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The Civic Identity of Graduates (11th Grade Students) of Secondary Schools at the Current Historical Stage of Kazakhstan’s Development: the Results of a Quantitative Study

This article presents the results of a quantitative study on the civic identity of high school students in Kazakhstan. The analysis is based on survey data collected from final-year students across schools in all regions of the country, conducted in both Kazakh and Russian languages. The study explores how high school students perceive their civic identity and highlights differences influenced by the language of instruction and regional contexts. The findings reveal that the majority of students endorse the concept of a civic nation. It becomes evident that students’ civic and patriotic attitudes are shaped by their linguistic environment, social engagement, and educational policies. The authors argue that state policies regarding civic education should take into account the socio-cultural and linguistic characteristics of different regions, address existing language barriers, and actively involve Russian-speaking youth in civic socialization processes. Furthermore, the study underscores the crucial role of educational institutions in fostering civic identity and advocates for the integration of intercultural interaction into school curricula and student activities. The results are valuable for educational institutions, regional policymakers, and specialists in contemporary Kazakhstan history and regional studies.

Keywords: civic identity, patriotism, students, Republic of Kazakhstan, ethnocentrism, civic nation, regional differences, state policy, modern history, history of Kazakhstan

Introduction

Civic education and historical science represent complementary components of the educational process, contributing to the formation of conscious civic awareness and respect for historical heritage among learners. Historical science, which studies the processes of civil society formation, enables the identification of patterns in the development of social institutions, democratic principles, and legal norms, serving as the foundation for educating active and responsible citizens. In turn, civic education fosters young people’s understanding of the significance of historical events and processes, encouraging interest in studying the past as a source of experience for addressing contemporary social and political issues. In the context of globalization and increasing intercultural interactions, the role of civic education is growing, as it shapes young people’s sense of belonging to historical heritage and responsibility for the future of society.

The issue of shaping the civic identity of modern youth is increasingly relevant in the context of globalization and the rapid socio-cultural transformations occurring in society. This is particularly significant in multiethnic states like the Republic of Kazakhstan, where diverse cultural and linguistic groups coexist. In this environment, the question of identity is closely linked to maintaining social stability and interethnic harmony. High school students are challenged to understand and adopt shared civic values, forming a stable civic identity that serves as the foundation for social solidarity and patriotism [1], [2], [3].

The aim of this study is to identify the features of civic identity formation among high school students in the Republic of Kazakhstan through the analysis of quantitative survey data. To achieve this objective, sociological methods were utilized in the historical research. The following tasks were set to achieve the research goal: to determine the extent to which civic identity has been developed among graduating high school students; to identify differences in civic formation based on the language of instruction (Kazakh or Russian); and to assess regional differences in how Kazakhstani high school students perceive civic values.

The study employed a model involving experimental and control groups, which enhanced the validity and reliability of the findings. The experimental group included 11th-grade students from general education

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schools, from whom the primary research data were obtained. The control group consisted of first-year students from colleges and higher education institutions — recent high school graduates. Comparative analysis of the data from these two groups allowed for the assessment of the stability and dynamics of formed civic attitudes, as well as the identification of possible changes during the adaptation process to new conditions after graduation, thus reflecting the historical dynamics of civic attitudes. The use of this methodology provided the opportunity to track short-term changes in civic identity during the transition period from school education to professional and higher education.

Civic identity, considered in a historical context in this study, represents a set of value orientations, social attitudes, and behavioral models that shape an individual's sense of belonging to a specific state and civic community, as well as awareness of their role and responsibility in the socio-political life of the country. In various historical periods, the formation of civic identity has been closely linked to the processes of nation-state building, the development of civil society institutions, legal culture, and patriotic education. In the context of modern Kazakhstani history, this process reflects not only the legal status of an individual but also their active participation in the realization of public interests, perception of historical memory, state symbols, and ideals that form the basis of national unity, as well as the vision of Kazakhstan's future development.

Despite the significance of this topic, existing scientific literature reveals several contradictions in both theoretical and methodological approaches to studying civic identity. In particular, the structure and factors contributing to civic identity formation remain unclear, as does its relationship with the linguistic and cultural characteristics of different regions [4]. Foreign researchers from the United States, Russia, Turkey, and other countries propose various methodological approaches, yet there is no consensus in academic circles on a universal model of civic identity [5], [6], [7], [8], [9]. This lack of agreement leads to discrepancies in diagnosing and interpreting research findings.

Research on the civic identity of youth in Kazakhstan's historical and educational context predominantly relies on qualitative methods, often limited to small samples from specific regions or cities. This limitation complicates efforts to generalize findings and identify nationwide trends [10], [11], [12]. In this context, employing a quantitative approach based on a representative sample of high school students from all regions of Kazakhstan is a crucial methodological advancement. This approach enables researchers to overcome existing limitations and obtain an objective overview of the state and developmental trends of civic identity among Kazakhstan's youth.

In this study, we argue that the formation of civic identity in Kazakhstan is a complex, multi-level process influenced by the educational environment and the socio-cultural characteristics of different regions. Civic identity is seen not only as a product of state policy but also as a result of the interaction between individual and group identities formed through socialization, which is discussed in various studies on this topic [13–18].

Thus, this research aims to address current gaps in the understanding of civic identity among Kazakhstan's youth and to enhance the theoretical framework regarding its structure and the factors influencing its formation at the national level.

Materials and Methods

In investigating the civic identity of high school students in Kazakhstan, historical methods played a crucial role in the research methodology. These methods allowed for uncovering the specific features of civic values and identities across historical contexts, as well as identifying historically determined factors that influence the current situation.

The historical-genetic method was particularly valuable in tracing the origins and development of the concept of civic identity in Kazakhstan. It helped identify the historical conditions and factors that have shaped the modern forms of civic identity among Kazakhstani youth, while also facilitating an examination of the transformations in civic and national values.

The historical-comparative method was employed to compare the processes of civic identity formation among high school students across different generations and regions of Kazakhstan. This approach revealed both stable and evolving characteristics of civic orientations among youth. Additionally, it allowed for potential comparisons between the results from Kazakhstani high school students and similar data from other countries (such as those in the EU, CIS, USA, and Japan), providing insights into the uniqueness of Kazakhstan's experience in an international context. This method was integral in analyzing statistical data regarding the structure and number of respondents.

The historical-typological method facilitated the identification of typical and recurring models of civic identity formation among students from a historical perspective. This approach enabled the determination of stable types of civic identity and their influencing factors.

The periodization method, applied during the preparatory stage of the study, allowed for the identification of key historical phases in the formation of civic identity among Kazakhstan's youth. This method structured the research and illustrated the development of civic values and identity through successive historical periods, each with its own unique influences on the civic stance of young people, including the roles of various socialization agents.

The application of historical methods enabled a thorough exploration of the influence of political, cultural, and social transformations on the modern civic identity of high school students in Kazakhstan.

Primary sociological data collection was conducted using surveys of students in general education schools. A simple random sampling strategy was employed, with a statistically significant minimum sample size of 383 respondents for the study. The general population included 168,306 students in the 11th grade of secondary education institutions [19]. To ensure statistically significant representation of socio-geographic, socio-demographic, and ethnolinguistic characteristics, and to account for potential losses (such as refusals to participate or damage to research tools like questionnaires), the sample size was increased to 675 respondents. High school students formed the experimental group.

For comparative analysis, the control group consisted of students from colleges and universities, totaling 510 individuals. The distribution of the sample adhered to strictly defined parameters, ensuring statistically reliable survey results.

Results

The vast majority of respondents envision the future of Kazakhstan as a civic nation, where citizens of all ethnic backgrounds come together to form a united community while maintaining their linguistic and cultural diversity. Approximately one-quarter of participants hold an ethnocentric view, believing that, over time, a Kazakh nation rooted in the Kazakh language and culture will emerge. Additionally, 13.8 % of respondents found it difficult to provide a definitive answer (see Table 1).

Table 1

Question: "What kind of future would you like to see for Kazakhstan?", %

№	Answer options	Percentages
1	Citizens of all ethnoses make up the united Kazakhstan nation	64,0
2	All citizens of Kazakhstan constitute Kazakh nation	22,2
3	Difficult to answer	13,8

The most significant contrast is evident when comparing the data based on the language of education (Table 2). Among Kazakh-speaking students, ethnocentric views are notably more prevalent; the belief in an ethnonation is 3.5 times more common compared to Russian-speaking students (34.0 % versus 9.3 %). Conversely, the emphasis on Kazakhstan's development as a civic nation, in line with current state policies, is higher among Russian-speaking respondents, exceeding that of Kazakh-speaking respondents by 12 % (70.4 % versus 58.3 %).

At the same time, it should be taken into account that this refers to relative, not absolute predominance, since Kazakh-speaking respondents, just like Russian-speaking ones, prefer the future of Kazakhstan to be associated with the formation of a Kazakhstani nation rather than an exclusively Kazakh one. Nevertheless, ethnocentric attitudes are more widespread among Kazakh-speaking respondents (more than three times higher compared to Russian-speaking respondents).

Table 2

Question: "What kind of future would you like to see for Kazakhstan?", in the context of the language of education, %

№	Answer options	Kazakh, %	Russian, %
1	Citizens of all ethnoses make up the united Kazakhstan nation	58,3	70,4
2	All citizens of Kazakhstan constitute Kazakh nation	34,0	9,3
3	Difficult to answer	7,7	20,3

One of the aspects of the study is the influence of the language of instruction (Kazakh or Russian) on the perception and formation of civic identity among high school students. This issue becomes particularly relevant in the context of Kazakhstan's multi-ethnic and multicultural environment, where language serves not only as a means of communication but also as an important element of identification practices.

When analyzing the obtained data, it should be noted that the linguistic environment of education has a complex impact on the process of civic identity formation through several key social and cultural mechanisms. Firstly, the language of instruction is closely related to the content of educational programs, where different aspects of historical memory, national values, and models of civic behavior may be emphasized. In Kazakh-speaking schools, traditionally more attention is paid to issues of national identity, the role of the Kazakh language as a factor of societal consolidation, and the preservation of cultural heritage, which contributes to a more pronounced perception of civic identity in the context of Kazakhstani patriotism.

Secondly, the language of instruction affects the environment of interpersonal communication and the nature of social integration. Kazakh-speaking students are more often involved in cultural practices that support traditional values and state initiatives aimed at strengthening national unity. Meanwhile, Russian-speaking students may demonstrate a greater orientation towards universal civic values, interpreting the concept of civic identity predominantly through the lens of individual rights and freedoms, tolerance, and social justice.

Thirdly, the media space, which students turn to depending on the language of instruction, is also a significant factor. Kazakh-speaking students tend to consume content that promotes ideas of national unity and the prioritization of state identity, while Russian-speaking students are more strongly influenced by global value orientations presented in the international information space.

Thus, the formation of civic identity is largely mediated by the linguistic environment as a tool of socialization, which determines access to certain social roles, cultural codes, and symbolic systems that shape perceptions of civic duties and rights. In this regard, it is important to consider that the successful consolidation of civic identity in a multi-ethnic society requires a balance between national-cultural and universal civic values, which should be reflected in the country's educational policy.

The school curriculum designed to foster tolerance is generally standardized and maintains a similar focus in both urban and rural contexts. Students study comparable modules on interethnic relations, the history of ethnic groups, and related subjects. However, fostering true tolerance is most effectively achieved when theoretical knowledge is paired with real intercultural interactions and engagements with representatives from other cultures. For schoolchildren, whether in cities or rural areas, these interactions are often limited, resulting in similar survey outcomes.

Thus, urban students enjoy a broader range of cultural contacts and approach interethnic interactions more consciously, influenced by factors such as their maturity, the diversity of urban settings, and the educational environments of colleges and universities. In contrast, schoolchildren, irrespective of their residence, tend to lack extensive experience in intercultural communication and are still in the process of shaping their value systems. At this stage, traditional social factors and educational conditions, which are largely similar for both urban and rural schools, play a more significant role.

The shaping of students' perspectives on Kazakhstan's future is influenced not only by state policies but also by regional socio-cultural characteristics. Most respondents demonstrate well-developed civic attitudes, with a significant majority of surveyed schoolchildren identifying as patriots of Kazakhstan to varying degrees (see Table 3). Only 8.2 % of respondents expressed the opposite opinion, while 7.1 % were unsure or unable to provide a definitive answer. Interestingly, patriotic values are even more pronounced among college and university students.

Urban students tend to have a broader range of cultural experiences and approach interethnic interactions more consciously. Their age-related maturity, exposure to diverse urban environments, and the enriching educational atmosphere of universities and colleges contribute to this awareness. In contrast, schoolchildren—regardless of their residence—generally lack extensive experience in intercultural communication and are still in the process of forming their value systems. In this stage, traditional social influences and uniform educational conditions in both urban and rural schools play a more significant role.

As students progress to college and university, their perspectives on Kazakhstan's future are shaped not only by state policies but also by these socio-cultural factors. College and university students, being older, possess broader social experiences and a deeper understanding of societal processes. As they begin to contemplate their professional futures and face questions related to their careers and civic responsibilities, their sense of belonging to the country and their desire to contribute to its development naturally strengthen.

Colleges and universities host various activities related to civic and patriotic education, such as conferences, themed discussions, community initiatives, and projects. These events allow students to develop a conscious sense of patriotism and recognize the importance of their personal contributions to addressing national challenges. University students, in particular, understand that they will engage directly with the economy and social institutions through their professional careers and participation in public life. This understanding enhances their interest in the country's future and strengthens their awareness of their civic identity.

Therefore, the greater prevalence of patriotic sentiments among college and university students compared to schoolchildren can largely be attributed to their social experiences, deeper understanding of the citizen's role within the state, as well as the specific educational environment and their increasing personal involvement in societal processes.

Table 3

Question: "Do you consider yourself a patriot of Kazakhstan?", %

№	Answer options	%
1	Yes	60,9
2	More likely yes than no	23,9
3	More likely no than yes	4,3
4	No	3,9
5	Difficult to answer	7,1

Schoolchildren and students who study in Kazakh are more likely to identify as patriots of Kazakhstan, as shown in Table 4. The high level of patriotic self-identification among Kazakh-speaking youth can be attributed to several factors. For many members of the Kazakh ethnic group, being proficient in their native language is a significant symbol of their belonging to the nation. In an environment where the Kazakh language is given special status — both as the state language and as the language of the "titular" nation — identifying as a Kazakh speaker is closely linked to a sense of belonging to Kazakhstan, and thus to patriotism.

The Kazakh language is also deeply connected to the country's traditional culture and history. For many young people, awareness of their ethnic identity and understanding of their native culture serve as additional sources of pride in their homeland. Consequently, ethnic self-identification and patriotism intertwine in their minds, becoming nearly inseparable.

Table 4

Question: "Do you consider yourself a patriot of Kazakhstan?", in the context of the language of education, %

№	Answer options	Kazakh language, %	Russian language, %
1	Yes	72,6	48,6
2	More likely yes than no	19,7	28,3
3	More likely no than yes	2,9	6,1
4	No	2,0	5,5
5	Difficult to answer	2,9	11,6

In the Kazakh-speaking educational environment, there is a strong emphasis on studying Kazakhstan's history and culture, particularly in fostering respect for national traditions. This focus is further reinforced by the role of the family, especially in traditional Kazakh households, where love for the homeland is closely associated with ethnocultural values. The state policy in Kazakhstan supports the development of the Kazakh language, and the social and political recognition of this native language enhances students' and schoolchildren's sense of connection to the nation as well as their confidence in the importance of their ethnic and linguistic identity.

Since the term "Kazakh" closely resembles the name of the country — Kazakhstan — some individuals may develop the perception that being part of the Kazakh ethnic group automatically signifies patriotism toward Kazakhstan. Meanwhile, members of other ethnic groups, such as Russians, Uyghurs, and Tatars, may also consider themselves patriots, but they often do not perceive "ethnicity" and "statehood" to be as inherently linked.

As a result, stronger patriotic sentiments among Kazakh-speaking schoolchildren and students are often tied to their awareness of ethnic identity, which is reinforced by cultural, linguistic, and socio-political factors. This connection leads to the association of Kazakh language and culture with patriotism in general. Overall, a civic approach to patriotism predominates among the surveyed participants, reflecting the effectiveness of state policies in promoting civic education.

However, negative societal phenomena, such as corruption and social injustice, have a detrimental effect on national belonging. Respondents expressed mixed feelings, stating remarks like, “Kazakhstan is a republic drowning in corruption, taking credit for others’ achievements,” “*There is a lot of corruption,*” “*I love my country, but not the government,*” and “*I consider myself a patriot of this country because, despite all the negative things happening, I do not let my country down in the eyes of others. I always support domestic brands. If we do not take pride in our country ourselves, then who will?*”

Table 5

Question: “Do you believe that your social, civil, and political rights are reliably guaranteed?”, %

№	Answer options	%
1	Yes	48,4
2	More likely yes than no	28,0
3	More likely no than yes	8,1
4	No	4,6
5	Difficult to answer	10,8

The differences in patriotic attitudes between Kazakh-speaking and Russian-speaking schoolchildren (as discussed in Table 5) arise from a mix of linguistic and cultural factors, the specifics of educational and family environments, and state policies that emphasize the Kazakh language as a key symbol of national identity.

In Kazakh-speaking environments, the language is directly linked to historical and cultural heritage as well as national traditions. For many Kazakh-speaking schoolchildren, fluency in the state language is inseparably tied to their identity as members of the nation-building ethnic group and fosters a sense of pride in their country. For Russian-speaking students, such a profound connection between their native language and the “titular” culture may not develop, especially if their families or immediate social circles do not place significant value on the Kazakh language and traditions.

The prioritized development of the Kazakh language is supported at the state level through various programs and initiatives aimed at its promotion and preservation, highlighting its critical role in shaping national identity. In contrast, similar priorities are often less emphasized in Russian-speaking schools and families, which can diminish the sense of connection to Kazakhstan’s civic identity as an integral part of everyday culture.

Kazakh-speaking schoolchildren are more frequently engaged in activities related to national traditions, holidays, and folklore, which reinforces their bond with the country’s culture and cultivates a stronger sense of patriotism. Russian-speaking students, particularly those who lack sufficient proficiency in Kazakh, may feel less involved in these cultural practices.

Schoolchildren often adopt the attitudes of their families and social circles. When national cultural symbols, traditions, and the Kazakh language are not emphasized in Russian-speaking households, the patriotic feelings of these students may be more rooted in civic concepts (such as attachment to their place of residence) rather than in a profound identification with Kazakh culture.

This situation underscores the limited effectiveness of the current model of civic education. Furthermore, this issue extends beyond the school system, impacting all key areas of societal function, as evidenced by responses from other participant categories surveyed, including college and university students, teachers, and parents.

The concept of patriotism among the surveyed schoolchildren in Kazakhstan centers around love for their homeland, its protection, and their citizenship. Here are some sentiments they shared:

- “*For me, patriotism is a desire to improve my homeland, to respect and follow its rules and traditions.*”

- “*Patriotism, for me, means deep love, responsibility, and a desire to serve my native country, its culture, and history.*”

- *"Patriotism is about respecting one's homeland, protecting and developing its values, and working for the benefit of society. It includes pride in the achievements of the country, standing together in times of difficulty, and maintaining national unity."*

- *"Patriotism involves subordinating personal and group interests to the interests of the nation, serving it with loyalty, protecting one's homeland, and harboring deep love for the ancestral land."*

This understanding of patriotism aligns with the responses of college and university students, reflecting a continuity of civic values across different educational levels. In any society, both at the state and social levels, institutional structures contribute to the maintenance and dissemination of patriotic values. Accordingly, respondents were asked an open-ended question: *"What Kazakhstani patriotic organizations do you know?"* The answers revealed a contradictory perception of patriotic activities among schoolchildren, with similar patterns observed in students' responses.

During the survey, respondents most frequently named organizations whose activities are implemented at the state level and are visible in the public information space. Additionally, organizations integrated into school-based educational programs were frequently mentioned. This suggests that public attention predominantly focuses on institutions that combine official support with a tangible presence in the educational environment. This dual involvement, supported by state policies and impactful on youth civic values, plays a key role.

The most frequently mentioned organizations included: the youth wing of the "Amanat" party, as well as the party itself, often referred to by its previous names, "Nur Otan" and "Zhas Otan." Other commonly cited organizations were the youth military-patriotic movement "Zhas Sarbaz," the unified children's and youth organization "Zhas Ulan," the Union of Veterans of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the youth association "Dala Kyrandary."

Additionally, some organizations mentioned have either ceased their activities in Kazakhstan or conflict with current legislation. These include the youth movement "Kahar," the youth league of the "Alga" party, the youth movement "Aibat," and the Socialist Resistance of Kazakhstan. This indicates the presence of radical political views within the youth environment, although these views have not gained widespread traction.

The concept of patriotism among schoolchildren in Kazakhstan appears to be well-formed, largely due to the widespread dissemination of information about state symbols, which are a crucial component of civic identity. Most students are familiar with the text of the Constitution and the National Anthem. For example, 80.6 % of students are aware of the key provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and nearly all (98.5 %) know the lyrics of the National Anthem. These foundations play an important role in fostering civic awareness and patriotic sentiments.

Interestingly, there are almost no differences in perceptions based on age, level of education, or similar characteristics. This aligns with the survey results among college and university students, suggesting a similarity in patriotic beliefs across both age groups. For both students and schoolchildren, educational and informational modules — such as training on citizens' rights and responsibilities and knowledge of national symbols — are essential.

The similarity in awareness of civic values among students may be attributed to the unified teaching system in educational institutions, which emphasizes understanding state attributes and developing civic identity. This standardized approach, implemented in both schools and universities, ensures that students are well-informed about official symbols and legal frameworks, contributing to the formation of similar civic values across the country.

Students often cite a lack of personal interest and only superficial exposure to the Constitution as reasons for their unfamiliarity with its text. Some respondents view the articles of the Constitution as abstract and disconnected from their lives, reflecting insufficient awareness of the legal foundations necessary for comprehensive civic socialization.

Notably, college and university students face the same issue, with their responses closely mirroring those of schoolchildren. This indicates that even at higher levels of education, some young individuals lack motivation to study their country's Constitution. Such a situation calls for focused attention from the educational community and a reevaluation of curricula to help young people understand the practical significance of legal knowledge, viewing the Constitution as a vital tool that regulates their roles and lives in society.

Furthermore, 76.4 % of respondents believe that their social, civic, and political rights are fully upheld and protected by the state, while only 12.7 % expressed doubts (see Table 6).

Kazakh-speaking students show greater confidence in the legal guarantees provided by the state (see Table 6). Additionally, the disparity between the two groups of respondents based on their language of in-

struction becomes more pronounced in colleges and universities compared to schools. Students who study in Russian tend to be even less optimistic than those in the school system.

The Kazakh language, being the state language, is seen as a crucial aspect of national identity within society. Kazakh-speaking students often feel a closer connection to the state and view it as a protector of their rights. This perception is partly due to government policies that focus on the development and support of the Kazakh language. As a result, Kazakh-speaking students are more likely to believe that the state “protects” their interests, leading to increased confidence in the legal guarantees it provides.

Table 6

Question: “Do you believe that your social, civil, and political rights are reliably guaranteed?”, in the context of the language of education

№	Answer options	Kazakh language, %		Russian language, %	
		College and university students	Schoolchildren	College and university students	Schoolchildren
1	Yes	62,1	56,3	25,9	39,9
2	More likely yes than no	23,1	23,4	36,1	34,4
3	More likely no than yes	7,4	7,1	20,4	8,7
4	No	3,3	4,0	9,3	5,5
5	Difficult to answer	4,1	9,1	8,3	11,6

At higher levels of education, such as in colleges and universities, students actively engage in discussions about politics, interethnic relations, and social justice. For Kazakh-speaking students, this engagement often includes a heightened focus on national and state rhetoric, which serves to strengthen their trust in legal guarantees. In contrast, Russian-speaking students, who observe the specifics of national policies and notice an increasing allocation of public initiatives and resources toward promoting the Kazakh language, tend to become more skeptical about whether the state protects all population groups equally.

As students transition to college and university, their interactions with state institutions increase — for example, when applying for scholarships, managing documentation, or participating in grants and competitions. Kazakh-speaking students generally find these interactions easier, as their proficiency in the state language simplifies the process. On the other hand, Russian-speaking students may face additional challenges, especially in administrative procedures, if their Kazakh language skills are lacking. This discrepancy can influence their perceptions of state guarantees.

As Russian-speaking youth move from school to university, their exposure to information — including content from international sources and Russian-language media — expands significantly. This broader communication network encourages many students to critically assess the current situation in the country, particularly concerning equality of rights and opportunities. Such critical perspectives may lead to decreased optimism about the legal guarantees provided by the state.

Moreover, students studying in Russian recognize that career prospects in certain fields, such as civil service, media, and education, may be limited without proficiency in the Kazakh language. Many are aware of the state’s ongoing efforts to elevate the status of Kazakh and worry about their competitiveness in the job market. This concern fosters skepticism regarding whether the state equally protects and supports all linguistic groups.

In contrast, the stronger confidence in the state’s legal guarantees among Kazakh-speaking youth can be attributed to several factors: recognition of Kazakh as the official state language, an emphasis on national and state values, and positive personal experiences in dealing with state institutions. Meanwhile, Russian-speaking students, particularly at the college and university levels, may develop a more critical view of the practical mechanisms of legal protection and socio-economic opportunities. This shift can be influenced by exposure to certain foreign media, which can create a negative perception of Kazakhstan’s domestic and foreign policies and further amplify skepticism about the state’s role.

This skepticism and lack of confidence in their future can explain the comparatively lower prevalence of patriotic beliefs among Russian-speaking students. This phenomenon is shaped by specific aspects of civic socialization. Most programs and activities in this area are designed for Kazakh-speaking audiences, extending from printed materials to television content. Young people with limited proficiency in Kazakh often feel excluded from these initiatives and the educational agenda.

In the context of Kazakhstan's multi-ethnic society at the present historical stage, ethnocentrism manifests itself as a form of protecting group identity amid social changes, uncertainty about the future, and perceived threats of cultural assimilation. Young people, who are in search of self-identification, often rely on ethnic affiliation as the most accessible and emotionally rich source of social identity.

The factors contributing to the strengthening of ethnocentric attitudes include the following:

- Uneven access to resources and opportunities in the fields of education, employment, and career growth, which shapes the perception of discrimination or, conversely, privileges based on ethnicity.
- Politicization of ethnocultural issues in the public space, which increases young people's sensitivity to interethnic relations.
- Weak institutionalization of common civic values, resulting in a priority being placed on ethnocultural self-identification instead of forming a unified civic community.
- Family and social environment, where the values of ethnoconfessional solidarity are transmitted as fundamental, often without emphasis on supra-ethnic forms of identity.

The influence of sociocultural factors on the perception of civic identity is manifested through several levels:

Macrosocial level — the official ideology, policies aimed at strengthening national unity, educational programs, and state symbols that promote the image of a citizen as a loyal member of Kazakhstani society.

Mesosocial level — the activities of educational institutions, public organizations, and youth movements, through which models of civic engagement and concepts of social responsibility are formed.

Microsocial level — the influence of family, close social circles, and local communities, where the foundations of worldview, attitudes toward other ethnic groups, and understanding of civil rights and responsibilities are laid.

Thus, the perception of civic identity among young people is formed through the complex interaction of ethnic affiliation, cultural traditions, state initiatives, and socio-economic conditions. Eliminating the factors that contribute to ethnocentrism is possible only with the active development of national institutions of civic education, the creation of an inclusive social environment, and the enhancement of social mobility for youth regardless of their ethnic background.

The educational system, both in schools and universities, prioritizes knowledge of the state language as a key indicator of civic identity. However, insufficient attention is paid to how those with weaker Kazakh language skills can be engaged in civic activities. The methodologies employed can sometimes be overly formal, rendering these students unmotivated to participate actively and leading to a loss of interest that begins in school and persists into higher education.

As a result, young individuals struggling with the Kazakh language may feel that they do not meet the criteria for being considered "complete citizens," as knowledge of the state language is seen as an important aspect of patriotism in society. This feeling of social exclusion can intensify if civic education institutions — such as youth organizations or government bodies — fail to address the language barrier and integrate people proficient in other languages into their activities.

While government institutions and educational organizations increasingly hold events aimed at strengthening national identity, these initiatives often lack opportunities for interaction among individuals with diverse linguistic backgrounds. The absence of discussion formats that ensure equal participation for Russian-speaking youth leads many to feel they have no opportunity to express their opinions or take part in national matters.

The core issue lies in the insufficient differentiation of dominant forms of civic socialization. As a result, these forms become less accessible and appealing to young people who have limited proficiency in the state language. This creates a linguistic barrier in civic education, which restricts opportunities for comprehensive civic engagement and public participation.

Discussion

Analysis of the responses within the section "Knowledge and Understanding of the Fundamentals of State Policy in Civic Education" supports the research hypotheses and leads to the following conclusions:

The overwhelming majority of respondents envision the future of Kazakhstan as a civic nation, where citizens of all ethnicities form a unified community while preserving linguistic and cultural diversity. Approximately a quarter of those surveyed hold an ethnocentric view, believing that the country will eventually evolve into a Kazakh nation centered on the Kazakh language and culture. Regional differences are also not-

ed: ethnocentrism is more pronounced in the southern region, where a monocultural environment naturally prevails.

A significant majority of surveyed schoolchildren consider themselves patriots of Kazakhstan to varying degrees. The higher prevalence of patriotic sentiments among college and university students compared to schoolchildren can be attributed to their broader social experiences, a deeper understanding of the citizen's role within the state, and the specific educational environment that encourages greater personal involvement in societal processes.

Negative phenomena such as corruption and social injustice adversely affect their sense of belonging to their home country. Despite this, respondents generally display a civic approach to the concept of patriotism, indicating the effectiveness of state policies in fostering civic education.

The civic understanding of patriotism among schoolchildren aligns with the responses from college and university students, highlighting a continuity of civic values across different levels of the educational system. The unified approach in schools and universities ensures a relatively high level of awareness regarding state symbols and the legal framework, contributing to the formation of similar civic values nationwide.

However, some young people still lack sufficient motivation to study the country's Constitution. This situation warrants special attention from educators and calls for enhancements to educational programs to help young people understand the practical significance of legal knowledge and view the Constitution as a vital tool governing their lives within society.

Kazakh-speaking schoolchildren demonstrate greater confidence in the state's legal guarantees. The gap between the two respondent groups based on the language of instruction widens in colleges and universities compared to schools, with Russian-speaking students displaying even lower optimism than their counterparts in secondary education.

The insufficient differentiation of dominant forms of civic socialization makes them less accessible and appealing to youth with limited proficiency in the state language. This existing linguistic barrier in civic education objectively limits opportunities for full-fledged civic engagement and public activity.

The results of this study confirm findings from previous research, indicating that the majority of Kazakhstan students envision the country's future as a civic nation that emphasizes the importance of cultural and linguistic diversity [2; 3; 15; 16]. Similar conclusions were drawn by Z.K. Shaukenova [1] and E.B. Asyltaeva [3], who noted parallels in how Kazakhstan's youth perceive civic values. However, the data collected in this study about the higher levels of ethnocentrism among Kazakh-speaking schoolchildren partially diverges from the findings of B.I. Karipbaev [12], who observed a gradual decline in ethnically oriented attitudes among the youth.

It is noteworthy that these findings align with the observations of A.S. Zhanbosinova [2], which also highlight regional specifics in the perception of civic and ethnic identities, particularly pronounced in the southern regions of Kazakhstan. The differences in how legal guarantees and patriotic values are perceived by students across various language-based educational groups correspond to the work of Bremmer [14] and Dave [16], who emphasize the role of linguistic and ethnic diversity in shaping Kazakhstan's identity.

Conclusions

This article summarizes the findings of a quantitative study on the civic identity of school students in the Republic of Kazakhstan. Key conclusions reveal that most students primarily identify with the concept of a civic nation, highlighting the significant impact of linguistic and educational environments on the development of patriotic attitudes.

The study points to the necessity for improvements in state policies concerning civic education, taking into account the linguistic and socio-cultural characteristics of the youth. Its scientific contribution lies in clarifying the structure and factors that shape civic identity in a multiethnic society. The practical implications are substantial, providing empirical data that can aid in the creation of educational programs and policies aimed at strengthening civic unity and fostering intercultural dialogue. Educational institutions, social and regional policy experts, public organizations, and government agencies can utilize these results to enhance approaches to youth socialization and civic integration.

Our research has also revealed new insights, particularly regarding the differences between school students and those in colleges and universities. The study found that patriotic and civic values among college and university students are cultivated in a more conscious and profound manner compared to schoolchildren. This difference can be attributed to their broader social experiences and greater engagement in educational and social contexts. These findings can be explained through Social Identity Theory, which emphasizes the

role of the social environment and interactions with representatives of other cultures in the development of civic identity.

The results of this research are highly reliable, supported by the representativeness of the sample and the analysis of primary data using SPSS Statistics 27.0. However, these findings should be complemented by qualitative research in future studies to refine identified trends and ensure a comprehensive interpretation.

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И.Д. Хлебников, А.Ж. Мырзахметова, А.Б. Сатанов, Е.А. Маторина

Қазақстан дамуының қазіргі тарихи кезеңіндегі орта мектеп түлектерінің (11-сынып оқушыларының) азаматтық бірегейлігі: сандық зерттеу нәтижелері

Мақала Қазақстанның жоғары сынып оқушыларының азаматтық бірегейлігін сандық зерттеу арқылы зерделеуге арналған. Қазақ және орыс тілдерінде оқитын еліміздің барлық өңірлеріндегі мектептердің бітіруші сынып оқушыларының сауалнамалық деректері талданды. Жоғары сынып оқушыларының азаматтық бірегейлікті қабылдау ерекшеліктері, оқыту тілі мен аймақтық жағдайларға байланысты айырмашылықтар анықталды. Оқушылардың көпшілігі азаматтық ұлт тұжырымдамасын ұстанатыны айқындалды. Оқушылардың азаматтық және патриоттық көзқарастары тілдік ортаға, әлеуметтік белсенділікке және білім беру саясатына байланысты екені тұжырымдалды. Авторлар азаматтық тәрбие саласындағы мемлекеттік саясат өңірлердің әлеуметтік-мәдени және тілдік ерекшеліктерін ескеруі, қолданыстағы тілдік кедергілерді еңсеруі және орыс тілді жастарды азаматтық әлеуметтену үрдісіне белсенді тартуы тиіс деген қорытындыға келді. Зерттеу білім беру ұйымдарының азаматтық бірегейлікті қалыптастырудағы мақсатты жұмысының маңыздылығын, сондай-ақ мектеп бағдарламасына және оқушылардың қоғамдық қызметіне мәдениетаралық өзара әрекеттесуді біріктіру қажеттілігін көрсетеді. Алынған нәтижелер білім беру ұйымдары, жергілікті билік өкілдері және Қазақстанның қазіргі заманғы тарихы мен аймақтану саласындағы мамандар үшін өзекті.

Кілт сөздер: азаматтық бірегейлік, патриотизм, білім алушылары, Қазақстан Республикасы, этноцентризм, азаматтық ұлт, өңірлік айырмашылықтар, мемлекеттік саясат, қазіргі тарих, Қазақстан Республикасының тарихы.

И.Д. Хлебников, А.Ж. Мырзахметова, А.Б. Сатанов, Е.А. Маторина

Гражданская идентичность выпускников (учащихся 11-х классов) средних школ на современном историческом этапе развития Казахстана: результаты количественного исследования

Статья посвящена результатам количественного исследования гражданской идентичности старшеклассников Казахстана. Анализируются данные анкетного опроса учеников выпускных классов школ всех регионов страны, обучающихся на казахском и русском языках. Установлены особенности восприятия гражданской идентичности старшеклассниками, выявлены различия в зависимости от языка обучения и региональных условий. Показано, что большая часть учащихся разделяет концепцию гражданской нации. Выявлено, что гражданские и патриотические установки учащихся зависят от языковой среды, социальной активности и образовательной политики. Авторы делают вывод, что государственная политика в области гражданского воспитания должна учитывать социокультурные и языковые особенности регионов, преодолевать существующие языковые барьеры и активнее вовлекать русскоязычную молодежь в процессы гражданской социализации. Исследование подчеркивает важность целенаправленной работы образовательных учреждений в формировании гражданской идентичности, а также необходимость интеграции межкультурного взаимодействия в школьную программу и общественную деятельность учащихся. Полученные результаты представляют интерес для образовательных учреждений, разработчиков региональной политики и специалистов в области современной истории Казахстана и регионоведения.

Ключевые слова: гражданская идентичность, патриотизм, обучающиеся, Республика Казахстан, этноцентризм, гражданская нация, региональные различия, государственная политика, современная история, история Республики Казахстан

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