

The study of the intercommunication problems of local authorities and the population

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Abstract. At present the interaction process of municipal authorities and the local community is spontaneity. At the same time, at the local level we can find close enough «touch» of society and the state interests. Therefore, it is very important at the present stage to have a clear system of scientifically founded actions to improve the quality of this interaction. The article presents the results of an opinion poll of Tyumen population, which reflects the characteristics and efficiency of interaction between local governments and the public.

[Pivovarova I.V., Kurashenko I.A. **The study of the intercommunication problems of local authorities and the population.** *Life Sci J* 2014;11(11s):526-529] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 119

Keywords: local government, population, local authorities, local self-government interaction with the public

Introduction

Reform processes in Russia affected all aspects of life society. At the same time, the role of local authorities in its structure was exposed. [1] Focusing on short-term interests and goals of the local community, and long-term development priorities of the municipality as well, the ability of municipal authorities to exercise their functions obtains the key importance. [2]

A special urgency of scientific understanding of various aspects of the relationship of local authorities and the local community is contained in a number of topical problems particularly acute at the present stage. The key ones are: a lack of practical sociological examination taken by municipal authorities and solutions developed legal documents; lack of awareness of the authorities on key needs and interests of the local community; insufficient development of feedback mechanisms between the local authorities and the population, etc. [3].

The main part

Obviously, the interaction between the authorities and the people, both in Russia and in any other state, was complicated. Historically formed relationships style as a chain «ruling elite - the population (people),» get in way the ability of fully interaction to some extent.

In recent decades, Russian and foreign scholars study various aspects of government. Among other things, the attitude of population towards the government is investigated. On the one hand, people who are accustomed to a variety of paternalistic model of interaction with authorities, are expecting an initiative, as well as they are holding the account by it for the processes taking place in the country. On the other hand, the governorship in the process of democratic transformation increasingly seeks to take care of its own special image, realizing

that it can significantly affect the results of the control population. [4]

In this situation, the key difference between the current situations of the inherent traditional Russian political culture is that modern government cannot rely only on force and techniques. Nowadays, officials are trying to gain credibility with the people. It is also important that with the advent of new communication technology, new requirements to the government, its new mechanisms maintain, based on historical, political and psychological patterns perception of authority people were formed. [5]

Public image of government has an impact on electoral vote, as well as the range of appearing possibilities of the political leaders in the performance of their powers. On the one hand, the images of officials have a kind of variability due to specific actions both politicians and fluctuations opinions of people, who are exposed to the purposeful actions and mass sentiments, random events, political crises as well. On the other hand, some images are characterized by a certain stability, as most often they are not realized by people, «backed up» from the reservoir of public world views and beliefs rooted in tradition of political and national culture. [6]

Thus, in relation to the authorities in society formed, at least two systems of attitude, which are the opposite to each other. In particular, quite common system seeks to dissociate from the tutelage and from the interaction with the government. However, another system of attitude, consisting in anticipation of government care and assistance, is also rather common.

In this regard, the character of the relationship between government and the community can be quite varied and depend on the level of public trust in the authorities [7]; the expectation of the former for a supporting, assistance and protection in difficult circumstances by the authorities; ability (or

inability) of authorities to meet the people's expectations; willingness of people to participate in governance [8], etc.

Thus, it is now becoming particularly relevant the scientific understanding of the processes of local authorities interaction and the population in the condition of modern Russia. The successful development of local government in the country depend on efficiency this interaction in each region. [8]

In order to identify the characteristics and efficiency of interaction between local governments with a population the authors conducted a survey of 442 residents of the city of Tyumen in age from 18 to 70 years old.

The results showed a low level of complaints population in local government - 65 % of respondents of Tyumen never contacted to authorities, 19% - contacted rarely, 15% - sometimes, and only 2% - often.

In collaboration with local authorities every second respondent personally appealed to specialized sources of information or the means of communication; every fifth implemented this interaction verbally by personal visits to officials (20.2%); about one in seven - by written request (14.8%), 8.7% - by appealing to the media (Fig. 1).

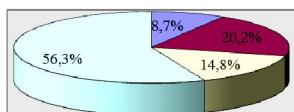


Fig. 1. The ways of Tyumen natives to apply to the local authorities

The main objectives of population's resort to the representatives of power structures as follows: 91.4% - a request for assistance or complaints, 4.9% - the expression of their opinion about a problem, 3.7% - an expression of gratitude.

However, the percentage of population, who are satisfied with solving their problems by local authorities, regardless of the way and the objective of their applying, does not give sufficient opportunities to talk about the effectiveness of the latter – one in fourth the respondent got a complete solution to the problem; about the same proportion of respondents did not receive the desired result; one in two addressed had a partial solution (Fig. 2).

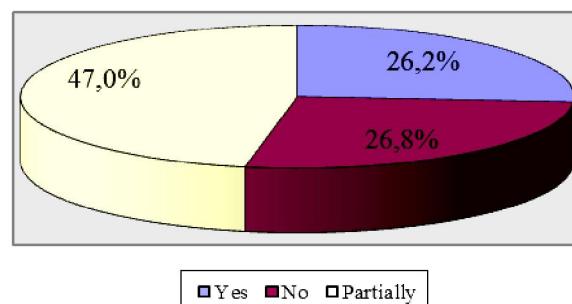
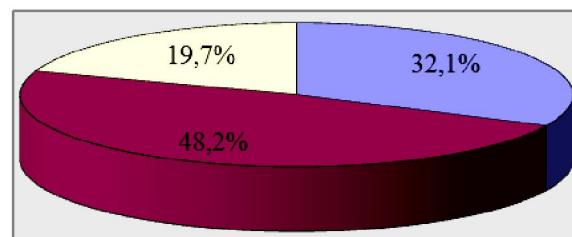


Fig. 2. The distribution of the answers of the natives of Tyumen on the question: «Did your representatives of the local authorities help to solve the problem with which you applied?»

We can assume that nowadays the authorities are paying much attention to working with the public, but the effectiveness of such activities could be significantly higher. This is confirmed by answers to the question about the degree of confidence to the local authorities (Fig. 3).



■ Yes ■ No □ It is difficult to answer

Fig. 3. The distribution of the answers of Tyumen natives on the question: «Do you think that local authorities are interested in solving your problem?»

The answers of the natives of Tyumen showed that the greatest dissatisfaction is associated with the housing sector, the environment, the level of development and access to public health service, transport services (Table 1).

The assessment of socio-economic situation in Tyumen by city people showed their positive attitude - according to 14.8 % of the respondents, the socio- economic situation in the last 10 years has worsened, 70.2% - improved, 15.0% - it remained. Obviously, these favorable factors, such as an active construction, landscaping of the city, road renovation, etc. are noticed and appreciated by the majority of population of Tyumen, which is generally associated with improving their socio-economic situation in the municipality [9].

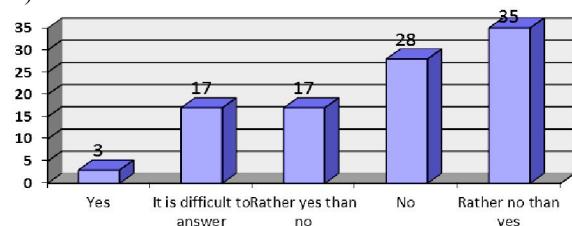
Table 1. The estimate of activity of the local government by the population of Tyumen (five-point grading scale)

Estimated figure	Grade	The average point
Food service	1	4,62
Fire safety	2	4,45
The work of cultural institutions	3	4,36
The quality of the primary education	4	4,24
Household service	5	4,14
The development of physical culture and sports	6	4,07
The quality of the secondary education	7	4,06
Communication services	8	3,97
Road conditions	9	3,78
The landscaping of the city	10	3,62
The settlement of trade	11	3,61
The work with the children and the youth	12	4,47
The public order maintenance	13	3,35
The informational accessibility of administration	14	3,34
Transport services	15	3,24
The level of development and access to public health service	15	3,24
The environment	16	2,62
The housing sector	17	2,38

One in seven respondents (15.2% of respondents) says about serious changes in the relationship between local authorities and the public, which are happening in connection with the transformation processes in different spheres of the municipality. Approximately one in three respondents (34.8%) believes that changes have occurred, but they are not essential; one in five respondents (25.2%) believes that the processes of transformation did not affect the relationship between local authorities and the population.

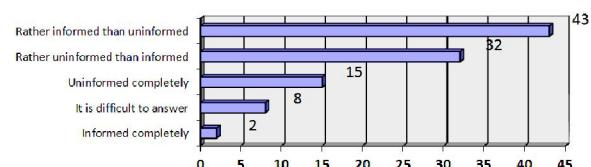
The study of transparency of local government for the population was of particular interest is, as well as the awareness (information) of the activities of the government.

Only 3% of respondents are fully satisfied with the information openness of local government for the people, 17% - fully satisfied, 35% - "rather no than yes." Alarming the fact that «not satisfied» and «undecided» are 45% of surveyed residents (Figure 4).

**Fig. 4. The distribution of answers of natives of Tyumen on the question about the degree of satisfaction about information openness of local governments Tyumen, %**

The population of Tyumen voted non-unique about the awareness (information) of the activities of the government.

Thus, 58% of respondents were either not aware or informed insignificant. Only 2 % of the population were fully informed (Fig. 5). Among other things, this low figure can be explained by passivity, indifference of population, because in order to be informed you need to have an interest (curiosity) and a plan to get information, though the sources are increasing steadily [10].

**Fig. 5. The distribution of answers of natives of Tyumen on the question about the degree of the awareness of the activities of the government, %**

The respondents receive the basic information about the activities of the authorities from the local TV - 67%, from local radio - 23%, from interviews with relatives, friends, neighbors - 23% from the local newspapers - 43%, from conversations with colleagues, business partners - 12% from the national newspapers - 8% from Internet - 10% undecided - 10%.

Among the effective forms of cooperation with local authorities, the population pointed the municipal elections, gatherings and meetings of

citizens, as well as appealing to the local government. The respondents did not identify other forms such as conference of citizens, public hearings, local referenda, and citizen survey and lawmaking initiative as effective not because they do not consider them as efficient, but because they have no idea about them. This is because, in practice, these forms are not practically used by the local authorities.

According to the survey, 72 % of the population are not ready to provide any assistance to the local governments. This testifies to the lowest civil liability, a passivity of the population, as well as a reluctance to join with them in the interaction, all but, their participating in the elections and appealing to the authorities to deal with personal problems.

Conclusion

The results of studies proved the fact, despite the presence of some negative aspects, in general the municipal authority externally seems like quite capable within existing rights and powers to resolve everyday problems of life of the municipality, but the degree of effectiveness of their solutions according substantial portion of the respondents can be considerably higher.

The character of the municipal authorities in the perception of the citizens seems twofold. So, on the one hand, the positive changes in the life of the city that have occurred over the last ten years, influenced on the presence of a significant proportion of citizens, who are positively evaluating the work of the local government municipality. On the other hand, a certain part of the citizens considers it as a kind of a formal institution, which insufficiently responds to the local needs and taking into account their needs.

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7/6/2014