

## ARTICLE

# COMMUNICATION CAPACITY OF AUTHORITIES AS FACTOR OF FORMATION AND REALIZATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS

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### ABSTRACT

In the modern Russian information and information technologies become one of the main resources of interrelation of the authorities and society. Importance of information is also caused by the fact that it influences not only on decision-making processes, but also on their realization. In turn, the effective system of information exchange between the state and society becomes an indispensable condition for creation of the democratic constitutional state and the major condition in activities for increase in effectiveness of public administration that is caused by the information nature of society. There is a number of the tools promoting creation of model of open state policy, one of which is the management enriched with structures and knowledge in the field of "Public Relations". This fact and also need of the population for socially important information and the administrative reform [1, 2] assuming openness and accountability of activity of public authorities to civil society have defined need of the organization of special structures. The mission of these structures is to realize communicative information exchange between the authorities and society which demands formation in the most general view of some norms of information policy.

### INTRODUCTION

Today practically all public authorities have specialized departments, that plays role of auxiliary subjects in the system of communication and information exchange. Their appointment mainly consists in ensuring communicative and information maintenance of activity of public authorities and formation of positive image of government institutions. One of such specialized departments is press-service. In this regard identification of potential and restrictions in activity of press-services of public authorities as the tool promoting creation of model of open state policy and effective functioning of the Russian communication space is represented a current problem.

This institute began to be formed in the 90th years of 20th century, however there is still no unambiguous approach to a complex of the functions which are carried out by him and models of creation of its structure, there is even no settled name.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study is based on official statistical data, legal acts and other official documents of state bodies. Statistical analysis included also the comparative approach. Normative analysis of the legislative framework in the field of the press-service activity and the information component associated with it has made according to regulatory legal acts placed in the online legal information systems. This analysis was carried out from both the historical point of view, and in the long run. The information has been considered from the standpoint of structural-functional and system paradigms by general scientific methods of analysis.

The analysis of activity of the press services of public authorities the authorities of the Republic of Tatarstan and also data of surveys conducted in the territory of the republic became methodological and empirical base of a research. The official sites of the state and municipal authorities of the Republic of Tatarstan from 2010-2017 (selection is 43 municipal districts and 2 city districts) regarding identification of openness of public authorities and a problem of their communication interaction with society are analysed using content-analysis methodology [3, 4].

Such methodology was chosen because it provides verifiable and statistically reliable data [5, 6, 7, 8]. Special aspect of the study was to investigate the political role of information exchange between authorities, provided by press-service and civil society [9, 10].

### RESULTS

Having analyzed a number of sources and considering that there is no conventional definition of a concept "press-service", as an operational definition we suggest to use following:

The press-service – department of the organization - specialized structure on work with mass media for communicative and information maintenance of activity of the organization.  
At the same time the main task of the press-service in public authorities – informing the public on an essence of the made decisions and creation of positive image of the subject of information policy - the government institution and its head.

Thus, the press-service in public authorities – the official representative of the state having a significant amount of information which interests society about actions of the authorities, issuing this information, using all forms of interaction from media. At the same time own prepared and published information articles, statements, an interview can be result of activity of the press-services.

Today the main channel of the state communications is mass media. Insignificant impact on information and communicative process in the system of public administration is exerted by informal channels and communication through the organizations. Thus, mass media become the powerful tool of the authorities by means of which it purposefully realizes the political orders. However, it is possible to find also problems of rather this channel of the state communication:

- distortion of information streams;
- insufficient efficiency of mass media as a feedback channel from the population to power structures.

The main communicator in the Russian system of public administration can be considered undoubtedly the state. It has historically developed so that the state in our country was strong, dominating institute, the authorities always had power and the importance. Process of destruction of habitual "Soviet" systems of guardianship and control has generated changes of estimates and expectations concerning the state. So, for example, according to Initiative All-Russian survey conducted by VCIOM on December 22-23, 2012, the level of credibility to employees of media is higher, than to government employees (2,67), police officers and businessmen (2,65 each), to politicians (2,58) [11]. Also a number of surveys conducted by the research centers during the period since 2012-2016 prove alienation of the person from the state that affects assessment of activity and level of credibility to public authorities [11, 12, 13]. Unfortunately, we can observe strong falling of level of credibility of the population to public authorities. It is proved by results of survey conducted by the research center "Levada Center" in September, 2016. The rating of the government was downgraded almost twice (from 45% up to 26% a year ago) and it was the lowest for the last five years. The trust to the Federation Council in a year has fallen from 40% to 24%, to the State Duma - from 40 to 22%. The police causes trust - in 24% of respondents (29%), court - in 22% of respondents (29%). Sympathize with local authorities - 22% (32%), to political parties - 12% (20%), churches - 43% (53%) [13]. The greatest trust in Russians is caused by the president, army and bodies of state security.

However by results of the conducted researches also negative attitude of public servants to process of participation in management of citizens and need of control of public authorities has been revealed, nevertheless the openness of authorities structures can be one of indicators of quality of public administration.

The following obstacles are the reasons of information closeness of public authorities.

Firstly, insufficient development of standard and legal base within regulation of providing information by public authorities; regulating activity of the press-services, including the solution of organizational, financial and personnel issues, interaction of public authorities with mass media and questions of realization of legitimate rights of citizens for receiving and use of information.

Secondly, the administrative heritage of the Soviet past affects.

Thirdly, many heads of public authorities underestimate a role of information and communicative interaction with the population. An indicator of effectiveness of work of public services is the level of credibility to public authorities from the public.

Fourthly, communication during informing or absent, or, most often, happens between authorities and mass media. We observe a situation at which press-service, in practice, is responsible mainly only for forming of the relations with mass media, and her functions come down to scoring for media of decisions of the authorities by dissemination of information, necessary for them. Thus, it acts as the auxiliary subject in information exchange and the system of communication. Therefore the information and communicative capacity of press-service completely isn't implemented, it turns only into a repeater for media of information on activity and decisions of authorities. There is a transfer of information stream on mass media, lack of understanding that citizens are the main recipients of information on activity of authorities. Fifthly, lack of the adjusted system of feedback between public authorities and society. Social responsibility for dissemination of information on activity of authorities of the federal press-services is higher, than at regional, besides, they are responsible for decisions of regional divisions. Functions of the press-service at federal level are more various, and powers are wider, but functioning of the regional press-services has more concretized character. The same conclusion belongs also to the Republic of Tatarstan and its areas. Ho ever in practice, data on the level of knowledge of the population on activity of local authorities are not high.

The analysis of the websites of public authorities of the authorities of the Republic of Tatarstan has shown information closeness and blurring [14]. It is impossible to define structure of the press-service, there is no contact information, and often this department has the nominal character which is expressed in writing and publication of press releases which can be characterized as "information for the sake of information on an occasion". Still the ode the lack of incentives of heads of government institutions to bigger

information openness, introduction and use of new methods of information work is the reason of closeness of public authorities.

It is possible to note that at the present stage of development of system of information services of state governing bodies in the Republic of Tatarstan, despite positive dynamics, it remains institutionally weak, closed, and the ministries and departments, judicial authorities are passive on an information field, from the point of view of the necessary, interesting for society information.

The established reasons and obstacles of information openness of public authorities allow offering the following practical recommendations about optimization of information and communicative function of those structures:

#### **Understanding of leaders of importance of openness of public authorities and ensuring this openness**

One of indicators of effectiveness of work of public authorities, along with quality of performance of the functional duties, is the level of credibility to them from the public. Ensuring the maximum availability of information, openness and transparency of activity of government institutions – an effective way of increase in this trust and one of fundamental tasks of modern institute of the government.

#### **Necessity of determination of the status of the press-service**

Lately the essential number of the normative legal acts regulating the information sphere including about activity of authorities has been adopted: Federal law "About Information, Information Technologies and on Information Security", Federal law "About Personal Data", Federal law "About an Order of Consideration of Addresses of Citizens of the Russian Federation", etc.

However the standard and legal base regulating activity of the press services is insufficiently adjusted. The mechanism of interaction of public authorities with mass media and questions of realization of legitimate rights of citizens for receiving and use of information isn't debugged.

Accurate statement of tasks, definition of functions and structure of the press-service is respectively necessary. That will allow to increase efficiency and quality of informing the population on activity of authorities, formation and maintenance of their positive image.

#### **Increase quantity of sociological researches and their objective interpretation**

In our opinion, the lack of sociological researches which would touch on the issues connected with communication interaction of authorities and the population, the level of knowledge of inhabitants of activity of current authorities in the Republic of Tatarstan is observed.

#### **The differentiated approach to the addressee**

Press-services of public authorities have to pay more attention to communication interaction with youth as this social group in the short term objectively has to become the main social support of democratic political system of the country, the fixed intellectual, creative and moral capital of society [16, 17, 18].

## CONCLUSION

Thus, researchers conducted in the context of identification of potential and restrictions of the press service of public authorities in ensuring public relations have allowed to draw a conclusion that the government, increasing knowledge of the population of the activity, establishing effective feedback, promotes formation as positive image of government institutions and to growth of accountability of the state to society, and the positive attitude of the population towards them. However today "information closeness" remains the main restriction for realization of information and communicative opportunities of public authorities which reasons shortcomings of standard and legal regulation of providing information by bodies, lack of professionalism of staff of the press services and misunderstanding by heads of importance of information openness of government institution are. Active participation of public relations in information and communicative process and public administration can promote forming of open model of the government and effective communication on the "state authority-society" line.

The information and communication technologies used by public authorities allow not only to provide information transfer to society, explaining the own decisions, but also to establish feedback with society that gives chance to consider inquiries of various social groups, to increase level of credibility to public authorities. This process promotes carrying out by public authorities the analysis and correction of the state information policy.

#### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest.

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