

Identity Need Analysis of the Minority College Students Citizen

Xuepeng Yin¹ & Guoning Wang²

^{1,2} School of Politics and Administration
China West Normal University

Corresponding Author:

Xuepeng Yin,

School of Politics and Administration

China West Normal University,

No. 1 Shi Da Road, Nanchong, 637009,

Sichuan, China

The research is financed by National and Sichuan College Students Innovative Training Program (Project No. 201410638012) and Research Innovation Team of China West Normal University Named “Political Mentality and Social Risk”

Abstract:

The minority college students' civic identity has the unique connotation, which has the features of plasticity, sociality, secularity and complexity. The identity need of minority college student citizen is divided into four gradients: self identity, ethnic identity, social identity and national identity. The conditions suitable for different citizenship identity need of minority college students are diverse which have strong complementarities.

Key words: Citizenship identity, need, gradient

Introduction:

The “identity” is the common problem in the ethnic integration process of the multi-ethnic nation, among which especially the minority nationality’s citizen identification problem is the most outstanding. Minority college students as a force for the future development of the ethnic minority areas are also the backbone to maintain the stability of the ethnic regions and promote the national unity and progress. Therefore, getting a clear understanding of the minority college students citizenship identity needs is the important theoretical preparation to strengthen the study about the minority college students’ identity problem and also it has important realistic significance for status quo analysis of minority college students’ civic identity and the effective solution of citizen identity

1. The connotations and characteristics of the citizen identity of Minority College Students

The word “identity” means “the same”. Its English interpretation includes the “oneness”, “the same as”, “identity”, personality, etc. and in the present Chinese it is interpreted as “recognition” and “ratification” and so on. Yet citizenship identity is a performance of social and political characteristics of: from the macro perspective, it is the concentrated reflection of the social, political, economic and cultural factors on the citizens; from the micro perspective, it is the development results of civil conflicts. Minority college student’s citizenship identity demand mainly refers to their self identity perception and confirmation, the emotional attachment and cultural identity for their own tribes and the improvement and acceptance for the state, social norms and system. In contemporary China, as a special group, the formation, development and change of citizens identity need of the minority college students has its own laws. The arrangement of different identity need is like gradient including mainly four: self identity, ethnic identity, social identity, national identity and each has the unique feature of development:

1.1 Plasticity

As a dependent variable, the content of citizen identity needs is constantly changing with the change of social environment. Some content is relatively stable, such as the needs of national identity is profound and long lasting yet some of the content is easier to change, such as the demand of social identity, and national identity which are vulnerable to external environmental impact. At present, with the arrival of the era of globalization and network, minority college students are in the key stage of finalizing their design of national view, ethnic view and citizenship view and their citizenship identity need is easily distressed by their own irrational factors and influenced by social environmental factors, easy to produce the fluctuation or even diverge. In minority college student’s citizenship identity formation, it will contribute to the continuous improvement of the citizenship identity need hierarchy to effectively remove the adverse external environment factors and create positive factors of promoting the formation of civic awareness. It is seen that the demand of the minority students’ identity is constantly changing, and it has a strong plasticity in practice.

1.2 Sociality

The citizen identification need is the result of the interaction between the object and object in the practice, and the essence of the citizen identification can not be understood really if leaving the citizen identification

practice. As a kind of thought consciousness, the citizen identification is the concentrated expression of the collective behavior, which originates from the mutual relationship between individual and others, society and country. It is produced and continuously developed in social activities. Sociality of minority college students citizenship identity needs refers to that this identity demand is based on specific social practice such as self learning of the minority college students and inter ethnic communication. It is constructed in a repeated bout of self initiative and realizes it in social restriction. The promotion of each demand gradient is also determined by the satisfaction degree of social identity and validity of the society acceptance.

1.3 Secularity

The citizen identity demand is in constant change and it is a long-term and repeated formation process, always showing a kind of trend of mutual blending. The process of citizenship identity demand change is often advancing along the gradient cognitive rout from “self identity, the ethic identity and social identity - to national identity”, but identity demand change process is not plain and it turns to a new identity hierarchy of needs in the twists. Minority college students citizenship identity process is also a kind of internalization process from outside to inside, that is to say, internalize the external and prescriptive needs of the state and society into their own needs, achieve organic integration of citizen’s cognition, value resonance and consistent behavior and then rose to the higher national identity of citizen identities, reaching citizenship identity needs standards one eligible citizens should have.

1.4 Complexity

The citizen identification need is a complicated changing process of recognition consciousness which is mainly determined by the subjective factors of the identity subject, the changing gradient of the contents of the identification need, and the variety of identification means. In the formation process of minority college Students' citizenship identity, the subjective needs of the identity subject is more diverse whose theoretical knowledge, value view, thinking ways, national cultural psychology, non rational factors etc. always affect the level of improving civic awareness and the gradation of raising citizen identity demand. Due to the citizenship identity needs covers different levels of the self identity, ethic identity, social identity and national identity, whose gradient changes have increased difficulty of judging minority college students citizenship identity value and cause the contradictions between "ought to be" arrangement and practical selection of citizenship identity demand level. As the important media to achieve minority college students' citizenship identity demand, diversification and information of Identity means provides an effective power for meeting its citizen identity needs, but its negative effect also hinders the correct division of citizenship identity need hierarchy of minority college students.

2. The demand gradient of citizenship identity of the minority college students

In the present world, the national cohesion has become an important part of the comprehensive national strength. Minority college students are an important reserve force to promote future construction of minority areas, therefore, it is conducive to cultivating a modern citizen with independent personality if caring about minority college students citizenship identity needs and actively creating the conditions to meet the demand

of citizens identity. Minority college students citizenship identity demand is different from other social groups' and its realization needs to take meeting self-identity and ethnic identity as the premise based on which it realizes a gradient rising. There are close links between the different needs, as shown below:

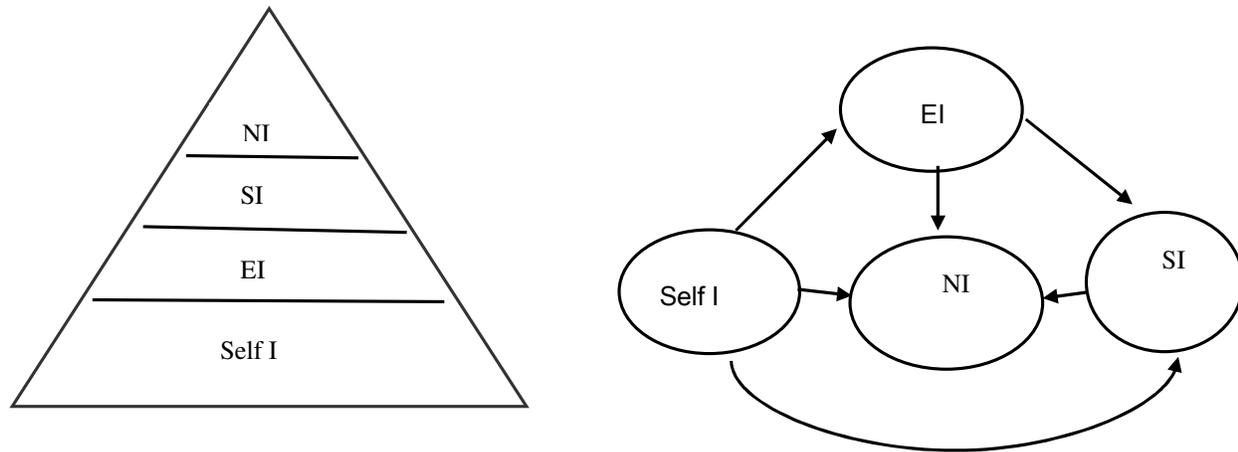


Chart1: The demand gradient map for the citizen identity of Minority College Students

Chart 2: The relationship chart of the citizen identity of Minority College Students

Notes:

Self Identity= Self I

Ethnic Identity= EI

Social Identity= SI

National Identity=NI

2.1 The need for self identity is the first gradient which is the basis for meeting the other's needs.

Self identity is also known as “self sameness” proposed by the American scholar Erikson on the basis of Freud's concept of “identity” and it is a multi-level and multi-dimensional psychology concept which has close relationship with self and personality development.¹Self-identity includes three levels: ego-Identity, personal identity and social identity. Among them, ego-identity is individual recognition for the inner self, showing strong internal; a personal identity is a interactive sameness with external environment, showing strong external characteristic; social identity is recognition and acceptance for the identity and culture of their groups. Minority college students are in the critical period of civic identity formation and citizen personality development and the preliminary stage of citizenship identity formation is presented to that it gradually forms strong subject consciousness and identity, with independent individual sense, sense of uniqueness, sense of integrity and the persistent cognitive for the past and future. With the increasing of the uncertainty and the fluidity brought by globalization and modernization, the minority college students are prone to have self identity crisis as cognition dislocation of “who am I”, role confusion and anxiety of high level.

2.2 The ethnic identity is the second gradient built on the need of self-identity, which is the important link to meet the needs of social identification and national identity.

The needs of ethnic identity mainly refers to the identity process of the members for their groups and ethnic culture which mainly includes three aspects: one is clan identity demand, namely ethnic member selects clan consciously through his clan's cognitive and takes the initiative to internalize and maintain the national memory, culture and value view; the second is ethnic body identity needs which refers to confirm and give an emotional acceptance to the similarities of the same clan members and forms collective concept of "kindred"; the third is cognition need for ethnic boundaries which refers to that all ethnic groups' detect and judgment for ethnic differences and ethnic boundary. Minority students affected much from the ethnic social factors, it is inevitable that their thoughts are rooted in an ethnic consciousness and they will have natural sense of identity and sense of belonging for their ethnic culture. After self-identity formation, the identity demand level of minority students will gradually increase and a greater range of ethnic group identity and the identity of national culture is easy to become their preferred goal of identity pursuit. Therefore, they often achieve to meet the demand of their ethnic identity through communicating with the college students of their own ethnics, showing sympathy for the disadvantaged ethnic group and concerning the hot events of their ethnics.

2.3 The third gradient is the need for social identity whose realization is the key link to achieve the level of national identity needs.

After meeting the individual's self identity, transforming from the identity of ethnic community to social community becomes the critical stage of improving the level of civic identity needs. The citizen's social identity is the same state between citizen and society based on the cognition, emotion and practice. The core quality of the citizen's social identity is public spirit which requires civic virtue of being highlighted in public life everywhere and strives to become an important element of civil society community with the public for value. Civil society identity need of minority college students is in the construction of the self-identity needs and ethnic identity needs and its being satisfied requires minority college students of consciously cultivating the public spirit, forming a strong sense of social responsibility, actively creating harmonious interpersonal relationships with other minority students, eliminating the individual subjectivity of atomic formula, acknowledging and accepting the basic operating rules of the current society, and forming a new theory of social identity in the process of social changes.

2.4 The highest gradient is national identity needs.

Citizens' national identity needs refers to the citizens' desire for identity of historical cultural tradition of their motherland, moral values, ideals and beliefs, and national sovereignty which lies at the top of citizenship identity needs gradient. The demand of national identity embodies the ultimate goal of citizenship identity needs and it is embodied in that desiring for the owner identity of the country is admitted and being integrated into the nation among which desiring for the owner identity of the country refers to that citizens hope their legal citizenship can be admitted, their freedoms and rights can be protected, and also it requires citizens of always identifying with and being loyal to their country and always putting

national interests above ethnic and personal interests. The desire for being integrated into the nation mainly refers to that the citizens want to attribute their own ethnic consciousness to the state, coordinate well the role conflict between ethnic identity and national identity, and take national identity as an honor. The national identity needs is in the highest level of the citizen identity of the minority college students, and it is the core of the citizen identity of minority college students. Achieving minority students' national identity is based on their self identity, ethnic identity and social identity needs, taking meeting these three for premise, but it is also beyond them from quality.

3. The conditions of meeting the demand gradient of the minority college students' citizenship

Any demand is actually caused by the lack of state and when the state of lack appears, both individuals and ethnic groups need to depend on their groups, countries and their own efforts to balance the lack of state. Concerning minority college students, regardless of the individual or group status, they always have citizen identity demand of maintaining their survival, development and balance, and also a series of citizenship identity needs meet depend on some specific conditions. Once the corresponding conditions of citizen identity needs get satisfied, it can promote the correct shape of the minority college students' citizenship identity.

3.1 The conditions for meeting their self-identity

First, the subject needs should be met. As a special group, the subject needs of minority college students include the material needs and spiritual needs and whether these two can get the effective satisfaction directly affect the formation of their civic identity. The material needs of minority college students mainly refers to the natural and social needs for maintaining the survival and development. The spirit need refers to the needs of aesthetic, emotion and faith created by minority college students to meet the pursuit of the spirit of life. Second, active subjective consciousness should be formed. The subjective consciousness, as the conscious cognition for subjective status, ability and value, is the performance of people's initiative, autonomy and creativity in the concept. Cultivation of minority college students' subjective consciousness should respect individual multiple selective, give full play to individual creativity so as to make them develop national master spirit and sense of participation and eliminate the recognition confusion of "who am I". Third, the cultivation of citizen identity ability is also important. Meeting minority college students' self identity needs should based on improving identity ability, request minority students to master systematic knowledge and experience treat things in a rational and scientific way of thinking, exclude negative an irrational emotional factors and develop strong value judgment in practice cognition.

3.2 The conditions for meeting their ethnic identity

First, to meet the basic conditions for the needs of self-identity and only after realizing it, the minority college students can construct the psychological schema of the national identity. Second, pay attention to the protection and promotion of the excellent national culture. As the symbol of the existence and development, the national culture is the concentrated expression of the spirit of the minority nationality. Minority college students' recognition for their ethnic culture is the value premise for meeting ethnic identity demand, so

paying attention to the protection of minority culture should take effective way to heritage down its excellent culture and promote the organic combination of dissemination of Chinese civilization and expansion of the excellent culture. Third, the effectiveness of education policy for minority students should be strengthened. Since the founding of the people's Republic of China, the party and the government attaches great importance to the cultivation of minority talents, especially more policy care is given in the minority students' higher education, but at present, some problems such as regional difference and so on appeared which is resulting in the excessive growth of ethnic minority college students for their own ethnic identity need, sense of nationalism is growing and the phenomenon of extreme ethnic identity continue to emerge.

3.3 The conditions for meeting their social identity

Social identity need is generally built on the basis of meeting self-identity need and ethnic identity (as shown in the relationship chart of the citizen identity of minority college students). At present, there are three conditions for minority college students to meet the needs of social identity: first, to reach a consensus on social core culture. Miller David pointed out that the "consensus" refers to a series of beliefs, values and norms shared by individuals in a certain geographical environment in a certain age.² In today's Chinese society, the core value concept that occupies the dominant position and plays dominated role is the core value system of socialism which is also the spiritual strength to promote the whole nation upwards, unity and harmony.

Minority students only making the socialist core value system formed recognized and accepted and making it the pursuit of spirit of internalized at the heart and outside of actions can effectively achieve the demand of social identity; second, to comply with social rules and social morality. The construction of civil society can not be separated from the satisfaction of the needs of civil society identification, and it is built based on the basic social rules, social ethics and other humanistic foundation. After achieving self-identity and ethnic identity, realization of social identity needs to comply with the social civilization rules and form a strong social morality consciousness. Third, consciously respect other ethnic groups. At the time of meeting the needs of their ethnic identity, minority college students are easy to produce the inclination of narrow group identity such as exclusion of other college students of ethnic groups which maybe hinder the normal exchanges with other social groups. In order to realize the vision of social identity, they must learn to respect other ethnic groups, and achieve harmonious coexistence with other ethnic groups.

3.4 The conditions for meeting their national identity

State is the most important political community of current development of human society and the national identity need ethnic minority college students is built at the top of self identity, ethnic identity and social identity whose realization still needs to meet the following two conditions: first, the formation of a strong civic awareness. Citizen consciousness, as the citizen's self consciousness for their master status, rights and duties in the country, should be the ideological basis of the national identity of the minority students. Only after the formation of a strong sense, can minority college student citizens have strong political participation interests and rights protection consciousness to play the national master role better and achieve the unity of the citizenship identity and national identity; second, developing the consciousness of the Chinese nation community. The Chinese nation is a unity composed of 56 interwoven and interdependent ethnic groups and

the formation of common consciousness is the guarantee for the realization of the unity and the great rejuvenation of Chinese nation. Ethnic consciousness of their own is rooted in minority college students, which easily lead the birth of exclusion sense for other ethnic groups, resulting in the need of self identity and the ethnic identity easily being strengthened and the need of society identity and national identity easily being weakened. Therefore, to meet the minority students' national identity needs should take enhancing history and culture identity of the ethnic minority college students as a means and take cultivating the Chinese national spirit and national identity consciousness as the ultimate goal in order to stimulate and meet the national identity need.

It can be seen that the demand of the minority college students' citizenship is in a gradient state, and its content is varied and changeable which is formed in the long-term practice of citizen cognition. To meet citizenship identity gradient demand of the minority college students must focus on the necessary conditions for its realization and it has an important promoting role to improve the quality of the whole nation and construct our citizen society by actively creating favorable conditions to promote the realization of citizen identity demand from low level to high-level gradually.

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