introducing social forces to participate in juvenile procuratorial work. An

increasing number of social workers have engaged in the protection of minors, and the role of social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work has become increasingly prominent. This also represents an innovation and reform in the working mechanisms and methods of juvenile procuratorial departments, contributing to the establishment of a new pattern for the protection of minors.

This study takes the juvenile judicial social work practice in City Z as its research object, systematically exploring the feasibility, practical effects, current dilemmas, and optimization paths of social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work. The research hypothesis posits that social work, by virtue of its professional values and unique advantages, can play an irreplaceable role in juvenile procuratorial work, effectively alleviating the case-handling pressure of procuratorial organs and improving the service effectiveness of judicial protection for minors. However, due to limitations in participation mechanisms, funding guarantees, social support, and talent teams, social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work has not yet formed a mature and stable working model, and its professional advantages are difficult to fully unleash, urgently requiring institutional improvement and path optimization to address these issues. This study holds significant theoretical and practical value for promoting the socialization and professional development of juvenile procuratorial work and constructing a new pattern for the protection of minors.

2. Feasibility of Social Work Participation in Juvenile Procuratorial Work

Procuratorial organs are one of the most important institutions in China's legal system for judicial protection of minors, and juvenile procuratorial work represents the “specialized business” of procuratorial organs. In juvenile procuratorial operations, social work demonstrates considerable feasibility and advantages in promoting the transformation and growth of juvenile offenders, achieving the goals of preventing recidivism and facilitating social reintegration, while also playing a positive role in alleviating the pressure on juvenile procuratorial departments and improving service effectiveness [3].

2.1 Policy Basis for Social Work Participation in Juvenile Procuratorial Work

The revised Two Laws both emphasize the involvement of social forces and focus on multi-party collaborative protection of minors. Relevant documents from the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League regarding the construction of social work talent teams for youth affairs also explicitly state that social work should play an important role in youth affairs to achieve the goals of preventing juvenile delinquency and post-crime rehabilitation. Furthermore, at the national judicial policy level, increasing emphasis is placed on the protection and rehabilitation of minors rather than deterring minors involved in cases through severe punishment, which provides certain policy space for the involvement of social work.

2.2 High Alignment Between Professional Values and Juvenile Protection Philosophy

Minors possess high malleability during their growth process, and with proper guidance and assistance, they can be encouraged to reform themselves. Social work adheres to a series of value orientations including “belief in human potential,” “strengths perspective,” and “de-labeling,” which align closely with the philosophy of “educating, reforming, and rehabilitating juvenile offenders” in juvenile procuratorial work. This alignment helps remove the label of “problem youth” and discover their potential, guiding them to build self-confidence and facilitating their return to normal life.

2.3 Complementary Roles Between Judicial Work and Social Work

From the perspective of professional collaboration, the participation of social work can alleviate the work pressure of juvenile procuratorial departments and improve service effectiveness. Juvenile procuratorial work encompasses both judicial work involving minors and social work such as legal education and judicial assistance undertaken in an administrative capacity. Excessive administrative work leads to inefficiency and formalization in juvenile procuratorial work, yet social investigation and follow-up assistance require meticulous participation from professionals. Juvenile procuratorial departments often face heavy caseloads and dispersed attention, while social workers with backgrounds in psychology and sociology can effectively compensate for the insufficient energy of procuratorial departments in assisting and educating juvenile offenders. This also makes the involvement of social work in professional services such as individual case

assistance and education for minors feasible, achieving complementary roles and dual protection between procuratorial organs and social forces for minors involved in cases [4].

2.4 Unique Advantages of Social Work Participation in Juvenile Procuratorial Work

Judicial work emphasizes procedures, laws, and regulations, tending toward rationality, while social workers are trained to uphold professional values such as equality, respect, and acceptance, emphasizing affinity and trust-building. In participating in social investigations and assistance for minors, social work possesses unique advantages. For juvenile offenders, both supervision and service are important, yet these two roles entail certain conflicts. Supervision requires emphasis on authority, principles, and rationality, while service requires affinity, empathy, and care. In the eyes of juvenile offenders, the identity of prosecutors is more akin to supervisors, while the “professional service provider” role training received by social workers enables them to more easily establish equal cooperative relationships with minors. Consequently, social workers can more smoothly gain the trust of juvenile offenders, thereby providing higher-quality professional services in care, education, and counseling. Additionally, social workers have received training in psychological counseling, communication skills, and family education, theoretically making it easier for minors to open up and establish trust with staff.

3. Current Status of Social Work Participation in Juvenile Procuratorial Work

The Supreme People's Procuratorate proposed in the “2018-2022 Procuratorial Reform Work Plan” to explore the establishment of crime prevention, parental education, graded intervention, and protection systems. Subsequently, the Supreme People's Procuratorate and the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League established pilot programs for constructing juvenile procuratorial social support systems in more than 40 municipalities, actively exploring graded intervention work for minors involved in cases [5]. At the policy level, the status and role of social work in juvenile procuratorial work have been established.

Through reviewing literature and news materials, it can be found that the main forms of cooperation between current procuratorial departments and social work service providers in China are position-based procurement and project-based procurement. Position-based procurement refers to a model in which judicial social workers after completing training at social work agencies, are dispatched to procuratorial departments to assist with juvenile procuratorial work, receiving dual management and guidance from both procuratorial departments and social work service agencies. Project-based procurement involves professional service agencies providing services such as appropriate adult presence, social investigation reports, and assistance and education during agreed work periods according to the needs of procuratorial departments [6]. The content of social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work varies across different regions, but in terms of service recipients, it can be divided into intervention services for juvenile offenders, juvenile victims, and ordinary minors. Regarding juvenile offenders, the Shenzhen Futian District Qihang Public Welfare Service Center conducts comprehensive, whole-process, and full-chain intervention in juvenile criminal cases at the investigation stage, continuously aligning social work professional methods and philosophies with case handling procedures, and carrying out correction and assistance in areas such as individual deviant cognition, behavior, negative emotions, negative peer relationships, parent-child relationships, and social relationships of juvenile offenders. The Shanghai Procuratorate's juvenile procuratorial department introduces social work agencies to conduct social investigations, appropriate adult presence, conditional non-prosecution assistance and education, and establishes social observation systems for juvenile offenders through social work organizations, demonstrating effects of judicial connection and social linkage [7]. The Beijing Haidian District People's Procuratorate strengthens collaboration with social work in areas such as social investigation, appropriate adult presence, and follow-up assistance and education through government procurement of social services. The Shenzhen Municipal People's Procuratorate's proposed “precise assistance and education” has formed an “assistance and education circle” involving procuratorial officers in supervision and dynamic review of assistance effectiveness, social workers implementing precise assistance, and experts providing guidance and evaluation of service effectiveness. For juvenile victims, the Shenzhen Futian District Procuratorate and social work agencies have worked together to use “one-stop evidence collection and protection” as a key entry point, intervening promptly after receiving police reports and seizing the “golden 48 hours” for optimal counseling. Additionally, for ordinary minors, most social workers link volunteer resources, Communist Youth

League committees, and women's federations to carry out legal education activities or conduct targeted preventive legal education in schools and communities with high numbers of minors involved in cases.

In some Western countries, the breadth and depth of social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work are even greater. Examples include victim-offender mediation, juvenile crime treatment, family services for drug users and juvenile offenders, victim and witness support services, and domestic violence shelter services. In the United States, non-governmental organizations employ a large number of social workers to implement federal, state, and local legal aid and crime prevention programs, or use social work methods to provide flexible and targeted service plans for minors or adults in need [8]. In common law countries, judicial social workers can also serve as expert witnesses in court or provide expert testimony in a neutral capacity as appointed by the court, with their professional opinions influencing judicial decisions [3].

4. Practice and Effectiveness of Social Work Participation in Juvenile Procuratorial Work

With the revision and implementation of the Two Laws, the attention given to juvenile judicial protection and juvenile procuratorial work has reached unprecedented heights, and the responsibility of procuratorial organs for juvenile judicial protection has become increasingly arduous. Against this background, the procuratorial department in City Z, based on actual work needs, selected social work service agencies with good professional qualifications and industry reputation through field visits and observations, and entrusted juvenile offender observation and assistance, social investigation, victim assistance, and juvenile crime prevention work to qualified social service agencies through direct commissioning, negotiation, and bidding. By establishing budgets and purchasing social work services, professional judicial social work services are provided for minors.

4.1 Practice Process of Social Work Participation in Juvenile Procuratorial Work

In the cooperative practice between the juvenile procuratorial department in City Z and social work agencies, the participation of social workers covers most of the five major work tasks of juvenile procuratorial work, including protecting and assisting juvenile victims, educating and rehabilitating juvenile offenders, preventing juvenile delinquency, and safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of minors.

4.1.1 Protecting and Assisting Juvenile Victims to Avoid Secondary Harm

Social work service teams adopt case-based methods, comprehensively understanding the social environment and needs of juvenile victims to develop targeted service plans for their assistance, preventing secondary harm. Social workers possess disciplinary literacy in psychology and sociology, and in addition to providing case follow-up and linking required resources, they can also observe service recipients during the service process. When detecting tendencies toward depression or other conditions, they use relevant scales for assessment. If serious physical and mental health issues are identified, they refer service recipients to psychological counseling experts for guidance, promptly feedback to the procuratorate and guardians, and finally adjust service plans to help service recipients better return to normal life. Compared to psychological counselors, social workers place greater emphasis on the “social nature” of victims. Beyond providing direct counseling, they also conduct counseling and training for guardians or other significant others, guiding family members to understand the psychological and behavioral norms of victims, improving companionship and discipline techniques, and creating a favorable healing atmosphere for the recovery of service recipients.

4.1.2 Educating and Rehabilitating Juvenile Offenders to Promote Positive Change

After accepting the procuratorial department's commission, social workers adhere to the policy of education, reform, and rehabilitation, as well as professional service philosophies, participating in the assistance and education of juvenile offenders through case work or group work methods. Under the guidance of the procuratorial department, social workers sign four-party assistance agreements, service referral agreements, and other documents with service recipients and guardians, and establish standardized service files. During the “early observation and assistance” stage of bail, seamless connection can be achieved, clarifying work objectives with service recipients and families, focusing on guiding them to analyze their actual situations, actively seeking compensation and forgiveness, and fully investigating and objectively assessing individual psychological states and supervision conditions to provide a basis for subsequent prosecutorial decisions regarding prosecution. During the observation and assistance stage following conditional non-prosecution

decisions by the procuratorial department, social workers, within a 6-12 month work cycle, provide services such as psychological counseling, emotional support, career planning, and personality development for service recipients and their families based on actual needs and risk points, through individual meetings, family meetings, volunteer services, parent classes, and workshops. They construct or repair social support systems, correct personal cognition and behavior patterns, adjust family and individual social functions, enhance social participation and social responsibility, ultimately achieving positive individual and family transformation and reducing recidivism rates.

4.1.3 Conducting Legal Education to Prevent Juvenile Delinquency

In terms of preventing juvenile delinquency, a procuratorial department in City Z fully absorbed and drew upon advanced experience from developed regions, establishing a cross-professional team for juvenile crime prevention projects consisting of prosecutors, university experts, professional social workers, and middle school leaders and teachers. Based on literature review and previous case data, combined with the personality characteristics of minors, they developed the highly professional “Protecting Youth, Procuratorial Love Guiding the Way” juvenile crime prevention project. This project relies on primary and secondary schools, communities, and other places where minors gather, conducting diverse and rich in content legal education activities. In terms of service content, activities cover the Civil Code, Criminal Law, prevention of school bullying, prevention of sexual assault, anti-domestic violence, drug prohibition, sex education, interpersonal relationships, family conflicts, parent-child relationships, and emotional management. In terms of project formats, activities are diverse. For general minor populations, activities such as educational theater, legal classrooms, legal break-time meals, legal scenario drama competitions, and mock courts are conducted to strengthen juvenile crime prevention, legal education, and safety education, aiming to enhance legal awareness and safety consciousness. For potentially high-risk groups, such as students who have received disciplinary records or exhibit deviant behavior, social workers conduct youth groups on themes such as emotional management and safe interpersonal relationships, as well as interactive legal scenario dramas and interactive crime prevention theater, aiming to enhance behavioral and emotional control capabilities, establish safe friendship perspectives, strengthen legal awareness, and ultimately achieve the goal of reducing crime risks.

4.1.4 Safeguarding the Legitimate Rights and Interests of Minors and Demonstrating Judicial Warmth

When safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of minors, social work mainly participates by accepting and conducting social investigations commissioned by procuratorial organs and serving as appropriate adults. For minors on bail or under conditional non-prosecution, social workers conduct thorough investigations and assessments of service recipients' personality characteristics, growth experiences, family supervision conditions, and social environments from professional and objective standpoints, exploring the motivations for juvenile delinquency, protective factors, and risk factors to form assessments of supervision conditions and submit written reports to juvenile procuratorial departments for decision-making reference. If a minor is being interrogated and guardians cannot be present, social workers serve as independent third parties as appropriate adults to ensure the legality and fairness of the interrogation.

4.2 Effectiveness of Social Work Participation in Juvenile Procuratorial Work

The procuratorial organs in City Z have actively introduced social work into juvenile procuratorial work. Based on recommendations from experts and partners, they have continuously standardized service procedures, improved service quality, and guided social work service agencies to provide diversified and effective professional services, achieving certain results.

4.2.1 Needs-based Approach with Pioneering Service Standardization

Before the Supreme People's Procuratorate issued the “Specifications for Juvenile Justice Social Work Services” (draft for comments), the procuratorial organs in City Z had already established a judicial service system based on experience, widely consulting university social work teachers, legal experts, and social workers. Meanwhile, social work service agencies have also developed service guidelines for juvenile judicial social work, clarifying the standards for documents such as case intervention plans, case closure material lists, cross-regional examination agreements, social investigation reports, mid-term evaluations, and case closure reports, forming a relatively comprehensive juvenile judicial social work service system.

4.2.2 Comprehensive Assistance with Remarkable Education and Rehabilitation Effectiveness

During the assistance and education process, social workers leverage their professional advantages by thoroughly investigating the social nature of parties and providing relevant materials as references for procuratorial decision-making, making the handling of juvenile cases more meticulous and in-depth. During the assistance and education period, social workers adhere to professionalization and personalization as working principles, aiming to assist service recipients in restoring and improving social functions, and employing flexible and diverse methods for comprehensive assistance, including psychological counseling, legal awareness enhancement, family relationship improvement, proper friendship, and social participation. Over the past three years, City Z has referred nearly 200 minors involved in cases to social work service agencies, with social workers providing more than 1,500 instances of assistance and education, completing 300 social investigations, and serving as appropriate adults more than 100 times. Juvenile offenders who received professional social work services have generally shown improved legal awareness, significantly improved family supervision conditions, significantly enhanced social participation through volunteer services and other forms, and reduced recidivism risk rate to below 10%.

4.2.3 Procuratorial-school-community Cooperation with Effective Crime Prevention

Procuratorial organs actively cooperate with social workers and universities to conduct legal education, establishing juvenile judicial social work practice bases with local universities. Social workers and university interns actively participate in legal education work, conducting diverse and rich in content activities. In terms of service formats, there are legal classrooms, legal break-time meals, legal scenario drama competitions, and mock courts conducted in cooperation with prosecutors, as well as institution-original educational theater, interactive legal scenario dramas, and interactive crime prevention theater attracting university student participation. In terms of service content, activities cover the Civil Code, Criminal Law, prevention of school bullying, prevention of sexual assault, anti-domestic violence, drug prohibition, sex education, interpersonal relationships, family conflicts, parent-child relationships, proper friendship, and emotional management, aiming to enhance service recipients' legal awareness and friendship capabilities, safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of minors, and provide emotional support and career planning services for service recipients and their families. In City Z's M District alone, procuratorial organs, with the help of social workers, universities, and other social forces, have completed more than 100 legal education activities, covering over 80,000 minors, significantly improving local minors' legal awareness. The "Protecting Youth, Procuratorial Love Guiding the Way—Juvenile Crime Prevention Project" conducted by the M District juvenile procuratorial department won the Excellence Award in the 2021 Guangdong Province "Youth Social Organizations Participating in Social Governance" thematic case competition and the First Prize in the 2022 City Z Excellent Social Work Project competition.

5. Limitations and Path Improvement of Social Work Participation in Juvenile Procuratorial Work

In the practice of the juvenile procuratorial department in City Z purchasing social work services, the professional advantages of social work have been evident in areas such as juvenile rights protection, crime prevention, and observation assistance. However, as an emerging social force, social work also faces certain limitations in its participation in juvenile procuratorial work, affecting the improvement of service effectiveness.

5.1 Limitations of Social Work Participation in Juvenile Procuratorial Work

5.1.1 Imperfect Participation Mechanisms for Social Work

Judicial social work in juvenile procuratorial work has not yet formed effective connection mechanisms, and one-stop judicial social work service systems are imperfect. Particularly in cross-professional, cross-departmental, and cross-domain contexts, judicial social work lacks clear cooperation methods and pathways in juvenile procuratorial work. For example, parental education for minors involved in cases lacks mandatory legal foundations, making it impossible for procuratorial organs to compel guardians to accept parental education. Additionally, the legal status of social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work in China

remains unclear, lacking independent provisions for social work intervention in juvenile procuratorial work, and relevant departments do not recognize the legitimacy of such participation, creating certain obstacles to the implementation of specific systems such as assistance examination and social investigation [9].

5.1.2 Unstable Participation Opportunities for Social Work

Limited by local economic development and social needs, opportunities for social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work are scarce and unstable. Taking City Z as an example, funding for social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work currently lacks unified fiscal support, with each county and district paying for social work service fees from case-handling funds based on their own needs, but overall service procurement efforts are limited and standards are low. Furthermore, variations in fiscal levels, work philosophies, and personnel changes among responsible persons in different regional procuratorial organs result in narrow and unstable participation channels for social workers or social work service agencies, affecting service continuity. Some judicial social workers have had to transfer to other service fields due to insufficient caseload.

5.1.3 Imperfect Social Support Systems

A comprehensive social support system is crucial for the transformation and growth of juvenile offenders. However, in practice, social support from families, communities, and social organizations is insufficient. First, some guardians, due to working outside their hometowns, feudal thinking, or rigid mindsets, show low enthusiasm for parental education. Second, juvenile offenders are “labeled” due to their cases, making it difficult for them to be accepted by peer groups and affecting their integration into their original social lives. Furthermore, in economically underdeveloped areas, the awareness of active social participation is low, and formal support received by service recipients is insufficient. The existence of these issues constitutes obstacles to more effective social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work.

5.1.4 Weak Talent Teams in Judicial Social Work

Limited by regional economic conditions and industry scale, the number of professionals specializing in juvenile judicial social work is insufficient, and professional competence needs improvement. The nature of juvenile procuratorial work requires participating social workers to have backgrounds in social work, psychology, law, and other disciplines, yet in reality, judicial social workers are often familiar with social work and psychology but have weak understanding and mastery of laws and regulations. Additionally, juvenile judicial social work in underdeveloped areas is still in its initial stages, and social workers also face issues of insufficient professional competence and lack of experience, affecting the full realization of social work advantages in juvenile procuratorial work.

5.2 Path Improvement for Social Work Participation in Juvenile Procuratorial Work

5.2.1 Improving Top-level Institutional Design

The revised Two Laws cover multiple aspects of judicial social work, providing both macro-level guiding principles and micro-level specific measures, offering beneficial references for the involvement and participation of judicial social work. However, it is still necessary to clarify the legal status and rights-responsibility subjects of social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work, combine practical pilot experience, promote resource sharing, construct effective connection mechanisms between judicial social work and juvenile procuratorial work, and guarantee the effectiveness of juvenile procuratorial work. Furthermore, the participation of social organizations is multi-level and multi-faceted, and only through sound institutions can the role of social forces be fully realized. Taking mandatory parental education as an example, only when institutional provisions mandate that guardians accept parental education through compulsory means can social work better assist guardians in fulfilling their supervision and education obligations. Therefore, judicial units should serve as the main body, coordinating family, school, government, and social resources, ensuring government financial investment, and constructing a complete one-stop service system.

5.2.2 Issuing Local Supporting Policies for Judicial Social Work

Currently, procuratorial organs' purchase of social work services is conducted according to normative documents issued by the Ministry of Public Security, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, and other

departments. While these documents have certain reference value, they suffer from insufficient specificity and limited effectiveness. Regarding which parts of juvenile procuratorial work social work services can participate in, and how the procedures and standards for purchasing services should be determined, facing such uncertainty, local governments can, within the scope permitted by law, formulate and improve local judicial social work regulations adapted to local economic development based on local livelihood conditions. Local regulations can effectively compensate for the shortcomings of top-level design, possess higher implementability and specificity, and can flexibly formulate response measures according to local juvenile judicial service needs, promptly address issues encountered in the local development of judicial social work, and promote the long-term and stable development of judicial social work.

5.2.3 Strengthening the Construction of Social Support Systems

First, encourage public welfare institutions and social enterprises to participate in juvenile procuratorial work through the introduction of preferential policies. Second, procuratorial organs need to properly seal juvenile criminal records, and based on local actual conditions, learn from and draw upon advanced practices from other regions, actively report to Party committees and People's Congresses, and strive for national fiscal support with supporting measures for social work organization services. Third, through policy advocacy, increase social tolerance for juvenile offenders, guide juvenile offenders to participate in society, and eliminate public misunderstandings about juvenile offenders. Through these measures, create a favorable atmosphere for the growth of minors, and actively promote the formation of juvenile judicial communities and minor protection communities [5].

5.2.4 Establishing Diversified Talent Cultivation Mechanisms for Juvenile Judicial Social Workers

First, provincial procuratorial departments can cooperate with schools to form talent cultivation mechanisms, strengthening the professional competence of judicial social workers through courses with higher relevance. Second, local procuratorial or other judicial organs can also establish collaborative mechanisms with universities, providing both student practice bases and promoting the development of judicial social work and talent cultivation through projects or research. Finally, social work service agencies should strengthen training in social workers' professional competence and communication skills, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of judicial social workers in serving minors.

6. Conclusion

This study takes the practice of social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work in City Z as its entry point, systematically exploring the feasibility, practical effectiveness, and practical dilemmas of social work intervention in juvenile judicial protection, and has formed certain contributions at both theoretical and practical levels.

In terms of theoretical value, this study enriches research content in the intersection of juvenile judicial protection and social work, verifies the applicability of social support theory and strengths perspective theory in juvenile procuratorial work, provides theoretical support for social work intervention in the judicial field, and further expands the research boundaries of judicial social work. In terms of practical value, this study summarizes the practical experience of procuratorial organs in City Z in introducing social forces, forming standardized service processes covering social investigation, observation and assistance, victim assistance, and crime prevention, providing a replicable and promotable reference model for procuratorial organs in underdeveloped regions to purchase social work services. According to statistics, over the past three years, City Z has referred nearly 200 minors involved in cases to social work service agencies, with more than 1,500 instances of assistance and education provided, and recidivism risk rate reduced to below 10%, achieving significant social effects.

Compared with existing research findings, previous literature has mostly focused on advanced experiences in developed regions such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen, or emphasized the introduction of foreign judicial social work systems, while this study takes City Z as a sample, filling the empirical research gap regarding social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work in underdeveloped regions. Furthermore, previous studies have mostly explored social investigation or conditional non-prosecution assistance from a single dimension, while this study systematically covers four domains: protecting and assisting juvenile

victims, educating and rehabilitating juvenile offenders, preventing juvenile delinquency, and safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of minors, offering a more comprehensive research perspective. In terms of research methods, this study combines practical data and case analysis, pioneering the establishment of relatively comprehensive juvenile judicial social work service guidelines and documentation standards, innovating the “procuratorial-school-community” cooperative legal education model and interactive crime prevention forms such as “educational theater,” and promoting the development of social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work from experiential exploration toward standardization and professionalization.

However, this study still has certain limitations and unresolved issues. First, the legal status of social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work remains unclear, lacking independent intervention basis, which affects the rigid implementation of systems such as social investigation and assistance examination. Second, funding sources are unstable, and local fiscal support is limited, resulting in significant fluctuations in social work participation opportunities and service quality. Third, social support systems remain imperfect, with the “labeling” of juvenile offenders being prominent, and insufficient collaboration among multiple subjects including families, communities, and social organizations. Finally, judicial social work talent teams are weak, with a shortage of professionals possessing composite backgrounds in social work, psychology, and law, constraining the further improvement of service effectiveness.

Based on the above issues, future research can further focus on the following aspects: first, strengthening legislative research on social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work to clarify the legal status and rights-responsibility boundaries of social work; second, exploring the establishment of stable government procurement service fiscal guarantee mechanisms to promote the normalization and institutionalization of social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work; third, deepening research on multi-party collaborative mechanisms involving “family-school-community-judiciary” to construct systematic social support networks; and fourth, strengthening research on professional talent cultivation and vocational competency certification for judicial social work to improve team professionalization levels. It is hoped that through the joint efforts of theoretical and practical circles, a sound institutional system for social work participation in juvenile procuratorial work can be established, a more comprehensive social support system for minors can be built, the healthy growth of minors can be effectively safeguarded, and the high-quality development of juvenile procuratorial work in the new era can be promoted.

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