

The Interactive relationship between National identity and citizenship education

Wenjun Ji^{1*}, Danhua Zhang²

¹ PhD candidate, School of Marxism, Shanghai University, work unit: Shanghai University of Political Science and Law, 502, No.36, Lane 353, Jintang Road, Putuo District, 201701, Shanghai, China

² Professor, School of Marxism, Shanghai University, No.99, Shangda Road, Baoshan District, 200444, Shanghai, China

Abstract: National identity constitutes the psychological basis and important force for the survival and development of a country. How to shape and construct national identity and maintain the unity and stability of multi-ethnic countries is an important subject that multi-ethnic countries must face. Citizenship education is considered to be the basic path to cultivate and strengthen national identity. The construction of national identity affects the direction of citizenship education, which in turn affects the cultivation of national identity. National identity and citizenship education interact and shape each other. It should be pointed out that both national identity and citizenship education are related to citizenship, and citizenship is the connection point between national identity and citizenship education.

1. Introduction

In today's world, the continuous advance of globalization, modernization and democratization is rapidly changing people's traditional way of life and ideas. In the past, the nation-state as the border of citizenship is increasingly breaking the original boundary in the cultural exchanges and collisions of various ethnic groups, and the problems of national identity, ethnic identity, cultural conflict and integration gradually emerge. Among them, national identity is the core issue. Samuel Huntington, a famous American political scientist, said: "People almost everywhere are asking, reconsidering and redefining what they have in common and what distinguishes them from others: who are we? What do we belong to? The Crisis of National Identity has become a Global Phenomenon.[1] Therefore, how to restore national identity and deal with the relationship between citizen and national identity has become a major theoretical and practical issue that the academic circle must face.

Education is intrinsically related to identity. The essence of education is to solve the problem of what kind of people to cultivate. In other words, it enables people to internalize values and moral standards into their own active identity and externalize them into behavioral practice. As American scholar J.A.Banks pointed out, "A multicultural society faces the problem of creating a national identity, which accepts and absorbs the diversity of its citizens and embraces the values, ideals and goals that all citizens of a whole adhere to and share... Citizens understand and act on unity and Diversity not from thin air, but from their education." [2] In modern society, the

main educational approach to realize the goal of national identity is citizenship education.

2. The basic connotation of national identity, citizenship and citizenship education

The word "identity" comes from the Latin *idem*, meaning the same or identical. Freud first proposed the concept of identification and introduced it into the field of psychology. Erik Erikson expanded on Freud's point of view. He believed that identification answers the question of "who I am", so the process of "identification" is actually the process of interaction between individuals and others, reflecting the relationship between people. On the subject of identity, it is not limited to individuals, but also includes social and group identity. The question "who am I?" becomes "who are we?" National identity refers to that a domestic individual forms psychological affiliation and behavioral loyalty to the national community based on rational choice, accepts his own identity as a member of the country, affirming the sovereignty, system, historical tradition and values of the country to which he belongs, holds national pride, and actively participates in national construction.

As for the connotation of "citizen", according to the definition of "Cihai", "citizen usually refers to a person who has the nationality of a country and enjoys rights and obligations according to the Constitution and laws of that country." [3] Citizenship refers to a kind of membership of an individual, while citizenship is a universal abstraction of the concept of citizenship.

Citizenship education is about citizenship education, which aims to cultivate the character and ability of citizens

* Corresponding author: jiwenjun0105@163.com

to be loyal to the country and practice their rights and obligations consciously.

3. National identity is an important part of national construction

3.1 National identity is the psychological basis for national unity and stability

In *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Anderson defines a nation as such: "It is an imagined political community -- and it is imagined as a community that is both intrinsically limited and sovereign." [4] It is clear that the identity of the country is a collective identity, they form a sense of community through a common identity, and this sense enables the members of the community to have a kind of relationship of solidarity psychologically. Therefore, national identity constitutes the psychological basis and important strength for the survival and development of a country. It is the recognition and love of citizens for the country that can form a strong cohesion in the whole society.

3.2 National identity is the basis for safeguarding the legitimacy of state power

Prasenjit Duara pointed out that the expansion of state power in modern times has designed a two-sided process: "One is the process of penetration and expansion, the other is the process of justifying such penetration and expansion." [5] The question of the legitimacy of state power is actually to answer what is the moral basis of the power of the state as the subject of power. Weber, a leading representative of the study of political legitimacy, pointed out that "any power - even any good fortune in life - is generally necessary to justify its own legitimacy." [6] The essence of proving or supporting the legitimacy of state power is embodied in the word "identity". As a form of "identity", citizens form national identity, which means to confirm which country they belong to, to recognize and obey the country they are in, and to have a sense of belonging to the country. It determines the legitimacy of the country and is an important link to maintain national unity and unity.

4. The function of citizenship education

4.1 Citizenship education is an important path to achieve social integration

Social differentiation and integration are two basic forms of social development and change. The so-called social integration refers to "social differentiation, social anomie and even social disintegration arising from the development of class society through the corresponding social mechanism, which makes the common life of human beings possible". [7] In modern society, with the

rapid development of productivity, individuals interact more and more frequently, social heterogeneity increases, and differentiation gradually appears and intensifies with the increase of unequal distribution.

How to carry out social integration? Parsons proposed to integrate the increasingly divided modern society with universal citizenship. He pointed out that the universalization of citizenship has the characteristics of isomorphism with modern society. Citizenship here provides the basis for the realization of universality and emphasizes the important role of education in the institutionalization of universality and the realization of citizenship. [8] Citizenship education itself is a recognition of the citizenship of modern countries. It provides a kind of community consciousness support for modern countries, connects individual citizens and the country closely together, and becomes an important basis for the survival and development of a country.

4.2 Citizenship education is an important basis for shaping the legitimacy of state power

State power expresses the relationship between domination and obedience. In its most general sense, power refers to any form of influence exerted by objects, individuals, or groups on each other. [9] Weber argues that when a power is justified by the governed, it is justified. [10] It can be seen that the legitimacy of modern state can be shaped and constructed, involving individual cognition and belief. Citizens' identification of the state is based on a deep understanding of the relationship between the two, and "education is a moderating effect in the process of achieving shared social consciousness, and the adaptation of individual activities based on this social consciousness is the only reliable method of social transformation." [11] The state can pass on and reproduce the ideology and values of the ruling class through education, so as to rationalize the rule. The development of citizenship education can promote the institutional construction of citizenship and the dissemination of ideas, promote citizens' identification of national politics and culture, thus shaping the legitimacy of state power and finally realizing recognition and obedience.

5. The interrelationship between national identity and citizenship education

Through the above analysis, it can be seen that national identity is a sense of community, the basis for safeguarding the legitimacy of state power, and an important link to maintain the survival and development of a country. Strengthening the multi-ethnic national identity is a systematic project, which requires not only the reasonable arrangement of the national institutional structure, but also the continuous promotion of the democratization process, and more importantly, the continuous play of the role of citizenship education.

5.1 The construction of national identity affects the content and direction of citizenship education

"In the modern society where people become the main force, national identity is not a simple problem of national concept or national consciousness, but a problem of national construction itself." [12] According to Andy Green, national state education systems were first created as part of the state-forming process that created the modern nation state. The rise of modern education is because the ruler needs to pass the national identity through education and shape the legitimate basis of the ruler's power. [13] The history of the rise and development of citizenship education is accompanied by the history of modern state construction. The hope and inherent predicament of the construction of national ideology and identity will inevitably be reflected in the guiding ideology, content and specific implementation of citizenship education, while the actual needs and future demands of national identity will inevitably become the basic compliance and important basis affecting the development of citizenship education at the same time.

5.2 Strengthening national identity is an important part of citizenship education

No matter what nationality a person belongs to, social status, cultural and historical similarities and differences, as long as he is a citizen of the country, citizenship is his first identity. He must face the country as a citizen. Citizenship education can promote the identity and the sense of belonging of citizens. It can promote citizens' identification with the national system, the national core values, the sense of responsibility to the country, and so on. These are the important objects and objects of citizens' identification with the country.

5.3 Citizenship is the connection point between national identity and citizenship education

Citizenship is a kind of identity given by the modern state to its members. The relationship between national identity and citizenship is a dynamic match, and citizenship education is a kind of education related to citizenship no matter how it is defined. The purpose of citizenship education is to cultivate citizens with a sense of national identity. Therefore, both national identity and citizenship education are related to citizenship, and the change of citizenship identity will inevitably bring about the change of national identity, and then lead to the change of citizenship education. While shaping citizenship identity, citizenship education will inevitably have an important impact on the construction of national identity.

5.3.1 Dynamic matching between national identity and citizenship

The relationship between national identity and citizenship has been a controversial issue in academic circles. Generally speaking, there are three main viewpoints. One

is the "Cutting theory", which advocates the separation between national identity and citizenship. Especially in the context of globalization, citizenship has increasingly become a concept inclusive of diversity, and the association with national identity must be cut off, which is an obstacle for citizenship to seek universal values. "Cutting theory" is difficult to be verified and supported in reality. The second is the "maintenance theory", which advocates maintaining the relationship between national identity and citizenship. However, the "maintenance theory" simply corresponds to citizenship and national identity without giving a detailed analysis. Scholar Xiao Bin put forward the third "matching theory". He believes that citizenship can be divided into two kinds of citizenship: One is cultural-psychological citizenship, and the other is political-legal citizenship. National identity can also be divided into two structures: one is the ascriptive national identity of the national community of territory, sovereignty, population, etc., and the other is the approval of the national regime system. The two dual structures of citizenship and national identity form a logical matching and symmetrical relationship: cultural-psychological citizenship is related to the national community, while political-legal citizenship corresponds to the state regime system. "Matching theory" surpasses "cutting theory" and "maintenance theory" and provides a new theoretical perspective for solving the relationship between citizenship and national identity.

5.3.2 Citizenship is the medium through which citizenship education shapes national identity

Citizenship education refers to the education of modern citizens with the popularity of citizenship as the logical starting point. Modern citizenship education, Heater says, is based on the nation-state giving citizenship to the masses and asking citizens to identify with the state. [14] Citizenship is the link between individual citizens and the country. Whether citizenship can be successfully developed depends on the ideas of individual citizens. Because concept and consciousness play an important role in the process of citizenship internalization, education can become a feasible path and an important force to cultivate citizenship. Citizenship education is to promote the identity of citizenship so as to achieve the identity of the national community.

References

1. Samuel Huntington. *Who are We? The Challenge to American National Identity*, translated by Cheng Kexiong, 11 (2005).
2. Banks, J.A., et al. *Democracy and Diversity: Principles and Concepts for Educating Citizens in a Global Age*, 176, (2005).
3. Dictionary of Law (Revised Edition), 142 (1984).
4. Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, translated by Wu Hiren, 6 (2003).

- 5.7.10 Liu Zhengxian. *Research on the Interactive Relationship between citizenship education and State Construction*, 49; 321-322, (2021).
6. Max Weber. *Sociology of Domination*, translated by Kangle, 18 (2010).
8. Parsons, Talcott. *The System of modern societies*, 22 (1971).
9. Aristotle. *Politics*, translated by Wu Shoupeng, 3 (1965).
11. Gu Chengmin. Citizenship education and National Identity, **11**, 35 (2011).
12. Lin Shangli. The political logic of the construction of modern national identity, **8**, 22 (2013).
13. Andy Green. *Education, Globalization and the Nation State*, translated by Zhu Xudong, Xu Weihong et al., 142-146 (2004).
14. Heater, Derek. *A History of Education for citizenship*, 65 (2004).