The normativity of multiple social identity: from motivation to legitimacy

Purpose. The authors of this article aim to reveal how motivation and legitimacy ensure the normativity of the structuring and genesis of multiple social identity.

Theoretical basis. Social constructivism was chosen as a research methodology. It reveals social identity as an identity constructed by its bearer on the basis of ready-made versions of social identity proposed by social groups and society. Social circles, identified by Georg Simmel, unite representatives of different social groups into a wider oneness, which can be interpreted as a multiple social identity, and the motivation for its formation can be identified on the basis of Weber’s concept of legitimacy.

Originality. Identifying the structure and genesis of a multiple social identity creates prerequisites for establishing its normative foundations, as well as for a specific analysis of the procedures for achieving its motivation and legitimacy. Georg Simmel’s concept of social virtues promotes consideration of the basic virtues of an individual as those that enable one’s to be a member of various social groups in which these virtues are manifested.

Conclusions. The social virtues present in the social identities that are part of a multiple social identity determine not only the social status of these individuals in these social groups but also the ranking and normative significance of these groups for this individual. If the observance of virtues in a certain social group causes a higher motivation of an individual’s behavior, then this group acquires a higher legitimacy for her/him. Using the example of virtues, it is possible to search for other possible grounds for the formation of multiple social identity. Such grounds are primarily other characteristics of key social practices that support different social groups.

Keywords: Man; personality; multiple social identity; motivation; legitimacy

Introduction

Multiple social identity has become recognized as a common and normal phenomenon in modern society, but its normativity still remains unclear. If there are several social identities that are simultaneously perceived as acceptable ones, what is the mutual submission between them? Are they all equal? Are there relationships of partial mutual overlapping between these identities? For the answers to these questions, it is necessary to turn to the clarification of the issue that acts as motivational incentives to accept these identities: after all, some incentives are stronger, some are more stable, and some are more all-encompassing. Then, using the next step, one will clarify how this motivation determines the effect of the legitimacy of social norms that ensure the functioning of these social identities – each in particular and as part of multiple social identities.

The classics of modern social philosophy Georg Simmel (1898) and Max Weber (2012) laid the ground for the theoretical essence of multiple social identities. Simmel proposed the concept of the social circle that encompasses the representatives of various social groups, and Weber revealed the nature of legitimacy on the basis of recognition, in other words, the available motivation for the behavior of the members of the society. Ukrainian philosophers Anatoly Loy (2007) and Mykhailo Boichenko (2022) figured out the philosophical essence of the social mechanisms in obtaining legitimacy. And yet, the nature of the normativity of multiple social identities has still not been revealed.

The methodology of this study is social constructivism since we consider social identity as constructed one – with the participation of the bearer of this identity, as well as with the
participation of social groups and societies that offer prepared versions of social identity for this bearer. We also proceed from the fact that social construction, to a certain extent, is not just a composition of existing patterns of behavior and corresponding types of personality, but is also the creation of new personality characteristics and relationships between such characteristics, both inherited and acquired, as well as newly created.

**Purpose**

*The purpose* of this article is to find how motivation and legitimacy ensure the normativity of the structuring and genesis of multiple social identity.

**Statement of basic materials**

*The structure of multiple social identity*

Multiple social identity lies in the simultaneous support of several social identities as one’s own by individuals, and sometimes by whole social communities. Obviously, there can not be discussing a multiple self – because this would mean the effect of schizophrenia, or bipolar mental disorder (Cybulská, 2019). However, as it turned out thanks to postmodern philosophical studies, for example, French thinkers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, social practices that look like schizophrenia are common in modern society, although they are essentially not.

Here is Edwina Barvosa-Carter’s definition of multiple social identity in "New Dictionary of the History of Ideas" – as opposed to the traditional one, centered on the self-conscious identity of the individual:

> Multiple identity, on the other hand, is one specific conceptualization of the more general idea that the subject is not centered, but instead decentered and multiple. Such a decentered subjectivity can encompass many different, perhaps even contradictory, identities, and is not necessarily centered by one self-defining or "true" identity. Rather, since identities are socially constructed and constructing, their specific number and character are a function of the various forms of socialization that forge the subject over time, as well as of the lifeworlds in which he or she participates. (Barvosa-Carter, 2005, p. 1089)

The modern British philosopher Eric Olson proposes to distinguish between synchronic and diachronic identity, and for him, diachronic identity is more important, which is distinguished by a certain durability, stability, and persistence, while synchronic identity as a more or less random set of simultaneous characteristics a certain personality uses to construct one’s self:
What does it take for a person to persist from one time to another – to continue existing rather than cease to exist? What sorts of adventures is it possible, in the broadest sense of the word 'possible', for you to survive, and what sort of event would necessarily bring your existence to an end?

What determines which past or future being is you? (Olson, 2003)

However, a person does not arbitrarily choose from what he/she should build his/her identity: to a greater extent, their possible images are already prepared in advance by society and are presented in those possible social roles that can be performed in their interactions with other people. These social roles are not passive objects to which only the individual gives life, on the contrary, in most cases, social roles are only part of integral life strategies that actively encourage the individual to take certain actions and hold him/her from others – these strategies actually actively form the social identity of the personality.

Moreover, social strategies are represented not so much by individuals, but by certain social communities that arise around sustainable social practices. Participation in these practices not only influences the formation of a person’s social identity but also determines the structure of this identity. Accordingly, a person, as a rule, does not choose this or that social identity out of his/her own whim but is under the decisive influence of a certain community, which seems to "lead" the person through life. This is a certain holistic modus vivendi, a way of life characteristic of people of a "certain circle".

Social circles are the concept that explains how the diachronic and synchronic characteristics of a certain social identity can be brought together. Moreover, we consider it more accurate to name them, respectively, genetic and structural characteristics: after all, we are not talking about abstract diachrony, but about gradual maturation, successive development of a certain social identity from its simple to its complex characteristics; what is more, non-random sets of such characteristics coexist synchronously, namely those that grow from a simple structure into a complex one. Thus, the structure justifies the existence of each of its elements, and this element naturally arises at a certain stage of the genesis of a certain social identity.

At one time the concept of a social circle was introduced by Georg Simmel. He shows that persistence in maintaining one’s social position is more than simply belonging to a certain social group. It is especially interesting, using the concept of honor as an example, he shows how people who belong to different sustainable and fixed social groups can at the same time be the bearers of honor that unite only some representatives of these groups: "Thus honor consists in the relation of the individual to a particular circle, which in this respect manifests its separateness, its sociological distinctness from other groups" (Simmel, 1898, p. 682).

According to Simmel, individuals as bearers of honor stand out among other representatives of their social group: within their social group, they form their own circle, just as in other social groups such bearers of honor stand out from among representatives of their class. These small circles of honor-bearers form a large social circle, which freely overcomes the established boundaries of the social structure, forming a new association governed by a common atmosphere, as they now say, the atmosphere in the observation of the law of honor: "This peculiar intermedi-
ary position of honor points to the perception which arises from the most general observation of the workings of honor, viz.: that honor is originally a class standard (Standesehre); i.e., an appropriate life-form of smaller circles contained within a larger whole" (Simmel, 1898, p. 681).

According to Simmel, honor as the basis of the formation of a social circle is an example of a certain connecting link between social normativity embodied in law, in particular penal law, on the one hand, and the normativity of personal imperative. Both social law and personal beliefs can be too strict in their requirements – they can be poor advisors on how to act morally in a difficult situation. Honor then acts as such a mediator helping to retain a moral position in an atypical situation that cannot be predicted by a formal moral position: "...honor corresponds, as a social requisite, to the needs of a somewhat contracted circle, between those of the largest civic group, which coerces its members by penal law, and those of purely personal life, which finds its norms only in the autonomy of the individual" (Simmel, 1898, p. 681).

Therefore, perseverance is rather a certain social virtue that unites people who adhere to the same social practices, regardless of the formal social groups to which they belong. This persistence cannot, in our opinion, be derived either from the norms of social groups or from the personal principles of a person. It is worth looking for the basis of honor as a virtue in a special way of life, in social practices that often unite people in a non-reflexive manner.

Motivation for communication as a basis for the normative choice of an individual

To some extent, the non-reflexive motivation for the formation of a certain informal sociality is explained by the modern French philosopher Michel Maffesoli, who introduces the concept of "atmosphere" to denote a social community united by a common mood, a common setting to act and feel in a certain way:

In a word, perceiving the outlined concepts in the most acceptable sense,
we can say that now there is a tendency to move from rational social to empathic sociality. Sociability will be expressed by a sequence of moods, feelings, and emotions. It is interesting to note that the concept of "atmosphere", characteristic of the era of German romanticism, is used more and more often. (Maffesoli, 2018, p. 46)

The French political philosopher Chantal Mouffe also shows close positions when she emphasizes the importance of emotional political self-identification and at the same time criticizes the rationalist approach of the modern German philosopher Jürgen Habermas to explain the emergence of social normativity in communication. If Habermas (1981), following Immanuel Kant (1784), emphasizes the priority of individual reflection as a condition for responsible communication, Mouffe (2005) subordinates individuals to collective action on a pre-reflective, existential principles: "...even in societies which have become very individualistic, the need for collective identifications will never disappear since it is constitutive of the mode of existence of human being" (p. 20).
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Ukrainian philosopher Anatoly Loy explains the perception of normativity as fundamentally justified by the proper motivation to obey social laws at the level of moral sense:

In the world of the public, in the space of public openness, both a sense of freedom and a sense of responsibility are supported, which are necessary for an adequate understanding and application of the law. Pragmatically applying reason in the realm of the public, its participants – as individuals – unintentionally strive for a single, common, all-encompassing common sense (Gemeinsinn, Sensus komunis), where the use of intelligence by each individual requires him/her to take a position, to be capable of "self-sufficiency" (Selbststand) in the world. (Loy, 2007, p. 6)

However, as we can see, unlike Mouffe, Loy does not recognize a radical confrontation between reason and emotions. Their reconciliation is possible in the case of proper legitimization of social norms, primarily legal ones. Referring to the philosophical arguments of the famous German and American thinker Hannah Arendt (2002), Loy argues that guaranteed adherence to legal norms is possible only if people recognize their moral rightness. This rightness cannot be rationally proven, and yet this sense of justice turns out to be the basis for all possible rational constructions regarding normativity in general and legal norms in particular.

This feeling manifests itself not abstractly but as a concrete experience of a person’s pride in one’s involvement in a certain social community. This pride gives the same person grounds to accept other social communities as acceptable for one’s identity or to reject others as unacceptable and incompatible with a certain original social identity that a person perceives as the root one for oneself. Such pride forms the basis of motivation for communication – it is impossible to force such communication, a person must strive for it oneself, wherein most of all.

Threats of splitting social identity in crisis situations and the legitimacy of overcoming such a split

For modern society, the state of multiple social identity, in which almost all members of this society find themselves, is a norm rather than a pathology (Boichenko & Shevchenko, 2020). It is not so much about different social roles performed by individuals, but about different scenarios of the performance of the same role, different dramaturgy, the choice between which depends not on a higher authority, but on the individual him/herself, who must at the same time be a director, an actor for him/herself and a critic, choosing this or that scenario not just at their own taste and discretion, but at their own responsibility. Indeed, in good times, one life scenario is completely justified.
The pandemic war situations further exacerbated the necessity and even the inevitability of making such a permanent choice, because now it becomes extremely obvious that each individual is no longer hypothetically, but quite realistically responsible not only for him/herself but at least for their close social environment: a decision inadequate to a threatening situation at any moment can bring not only illness but also death not only to the author of this decision but also to his/her loved ones and relatives. Thus, multiple social identity acquires an implicit collective character: decisions must be made not only for oneself but also for others. This has always been the social situation. But if in traditional society such decisions had to be made extremely rarely, or more often they did not have to be made at all (Fromm, 2019), then in modern society, such collectivist decisions have become the norm – globalization has led to a significant increase in social risks (Beck, 1992).

Another question arises: what right does a person have to make decisions for others, especially fateful decisions on which life and death depend? Obviously, such personal decisions for the team can be justified only in situations where it is impossible to find out the opinion of other members of this team: for example, when there is no time or there is no connection with other members of this team. In all other situations, some counseling is necessary whenever possible. In this way, full-fledged intersubjective legitimation of this decision is achieved (Shevchenko & Fialko, 2021, p. 224).

In modern society, the function of such legitimation is largely assumed by social networks: thanks to the possibility of discussing a certain decision, you can not only get its support or opposition, but also learn the arguments "for" and "against" this decision, as well as get other types of motivation – not rational, but emotional (Fialko, 2022). It often turns out that the latter has even greater power and influence than the former. As the French postmodernist philosopher Michel Maffesoli (2018) notes, it is now very important for an individual to belong to a certain "tribe", and to be "one’s own" to a certain community, decisions are often made not as rationally balanced, but under the influence of a certain "atmosphere", of collective thought, which is expressed not so much in the articulation of a certain rational strategy, but in the visual and emotional collective experience.

Often, the choice that is declared rational is not so, but rather, in Max Weber’s (2012) terminology, it is not "purpose-rational" but a traditional one – in favor of one or another component of multiple social identity. Each person must first find out all the risks both for him/herself personally and for others – both loved ones and society as a whole. And only after that, you should make a decision, first for yourself, and then come to a collective decision, but not at the level of blindly joining the will of the anonymous majority, but as lobbying for your own decision as a possible basis for a collective decision. Then more and more often such a collective decision will be the result of an argumentative discourse (Yermolenko, 2022), and not emotional impulses.

In such a situation, the splitting of social identity will take on a different nature: not as a result of likes/dislikes, blind loyalty, or "hatering", but as a result of developing alternative strategies of collective social behavior. Then such splitting will have more chances to acquire a productive rather than a destructive character, to be not a social pathology, but a way of special social self-organization.

Then and social conflicts have every chance to be more productive rather than destructive – including conflicts between components of multiple social identity. As Mouffe rightly remarks:
Conflict, in order to be accepted as legitimate, needs to take a form that does not destroy the political association. This means that some kind of common bond must exist between the parties in conflict; so that they will not treat their opponents as enemies to be eradicated, seeing their demands as illegitimate, which is precisely what happens with the antagonistic friend/enemy relation. (Mouffe, 2005, p. 20)

Thus, overcoming the threats of splitting social identity and achieving effective normativity of multiple social identity is possible on the basis of rational discourse and emotional and motivational agreement regarding the common basic interests of various members of the social community. Then, destructive group conflicts will not be projected on the personality as one’s splitting.

**Originality**

Establishing the normativity of a multiple social identity presupposes the preliminary identification of its structure and genesis. Then questions about the motivation and legitimacy of multiple social identity acquire concreteness, and the answers become procedurally weighted. Georg Simmel’s concept of social circles can play an important role in the understanding of multiple social identity: it can be viewed as a methodology of agreement, grounded on the basic virtues of an individual, his/her belonging to different social groups in which these virtues are manifested.

**Conclusions**

The presence of several social identities in an individual or social community, which are simultaneously perceived as acceptable requires clarification of their significance from the viewpoint of those social virtues that can be represented in these social identities: where such virtues receive their more expressive and more consistent, more systemic manifestations, occupy a higher position in relation to other social identities that a person has. This finds its normative manifestation when the norms of a more meaningful identity have a higher force. This is due to the fact that their observance causes higher motivation, and therefore they acquire higher legitimacy for the bearers of this multiple social identity. The appeal to social virtues is one of the main ones in determining the genesis and structuring of a multiple social identity, however, it is quite possible, using the example of virtues, to search for other possible grounds for the reproduction of key social practices, on the basis of which the formation of a certain multiple social identity takes place.

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Історико-філософська література, яка вивчає соціальний інтелект, соціальний колектив, соціальне становище, соціальний процес включає не лише теорії та методології, але теж практики та приклади, які демонструють можливи форми і носії соціальних ідентичностей.

**Мета.** Автори цієї статті мають на меті виявити, яким чином мотивація та легітимація забезпечують нормативність структурування та генезису множинної соціальної ідентичності.

**Теоретичний базис.** Методологією дослідження, яка розкриває соціальну ідентичність як сконструйовану її носієм ідентичність на основі запропонованих соціальними групами та суспільством готових версій соціальної ідентичності, обрано соціальний конструктивізм. Соціальні кола, виявлені Георгом Зіммелем, об’єднують представників різних соціальних груп у ширшу єдність, яку можна витлумачити як множинну соціальну ідентичність, а мотивацію до її утворення можна виявити на основі Веберового поняття легітимації.

**Наукова новизна.** Виявлення структури та генезису множинної соціальної ідентичності створює передумови для встановлення її нормативних засад, а також для конкретного аналізу процедур досягнення її мотивації та легітимації. Концепція соціальних чесnostей Георга Зіммеля сприяє розгляду базових чесnostей як таких, що дають ій можливість бути членом різних соціальних груп, у яких ці чесності проявляються. Висновки. Соціальні чесності, навіяні в соціальних ідентичностях, які входять до складу множинної соціальної ідентичності, визнаються не лише соціальним статусом цих особистостей у цих соціальних групах, але й ранжування й нормативну значущість цих груп для цієї ідентичності. Якщо дотримання чесност у певній соціальній групі викликає вищу мотивацію поведінки особистості, тоді ця група здобуває для неї вищу легітимність. За прикладом чесност можна здійснити пошук інших можливих підстав для утворення множинної соціальної ідентичності. Таким підставами є передусім інші характеристики ключових соціальних практик, які підтримують різні соціальні групи.

**Ключові слова:** Людина; особистість; множина соціальна ідентичність; мотивація; легітимація

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