Peculiarities of various types of civic identity

Inha Petrovska

Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Psychology, Ivan Franko National
University of Lviv
Universytetska 1, Lviv, Ukraine
E-mail: inha.petrovska@lnu.edu.ua
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7544-945X

Abstract

Aim. The aim of the research is to determine the psychological peculiarities of citizens with various types of civic identity.

Methods. 190 Ukrainian citizens were interviewed about their relations with their parents (or guardians) during their childhood, features of family upbringing, priority values of the parents' family, experience of interpersonal relationships with peers, participation in school/student activities, lifestyle, etc. The following psycho-diagnostic techniques were also used: a questionnaire "Level and Type of Civic Identity" (Petrovska, 2018); "World Assumptions Scale" (Janoff-Bulman, adapted by Padun & Kotelnikova, 2008); "Portrait Values Questionnaire" (Schwartz, adapted by Semkiv, 2013); "Interpersonal Trust Scale" (Rotter, adapted by Dostovalov, 2000); questionnaire "Level of Social Frustration" (Vasserman, Iovlev & Berebin, 2004); "Social Activity Scale" (Lewicka, adapted by Cholij, 2010).

Results. The typology of citizens ("devoted", "moderate", "disappointed", "indifferent" and "alienated") was created in accordance with the specificity of the formation of civic identity components (cognitive, value, affective, behavioral). Significance (value)/insignificance, positive/negative attitude towards belonging to the state and community of citizens and forms of activity/inactivity in relation to the state and citizens made up the basis of the classification. Also, psychological peculiarities of citizens with foregoing types of civic identity were determined.

Conclusions. The main factors in the formation of a certain type of civic identity are basic beliefs (in particular, the justice of the world, the ability to control the events of one's life and self-value); civic behavioral patterns of reference persons (including civic attitudes of reference persons); social integration and social acceptance (experience of interpersonal relationships with peers); subjective activity (defending own position, wide range of interests, initiative, active participation in many events); value-semantic orientations (in particular, universalism, self-regulation, safety, tradition); prosocial focus (focus of activity on socially useful affairs); social trust; the fact of meeting the needs of physical and social existence in the state (level of social frustration); experience of interaction with the state in the form of its various agencies.

INTRODUCTION

At the current stage, the issue of forming civic identity is extremely relevant for Ukraine, as it is a guarantee of integrity, stability and security of the country, as well as consolidation and development of the civil society. But for now, this process is restrained by a certain conflict of identities caused by the presence of elements of post-Soviet identity, strong position of regional identities with different value dominants, as well as processes of globalisation expressed in the expansion of the information and communication space, growth of social mobility that contribute to the formation of supranational (European, cosmopolitan) identities, as well as the emergence of hybrid and diffuse identities.

Studies of civic identity are interdisciplinary and widely represented in numerous works of political scientists, sociologists and philosophers, however, not enough in psychology. It should be noted that the nature of the civic identity phenomenon is complex and contradictory. There are significant differences in the interpretation of civic identity, understanding its structure, regularities and mechanisms of its formation. Thus, Daniel Hart, Cameron Richardson & Britt Wilkenfeld consider membership (affiliation), civic participation, civil rights and obligations to be indicators of civic identity, while its components are civic knowledge, attitudes and behaviour (Hart, Richardson & Wilkenfeld, 2011). According to Richard Bellamy, civic identity includes experience, beliefs and emotions related to membership, rights and participation (Bellamy, 2008). Ivetta Konoda (2007) distinguishes the sense of belonging to society, political and legal competence, active political and civic position as main indicators of civic identity.

Based on the fact that the civic identity belongs to social identities and interpreted as a complex (in terms of structure, factors and mechanisms of determination) and a multilevel psychological phenomenon, the theory of social identity and social self-categorization (Tajfel, & Turner, 1986), the concept of social identity complexity (Roccas, & Brewer, 2002), as well as the systematic approach (Lomov, 1996; Maksymenko, 2006) became the theoretical and methodological basis of our study.

Thus, the civic identity of a person is considered as a complex multilevel personal formation that results from self-categorization, awareness (giving meaning-value) of belonging to a community of citizens and the state (as its citizen) and subjective person's attitude (emotional and behavioral) to that membership.

Civic identity as a multilevel personal phenomenon is manifested at the institutional («citizen – state»), group («citizen – community of citizens») and individual («I as a citizen») levels. It has a four-component structure consisting of *cognitive* (awareness of own belonging to the state as its citizen and community of citizens, knowledge, figurative and symbolic representations about the state, citizenship and citizens), *value* (subjective significance, importance of membership, support (or not) state values and values of the civil

community), *affective* (emotional attitude of own membership, "mine / not mine", feeling of pride, shame, patriotism, etc.) and *behavioural* (determines civic behaviour and defines the forms of activity (or inactivity) in relation to the state and citizens – activity, inclusion, affection / passivity, indifference, hostility, protest, confrontation, etc.; the readiness of the individual to act in accordance with the interests of the state and the civil community; civic participation / activity or passivity in advocacy of civil rights and values) components (Petrovska, 2017).

The specificity of the formation of components of the civic identity made it possible to create a typology of citizens: "devoted," "moderate," "disappointed," "indifferent" and "alienated." Significance (value)/insignificance, positive/negative attitude towards belonging to the state and community of citizens and forms of activity/inactivity in relation to the state and citizens made up the basis of the classification.

Devoted citizens have a high level of civic identity, realise their responsibility for the state and society, make efforts for its development, try to influence important events, and are ready to defend the independence and integrity of the state, which is considered to be one of the highest values.

Moderate citizens have above-average level of civic identity, a more or less clear concept of themselves as citizens and manifest a certain level of solidarity with other compatriots. They value the state, statehood, fellow citizens, but are characterised by some restraint (of emotional and behavioral nature) in actualizing their social role of a citizen.

For *Disappointed* citizens, the civil and state values remain sufficiently important, but their perception of the state and of themselves as a citizens of this state has a negative emotional feeling (despair, despondency, shame, insignificance, etc.) due to unfulfilled expectations of justice, social protection, the possibility of social self-realisation in the state, etc., which complicates the formation of a stable positive civic identity. Generally, most of them have an average level of civic identity.

Indifferent citizens are characterised by a reduced interest in state and socio-political events, usually take a neutral stance on important state matters, not too inclined to solidarity, exhibit passive-indifferent civil position, avoid any forms of civic activity and have a vague concept of themselves as citizens. Most of them have a below-average level of civic identity.

Alienated citizens have a low level of civic identity; desire to separate and distance themselves from the state and society as a whole, or to leave the country. This may indicate that there was no internalisation of such a social role, or this role (citizen) for them is alien and is being rejected and devalued consciously. Citizens of such type do not want to identify themselves with the community of citizens of their state – they are ready to change the Ukrainian civic identity for another (potential emigrants), since neither the state nor fellow citizens have any value for them, or they prefer to belong to the category "citizens of the world" (have no civic self-categorization).

Research method and participants

In order to determine the psychological peculiarities of citizens with different types of civic identity, an empirical study was conducted, where 190 persons aged 20-59 (the average age is 32.9 years old) participated, 69% of whom were females and 31% were males. 59% have higher education, 24% have special raining, 17% have secondary education; 58% live in the cities, 42% live in rural areas, 81% come from two-parent families, 19% grew up in a single-parent family.

To achieve the goal, the respondents were interviewed about their relations with parents (or guardians) during their childhood, featuring family upbringing, priority values of the parents' family, experience of interpersonal relationships with peers, participation in school/student activities, lifestyle, etc. For this purpose, an author's questionnaire was used, where respondents were asked to evaluate pairs of opposing statements (from -3 to 3). The following psycho-diagnostic techniques were also used: questionnaire *Level and Type of Civic Identity* (Petrovska, 2018); *World Assumptions Scale* (Janoff-Bulman, adapted by Padun & Kotelnikova, 2008); *Portrait Values Questionnaire* (Schwartz, adapted by Semkiv, 2013); *Interpersonal Trust Scale* (Rotter, adapted by Dostovalov, 2000); questionnaire *Level of Social Frustration* (Vasserman, Iovlev & Berebin,, 2004); *Social Activity Scale* (Lewicka, adapted by Cholij, 2010).

The results of the research

According to the results of the empirical study, 25.3% of interviewed citizens are *devoted*, 28.9% – *moderate*, 11.1% – *disappointed*, 23.7% – *indifferent*, 11.1% – *alienated* citizens (table 1).

Table 1.
Types of civic identity (N=190)

Types of civic identity			Integral indicator of civic identity	
	N	%	M	SD
Devoted	48	25.27	52.31	5.75
Moderate	55	28.95	36.64	4.29
Disappointed	21	11.05	10.90	7.59
Indifferent	45	23.68	20.69	5.46
Alienated	21	11.05	-6.14	11.42

The conducted comparative analysis (Anova and Scheffe test) revealed statistically significant differences in the socio-psychological characteristics of interviewed citizens with different types of civic identity. As noted above, the respondents answered the questions related to their childhood, the values of the parents' family, the peculiarities of interaction with parents

and peers, their activity in school and student life, lifestyle and social activities, etc., because, in our opinion, family experience, behavioral patterns in the childhood, civic attitudes of referent persons and social environment in educational institutions and various organizations determine the adult civic orientation.

It was found that *alienated* citizens have statistically lower values in terms of "relationships with peers" compared with *devoted* (p=.001), *moderate* (p=.005) and *indifferent* (p=.003) as well as "participation in school / student events" compared to *devoted* (p=.000) and *moderate* (p=.028).

Devoted citizens demonstrate statistically higher values in terms of "defending own position (in school, university)" compared with *disappointed* (p=.005) and *alienated* (p=.005), as well as "wide range of interests" in comparison with all other types, namely *indifferent* (p=.002), *moderate* (p=.038), *disappointed* (p=.035) and *alienated* (p=.014) (Fig. 1).
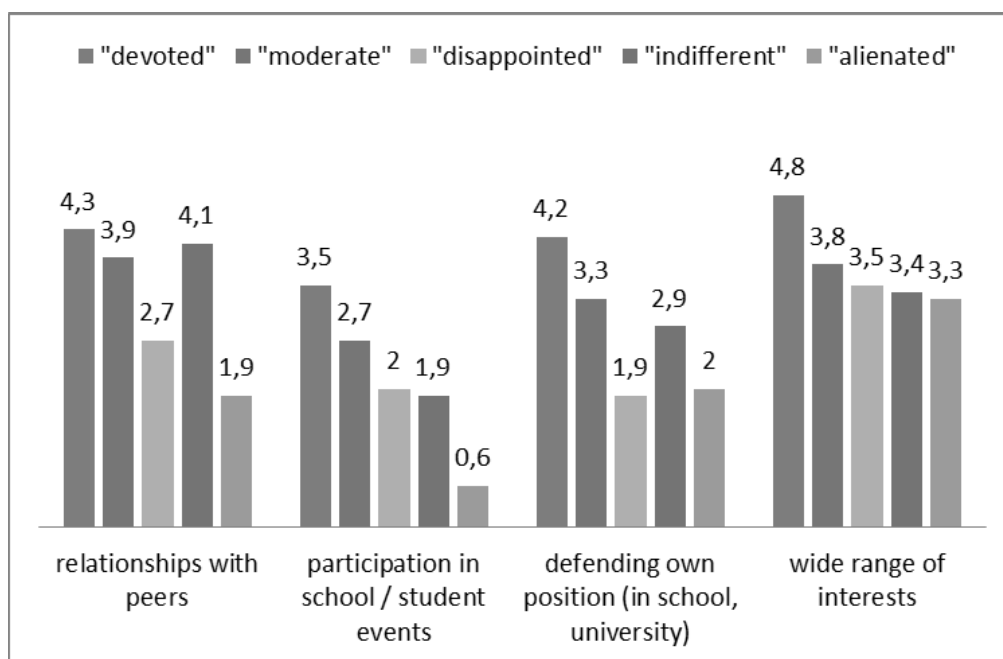

Figure 1.
Indicators of interpersonal relationship and subjectness activity of citizens with various types of civic identity
Source: Own research

So, important civic identity formation elements are social integration and social acceptance (positive experience of interpersonal relationship), as well as subjective activity that integrates such characteristics as activity, initiative, creativity, self-determination, self-regulation etc.

Statistically significant differences were found in citizens with different types of civic identity by basic beliefs. *Disappointed* citizens have statistically lower values by the "basic belief of the justice of the world" and the "basic

belief about the ability to control the events of one's life" in comparison with *devoted* (p=.000), *moderate* (p=.009) and *indifferent* (p=.005), as well as "basic belief about self-value" (p=.011) compared with *devoted*. *Devoted* citizens demonstrate statistically higher values for the "basic belief that events are not accidental" in comparison with *indifferent* (p=.036) citizens (Fig. 2).
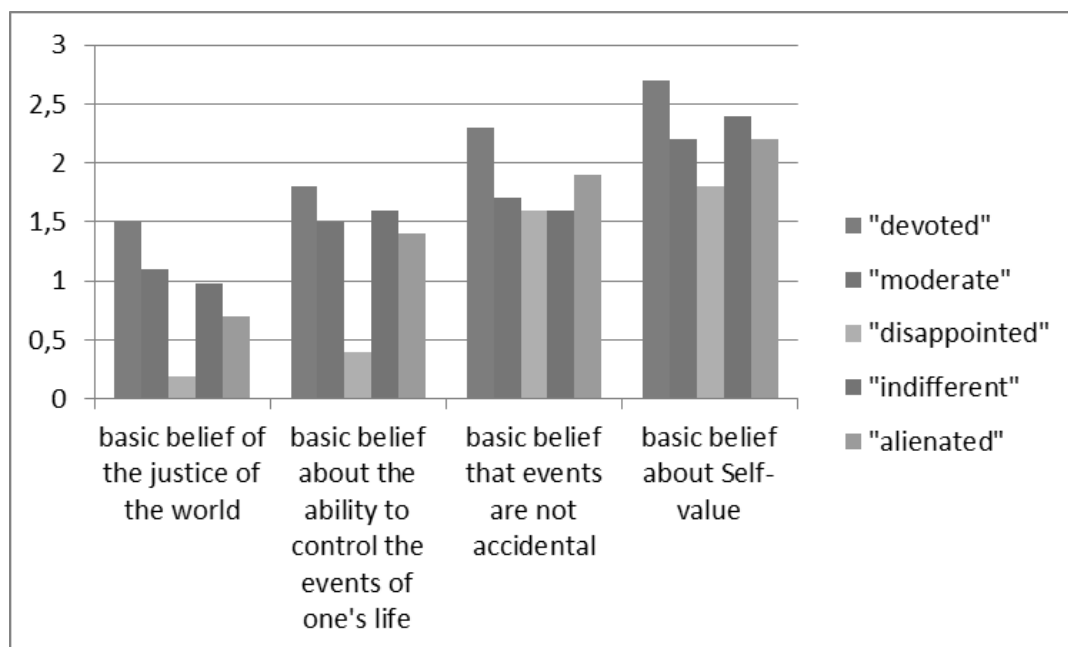

Figure 2.
Indicators of basic beliefs of citizens with various types of civic identity
Source: Own research

It can be assumed, that basic beliefs formed in childhood can serve as a criterion or standard in the value choice (motives, goals, actions), selecting and evaluating certain knowledge (assessments, norms) and influence the formation of civic beliefs in adolescence. Basic beliefs also influence the formation of an individual's «social value» – the importance of him/herself as a member of society, in particular for the state and community of citizens.

Devoted citizens have significantly higher values than *indifferent* by the "participation of parents in various NGOs" (p=.015) and by the "involvement of the child in various forms of civic activity" compared with *alienated* (p=.039). *Moderate* citizens differ statistically from *alienated* by "speaking with parents about the state (history, politics, etc.)" (p=.026) (Fig. 3).
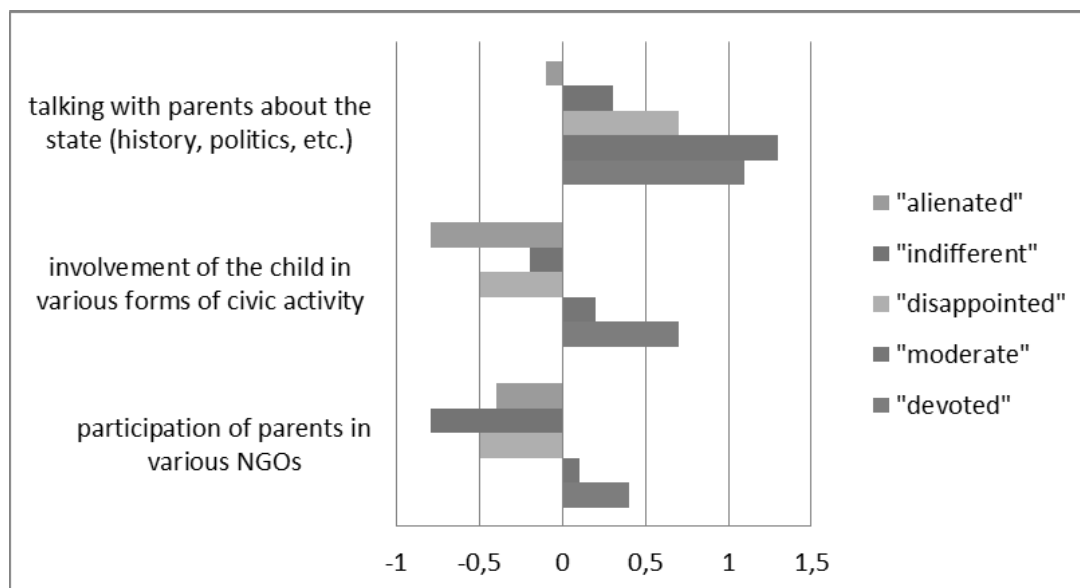
Figure 3.
Civic behavioral patterns of reference persons of citizens with various types of civic identity
Source: Own research

The results of the study confirm the significant role of parents and close relatives as agents of civic socialization. Behavioral patterns developed in childhood determine the ways of the civic orientation of an adult. As a rule, family influences do not have an expressed purposeful character, but indirectly influence both the formation of civic attitudes and the focus of the child's interests. Subsequently, civic attitudes of a person can be completely (in the case of foreclosure identity) or partially based on the system of civic attitudes of referent persons. Reference subjects (individuals or social groups) are known to have a decisive influence on the formation of opinions, judgments, assessments of an individual; their opinion is significant in the planning and implementation of his/her own actions.

On the other hand, the influence of the family can also have a direct nature. An example of direct influence is the situation when active and responsible civic position of the family members has a decisive influence on the way of their life, one or more family members are engaged in social activities, and considerable attention is paid to the formation of civic and political views of children. Parents can pass on attitudes that, in their belief, are valuable to children, in particular, a sense of solidarity, civic responsibility, respect for state symbols, etc., as well as to form affiliation with fellow citizens.

Differences in the value sphere were identified for citizens with various civic identities. *Alienated* citizens have statistically lower values, compared with *devoted* in terms of the value orientation "universalism (self-orientation)" (p=.046) and "safety" (p=.002). Thus, such categories as social justice, equality, tolerance, national security, public order, etc. for *alienated* citizens are less actualised and significant, in contrast to *devoted* citizens, for whom they are

extremely important and which, accordingly, specify their general life direction and orient them for concrete socially beneficial actions.

Devoted citizens also have significantly higher values of "self-regulation" value orientation in comparison with the *disappointed* (p=.006), *moderate* (p=.006) and *alienated* (p=.019), as well as higher values by "tradition" value orientation compared with *indifferent* (p=.009) and *alienated* (p=.048) (Fig. 4).
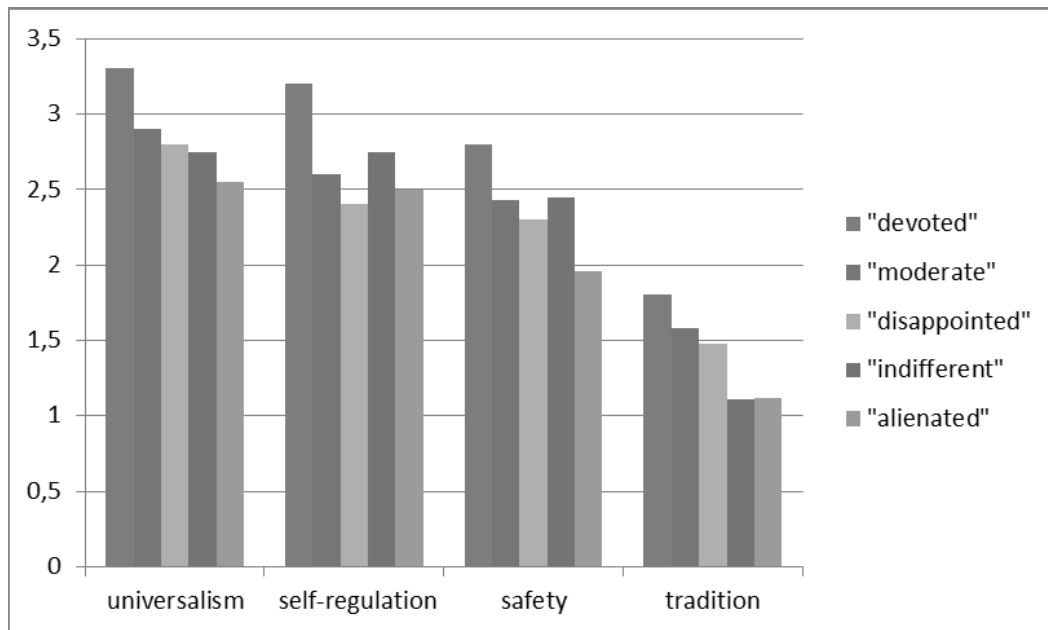

Figure 4.
Indicators of value orientations of citizens with various types of civic identity
Source: Own research.

Devoted citizens give preference to such values as independence, freedom and curiosity more commonly than other types and at the same time, they show respect for traditions. It is worth noting that *indifferent* and *alienated* citizens show the least propensity to support customs, acceptance and recognition of ideas existing in the culture of a particular society.

Alienated citizens have statistically lower values by "focus of activity on socially useful affairs (prosocial focus)" in comparison with *devoted* (p=.003) and *moderate* (p=.003). As a rule, most of them tend to act in their own interests. Unlike them, *devoted* and *moderate* are ready to act for the benefit of fellow citizens and the state. *Devoted* citizens also have significantly higher values of "solving complex life tasks" and "social activity" compared to *disappointed* (p=.000, p=.014), *indifferent* (p=.002, p=.003) and *alienated* (p=.001, p=.016), and by the "spontaneous social activity" they have significantly higher values in comparison with all other types (they differ in this peculiarity, in particular from *moderate*) (Fig. 5).
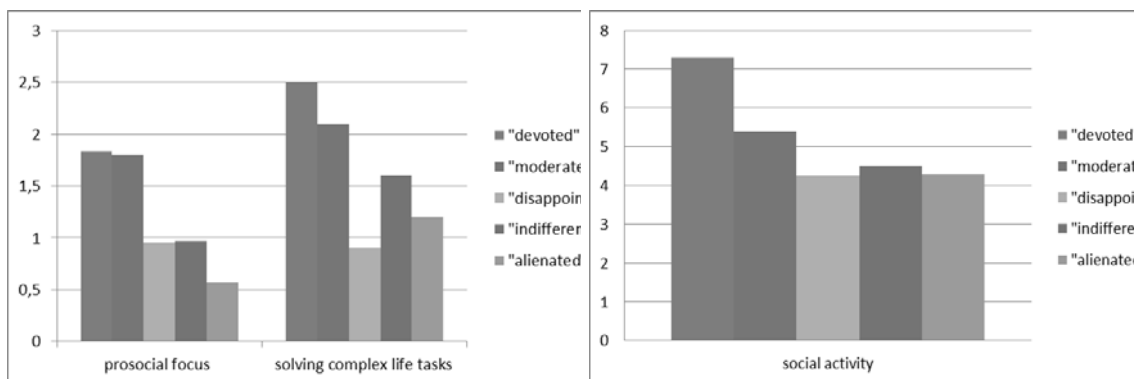
Figure 5.
Prosocial focus of activity of citizens with various types of civic identity
Source: Own research

The formation of the civic identity and, in particular, its type (*devoted, alienated, moderate, disappointed* or *indifferent*) is especially influenced by the fact, whether the needs of physical and social existence are satisfied within the state. It was found that *devoted* citizens are less "socially frustrated" compared to *disappointed* (p=.024), *indifferent* (p=.015) and *alienated* (p=.004), as they have statistically lower values in terms of "dissatisfaction with social status" and "dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in the state (employment opportunity, healthcare, etc.)" (Fig. 6).
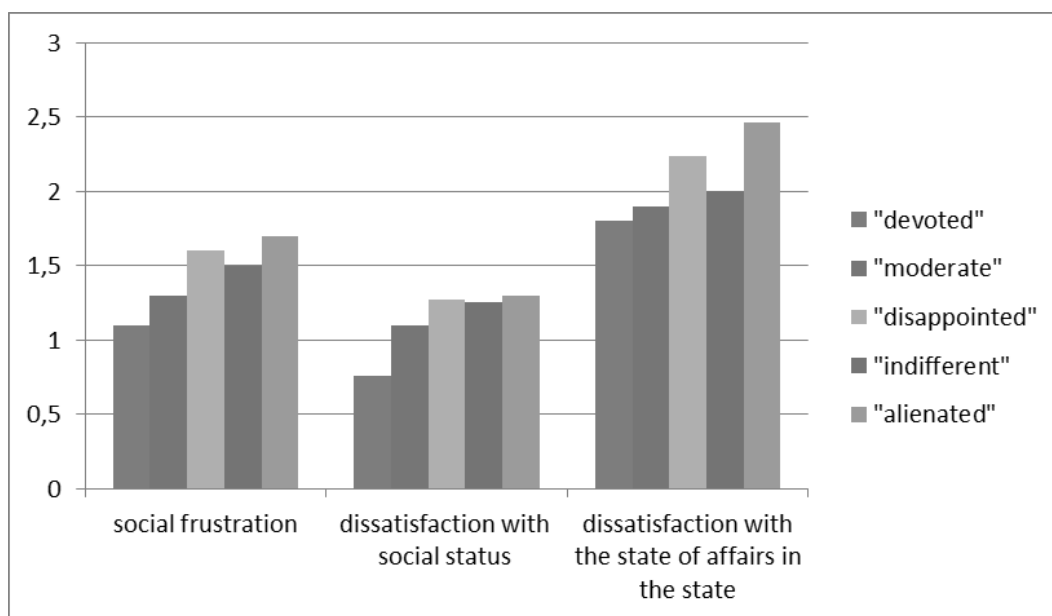

Figure 6.
Indicators of social frustration of citizens with various types of civic identity
Source: Own research

Consequently, the inability of an individual to satisfy the needs within the state, in particular, the need for social self-realisation, leads to the formation of an *alienated* and *disappointed* type of citizen. It should be noted that *disappointed* citizens also have statistically lower values in terms of "experience of interaction with the state in the form of its various agencies" in comparison with other types, as they mostly have a negative experience of applying to institutions for the purpose of implementing and advocating their interests. As a result, they feel frustrated and unimportant, which empirically confirms the correctness of the given characteristics of this type.

Also, in terms of «social trust» statistical differences between *disappointed* and *devoted* citizens (p=.039) were found (Fig. 7). Interestingly, according to the "institutional trust" scale, there are no statistically significant differences between types. This can be explained by the fact that the level of institutional distrust in Ukraine, especially of the authorities (president, government, and the Verkhovna Rada) increased to 80-90% in recent years. The lack of trust leads to the formation of ideas that representatives of social institutions have interests, motives, values that contradict the interests of citizens.
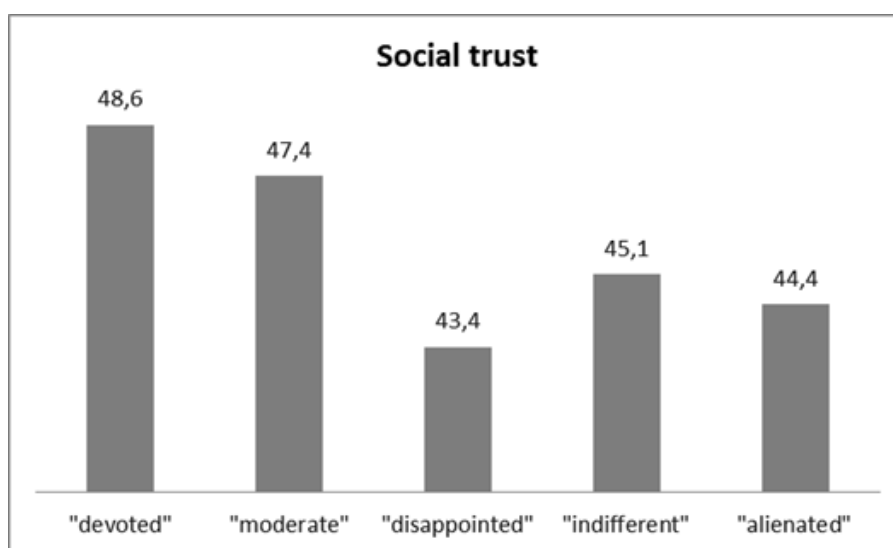

Figure 7.
Indicators of social trust of citizens with various types of civic identity
Source: Own research.

Social trust can be considered as one of the conditions for the formation of a civic identity, which is the basis of relations between a citizen and a state and fellow citizens. It ensures integration and stability in society, promotes solidarity, creates a sense of community, predictability – the expectations that fellow citizens will behave more or less predictably, honestly and carefully to the needs of others in accordance with some general norms (in the case of interpersonal trust) and the expectations of citizens for protection, assistance, support in difficult life situations and the ability/inability of government representatives to

correspond these expectations (in the case of institutional trust). This contributes to the emergence of a sense of stability, security and orderliness of life.

Conclusions

The civic identity of a person is considered by us as a complex multilevel personal formation that results from self-categorisation, awareness (giving meaning-value) of belonging to a community of citizens and the state (as its citizen) and a subjective person's attitude (emotional and behavioral) to that membership.

Civic identity has a four-component structure that unites cognitive, value, affective and behavioral components. The specificity of the formation of components of the civic identity makes it possible to create a typology of citizens: *devoted*, *moderate*, *disappointed*, *indifferent* and *alienated*. Significance (value)/ insignificance, positive/negative attitude towards belonging to the state and community of citizens and forms of activity/inactivity in relation to the state and citizens makes up the basis of the classification.

According to the results of a pilot study, it can be assumed that the main factors in the formation of a certain type of civic identity are basic beliefs (in particular, the justice of the world, the ability to control the events of one's life and self-value); civic behavioral patterns of reference persons (including civic attitudes of reference persons); social integration and social acceptance (experience of interpersonal relationships with peers); subjective activity (defending own position, wide range of interests, initiative, active participation in many events); value-semantic orientations (in particular, universalism, self-regulation, safety, tradition); prosocial focus (focus of activity on socially useful affairs); social trust; the fact of meeting the needs of physical and social existence in the state (level of social frustration); experience of interaction with the state in the form of its various agencies.

However, we understand that it is necessary to conduct similar studies on bigger and more representative groups for achieving scientifically credible results.

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