

Outline of Citizen Education and Public Finance

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Abstract

Objective: To investigate the relationships of constitution, citizen education and public finance in China.

Content: Citizen Education is one of the citizen basic rights in Constitution. It is also a guarantee for the realization of other basic rights. Qualified citizen is needed based on the regulation of citizen rights according to citizen education. However the realization of the power is restricted by finance, thus it is in need of financial support and guarantee.

Significance: The realization of citizen of citizen rights in constitution is based on legitimately exercising rights. Lacking of the public financial support as a foundation, it is impossible to achieve a balanced citizen education input, which would finally influence the rights enforcement in constitution.

Key words: Citizen education; Public finance

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INTRODUCTION

In 2007, Chinese Communist Party's congress government report emphasized on "citizen consciousness education", which is the reflection of coordination of Chinese citizen education and democratic legislation. The slogan "To

enhance citizen consciousness education, and to establish socialistic democratic legal, freedom, equality, equity and justice concept" is not only a milestone in consciousness, but also has theoretical and practical significance.

1. CONSTITUTION GOAL OF CITIZEN EDUCATION

Citizen education is the process of cultivate qualified citizen through the process of cultivate citizen knowledge. Active and passive, as well as positive and negative cognition processes are all involved. Different educational targets are set at various levels, and qualified citizen is the requirement at constitutional level. In other word, to cultivate qualified citizen though citizen education. In constitutional relationship, we need to cultivate constitutional-qualified citizen who can exercise citizen right in constitution though citizen education.

1.1 Cultivate the Concept of People's Sovereignty

As reflected in the constitution, the state and the citizen are the principal parts of constitutional relationship. All democracy countries come straight to emphasize the idea of people's sovereignty. All the rights of state belong to its people. It is the people's representative organ that represents people to exercise the state rights. The idea of people is actually a collection of citizen. In a state, citizens play a dominate role in the political life. Citizens make national decision, rather than the state over citizens, which is the key point to make a distinction between citizens and subjects. Citizens' exercise of people's sovereignty is mainly realized through the way to elect and to be elected, making their own will rise and control the national political life. Subjects move toward citizens and citizens move toward intelligent people, referring to the intelligent citizens that know how to use constitutional rights.

1.2 Cultivate the Concept of Supervision and Constitution Demands

Public power and civic right coexist in the right dimension of constitution. The realization of civic rights is the first place in terms of the purposes of modern states existence and the objects of constitutional protection. In case of imbalance or confrontation of public power and civic right, litigation is the legitimate and lawful way when citizens choose relief rights (Patrinos, 2002). When citizens are less aware of legitimate rights relief, they may sometimes choose violence or other abnormal means, which will shake the foundation of the constitution-regulated social relation and make the society develop irrationally. So it is sure for constitution to include the imbalance or confrontation in the structure specification. Hence, it would be of great practical significance to strengthen the cultivation of legitimacy and validity of the consciousness of citizen constitutional demands.

1.3 Cultivate the Consciousness of Participation

Besides interpreting the state belonging, the constitution also regulates the mechanism in which citizens participate in the specific national affairs. Concern and management for national affairs means participation—political participation of citizens. Excessive democratic participation may turn into populist democracy, leading to disorder while insufficient participation may weaken the basis of democratic politics (Weibrod, 1964). At present, insufficient participation becomes the main problem in our nation. Our citizens are indifferent about national affairs and cold when state prestige is challenged. The formulation and implementation of many policies which benefit the people cannot get the understanding and support of the masses. The reason, in fact, is that political practice activities lack mass foundation in default of citizen participation, resulting in their despair for the realization of civic rights involved in constitution, especially the rights to manage national affairs.

Of course, our country has also been making great effort in improving the institutional condition in order to realize the constitutional goals for civic education. With the establishment of the socialist legal system in our country in October, 2011, the legal system concerning civic education is also basically completed. It has been formed a system of law, regulation and rules with the constitution as the core and education as the contents. Multi-layered legal framework covering education laws, regulations and rules with the constitution as the basis and the “Education Law” as the basic law has promoted realization and protection of civic education rights. However, owing to late start of the study of civic education in China, theoretical understanding of inconsistencies on property dispute of right and power, orientation of right and obligation, differences between constitutional rights and general rights in civic education, leads to the inferior quality of legislation which is not specific enough and

is short of pertinence and systematization. On the other hand, current education regime generally manifests the attribute of soft law. Due to shortage of hard supporting measures, many educational policies and principles cannot be carried out. This tremendously destroys the balance for coordinated development of civic education and national society, which will necessarily influence the dynamic function civic education manifests in promoting sustainable development of national economy. Hence, realization and protection of civic education rights should not be only limited to the constitutional provision, but also be valued in the height of the basic state policy and be regarded in the status of the state and national rejuvenation because it shoulders on the responsibility of future national development.

2. THE PATH TO REALIZE CITIZEN EDUCATION

2.1 Cultivate Democracy Consciousness in Citizen

Democracy Emphasizes on democratic suffrage and political process. With the development of the civic education concept and the gradual improvement of its system construction, the fundamental role and value of citizen education is becoming more and more obvious in the entire social structure. With the development of modern democratic theory and practice, the relationship between democracy and civic education is becoming increasingly closer. Ancient democracy requires civic education be subjected to democratic politics, and civic education is essentially a civil in pursuit of rank and position, connected by managing the power. Modern democracy emphasizes on civil rights, and the value of civic education in modern society is to cultivate similar democracy freedom and citizens’ ability to influence modern democratic politics. The significant difference between the connection of citizen education and ancient democracy or modern democracy is the transition from managing rights to civil rights. And civic education a fundamental change showed the connection area of the right turn from the rule civil fields.

On the one hand, country modernization strengthened even expanded the desires and expectations of members of society. On the other hand, lacking of modernization in politics and economy, leads to dissatisfaction of desires and expectations, even frustration in society members and the lacking of dredge channels, thus resulting in unrest. Social mobility can weaken or eliminate the frustration after it is formed in social members, without resorting to politics, so as to maintain social and political stability.

2.2 Cultivate Legal Consciousness in Citizen

Constitution is a reflection of democratic politics, yet democratic politics does not equal to constitutionalism.

Democracy can be ruled by man, resulting in autocracy. In order to avoid the situation, constitutionality is in need (Leuven, Lindahl, Oosterbeek, & Webbink, 2007). Constitution restrains individuals to grant individual rights through the rule of law to. Similarly, it also restrains the government to and government authorization through the rule of law. Constitution is the foundation and prerequisite of ruling by law, and ruling of law is the consequence of constitutionalism and very essence of constitution. Constitution and ruling of law are indispensable. Ruling of law is an inevitable choice for the development of human society. Legal Faith can not be separated from the “good law” and implement “good law”. The understanding and implementation of the “good law” rely on citizen participation in legal life and belief in law. However, the key to cultivate the citizen participation in law is education. Citizen education provides fundamental resources in ruling of law, and it is the best way to enhance understanding of law.

3. THE REALIZATION OF CITIZEN EDUCATION RIGHTS RELY ON THE GUARANTEE OF PUBLIC FINANCE

Citizen education is one of the citizen basic rights as well as citizen livelihood well-being in a constitution perspective. As a livelihood right, the realization of it is in need of public finance support. The citizen education input directly or indirectly influences the quality of economics, politics and culture. For instance, the input of public finance in education drives the consumption in the third industry, thus leading the promotion of GDP education industry directly or indirectly (increased fixed assets and service value). On the other hand, increased education input leads to broadened width and enhanced quality in public education, which in turn increase the social human resource scientific and technology strength, thus promoting the economy growth indirectly.

There are mainly three sources, including national, social and personal, in Chinese education input. Some researchers believe that national input in education contributes most marginal contribution ratio to economy growth through descriptive statistical method, disequilibrium test, granger causality test and regression analysis (Ji & Zhou, 2011). Public finance input in citizen education should be a medium-long term financial strategy as long as economic booming continues.

3.1 Realization of Public Financial Input in Citizen Education

In 1980s, Wang Yongquan and Li Yining applied for the national “sixth five” social scientific key project “rational percentage of education input in national income and economic outcome in education investigation”. One of the subproject “international comparisons of rational ration

of education input in national income” was hosted and implemented by Chen Liangkun in Peking University. In this project, they choose 38 countries with a population above 10 million as research subjects and collect the public education input and GDP ratio around year 1961 to 1979 based on regression method. They concluded that the international average public education input is around 4.24% once GDP reaches \$1000. So the research team suggest that our education input to be 4% by 2000. Afterwards, the research team collected data from 40 countries between 1980 and 1985, reanalyzed the data and gain the same conclusion. In February, 1993, state council issued “*Chinese education reform and development outline*” which first proposed that “steadily increase state financial education funds ratio in GDP, and the ratio should be 4% by the end of the century”. To our disappointment, the number is only 2.58% in 2000. Again, state council proposed “more financial education funds increase than financial current input, and steadily increase state financial education funds ratio in GDP, and the ratio should be 4%” in “*The eleventh five year regulation outline for National economic and social development*” in March 2006. The outline, however, did not point out the deadline. In May 2010, state council executive meeting review and approved “*National medium-long term education reform and development regulation outline*” (2010-2020) (*education regulation outline*). On June 21st, the central committee of CPC reviewed and approved *Education regulation outline*, which put forward a 4% goal by 2012 thus give the priority to education development.

After 2013, education budget problem is not restricted to 4%, but how to provide sufficient education funds. According to C. S. Benson, the percentage of education budget in GDP is sufficient when it reaches 8%, and appropriate when it reaches 20%. These two numbers are considered to be the standard of whether the education financial input is sufficient.

3.2 Guarantee of Public Finance to Citizen Education Input

It is not difficult to realize a 4% of education funds in GDP according to 2013 national government financial budget report. According to the relationship between central and local input, central input amounts for 10% and local input amounts for 90%. This percentage varied among different places. Imbalanced public education resource distribution, inequality among city and county (especially in rural areas, border areas and ethnic areas), all of these indicate the uneven structure and insufficient efficiency in education input.

Once we achieve the 4% goal, we need to further complete and standardize the regulations on education funding. On the one hand, we need to intensify the current scientific theory, on the other hand, we need to ensure and complete the new problems. Only when education

funds are ensured by legislation can education be prior developed.

There must be clear rules and regulations of public product attributes, the distinction between public and private goods areas, on basis of which implement the national (central and local) spending on public finances direction (Bray, 1996). In central government level, we should emphasis on the realization of fair education on public goods theory. We should support a. those important national strategic and minority nation unity areas, b. vulnerable populations, such as the poor, left behind or disabled children, c. the financial transfer payment measures to make up for insufficiency in middle and western education finance issues. In local government level, we should rely on the provincial financial strength and the central transfer payment income to realize the equalization transfer payment among different areas in the province. By “balancing the difference” approach, we need to ensure to smoothly construct a standardized public financial system. On the other hand, local governments should strengthen the local tax collection work, promote tax reform, and take government budget revenues at different levels into the budget management, so as to maintain steady and rapid growth in local revenues to provide financial foundation for the (local) education funds.

CONCLUSION

Citizen education, as well as survival right and property right are all important index of livelihood. Constitution

in every nation affirms the livelihood value of citizen education in various aspects. Undoubtedly, citizen education provides fundamental requirements for citizen society construction. Under the prerequisite of qualified citizen, ensured by constitution, based on necessary public finance and ensured livelihood as value pursuit, thus citizen society formation is promoted. Constitutionalism is meaningless without citizen, the main subject of citizen society. The prerequisite and foundation of financial constitution is the guarantee of citizen rights.

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