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ROLE OF JUSTICE WHILE IMPLEMENTING CIVILIAN CONTROL MEASURES IN MODERN RUSSIAN SOCIETY

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the diagnosis of justice as one of the fundamental social values. It is emphasized that justice is one of the most significant motivators for civil actions due to the sociocultural specificity of the Russian Federation. Justice is not only a value and an ideal. It is a cognitive category, an explanatory principle expressing many other values (legitimacy, equality, honesty, recognition, etc.). The idea of justice remains one of the key values in the value system of the modern Russian society. It is one of the three most significant (along with trust and responsibility) social values. Knowledge and attitudes remain at the value level; however, they are not implemented at the everyday level. Non-profit organizations are a “layer” between the government and the society, they unite active citizens and initiative groups to create civil solidary and fair society that can become an effective partner in solving the constructive tasks. According to Belgorod researchers of the regional management, the world is striving for social efficiency and integrity of the management which includes target criteria indicators, transparency of government activities and density of civil institutions. The purpose is to assess the role of justice in transforming the values and attitudes of citizens in the civil practices. The research involved studies on various conditions affecting the implementation of the principle of social justice, analysis of normative significance of justice. The methods used for collecting primary information were of complex nature (mass survey, expert survey, secondary analysis of research).

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Keywords: Justice, consolidation, self-organization, civil control, regional management.



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1. Introduction

Currently, it is necessary to search for effective mechanisms of interaction between the authorities and society due to several reasons: first, citizens should be able to participate in making decisions that are vital for society; second, abuse of power can be minimized; third, new civil traditions and values can be developed. At present, non-profit organizations are a “layer” between the government and society, they unite active citizens and initiative groups in order to create civil society that can become an effective partner in solving constructive tasks.

Theoretical and empirical analysis of the value of justice while implementing civil control practices at the local level is important for the development of management theory, since it will allow to study the consolidation potential of the population; analyze forms and methods of self-organization of citizens that meet the needs of society; suggest methods for assessing risks arising from the development of civil control technologies.

Justice is one of the most significant motivators for civil actions due to the sociocultural specifics of Russia, where control practices have been based on justice. Social justice is a value. Being a critical point of intersection of individual and public interests, it expresses a historically and culturally acceptable measure of equality and freedom of individuals. In the modern social and cultural environment, justice can act as a national idea consolidating society (Dylnova, 2005).

2. Problem Statement

Discussions about the role of social justice as a basic value of society have been aggravated. The concept “social justice” has not been defined. For example, Gorshkov and Tikhonova (2013) define justice as a “great Russian dream”. Diskin (2018) defines it as a “basic value of Russian society”.

In the works by foreign sociologists, the issue of social justice is not relevant. Western society appeals to the law rather than to justice (Dempsey, 2008; Premdas, 2016). For example, Alexander (2014) considers justice as an element of social resources of consolidation in modern "post-Marxist" reality.

Pirogov and Efimov (2008) emphasize that: “concepts of social justice depend on the socio-economic structure, the balance of power, political culture of the elite. However, this does not mean that any concept of justice is acceptable. The concept that provides a consensus among various strata of the population, does not cause serious objections and outrage should be dominant” (p. 5).

The search for a special, traditional definition of social justice and its functions in society is typical of the works of Russian researchers (Magun, Rudnev, & Schmidt, 2017)

This position is typical of the work by Kozlov (2010) who defines traditions as “a tool for preserving Russian identity and developing Russian culture, state and nation” (p. 20).

The author associates the specifics of justice inherent in Russian culture and mentality with Orthodoxy. He specifies that “the moral principle (perfection, transformation of the soul), inherent in the pre-Christian worldview of Russians, organically entered into the Christian culture” (Kozlov, 2010, p. 20).

Justice is a fundamental principle of social life based on traditions. It is one of the main integrating elements of society. Its essence is to establish the balance of action and retribution in accordance with the social values.

3. Research Questions

The research subject is the role of the value-semantic sphere while implementing civilian control measures.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose is to assess the role of justice in transforming the values and attitudes of citizens in the civil practices.

5. Research Methods

As part of the project “Diagnostics of the consolidation potential of the value of justice while implementing civil control measures in the practice of local self-government”, in 2017, young researchers from Belgorod National Research University developed tools and carried out a survey of the population of Belgorod region on the issue of social justice (N = 1000). The main research and applied task of the project was to substantiate the role of justice in implementing civilian control at the local level. The project was aimed at analyzing conditions forms of self-organization of citizens at the local level.

The research involved studies on various conditions affecting the implementation of the principle of social justice, analysis of normative significance of justice. The methods used for collecting primary information were of complex nature (mass survey, expert survey, secondary analysis of research).

6. Findings

The sociological data obtained allow us to conclude that the idea of justice remains one of the key values in Russian society. It is one of the three most significant (along with trust and responsibility) social values (for 46.00 % of respondents). In addition, justice occupies an important place in the dreams of the population about the future of the country. More than 90.00% of respondents want to live in a fair society where individuals have equal rights, the strong government cares about its citizens, there are equal opportunities for using social benefits and resources. The idea of social justice is peculiar to the respondents of different age groups. Differences determined by education and income levels are insignificant (2.00-5.00%).

It is obvious that in the minds of citizens, the idea of justice occupies one of the leading places; on the other hand, its definition is ambiguous. The respondents want to establish the ideals of a just society in the country, but these ideals are different. The research results allowed us to draw several fundamental conclusions about the nature of justice. Firstly, justice is associated with an ideal society. Second, most of respondents believe that modern society is unfair. Third, most of citizens define justice as legality (56.00% of respondents agree with the statement that “it’s not so important whether something complies with the law or not - the main thing is to be fair”). Fourth, a high degree of tolerance to social inequality that seem fair is inherent in citizens. The citizens do not strive to “divide everything”; equal opportunities allow for the existence of inequalities based on equitable grounds.

Thus, justice is the most important value capable of ensuring the consensus of various segments of the population, which does not cause serious objections. The importance of justice has been conceived by researchers and citizens. Nevertheless, we believe that it is premature to conclude that in the concept of justice, there is an idea that can unite different categories of citizens.

Successful implementation of the principle of justice determines the integration of society and legitimacy of social order. Despite the fact that justice is recognized as one of the most important values, declaration does not mean implementation, justice should be a terminal value.

In modern Russian socio-economic and socio-cultural conditions, there is an obvious discrepancy between the normative significance of justice in the minds of the population and willingness to fight for justice (Davtyan, 2015).

Non-profit organizations emerged as voluntary associations of citizens to serve interests of society based on the principles of humanism and justice. In addition, most of the non-profit organizations emerged in the late 90s and early 2000s after the direct or indirect unsatisfactory interaction of active citizens with local authorities. They were established on the principles of justice, equality, mutual assistance and support. However, at present, the potential for subsidiarity is low, the feeling of communion with people living in the same village, in the same locality is not developed, citizens are not ready for joint actions to protect their group interests. In this regard, it is not possible to establish non-profit organizations on a territorial basis.

It is known that values contain a basis of human behavior which becomes a vector of changes in the control system. It is necessary to pay attention to personality features of people who want to work in government bodies. If these people do not believe in social ideals, social institutions and management mechanisms will be inefficient (Mitroshenkov, 2011). Justice is impossible without moral qualities and “internal” requirements to the authorities and their representatives (Podkovenko, 2016).

During the sociological research initiated by the Institute of Management of the National Research University "BelSU", a clear contradiction between the values of civil servants and assessment of their professional activities by the population was identified. The deviation from the principle of justice in the system of public administration was confirmed: priority tasks of effective transformation of public administration cannot be solved due to the lack of goal-setting. We believe that the conflict of justice and efficiency in public administration can be resolved provided that the criteria for the performance of civil servants will be approved by the institutions of civil society rather than by the authorities themselves (Zakharov & Nikonova, 2018). Today, the world strives for social efficiency and integrity of management, which involves transparency of government activities and density of civil institutions (Tretyakov, Tselyutina, Podvigaylo, & Sapryka, 2015).

As for the civilian control over the local authorities, most of respondents (72.00%) believe that it is necessary to restore the principle of justice discredited by corruption practices and bureaucratic arbitrariness.

However, the high significance of justice as a terminal, rather than instrumental value does not allow the majority of citizens to formulate a requirement of rational responsibility of government authorities. Ideas of social justice are not implemented in real life practices.

7. Conclusion

There are several groups of citizens participating in the struggle for social injustice: activists (willing to participate in the struggle for justice in various active forms); solidarists (they share the idea of fair society, but are not ready to take part in the struggle for it); conformists (they do not share the idea of justice, they consider injustice to be integral an element of society).

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