

A Research on The Nature and Function of National Social Capital

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Abstract-Physical capital, financial capital, human capital and social capital of a country together constitute the national capital, which determines a country's overall strength and competitiveness. Through the study of elements and formation of the national social capital and the analysis of its nature and function, this paper tentatively suggest that there is complex relationship between national social capital and other capital, formed the basis of social internal innovation and reform. As a result, this paper focuses on how do moral, ethics, norm, credit and innovation constitute a country's social capital and has a positive impact on national development in the process of social development and explores the effective ways to increase the national social capital.

Keywords- originality of conception; social capital; physical capital; human capital

1. INTRODUCTION

From modern western countries` development history, changes in the country began with changes in the national social capital (including changes in quality and quantity). And changes in the national social capital's quantity will promote changes in the society. For example, the Renaissance and religious reform force change of social capital in the west, including the view of nature, view of society and social thought, and provides a spiritual power for the change and development.

China's modern history indicates that if the national social capital has not changed, advanced thought from abroad will not drive the national development and progress. For instance, the reason that westernization movement, Hundred Days' Reform and the Revolution of 1911 in modern China all failed is that the national social capital content has not changed. Hence, through "the May fourth movement", the national social capital content changed dramatically and the communist party of China found the core to build the new national social capital. China found the Marxism as the core to build new national social capital system and really got rid of the fate of the semi-colonial and semi-feudal society.

In this article, we believe that the ideas, values, moral, credit, innovation ability, traditional culture and national prestige occupies an important position in the national social capital and have important practical significance. For example, in the process of reform and opening up, China's Confucian culture occupied an important position in the national social capital and became an important

factor in the development of China. Traditional Chinese people accept the Confucian culture and keep the traditional virtues of bearing hardships and the burden of hard works from childhood.

Currently, the reform in China turns into the critical period and to build the national social capital investment system is the main trend of China's reform and development in the future. We not only need to develop the productive forces, but also actively invest in the national social capital construction, so as to improve the international competitiveness of China. As an ancient civilization, China has accumulated abundant social capital in the process of thousands of years` history. Chinese traditional culture and national quality will become one of the core elements of the national social capital and plays a more and more important role in social development and progress in China. Therefore, the national social capital is the social basis, spiritual power and cultural power for the development of a country and has an important role and value in the development of a country.

2 . THE BASIC MEANING OF THE NATIONAL SOCIAL CAPITAL

In the 1980s, Pierre Bourdieu put forward the concept of social capital from the perspective of sociology. He thought that social capital: is a collection of resources; is a kind of institutionalized relationship network; exists in social relation network; is a kind of intangible capital, constitutes a sum of social resources with economic capital and human capital [1]. James Coleman thought "social capital is the resources of social structure that a person possesses", including social organizations, social network and the network [2]. Based on social network, the American sociologist Lin Nan put forward a theory of social resources. In a society or group, after some programs and are generally considered to be something of value, it can increase the survival opportunity of occupant. Social capital is a kind of resource that is invested in the social relationship and hoped to get returns; is a kind of resource embedded in the social structure and can be obtained through a purposeful action [3].

Based on the concept and theory of social capital, many scholars, especially Chinese scholars clearly put forward the concept of the national social capital. Robert Putnam introduced the concept of social capital into the political science fields. He thought that from the perspective of voluntary community participation, people in a common historical and cultural environment form a

close ties to the community which called citizen participation network. Through various means citizen participation network punishes the people or behaviors that destroy the trust relationship and gets strengthened. Besides, civic spirit and citizen participation is embodied by social capital. Finally, social capital is a kind of group property and not personal property [4]. Since then, Robert Putnam thought we can inspect the social capital from a national perspective and it is a kind of real existence [5]. Based on the point of Putnam, many scholars in China put forward the concept of the national social capital and analyzed the construction of national social capital deeply. For instance, a Chinese scholar called Fu Ping thought that national social capital is the sum of internal relationships that embedded in a certain country and social structure [6]. Cheng Minxuan thought that social capital in national level is the sum of civil social capital and government social capital [7].

Based on the analysis above, we believe that the national social capital is the macro social capital and it's owned by the whole country. Besides, the national social capital cannot exist without the social group or community. That's to say that the national social capital is made up of individual capital and organizational capital. The national social capital is a kind of intangible assets and mainly refers to the mainstream ideology and practices of complex, including the mainstream values, ideas, norms, regime, reputation, etc. It restrains the idea, behavior and social relations of social groups. Therefore, the relationship between the national social capital and the national culture is complicated and it is hard to strictly distinguish them in essence. They are the network of signature that humanity active socially and make the humanity active in a certain sense.

3. THE NATURE OF NATIONAL SOCIAL CAPITAL

The national social capital exists in the form of intangible capital and is a kind of complex of spirit and norm. Together with physical capital and human capital it constitutes the resource base of national existence and development and emerges through the social activities of the physical capital and human capital. When the relationship among the material capital, human capital and social capital achieve coupling state, a country can achieve efficient organization activities. For example, in the period of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the loss of their national social capital leads to abnormal social operation. The national social capital contains two aspects of content. On the one hand it is the internal system of culture, norms, and interpersonal relationships and so on. On the other hand it is the relation between a country and its external society, including reputation, credit, responsibility, obligation, and a variety of social relations established. The national social capital determines a country's internal power and responsibility, trust friendly relations and cooperation in international relations.

The national social capital is characterized by static specifications as well as the dynamic social change. The national social capital embodies the degree of social integration and power unity, is an important normative force of maintaining social order and maintains the healthy development of the social order by means of incentive and punishment. When the old national social capital gradually dies out, new ideas tend to become the starting point of the new social capital development and become the motivation and direction of social development. In other words, the inner source of social and historical change is productivity, but new ideas represent the development direction of new productivity. For instance, in China's transition period, with the liberation of productive forces the national social capital gradually changed and forced social change and progress. China's reform and opening up is a self-reform and eventually leads to the change of the national social capital structure and connotation. In addition, in Chinese traditional culture, bearing hardships of Confucian culture gestates Chinese quality and mentality of the ordinary people. It constitutes an important part of the national social capital and becomes the spiritual strength and human capital advantage to promote the development of economic society.

Next, the socialization process of the national social capital can increase the overall social capital. The national social capital reflects a nation's mainstream values, norms, interpersonal relationship and the system style. And it has a strong impact on the overall social capital through the social capital's socialization process. After being accepted by the mainstream society, a thought or morality can be converted into social capital of the country and integrated into the national social capital system. For example, a British historian, Arnold Joseph Toynbee, thinks the humanitarian and world peace and harmonious thought implicated in Chinese Confucian culture, Taoism and Buddhism is the important thought that can save the future world crisis [8]. The country with this kind of culture will gain the social capital that masters the national development fate in the future.

At last, only when the social capital matches the material capital and human capital, the operation of the country is efficient. Social capital, physical capital and human capital together constitute all the social resources and determine the national productivity level and social life quality. Under the special historical condition, social capital can make up for the lack of physical capital. From the point of long-term development of a country, when the social capital matches the material capital and human capital, a country will have strong productivity. For instance, when the communist party of China was founded, relying on millet plus rifles, it had a strong social capital and defeated the Nationalist Party equipped with American weapons. This is the best evidence of great victory of social capital. At the beginning of new China, the communist party of China leads the people to develop the productivity and build their own industrial system, in order to guarantee material capital quickly adapt to the social capital and human capital level. Similarly, China's

reform and opening up is the continuous investment of material capital and human capital. It makes Chinese economy grow rapidly for 30 years maybe longer. In the rapid economic development, the total social capital did not keep pace with the development of the material capital and human capital. With the development and perfecting of Chinese market system, investment in social capital is the core task of the Chinese government in the future.

4. THE FUNCTION OF NATIONAL SOCIAL CAPITAL

The national social capital is the spirit of the whole society, is a kind of important strength to change the society and represents a country's development direction and prospect in the future. In the process of development of a country, social capital can break through the limitation of development because of the lack of physical capital and human capital. For example, in the early days, the physical capital and human capital of the communist party could not compare with that of the nationalist party, but the communist party eventually defeated the nationalist party. The reason is that the communist party has a group of outstanding talent dedicated to lofty ideal of communism which is a strong social capital. Contrarily; the nationalist officials have no lofty ideal and the society under its management is very corrupt. The nationalist party lost the support of the people gradually; the social capital was becoming less and less and eventually lost the physical capital. Countries with good social capital can develop physical capital and human capital gradually; and because there is enough physical capital and human capital, the social capital will increase. Even if a country has strong physical capital and human capital, if its social capital lost, its physical capital will gradually reduce, and ultimately lead to weak countries. In British colonial history, the loss of power in the North American continent followed the loss of social capital. Therefore, the national social capital has very important significance to the national development. In the human history, the change of national social capital can explain a country's rise and fall. Hence, the national social capital concept is a useful theory tool to explain national development.

The national social capital constitutes the system of self-regulation and social norms. Development of human history shows that self-restraint is a noble quality of mankind and the highest pursuit of human spiritual life. For example, to obey the discipline has always been a feature to distinguish between religious believers and ordinary people. Self-discipline is a very important feature in Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. Because religion has a strict self-regulation and strong constraint force, so the religious countries have strong social capital. The society possessing strong self-regulation and constraint force will gain strong social capital. In modern history, due to the lack of effective self-discipline culture, many western countries lost the advantage of social capital gradually. There is a good example of Germany: Hitler's government imposed its own ambition on the entire human society. It

broke through the concept of universal human development and moral constraints, resulted in the loss of German social capital and ultimately brought disaster to the entire world. In the modern history of Europe, some monarchs cannot control their behaviors and made the government down or regime change. King Charles I of England and the French king Louis xvi were even sentenced to death. Hence, the core element of the national social capital is the contract between the government and the people which is guaranteed through the leader's self-regulation and constraint force.

National social capital affects the national mission, culture, strategy and political pattern, etc., determines the behavior pattern of the country. In the practice of the human history, political thought forms the foundation of national mission and culture. In the ancient Chinese Confucianism, "God will bless man of good character, nature will help the man of good character". This thought is the core of the way of "the Doctrine of the Mean" and the basis of social stability in ancient China. Confucianism such as "To subdue one's self and return to propriety" and "Do not impose on others what you do not desire" transforms into the national social capital and makes the ancient Chinese feudal society in a state of order until the Golden Age of Three Emperors in the Qing dynasty[9]. This is the evidence that China's feudal society has high national social capital. In the early 20th century, relying on the strong social capital accumulation the communist party of China grew and eventually won the war of liberation [10]. Modern German(Liszt economics ideas into reality)[11]、the Soviet union(the social practice of Marxism)[12]、America(the development of European modern thought in the north American continent)[13]、France(democratic ideals of freedom, equality and fraternity established in the Enlightenment and Revolution)[14]、Japan(the thought revolution in the Meiji restoration period)[15]eventually become a world power depending on strong national social capital accumulation.

In the process of China's modernization, social capital accumulation is still an important social investment objective of the communist party of China until the reality of the great revival of the Chinese nation. From the process of social transformation, we can see the relationship between social capital and the state change. Social facts show that in the transformation period, the national social capital is the condition of a country change and evolution. Of course, not all foreign thoughts can be transformed into the national social capital. The core of the westernization movement is to imitate western advanced technology to make the country strong. However, western economic thought and the system does not become the social capital of Qing Dynasty and they failed to achieve the goal of changing the fate of the nation by new industry. In Hundred Days' Reform and the Revolution of 1911, the reformers tried to introduce a new system to save the national crisis, but the western democracy didn't translate into the national social capital, so these reforms failed

finally. In the May fourth movement period, Chinese found the Marxism theory, turned it into the national social capital through establishing the communist party of China and set up the new China. As a result, the formation of the national social capital determines the mass base of the social change, rather than that of physical capital and human capital. Only a country sets up new social capital, its material capital and human capital can gain profound changes.

The national social capital is the foundation of a country's survival and sustainable development. The national social capital also includes the idea of a national development, culture, norms and regime. Since established, a country has the foundation of social capital. Marxism is the theoretical foundation of the communist party of China, turned into the national social capital with Chinese characteristics gradually in the process of historical development and promoted the establishment and development of the country. In addition, in the process of China's development, the national social capital was strengthened and gradually transformed into a strong power of social development in interactions with social environment. Therefore, the national social capital is a transformation process from the recessive to the dominant. In the recessive phase, the national social capital is the inner cultural forces and turns into the country's internal various powers; in the dominant phase, it is a national quality, moral, ethical, social norms and mental outlook and becomes the basis of national development power, ideal and specification. In the transformation process, material capital and human capital increase gradually and are still restricted by the country's social capital.

The most important thing is that the national social capital determines the social content of material capital and human capital and makes the society develop rapidly through liberating social barriers of material capital and human capital. The national social capital concept allows us to better understand the structure of a country's resources and mutual relationship. We can know more clearly about the relationship between the national social capital and social change and development. In the modern society, the western industrial civilization is slowly devouring the civilization of other countries. The reason is that the developed countries have strong national social capital and widen their influence to the entire world through cultural output. Therefore, for a country, its social capital has irreplaceable special historical mission. Simply study on its physical capital and human capital cannot get a comprehensive understanding on the social nature of its development.

5. CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

Based on the analysis above, it provides us with a new perspective to analyze and research the important role of material capital, human capital and social capital in a country's innovation and sustainable development. In the evaluation and analysis of a national development strategy,

we get the following enlightenment:(1)to improve the understanding of the national social capital, including the contents such as ideas, thoughts and methods, and attach great importance to the concept of the national social capital;(2)to promote the country's social capital increase through education and social norms and regard the investment in traditional culture, moral and ethical aspects as the a effective way to boost the growth of the national social capital;(3)to improve the level of public management through the national social capital construction;(4)to adhere to Marxism and build the national social capital system such as on behalf of the interests of the majority of Chinese;(5) to build the national social capital construction project, promote the increase of the national social capital through government and social forces, promote development of social economy and culture and the great rejuvenation, and finally realizes the civilization and progress of the whole society.

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