CITIZENSHIP IN THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIO-POLITICAL ORIENTATIONS OF RUSSIAN YOUTH: PLACE AND ROLE IN STATEHOOD STRENGTHENING

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Abstract

**Purpose of the study:** In this study, we analyze citizenship in the structure of socio-political orientations of Russian youth and explore the youth role in strengthening statehood and formation of civil society institutions. The development of active citizenship values in sociopolitical orientations of Russian youth is determined by the need to change relations between the state and society. The citizens shall develop civic responsibility and civil initiatives and control the institutions of power.

**Methodology:** The theory of social anomie and the concept of socio-cultural crisis serve the methodological basis for this study. This theory explores the eclectic nature of citizenship ideas in the youth environment. The civilization-based approach makes it possible to investigate features of citizenship idea and practice information of Western European and Russian cultural traditions. All that is methodologically significant in tracking citizenship specificity of the Russian youth. The integrated approach becomes a conceptual one in this study as it treats the citizenship of Russian youth as a complex multi-component phenomenon. This phenomenon includes moral, legal and socio-political attitudes reflecting the various aspects of relations in the "man-society-state" system.

**Results:** We conclude that in the citizenship of Russian youth there dominate two main attitudes: liberal and paternalistic. In the liberal aspect, the young people consider citizenship to be awareness of their civil rights and responsibilities, a kind of rational and active behavior corresponding to democratic political system. Paternalistic attitudes are manifested in loyalty to the state. Paternalists consider the state to be the political institution that is solely responsible for the present and future of the young people.

**Applications of this study:** The results allow us to understand the significance of citizenship as an ethic-legal quality of personality that strengthens Russian statehood and the importance of agreement (contract) between government and society. The results discovered the need for the citizens to be engaged in solving the state's socially significant problems. The state shall also develop a favorable institutional environment for civil socialization and self-realization of the young people.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** The eclectic nature of Russian youth citizenship points at hindering factors in the development of active and responsible citizenship as the youth ability to self-organize and solve socially significant problems. The main factors hindering the process of civil activity formation among the young people are the stable etatist-paternalistic traditions of political culture and institutions of Russian civil society. Although, development of youth citizenship is a well-managed process. It requires the youth policy to be the stimulating and guiding force. This force is necessary to solve the problems of legal personality type formation. Such a personality is characterized by politically and socially active civic-mindedness.

**Keywords:** citizenship, statehood, Russian youth, social and political orientations, Russian youth policy, Russian civil society.

INTRODUCTION

The youth values have a great impact on the future of society. Appreciating the role of youth in the socio-political processes of Russian society, we shall take into account that the modern younger generation has been formed, matured, and gained its identity in specific conditions. These conditions were characterized by fundamental changes in social and political life of the country (Sangadzhiev, Marchuk and Galushkin, 2013; Kvon et al., 2017; Bijk et al., 2019). They were accompanied by destruction of the entire system of value-normative regulation and socialization as well.

The young people are the main resource of social development and a criterion for the future well-being of the state (Tastan & Davoudi, 2017; Galushkin, 2018; Masalimova et al., 2019). Their value orientations, preferences, and attitudes are monitored by some socio-political forces. These forces try to control the young people, aware of their importance in social transformations.
It is obvious that the assertion of citizenship as an ethical and legal quality is one of the ways to strengthen the Russian state. It contributes to an agreement (contract) between the government and society, allows the citizens to participate in solving socially significant problems of the country. Today, Russian society has formed a request for a radical change in the current system of relations between the state and society. Especially important today is to form civil responsibility, civil initiatives and civil control developing the true institutions of civil society (Tastan & Davoudi, 2013; Iskhakov et al., 2019; Yorov et al., 2019; Konysheva, Chirkina, and Vasbieva, 2019). All that determines scientific interest in the problem of citizenship in socio-political orientations of Russian youth and identifies the factors that impede youth civic activity. These factors are important for the state’s policy aimed at development and support of civil initiatives of young people.

**METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

The Social and political orientations of Russian youth form in conditions of social uncertainty typical for many societies in transition (including the Russian). Accordingly, studying the socio-political orientations of the young people we shall take into account the social context of their formation. In this case, we shall choose the transformational paradigm, including the theory of social anomie (Durkheim, 1982; Merton, 1996) and the theory of socio-cultural crisis (Sledzevsky, 2005; Evgenieva, 1999) as a methodological basis for the study of specifics of social processes of the Russian society. In E. Durkheim's (1982) concept the anomie is described as a state of society, characterized by the collapse of the value system, crisis of social institutions and lack of common social and normative order.

According to the theory of sociocultural crisis, the periods of strong social upheavals are accompanied by devaluation of the former moral norms and value orientations, fragmentation of society, and the desire of mass consciousness to fill the spiritual vacuum with mythological symbols that may form new cultural landmarks. Some researchers believe that the socio-cultural crisis of Russian society is seen in the crisis of national and state identity, mainly due to the processes of "deheroization of Russian history" (Evgenieva, 2012), spread of mass culture and consumer psychology. In such circumstances, socio-political orientations of young people are unstable, mostly spontaneous, depending on the current socio-political situation.

The integrated approach serves a methodological basis for the study of citizenship as it considers citizenship to be a complex multi-component phenomenon. The components include legal (legal culture, observance of laws, freedom, legal awareness), socio-political (political culture, civil rights, social and political activity), and moral (civic consciousness, duty, responsibility, patriotism) (Rozhko and Vasilyeva, 2014; Sibgatullina et al., 2019). In this aspect, citizenship reflects a wide range of relations in “man-society-state” system.

The civilizational approach (Danilevsky, 2008; Weber, 2003) provides opportunities for the study of citizenship in Western European and Russian cultural traditions. It is conceptual for the study of citizenship specificity in the structure of socio-political orientations of the Russian youth.

The central idea of Danilevsky's concept is that both cultural and historical types corresponding to certain civilizations are characterized by their own religion, models of the political and socio-economic system. Each cultural and historical type forms its own worldview system, which determines the basic cognitive, value and behavioral attitudes in the given society (Danilevsky, 2008).

In Western intellectual tradition, the idea of citizenship is based on individual freedom, the self-worth of the individual, respect for private property. These values are developing in the process of Western civilization formation, citizenship is considered to be an inherent attribute of the civil society.

Considering the cultural and civilizational specifics of Russia, some researchers point out the role of the state information of the Russian cultural sociotype. "It is not society that produces a certain type of state, but the state that most forms of social structures. All that generates the idea of assuming authoritarian rule and authoritarian methods of leadership as natural for Russian mentality" (Mchedlov, 2001).

Like in the Western countries, in Russia they often consider authoritarianism of the state, legal nihilism, negative attitude to the values of the Western world, such as freedom, law, and private property to be the main cultural traditions hindering civil society development: "the values that are key to the civil society in the West, are otherwise perceived in Russia" (Solomatova, 2007).

These approaches allow revealing cultural and civilizational features of citizenship in the structure of social and political orientations of the Russian youth.

One of the main directions of development in modern Russia is strengthening statehood and security along with building the civil society that protects interests and rights of the citizens. That is why scientists study citizenship in youth socio-political orientations as the basis for development of civil society institutions.

**RESULTS**

In modern foreign literature, citizenship is often associated with the civic initiative that creates various public associations that act as intermediaries between society and authorities. In this role citizenship becomes a part of the civil society concept.
In scientific discourse, there are two main conceptual and methodological interpretations that underlie the modern understanding of civil society. According to the first interpretation, civil society is identified with a special type of state where the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals are legally and politically secured. Proponents of this approach believe that civil society should operate exclusively within the framework of the rule of law (Popper, 1991; Habermas, 1995).

There is another interpretation of civil society. It is considered to be a special non-state sphere, based on civil initiative in creation of voluntary non-political associations aimed at solving social problems. This position is held by A. Arato (1995) and A.D. Tokvil (1992). The scientists focused on the role of voluntary associations actively involved in public affairs.

It should be noted that both approaches, based on a solid historical and theoretical tradition, have a common ground related to the role of civil initiatives in harmonizing interests of individuals, social groups and the state. Moreover, within the framework of these approaches, the civil activity of individuals "does not go beyond the limits established by the law (if the law does not contradict the fundamental rights of citizens) and other methods of social regulation (moral norms, rules, agreements, etc.)" (Belik, 2012).

Thus, citizenship is realized in recognition of self-value, rights of another person, patriotism, respect for the law and government (Banks, 2014). Understanding of citizenship is based mainly on liberal intellectual tradition, viewed through the prism of individual freedom, priority, and respect of the law, civic engagement and social responsibility.

Russian researchers are interested in the problem of citizenship because of the socio-political need for integration, associated with both unstable global geopolitical situation and desire for the democratization of Russian socio-political institutions.

The domestic researchers state that the concept of citizenship is closely related to the peculiarities and difficulties of Russian democratic political culture and civil society institutions. For this reason, citizenship is treated as a form of relationship between the individual, society, and state aimed at solving conflicts between the state interests and human rights of the citizens.

Some scientists consider citizenship to be "an idea reflecting the semantic environment of the political formation of personality" (Aivazyan and Olhovikov, 2009). The author notes that citizenship is associated with active human participation in socio-political sphere.

Other researchers think that citizenship is not just a form of relationship between the man and the state, but the quality of personality, which allows to freely unite in voluntary associations and express public interests. Scientists note that "today it is obvious that assertion of citizenship is the main means of reviving Russia, strengthening Russian statehood, forming the agreement (contract) between the government and society, including the vital forces of the citizens in implementation of reforms" (Poluhin, 2002).

**DISCUSSION**

Sociological studies show that citizenship is poorly implemented as a component of socio-political orientations of Russian youth in practice because of the socio-cultural characteristics of Russian political culture, where the state dominates in all the spheres of public life.

Experts consider the Russian model of statehood to significantly differ from the Western one. The Russian statehood is a kind of the Eastern type, characterized by the state power cult. This model "assumes such a type of elements interaction when the state always is the only one socially significant subject" (Dines, 2008). We suggest that the Russian political culture was formed in a completely different cultural context, which determined its specificity.

This specificity is manifested in the establishment of etatist-paternalist relations between the state and society - the population does not form a sense of responsibility for the country and private life, people mostly rely on the state's care. According to this model of relations the state power is oriented to make political decisions without consideration of the public opinion and human interests. This attitude shaped not only the lifestyle but the cultural and archetypal attitude of population as well. The centralized state power strongly influenced formation of Russian civil society institutions. In this regard, in the Russian model of political culture citizenship is expressed more as a form of etatist homagers loyalty to the state, they do not violate historical traditions of governing the country (Shogenov et al., 2018).

It should be noted that the state is trying to deal with the problem of Russian youth citizenship formation. For this purpose, there are created various youth public organizations with a broad range of activities. The youth organizations are engaged in socially useful initiatives, educational activities, charity programs, volunteering, etc.

The researchers point out a special feature of today's interaction between the youth public associations and the state: "on the one hand, the government is trying to take the initiative and develop "socially useful" associations, based on experience of the Soviet past, when there was built an integrated and successfully functioning system of youth organizations. On the other hand, in the modern conditions, there is a desire for social partnership, interaction on equal terms between organizations and administration" (Rodina, 2005).
Today, the state of Russian youth civil society organizations is quite contradictory. These organizations are considered to be a form of citizen participation in public life. They ensure the democratization of the political system, open up the space of urgent social problems consideration. The solution to these problems should ensure reproduction of consensus between society and the government. But the mental program of social behavior is steadily reproduced, the state keeps any civil initiative under total control (Volkov et al., 2018; Kolesnikova and Lubsky, 2018; Sergeeva, 2019). Trying to control the public initiative, the state often seeks to “tame” independent public associations by creating certain rules that govern their relationships. This has led to the fact that civil initiatives start to integrate into the “vertical” of power created by political leaders of the country.

In the regions, this nationwide trend of governmental control in the sphere of civil organizations is implemented as well. So are the regional branches of the Youth Public Chamber, Young Russia, the Union of Youth, etc., Since emergence of these regional offices was initiated "from above", these structures are essentially quasigraded.

Now, due to the deterioration of socio-economic situation, the citizenship of Russian youth starts to manifest in protest activity. At the same time, sociologists note that “only 8% are not ready to protest in case of violation of their personal freedoms. For the vast majority of young people, passive protest is an acceptable form, which includes addressing the press (43%), or state bodies (43%), and sabotage of elections (23%)” (Shereti, 2013). This, in our opinion, allows concluding that over the past twenty years, the Russian youth has learned the basic democratic values such as free expression of political opinion and desire to choose their own representatives of the government. At the same time, special attention should be paid to the young people who are capable of active actions against the current government: among them “there are people ready to take part in mass rallies (25%), civil disobedience (8%), and confrontation with the authorities (5%)” (Shereti, 2013). Among these 5%, there may be the most radical elements focused on extremist actions (Bedrik and Zarbaliev, 2018). These elements require special attention not only from authorities that ensure security and integrity of the country but also from the main socialization institutions.

Thus, the state youth policy aimed at minimizing the destructive activity of young people becomes the most important tool for supporting the younger generation, involving people in solution to national problems. The ideological vacuum and vague prospects of the future contribute to radicalization of the youth and their involvement in activities of opposition political movements or extremist organizations. It is obvious that facing these threats, there is a need for effective state youth policy able to respond to the spiritual needs and social problems of the young people in a preventive and timely manner.

CONCLUSION
The analysis of citizenship in the structure of social and political orientations of the Russian youth allows us to draw the following conclusions: for the young people citizenship represents a mixture of liberal and paternalistic attitudes. In the liberal aspect, they treat citizenship as knowledge of civil rights and obligations, as rational and active behavior, exclusively on the basis of legal norms in accordance with the democratic political system.

Paternalistic attitudes shape the concept of citizenship as a form of loyalty to the state, which takes care of citizens and is solely responsible for their present and future. The predominance of such attitudes in the structure of socio-political orientations of Russian youth is possible due to the historically established relations between the individuals, the society and the state where the state is always the key subject of socio-political activity. This managerial tradition influenced the process of civil society institution formation, preventing them from functioning at full capacity in the model of Russian statehood (Shevchenko et al., 2018).

As a result, the country has developed an "inert" form of citizenship, based on the momager’s type of social behavior. Individuals demonstrate a passive and detached attitude to the system of political power, expect the state to provide their well-being without participation in public life. This type of citizenship is based mainly on conformist-type personality.

It is obvious that to solve the problem of active citizenship development as a value in the structure of Russian youth socio-political orientation it is necessary to develop a favorable institutional environment to create conditions for successful socialization and self-realization.

The country today faces geopolitical and economic challenges. These challenges make us look for resources that can ensure sustainable development of the country. That is why the development of Russian youth citizenship can become a source of modernization for political and economic institutions.

One of the strategic goals of Russian social development is the formation of civil society which provides individuals with ample opportunities to show active citizenship and initiative in solving socially significant problems of the country.

Thus, the effectiveness of youth policy management and educational institutions should be aimed at the formation of a legal-type person. This policy should form the civil culture, civic consciousness, and the need of civil activity.

The youth citizenship development is a well-managed process associated with the state's youth policy being as a stimulating and guiding force in solving the problems of the legal-type personality formation characterized by politically and socially active civil position. The effective use of the youth civil activity potential in the modernization of Russian
society is possible if they form adequate state and public systems of socialization for the young people and institutions of civil society.

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