

# Investigation and Analysis of College Students' Civic Spirit in the Context of the New Era Based on A Survey of 496 College Students

Based on A Survey of 496 College Students

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**Abstract:** The civic spirit referred to in this paper is the spirit of modern people, the moral character and personality qualities that citizens in modern society should possess, and it is the basis and guarantee of the progress of modern society. The research group conducted an in-depth investigation on the growth of 496 college students' civic spirit. With a view to civic education and civic spirit cultivation for College Students, and will provide beneficial enlightenment for moral education in colleges and universities.

**Keywords:** College students; Civic spirit; Investigation; Analysis

## 1. Introduction

The Outline of the National Medium and Long Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) clearly points out that "civic awareness education should be strengthened vigorously, and the socialist democratic concept of rule of law, freedom, equality, fairness and justice should be established to train qualified socialist citizens". The cultivation of civic consciousness and the promotion of civic spirit are compulsory courses in University education.

"Citizenship" is an imported product from ancient Greece. After the reform and opening up, Chinese people gradually deepened their understanding of "citizenship". The so-called "civic spirit" is the inherent beliefs and beliefs of citizens based on a certain value orientation, as well as the behavioral expression based on civic beliefs and beliefs<sup>1</sup>. It is formed in the process of urbanization and in the practice of governing the country and government. The citizen shaping of benefit promotion is the citizen's enthusiasm, care and respect for "public", which means the citizen's responsibility and obligation to "public", and the citizen's lofty public morality and accomplishment.<sup>2</sup> The civic spirit referred to in this paper is the spirit of modern people, the moral character and personality qualities that citizens in modern society should possess, and it is the basis and guarantee of the progress of modern society.

Investigation and Research on the growth of College Students' civic spirit in the new era is the necessary pre-

requisite for understanding the recognition of contemporary college students' citizenship and studying the future trend of the development of civic spirit. It is also an important basis for civic education and civic spirit cultivation of College students, and will provide beneficial enlightenment for moral education in colleges and universities.

## 2. Research Objects and Methods

The questionnaire consists of three parts. The first is introduction, which simply clarifies the significance and methods of this survey, so that the subjects do not have any emotional burden to answer the questions honestly. The second is to know the general knowledge of the subjects including their gender, grade and specialty, etc., aiming to analyse the relevant factors in college students' civic spiritual growth, so as to put forward targeted training programs. The third is the design of the questionnaire. In these three parts, the third part of the questionnaire is the focus. The design is based on the connotation of "civic spirit". Domestic scholars have many views on it. Some scholars think that civic spirit mainly includes participation consciousness, autonomy spirit, independence spirit, rule of law consciousness, fairness consciousness, tolerance and compromise spirit, etc.<sup>3</sup> Some scholars view it from the perspective of modern democratic politics, believing that civic spirit is the personality, quality and quality of citizens as subjects in modern democratic society. In conclusion, it includes rights consciousness, subject consciousness, responsibili-

ty consciousness, participation consciousness, legal consciousness, contract spirit and autonomy spirit, etc.<sup>4</sup> A “citizen” with civic spirit, first of all, is an independent, self-conscious and self-reliant individual with various rights to enjoy and various obligations to fulfill in society. To study the development of citizenship, we need to study the two aspects of civil rights and obligations, namely, the consciousness of rights and obligations. Therefore, combined with previous studies, this paper argues that the sense of rights and obligations is the basic connotation of modern civic spirit, and also becomes the basic framework of the design of this survey questions. With these two aspects, a total of 30 indicators were designed. By means of questionnaires, interviews and literature research, 496 college students from various uni-

versities (including Hunan Normal University, Guangzhou Nanyang Polytechnic College and Hunan Yiyang Medical College etc.) were investigated. The questionnaires are mainly obtained through random sampling, qq, Wechat, individual interviews, telephone surveys and so on. 475 questionnaires were collected and among them 469 were valid. The questionnaire recovery rate was 95.7%, and the questionnaire efficiency was 94.5%. The sample size met the data qualitative analysis theory.

### 3. Analysis of Survey Results

#### 3.1. Rights consciousness

1. A vague understanding of citizens’ political rights and freedom Table 1 of Rights Consciousness

**Table 1. The subject consciousness of university students’ rights (%)**

Item	No.	Rights Consciousness	Very strong	strong	weak	sum
political rights and freedom	1	Do you dare to defend your rights when your legitimate rights and interests are infringed?	77.69%	0.83%	19.83%	100
	2	If your rights are violated, who do you think is most effective?	74.36%	7.69%	18.80%	100
	3	Some people say that the rights of the Party and the state are limited and should be restricted by the people and the law. Do you think so?	89.08%	7.56%	3.36%	100
	4	Are you concerned about of the major national conferences?	11.72%	58.59%	29.69%	100
	5	How likely do you think your rights will be protected by law?	58.47%	24.58%	16.95%	100
	6	Can Christians be elected deputies to the National People's Congress?	67.18%	20.61%	12.21%	100
	7	Can the Public Security Bureau Arrest the Undergraduate for Unjustified Criticism of the Government's Current Policy?	43.18%	26.52%	30.30%	100
	8	Can University Students Citizens Promote the Thought of Freedom of Speech?	80%	9.23%	10.77%	100
	9	If a person hides a large number of pornographic pictorials and videos in his home, can his working unit search his or her house and confiscate the property?	78.79%	4.55%	16.67%	100
	10	The class League branch secretary lost 2,000 yuan cash and he is sure that it was stolen by the monitor. Does he have the right to search the monitor to recover the lost cash?	89.34%	3.28%	7.37%	100

When they were asked whether “Christians could be elected deputies to the National People's Congress”, 67.18% of the participants expressed affirmation and 32.82% questioned and negated respectively. It can be seen that the majority of college students have a clear understanding of citizens’ right of being elected. They were also asked “if the Public Security Bureau could arrest the students when they criticized the current policy of the government for no reason”, the majority of college students have a clear understanding of their rights of criticism, but still there are 30.30% of them who answered yes. That is, almost one third of college students think that the Public Security Bureau can arrest students. According to Article 41 of the Constitution, “Citizens of the People's Republic of China have the right to criticize any state organ or functionary”, obviously, students' criticism of the current government policy is protected by the Constitution, even though such criticism is "irrational", or rootless. Therefore, the answer that the Public Security Bureau has no right to arrest students is correct.

When the students were asked the question, “If a person hides a large number of pornographic pictorials and videos in his home, can his working unit search his or her house and confiscate the property”, 16.67% of the students answered “Yes”. Article 39 of the Constitution stipulates that “The residences of citizens of the People’s Republic of China are inviolable. It is forbidden to illegally search or invade citizens’ houses.” It can be seen that the rate of correct answer is not high.

It is particularly noteworthy that the above two figures, 32.82% (questioning and negating the choice of Christians as deputies to the National People’s Congress) and 30.30% (whether the public security bureau can arrest the student), are worrying, that is to say, almost one third of college students do not understand the basic rights and obligations stipulated in the Constitution.

(2)A vague understanding of citizens’ economic and cultural rights Table 2 of Rights Consciousness

**Table 2. The subject consciousness of university students' rights (%)**

Item	No.	Rights Consciousness	Strong	Less strong	Weak	Sum
Economic and cultural rights	11	When you do summer work or part-time work, will you take the initiative to sign a contract with the employer?	75.97%	13.95%	10.08%	100
	12	A college student has been disciplined by the school. Can the monitor open his letter?	94.62%	4.62%	0.77%	100
	13	Some people have acquired a large amount of property from their capitalist father abroad. Does the people's government have the right to take these property into public ownership?	90.70%	3.10%	6.20%	100
	14	If a private owner requires a worker to work for another four hours after work, can the worker refuse?	82.03%	12.50%	5.47%	100
	15	Can college students study western anti-Marxist theory?	17.46%	72.66%	8.73%	100

When asked, "When you do summer work or part-time work, will you take the initiative to sign a contract with the employer", 10% of the students thought that "signing a contract or not" didn't matter at all, and 13.95% of the students thought that "signing an oral contract is also acceptable".

When answering "Some people have acquired a large amount of property from their capitalist father abroad. Does the people's government have the right to take these property into public ownership", about 10% of the students have a vague understanding. The Constitution protects citizens' legitimate income and property, but nearly 10% of college students have not formed a correct understanding of it.

In addition, college students do not have a clear understanding of citizens' right to rest and do scientific research.

**3.2. College students' sense of responsibility**

(1)There is a disconnection between cognition and behavior in the sense of. Self-responsibility, and a certain number of students are not responsible for themselves.

We investigated the current situation of college students' self-responsibility, and the results given by the options were unsatisfactory. When answering "whether to take part in physical exercise regularly to keep healthy", 26.85% of the students thought "no"; when answering "Do you stay up late watching TV, chatting or playing games", 21.23% of the students thought "always". It can be seen that contemporary college students are not strict with themselves, and there is a great tendency of arbitrariness and greed for pleasure. This phenomenon reflects a social problem - the tendency of profit-seeking and hedonism. Meanwhile, it also reflects the contemporary college students' pursuit of self in thought, but in action, of self-indulgence, a contradiction between cognition and behavior.

(2)Family responsibility as a whole is strong, but there is a risk of personalization. The survey found that contemporary college students have a strong sense of family responsibility. For example, in the aspect of supporting parents, only four out of 475 valid papers chose "not supporting parents", accounting for 0.84%. It can be seen

that only those with special circumstances would choose "not supporting parents". But when answering the question, "Love without marriage or even sexual intercourse between men and women should be allowed", more than 50% of the students choose "not to agree with it", more than 20% choose "indifference" and more than 20% choose "approval". It can be seen that more than half of the college students have a deep-rooted traditional view about love in China. However, nearly half of the college students hold a nontraditional concept of love. They advocate the concept of love of Westerners, which is contrary to the social norms and morals of today. They are irresponsible for love and family.

When answering "When are you going to get married?", 78.4% of the respondents were "after 30 years old, to get married when they are successful in their careers", 15.3% were after 25 years old, and 6.30% were "unwilling to get married or no wish to get married". This shows that most people are willing to marry late and have children late. Worryingly, 6.30% of the population did not want to marry or were unwilling to marry. There are many reasons for this, mainly the lack of confidence in marriage. With the increase of social pressure, high housing prices and high consumption make college students fear marriage. Another reason is that with the increase of the number of college students in single-parent families, the imperfect marriage of their parents has formed a negative shadow for them.

(3) The sense of collective responsibility is utilitarian. The survey shows that college students' sense of collective responsibility as a whole is strong but with the tendency of utilitarian. When asked, "What would you do if you saw a thief stealing on a bus and the stolen passenger didn't notice it?", although 15.64% of college students chose to "stand up and stop thieves", 77.24% chose other ways such as "shouting for thieves" or "quietly calling the police or making noises to attract the attention of victims" or "quietly reminding victims by other means". It can be seen that contemporary college students tend to be more rational when endangering their own interests. Rationality is an important accomplishment of citizen spirit, and also a manifestation of national progress. There are irrational characteristics in Chinese traditional culture.5 It

is an important feature different from western culture and has become a major feature in the field of Chinese national culture.<sup>6</sup> The rational trend of College Students' way of life shows that Chinese traditional culture has faced the problems of society, politics and life directly, and realized the transformation from empiricism culture mode to modern rationalism culture mode, because the change of College Students' ideology and life style is the internal force of this transformation. Similarly, 7.12% of college students chose to "pretend not to see" or "quickly avoid, stay away and protect themselves". This is a prominent manifestation of college students' self-centeredness as well as a concentrated reflection of College Students' utilitarian thinking.

(4) State responsibility is more rational. The survey found that when the motherland needs them, college students will go forward bravely regardless of themselves. 53.1% of college students have a clear attitude towards joining the army, actively responding to the call of the Party and actively participating in the army. However, there is a tendency of utilitarianism in the patriotic way. Only about 40% of them choose to "pay attention to national affairs and actively participate in the patriotic cause of rejuvenating China". 56.25% of college students think that patriotism is "study hard, live well, and do their own work" or "behave properly, care environment, help others, or start from tiny things". However, 3.78% of them chose "no feeling, or no feeling of patriotism in peacetime, and feeling indignation when others did". It can be seen that the national concept of college students needs to be strengthened. When asked "Do you pay attention to safeguarding national interests and dignity, and keep vigilance against Western culture and system", 14.48% of college students expressed "full approval". That is to say, more than one percent of college students agreed with the Western social system, and in a sense they had the idea of worshiping foreign things and flattering foreign countries. This is not what we want to see. It is also an important ideological problem to be solved in the course of ideological and political theory in Colleges and universities in the future.

(5) social responsibility needs to be strengthened. Surveys show that contemporary college students generally pay more attention to the sense of human social responsibility (ecological environment responsibility). However, due to various reasons, college students show a comparative concern or worry about the issue of ecological and environmental protection (they want to care but can not do anything about it). For example, 62.37% of the students chose "general" in the choice of "whether to love the environment, protect animals and worry about some ecological crises". Faced with the increasingly serious ecological crisis, college students' sense of ecological environment responsibility or human responsibility needs to be strengthened, which is one aspect of the problem; on

the other hand, for the option "Do you use disposable chopsticks or disposable lunch boxes", choosing "Often" accounts for 25.83%. College students can not make their own choices in the social environment (with disposable chopsticks or lunch boxes), which also reflects the embarrassment they encounter when they want to protect the environment. This can also be reflected from the option "If pollution is found, what will you do?" Nearly 60% of college students choose "want to participate but give up because they are weak". This tells us from the reverse: to cultivate college students' sense of social responsibility, social forces can not be ignored. The construction of ecological culture will still become an important issue. It involves how to construct an ecological environmental protection system, how to straighten out the relationship among social elements such as government, organization and individual in the construction of ecological civilization, how to fulfill their respective responsibilities, and how to do everything in their own way, especially in the field of moral education in Colleges and universities. Through the ecological phenomena that everyone must care about, college students should be educated about the knowledge of ecological environmental protection, to enable every college student's "Participation" in real life, "Participation" in the construction of ecological environmental protection in factories and mines, realizing the importance of ecological environmental protection, thus strengthening the education of ecological environmental protection and cultivating ecological environmental protection awareness. This is a work that must be persisted in for a long time.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the above findings, we draw the following conclusions.

##### 4.1. It is imperative to cultivate the civic spirit of modern college students to stimulate

People's creativity, we need to give full play to the positive role of citizens in modern democratic political life. The report of the nineteenth national congress pointed out that the development of socialist democratic politics is to embody people's will, protect people's rights and interests, stimulate people's creativity, and guarantee people's ownership by system. The survey shows that a considerable number of college students do not understand the basic rights and obligations of citizens in the constitution. For college students, it is necessary to strengthen constitutional education, awareness and carry forward the spirit of the constitution. How to properly exercise and fulfill citizens' basic rights and obligations, and how to cultivate students' legal consciousness and modern citizenship are a new subject for moral education under the new historical conditions.

#### **4.2. Contemporary college students begin to assume social responsibility, showing a higher sense of social responsibility**

They have strong national self-confidence and a higher recognition of the concept of the state. This is the result of our long-term ideological education for college students and a reflection of the inheritance of excellent Chinese culture. At the same time, college students' sense of social responsibility also shows the characteristics of strong subjective consciousness and weak collective consciousness, and even a considerable number of people show the lack of social responsibility. There are many factors influencing and restricting the sense of social responsibility of contemporary college students, which are interrelated with their behavioral habits and patterns. They are mainly manifested in their ideological and moral qualities, social and cultural backgrounds, school education, etc.

#### **4.3. In modern society, every citizen should always bear in mind the rights**

Entrusted by law, because the exercise of rights is the power and source of promoting social progress. At the same time, the realization of rights is the guarantee for people to enjoy a civilized and happy life. However, this is only one aspect of the problem, and it is the main aspect of the problem to fulfill the responsibilities of citizens. Therefore, the consciousness of citizens' rights and responsibilities can not be separated as a whole. It is the basic accomplishment that modern citizenship should

possess, and it is also the top priority in the construction of democratic politics.

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