

Ethnic Preferential Policies and National Identity -- A Survey of Dongxiang Nationality in Gansu Province

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Abstract: Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Party and the government have focused on the development of ethnic areas, formulated relatively comprehensive preferential policies, and provided help to these areas and improved them continuously. It is found through this survey that the implementation of the ethnic preferential policies directly affects the social and economic development of ethnic areas and improves the living standards of local people. Meanwhile, from the ideological and spiritual level, it makes people in these areas realize the deep connection between their own development and the national development, fully feel the "sense of care" and "sense of unity", and have a solid feeling and clearer understanding of the abstract concept of the state. This is also another important influence and value of ethnic preferential policies.

Introduction

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China for 70 years, the policy to adhere to equality, solidarity, mutual assistance, harmony and common prosperity of all ethnic groups has promoted the harmonious development of ethnic relations. Even from a global perspective, China's ethnic policies are relatively successful. In the process of exploring the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, China's ethnic policies have also shown a certain "Chinese characteristics", and ethnic preferential policies are one of the "characteristics". From China's situation, our ethnic policies can be divided into three parts. The first is the state's basic principles for handling ethnic relations, including policies on ethnic identification, regional ethnic autonomy, ethnic equality, ethnic development and ethnic languages. The second is the special policies formulated for the special situation of ethnic minorities. The third is preferential policies given to ethnic minorities in order to resolve the historical gap between ethnic minorities and Han and ensure reasonable social participation. In 1988, Fei Xiaotong proposed this theory in a speech at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and used the expression of "preferential policies for ethnic minorities[1]."

The concept of national identity appeared in the field of politics in the 1970s. For individuals, national identity refers to the psychological recognition that they belong to the political community and realize that they have the membership of the country. In multi-ethnic countries, national identity is often closely related to ethnic policies. Based on the actual survey data, this paper analyzes the influence of the ethnic preferential policies on the national identity of Dongxiang people.

The Basic Situation of Dongxiang Nationality in Gansu Province

Dongxiang autonomous county is one of the three unique ethnic groups in Gansu, and it is one of the key poverty-stricken counties in China. The county has a total area of 1510 square kilometers, with 24 townships and a total population of 279,900, of which Dongxiang is 84.73%, Han is 11.08%, Hui is 4.14%, and other ethnic groups are 0.05%. In recent years, with the support of the state, policies, self-reliance and hard work of the people of the county, its economic and social development has been accelerated, and the production and living conditions have been significantly improved. The county shows a good momentum of economic development, ethnic unity,

harmonious stability. However, "one hardship (hard living environment), two poverty (poor county, poor people), three lacks (lack of resources, funds and talents)" are still basic features of Dongxiang[2].

The Natural Conditions are Harsh, Which Urgently Needs Improvement.

The altitude difference of Dongxiang county is 929 meters, the annual evaporation is 4 times of the annual precipitation. Its the forest coverage is less than 9%, the area of soil erosion accounts for 98.6% of the total area, which is quite serious; 280000 people live in 1750 hills and 3083 gullies, with a total cultivated area of 367800 mu, including 87.3% of mountainous dry land, and 1.33 mu of cultivated land per capita. The county's population density is 184 people / km², which is 3.3 times that of Gansu Province's 55.3 people / km², and also higher than the national population density of 132 people / km². This is 9 times the critical line of the population of the same type of land estimated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Its mineral resources are extremely scarce. So far, no mineral resources have been found for large-scale and industrial development. The natural conditions are so harsh that it is in a dilemma that it cannot support its own inhabitants[3].

The Development is Seriously Lagging Behind, Which Urgently Needs Acceleration.

The main economic indicators of Dongxiang county are at the bottom of the whole province and the whole prefecture. In 2008, the per capita GDP of the county was 2,273 yuan, which was 1/2 of the prefectural level, 1/5 of the provincial level and 1/10 of the national level, ranking second from last among the province's 7 ethnic autonomous counties and Linxia prefecture; The per capita net income of farmers was 1,419 yuan, which was 3/4 of the prefectural level, 1/2 of the provincial level and 1/3 of the national level, ranking last among the province's 7 ethnic autonomous counties and Linxia prefecture; According to the new standard of 1196 yuan, there are 236500 poor people in the county, and 88% of them are in rural areas, ranking the highest in seven autonomous counties and Linxia prefecture. Moreover, its annual poverty return rate is more than 10% and more than 30% in case of drought; The per capita fixed asset investment of the whole county was 1206.2 yuan, which was 1/2 of the prefectural level, 1/5 of the provincial level and 1/10 of the national level, also ranking last in the local; The finance is very difficult. The per capita financial income was 86.6 yuan, which was 1/4 of the prefectural level, 1/20 of the provincial level and 1/50 of the national level, also ranking last in the local. In addition, the county's financial self-sufficiency rate was less than 2%, and the allowance for cadres and employees cannot be fully paid[4].

The Level of Social Development is Low, Which Urgently Needs Promotion.

Because of many factors such as nature, history, society, etc., its social development lags behind, and infrastructure construction has a large debt. It is difficult for the masses to travel, to get water, to go to school, to get medical treatment and to get housing. The farmers have low scientific and cultural quality, weak self-development ability, and lack of sustainable development; There is a serious shortage of staff in primary and secondary schools. According to the current number of students, there is a shortage of 785 teachers in these schools, which affects the development of education; Rural medical and health conditions are poor, health technicians are lacking, and most village clinics lack the necessary diagnosis and treatment equipment. There are no health clinics in 219 villages, and there are 1.2 health technicians per thousand people, which is 2/3 of the prefectural level and 1/3 of the provincial level, ranking the last place among the province's 7 ethnic autonomous counties and Linxia prefecture; The number of beds per thousand people is 0.63, which is 1/2 of the prefectural level and 1/4 of the provincial level, ranking last in the prefecture; Only 7 township family planning technical services in the county meet the required standards; Cultural infrastructure is seriously lagging behind, with no cinema in the county, and only five township cultural stations. The radio and television equipment is backward and incomplete, which can't be connected with the digital production and broadcasting system of provinces and prefectures; There are still 110 natural villages in the county where the power supply cannot be guaranteed normally[5]. 3 towns have no access to oil roads, 30% of rural roads are still dirt roads, and 30% of

natural villages cannot have access to automobiles; There are 101800 people whose safe drinking water cannot be guaranteed; The public facilities of the county and towns are not matched, and the city service is not perfect, which seriously affects the its economic development.

The National Representation is Strong, which Urgently Needs Attention.

Dongxiang county is the birthplace of Dongxiang nationality, one of the three unique nationalities in Gansu. It is the only national autonomous county with Dongxiang nationality as the main body, accounting for 46% of the total population of 513800 Dongxiang nationality. Nearly half of the Dongxiang people live in Dongxiang county, and its development represents the development of the whole Dongxiang nationality. Whether the county can get rid of poverty as soon as possible and achieve the well-off goal on schedule, in a certain sense, can be regarded as whether the Dongxiang nationality can solve the problem as soon as possible and achieve the well-off goal on schedule. It is believed that if Dongxiang county can't achieve the well-off goal on schedule, it can't be said that Dongxiang nationality will achieve this goal, and there will be no real well-off nationwide.

Research Methods

In order to investigate the situation of ethnic preferential policies and national identity of Dongxiang nationality in Gansu, we have conducted a field survey of Dongxiang ethnic autonomous county in Gansu. In the survey, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods are used. Qualitative survey mainly includes forum, personal interview and observation, while quantitative survey mainly adopts questionnaire. The survey has interviewed 60 people, including government officials, teachers of primary and secondary schools, township cadres, herdsmen, etc. The main interviewees belong to Dongxiang nationality, including 5 Han and 5 Hui.

The questionnaire adopts the method of classified sampling, and 249 questionnaires are distributed, all of which are recovered normally[6].

According to statistics, the average age of those who complete the questionnaire is 32, the oldest is 65, and the youngest is 15; There are 132 males, accounting for 53.01%, and 117 females, 46.99%.

Results

The Implementation of Ethnic Preferential Policies.

Considering the above basic situation of Dongxiang nationality in Gansu, the state and local governments, like other ethnic areas, have implemented some preferential policies to its settlement areas where natural conditions are unfavorable and development lags behind, vigorously support and promote the local economic and social development as soon as possible. Through the survey, we know that most people are satisfied with the implementation of these preferential policies.

Firstly, in terms of the cognition towards the establishment of ethnic regional autonomous counties, the statistical analysis results show that among 249 interviewees of Dongxiang, 159 of them think that this establishment shows the attention to Dongxiang nationality, accounting for 63.9% of the total. There are 117 people who think that its establishment has benefited them, accounting for 47.0% of the total interviewees. Concerning the subjective evaluation of the role of the autonomous county, 179 (71.9%) think that its role is good, 43 (17.3%) think that it is neither good nor bad, while only one thinks that there is no good, and 17 (6.8%) do not make the evaluation.

On the whole, 63.9% of people feel that the country attaches importance to their nationality, and 71.9% think it is good. People make judgments mainly from the feelings of social prestige and psychological stability. However, only 47% of the people think they benefit from the institutional arrangement of the autonomous county. Compared with the influence of autonomous counties on ethnic consciousness, the percentage difference is 16.9, and compared with the subjective evaluation of the role of autonomous counties, the percentage difference is 24.9. In the interview,

everyone knows at least one preferential policy implemented in the autonomous county, such as family planning policy or college entrance examination enrollment policy.

The Specific Perception of Ethnic Preferential Policies.

Through survey and interview, it is found that most of the interviewees believe that the state has given preferential policies or benefits to local minorities in various aspects. For example, 100% of the interviewees know that the state has a special policy for the local ethnic minorities in terms of education, such as admission to the college entrance examination, compared with the Han; Meanwhile, most of the interviewees (84.7%) think that there are preferential policies for their own ethnic groups in other fields besides education, such as economic taxes, subsidies and so on. Most of the interviewees (81%) know that they or their relatives and friends have benefited from the preferential policies of the state, such as various tax exemptions or subsidies.

The Influence of Ethnic Preferential Policies on National Identity.

In the interviews, we know that most interviewees believe that the preferential policies in all aspects are the state's attention and help to their ethnic groups, and regard them as part of the state. Some interviewees can also take history as a guide to show that ethnic conflicts will bring harm to national security and unity, and the concept that ethnic groups cannot live without each other is deeply rooted in people's hearts. Interviewees generally believe that unbalanced development among different ethnic groups is a basic national condition. Particularly, some ethnic areas that are located in remote areas or have harsh natural environments need the state to take reasonable measures to help or support them. Meanwhile, through interviews, we learn that most of the interviewees believe that if losing the help of the state, the development of ethnic areas will encounter great difficulties, and the gap with other areas with better development will become larger and larger. This shows that through the support and help of the state in policies, ethnic people clearly feel the relationship between their own nationality, regional development and national development. Meanwhile, most of the interviewees also mention that no matter what nationality they belong to, they are all Chinese. The development of the country cannot be separated from the struggle and efforts of every Chinese. Though some ethnic areas are poor and backward, they are significant to the country's integrity and future development. Ethnic culture is not only the characteristics of our nationality, but also a part of Chinese culture, and reflects the profound and colorful Chinese culture.

It is found through this survey that the implementation of the ethnic preferential policies directly affects the social and economic development of ethnic areas and improves the living standards of local people. Meanwhile, from the ideological and spiritual level, it makes people in these areas realize the deep connection between their own development and the national development. Besides, they can fully feel that though this area is backward, the country has not given it up, and received great support, with a "sense of care" and a "sense of unity" in mind. Besides, they can have a solid feeling and clearer understanding of the abstract concept of the state, which is also another important value of ethnic preferential policies.

Conclusion

At present, the study of Chinese national identity and its community identity has become a prominent learning. Apart from exploring the connotation of these two identities, more academic research is to explore how to form Chinese national identity and its community identity. China is a multi-ethnic country. Whether we can build the identity of all nationalities to the socialist country and the Chinese national community is related to the national stability and unity. Through this survey, we have generally understood the direct influence of national preferential policies on local economy and society. Meanwhile, it is found that because of the implementation of preferential policies, the local ethnic people's ideological understanding of the country, nationality and culture is also affected positively. Thus, the state's preferential policies for ethnic areas should be continued and improved.

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