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### **PROFESSIONAL CULTURE OF MUNICIPAL WORKERS**

*SUMMARY. This article features the results of a sociological research on the professional culture of municipal workers. The model of professional culture of municipal workers is accentuated.*

*KEY WORDS. Municipal workers, professional culture, bureaucratic model.*

Municipal employees possess an extensive list of duties on which the population's standard of living depends in all regions of the country. In keeping with the social importance of the administrative work of municipal employees, the importance of functions performed by them for the population and requirements of efficiency and quality of their work increases. The workers are required not only to possess advanced professional norms and values and profound knowledge in the field of management, the law, economy, psychology, sociology and other sciences and disciplines. The conditions of dynamic development of society and information quickly becoming outdated, municipal employees should be guided by a constant development of their professional culture.

Let us note, the author understands professional culture as an integral property of a professional generality regulating a system of professional knowledge, abilities, skills, norms and values both within interprofessional interaction, and as a measure of the development of a trade in a concrete society.

Traditionally in municipal service two ideal models of professional culture are allocated: bureaucratic and "state management". We will not go deep into details of the theoretical models of professional cultures as they are widely applied in the scientific literature [1], and we will focus our attention on the results of the research conducted.

It is necessary to consider that models of professional culture change historically depending on society's requirements concerning the place and role of a professional group, its specificity. To study the model of professional culture of municipal service in modern Russia we conducted a sociological research among municipal employees of the Sverdlovsk Region, the volume of the sample being 300 persons.

During research the relation of a professional generality to the process and results of work through the analysis of labor motivation, came to light first of all. Studying motivation, which is based on a system of values and valuable orientations, reveals the real level of professional culture. The motivation of labour activity is that motivation power which will define the character of decisions made by an individual among available alternatives. A person makes decisions which are to a greater degree capable of satisfying his/her requirements. In the sphere of influence of values and norms of socio-professional groups, the motives of the person enter

into a conflict with the former (if individual values and norms contradict group ones), or promote more effective professional work.

During the research we asked municipal employees a question "What above all involves you into your work?". Results were grouped by motivation types. As a result among municipal employees there were revealed three dominating types of motivation at professional work.

The first type of motivation which is characteristic of municipal employees is instrumental. With instrumental motivation it is important for workers to know that for their work they will obtain a reward (as a rule, a certain amount of money), career advancement. So, for 30% of workers who answered, the leading motive is payment, and for 21.5% career advancement. Hence, for 51.5% of respondents in their professional work instrumental motivation is characteristic. For such people, demotivating factors can be slow career advancement and an unreasoned system of payment. For example, the system of salaries will be a demotivating factor if workers obtain identical reward independently of results of work. Among factors which do not suit respondents in their profession, 33% named insufficient salary and 23% slow career growth, and that verifies the statement.

It is interesting that the age of employees and such motives as career growth are inversely correlated. 23% of employees aspire to a career at the age of 20-29 years and only 7% at the age of 60 and older.

Professional culture is a reflexion of the general culture of a society, therefore, the aspiration to material well-being and career advancement being represented is quite explainable, proceeding from the values dominating in modern society. For a consumer society the aspiration to material benefits, as a rule, exists to the detriment of the spiritual ones.

The second type of motivation revealed in municipal employees is non-achieving, where the worker does not look for substantial motives in work: responsibility, labor achievements, public utility, earnings, but works simply because the given place has a low level of responsibility, small, but guaranteed earnings, small labor efforts, or works simply as a habit. Such motivation is characteristic for almost 27% of respondents.

Non-achieving motivation is undesirable in any trade as the worker does not strive for self-development or the optimisation of professional work. Their efforts are connected with formal performance in assigned duties or fear of punishment (condemnation, reprimand, dismissal etc.). Thus external workers with such motivation can pretend to take extreme interest in their duties, but behind this mask there is a total absence of interest in the profession. Workers with non-achieving motivation negatively influence the maintenance and level of professional culture.

The third type of motivation revealed in employees is professional motivation. This type of motivation is characteristic only of 21.5% of respondents. With professional motivation the worker aspires to professional self-improvement. For such employees the aspiration to better realize oneself in the professional sphere is characteristic, the desire to deepen knowledge and to optimize job skills. For these workers a demotivating factor will be the absence of a possibility to realize themselves fully in their favorite profession. Such a problem was noted only by 14% of enquiry participants among municipal employees. Employees with the given type of motivation are also interested in the prestige and importance of their profession in the society.

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As a whole, instrumental and non-achieving motivation as an incentive basis of professional work are in the foreground for municipal employees. It means insufficient appreciation of the importance of their profession by municipal employees and directly influences their work. Besides, according to a formal norm, employees should be guided in their work by the “priority of the rights and freedom of person and citizen”, instead of being guided by the priority of personal interests.

The values of labor activity assume that municipal employees should love their profession, be interested in its optimization and professional development. Only in that case it will be possible to speak about effective performance of the duties by employees. At present, the share of those who call municipal service their vocation is incomparably small. The most part of employees do not feel their profession as a vocation, and consider it, first of all, as a source of stable and guaranteed income. As a result of this approach of employees to their duties there is red tape and a conventional attitude to business.

The conventional attitude to business is a sign of a bureaucratic system. “A formalism presents itself simultaneously as both an advantage and a lack of bureaucracy. On the one hand, it predetermines rigid regulation of the administrative process, demanding strict observance of set rules, reduces to a minimum an imperious arbitrariness. On the other hand, in the managerial process it leads to sense quite often being sacrificed to the letter of instructions, and purpose being limited to the means of its achievement” [2; 28]. According to employees, numerous reports today are not intended for overall performance increase, and are carried out frequently as a formal norm, for the removal or rearrangement of responsibility.

For the analysis of tendencies of development of Russian municipal employees’ professional culture we have tried to reveal features of the model of professional culture present today in municipal service.

We have defined employees’ expectations of their line manager as a criterion for the establishment of a model of professional culture. For example, propensity to give and receive advice about task performance is characteristic of the management model of professional culture. Control over the performance of functions characterizes rational-bureaucratic professional culture, and the formulation of accurate instructions “from above” is inherent to patrimonial bureaucracy.

It was discovered that for the overwhelming majority of municipal employees (55%) patrimonial expectations are characteristic, they dominate in municipal service. This fact offers a partial explanation for a number of negative norms revealed during our research, in the professional culture of municipal employees, for example, the importance of the manager and his/her interests or favoritism in appointment and advancement.

Expectations within the frames of the bureaucratic model are characteristic of 26% of respondents, and only the expectations of 19% of the employees questioned can be recognized as corresponding to the management model. It is possible to say that the tendency of a transition to the “management type” of management was only outlined by municipal employees, and now the role of expectations characteristic of the management model is insignificant. But here it is necessary to notice that the expectations of the municipal service employees of Ekaterinburg and its area differ rather significantly. In Ekaterinburg among municipal employees the dominant professional culture is not so obviously expressed. Among regional municipal workers

obviously dominates the patrimonial model of professional culture and irremovability (or very rare removability) of managers from posts, the orientation of employees to perform the will of their boss, and personal connections, instead of business relations between the manager and subordinates.

If we track change in the dynamics of the model of professional service culture, with the results of research performed in 2002-2003 [3; 71-73], it is possible to ascertain that among municipal employees there is an easing of displays of the rational-bureaucratic model and strengthening of the patrimonial models. Changes, characteristic for management model occur very slowly.

Patrimonial expectations dominate in all age groups. However, the younger the employee, the more marked their managerial preference. And, on the contrary, the more senior the employee is the more (in the second place after patrimonial expectations) rational-bureaucratic expectations dominate. But these expectations only partly characterize the model of professional culture of municipal employees. It is also influenced by installations (through formal and informal norms and values) by which employees are guided at work. To reveal these installations we asked employees: «What are you guided by while performing your duties?». This question was half-closed, employees were allowed to choose or to offer their variant of answers.

Characteristics of different models of professional culture were put into the variants of answers offered. Among the offered variants it is possible to identify the managerial model: “private responsibility for the assigned task” and “priority of company interests”, the rational-bureaucratic — “guidance mainly by duty regulations at work”, and the patrimonial — “guidance at work mainly with the manager’s instructions” and “aspiration to please management”. During the analysis of the data we noticed a number of contradictions in respondents’ answers. So, the behavior of officials in a patrimonial installation should accordingly define patrimonial expectations from the manager, but it is not always the case.

So, during our research it was revealed that in every group of employees (by model of professional culture) expectations unusual for it are present or even dominate. In their pure state, none of the models of professional culture are present today.

This data confirms that in municipal service there is a change of model of professional culture, and, therefore, of formal and informal norms, and also values which quite often contradict each other. As a consequence, the model of professional culture of municipal workers in modern Russia can be characterized as eclectic. The eclectic model is composed of a combination of varied and sometimes contradictory elements.

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