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Abstract: We studied the three most significant changes in the composition of the formal institutions that determine the behavioral patterns of actors in the institutional environment over the past few years: implementation of the Federal Law of 27.07.2010 No. 210-FZ, introduction of the Presidential Decree of 07.05.2012 No. 601 “Directions of improvement of the public administration system”, introduction of the specialized portal “Your control”. The reforms contradictions are shown in the context of the problem of evaluation the efficiency of the public services production at the regional level. The sociological study data on evaluation the public services quality in Omsk are presented: the results of a semi-formalized interview with experts and leadership of the MFCs in 2018. Based on the results of the semi-formalized interview, there was made an assessment of the actions of MFC employees in various situations, their understanding of the provisions of official regulations and attitudes towards institutional changes in the production of public services. In conclusion, we described some policy recommendation about the design of public improving.

Introduction and theoretical background

One of the main goals in core of New Public Management and New Public Governance agenda was the increasing the quality and performance of public services production. The Russian reforming public services model has been explicitly implemented for a decade. From the position top-bureaucrats, the reform contributed to the “real breakthrough” in improving of quality of public services. In the provision of public services, it was expected (starting from the implementation of the concept of administrative reform in the Russian Federation in 2006) that the level of public satisfaction with the quality of public services would be reached at 50% in 2008 and 70% in 2010. According to the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of

07.05.2012 № 601 “On the main directions of improvement of the public administration system”, by 2018 the Government of the Russian Federation was ordered to ensure the level of satisfaction of citizens of the Russian Federation with the quality of state and municipal services in the amount of 90%. According to the official research conducted by the order of the Ministry of Economic Development, in the period 2014-2017 the planned values were not so far. “Your control” portal, which main purpose was to create a feedback system between consumers of public services and its producers, shows the overfulfilment of the planned indicator on 90% (96.6% of the responses “excellent” and “good” related to the general level of service provision). The purpose of the service was to help to obtain government services in convenient and efficient way by bringing them closer to the needs and demands of citizens and also by involving consumers in the co-production process (*Alford, 2009*).

We identified the following significant changes in formal institutions that affect perceived quality of public services in 2012–2018:

- 1) the provision of services in the one-stop-shop;
- 2) the introduction of the Web-portal "Your control" (vashkontrol.ru) and the formation thereby of the social control elements;
- 3) the introduction of an e-government system through the institutionalization of the portal of e-government (gosuslugi.ru).

We will consider and discuss the results of our sociological survey of the public services quality of one-shop-agencies (multifunctional center of public and municipal services), conducted in March-April 2018 in Omsk, Russia. The main research task is to study the perceptions from the heads of government agencies responsible for organizing the provision of public services (middle-level bureaucrats) and their employees (down-level bureaucrats).

The research tasks of the study are:

- 1) to determine the types of innovations occurring in the provision of public services;
- 2) to identify the attitude of the employees of the MFC of the city of Omsk and the civil servants to institutional changes;
- 3) to evaluate the impact of external institutional changes on the internal environment of the organization (organizational culture).

The innovations presented in this area are substantively based on the “New Public Management”), which so as “New Public Governance” (*Talbot, 2010; Osbourne, 2011*) are implemented according to Ch. Hood, “In all Seasons” (*Hood, 1991*).

But the main problem was that the implementation of the reform package was often carried out without taking into account the context, in particular, both political constraints and the influence of informal institutions. Under such informal institutions in the framework of this

article, we consider the organizational routines and corporate culture of bureaucratic organizations. It is also important to take into account the difference in social orders (North et. al., 2009) between countries in which these ideas were originally developed and countries that implemented the reforms and trying to import or transplant successful in a certain environment institutions and institutional structures. In other words, not all coat suite for all seasons, but we need to find best for fitting. It concerns the problem of institutional import vs. transplantations the NPM-institutions in former Soviet countries, and it not only „wicked problem“ but also the problem to take in account the context of reform in macro-and micro level and the difference in social orders.

Despite modifying the toolkit, as well as various ideological and philosophical conceptual foundations of reforms (*Junjan, 2016, Barabashev, 2016*), the ultimate goal, not always explicitly stated, is to improve efficiency of government agencies as perceived by consumers, and evaluated through a system of indicators.

Despite the fact the system of indicators for evaluating the performance of government bodies has a number of contradictions and shortcomings (*Van Dooren, Bouckaert and Halligan, 2010*), the Performance Evaluation became a common place in the reform package, and very often it was intended to be used by end-users to evaluate the performance of government bodies - clients of government organizations. But for the objectification of the consumer's position, it also make sense to combine the results of surveys on customer satisfaction with the quality of public authorities' work with the analysis of quantifiable indicators, in particular, within the ServQual system (*Williams and Sanders, 2008*), as well as taking into account the context of the institutional changes being carried out. It should be noted that despite the fact that ServQual technology has been used for decades in both developed and developing countries (*Ramseook-Munhurrun P., Lukea-Bhiwajee S., Perunjodi N. (2010)*) and leads to an improvement in the production of public services (*Wisniewski, M. and Donnelly, M. (1996)*), it is still the “missing link” in the Russian public administration reform.

The nature of institutional changes is connected not only with the dynamics of relative prices for resources, but also with changes in the knowledge of subjects, which is a consequence of including incremental technological changes. In this regard, strategic institutional changes, both planned (*Sminia and Van Nistelrooij, 2006*) and dynamic (emergent) (*Van der Voet et al., 2014*), should be congruent with the institutional environment as a whole and promote cultural and systemic changes in the government itself (Politt and Bouckaert, 2011). In this case, changes in organizational culture and organizational behavior that contribute to organizational development are affected (*Edel, 2011*). However, Van der Voet (*Van der Voet, 2016*) noticed although recent studies have highlighted the importance of leadership in change processes in

public organizations, limited empirical evidence exists. In our case the impact of the style of leadership and specific features of organizational culture on performance of public sector organizations is our potential step in future researches.

Effective results of reforms that correspond to the ideology of NPM, are more typical for countries with a developed institutional environment. In a situation of reliance on customization, the introduced technologies can only slightly change the routine in public agencies, which has little effect on the perceived dynamics of the public services quality provided by various stakeholders. Meanwhile, it is believed that the institutionalization of this system is possible only when organization members “incorporate new policies and innovations into organizational routines” (Fernandez and Rainey, 2006, p. 172).

Methodology and Data

In our case, the direct addressees of formal innovations are civil servants (middle and senior managers responsible for organizing the provision of public services, as well as front-line employees who work directly with citizens in the MFC (multi– one-stop-shops)); and consumers of public services. But unlike the work of Gowan et. al (Gowan et. al., 2001), we have identified differences in perceptions from different stakeholders about the content of institutional changes and social requirements for the public services quality provided by the MFC.

During the field phase of the study, the primary sociological information was gathered with a semi-formalized interview (face-to-face method). In the end, expert interviews were conducted with 3 key, with 3 theoretical and 5 typical experts. It should be noted that typical experts from the list of experts will be selected at the site of the interview - 1 from the MFC of each district of Omsk (five districts in total), the one who will be available and will identify a desire to participate in the study. To conduct the study, we planned to interview 15 informants - MFC employees (front-line staff). Additionally, five typical situations were discussed with informants to identify the typologies of informants, including identifying their attitudes towards formal practices, job descriptions, administrative regulations and informal routines in the MFC.

It is difficult for the informants (MFC employees) to switch to the “One (single) window” format due to the fact they have been given the responsibility to serve consumers on all services. During the interview, the informants “complained” about the working time conditions, namely: the need to know a large number of various services, while instantly switching from one service to another, and have time to meet the temporary regulations.

Informant 1 (female, 28) *“A man cannot know everything. A specialist cannot be universal, he cannot know everything. I can't know everything”.*

Informant 2 (female, 34) *“At first we grumbled when services were added to us. We grumbled very much, we said that we cannot do it, we have a headache, and it's all very difficult.”*

But then eventually you get used to everything. Learn new. And the fact that 2 months ago it seemed very scary, either in the past, or the year before last, when we were connected to some new services, we are now snapping it like seeds, it seems to us that there is simply nothing. I am already philosophical about everything. New is good. We will learn". This informant positively assesses the difficulties that have arisen and binds the working difficulties to their own benefit.

Employees constantly gain knowledge about how to provide new services or how the old ones have changed, by increasing the level of their qualification. They see this as a way for self-development:

Informant 2 (female, 34) *"It is both difficult and useful for ourselves, for the improvement of our personalities."* Someone associates this with an increase in their social significance: Informant 3 (female, 26) *"Of course, self-development is increasing, and qualification is increasing. For me personally, this is very important. I feel my social significance. "* The same informant projects the importance of such self-development to old age, stating the following: *"yes, of course, probably "senile senility" will not visit me again soon, because the brain is constantly mobile"*.

However, despite the positive aspects of their work (regular mental activity), employees are experiencing stress. The stress is caused by intense workload and relationships with clients (but this is already a feature of the profession). Stress can also be associated with the time limits of the applicant's admission: Informant 4 (female, 24) *"And we do not have such a system that would allow us to increase the time of admission, adequately. So we are nervous."*

Working with a large amount of information in tense conditions, employees do not always have time to fit into the time limit, but for them this is considered as the norm: Informant 4 (female, 24) *"We have restrictions on the time of admission. Sometimes there are various kinds of difficulties in receiving documents; you need more time for certain services. And according to the regulations, this is spelled out so much, and we are going out of this framework."* This informant justifies herself by the fact that it is very difficult to work in the "One window" mode: *"for one person, a specialist, there is given such a large amount of information in order to provide these services qualitatively. It is impossible for one person to be competent in all services at the same time in order not to be mistaken."*

Also, due to the large number of services, the likelihood of poor-quality rare services is high: *"If any of these services rarely come to you, then you don't make accents, you can be mistaken, even in trifles"*. But the staff adapted to the occasion, if they do not remember how to provide a certain service: Informant 1, (female, 26) *"We need to know a lot, of course, we cannot know all the laws, we can look at the folder somewhere"*. *"It is difficult, of course, but we are working with reference books and regulations."*

With the transition to the universalization of specialists, as it has already been demonstrated, there have appeared many working difficulties. Employees deal with these difficulties with the help of mutual assistance (help each other in the field in which they were specialized before, which they understand better): (Informant 2, female, 34) *“Relationships have become more friendly. This mutual assistance brings together”*. One informant explicitly stated that it would be more complicated to avoid difficulties without mutual assistance: Informant 5, (female, 31) *“We need each other”*.

Many informants argue that the “One Window” system is convenient for visitors, but there is another opinion: Informant 7 (female, 25): *“This is not an advantage for customers. Someone says that they are comfortable. He sits in one window and he is provided with services. And someone says that it would be better if each expert was engaged in his own direction.”* In general, employees relate to the “One Window” principle with an understanding, to some extent, with respect, but at the same time they point directly to flaws and advocate for specialization in the workplace: Informant 5, (female, 31): *“It is good, but it still requires adjustment”, “This is interesting. But the human resource is not unlimited”, “There should necessarily be separation to some extent”*. Someone could express discontent first, but in the end he says he has a positive attitude to the system. Nevertheless, the staff put up with this system: Informant 7 (female, 25): *“There is nothing to do, I work here. You have to do what they say”*. And even when comparing themselves with managers, they call themselves. Informant 4 (female, 24): *“we are “ordinary mortals” who cannot initiate organizational change”*. The following quote confirms that the employees are in a such submission, that they do not even think that the system can be really modified: Informant 4 (female, 24): *“How to change, what can we change, if there are instructions?”*.

We can conclude that because of the appearance of great difficulties in new, including stressful, conditions, MFC employees can forgive themselves for not knowing something or making mistakes. This leads to a decrease in responsibility for the poorly rendered service. The difficulties that have arisen contribute to team building and self-development; employees perceive this development as a positive effect of the innovation (the “One Window” principle). But for them it is a forced development, not a voluntary one. However, they find an excuse for themselves that this is useful for their personal growth. At the same time, experts would gladly agree to return the system with a specialization where the number of services they provide would be significantly lower.

So, in accordance with the hypothesis of the study, which states that the formal and informal practices of workers depend on their perception of institutional changes occurring in

organizations providing public services, there were allocated the following grouping of informants:

1) conformist; 2) ritualized; 3) innovator 4) retreatist (opportunist)

The first group is called "**Conformist**." These are employees who positively perceived the new changes in the MFC, and accordingly follow the new regulations. This group represents the positive aspects of institutional changes and the new regulations.

The second group is called "**Ritualist**". This type of workers negatively perceived institutional changes, but they still follow official regulations. The group of "ritualists" shows the negative sides of the innovations, the reasons for which the employees are not good at the new regulations.

The third group is called "**Innovators**". These employees positively perceived the changes that have occurred, but do not follow the rules. These employees show particular interest because institutional changes do not affect their operations. They determine the nature of their practices themselves.

And the fourth group is called "**Retreatists**". These workers have a negative attitude towards institutional changes, and therefore do not follow the rules. "Retreatists" will show the reasons why they are bad for changes, and why they do not follow the rules.

Thus, when considering various situations, there were revealed no serious deviations in the behavior of specialists. Accepted innovations did not lead to a change in relations in the team, as well as to changes in the job descriptions of employees with a few exceptions: the frequency of teamwork on the subject of mutual assistance and advice on changes increased. As the heads of the MFC noted, with the adoption of the regulations "it is required to know more information, but not to work more". At the same time, there are enough norms and regulations: at least 200-250 in the agency. In addition, the experts note that there are constantly undergoing changes, so it's "unrealistic" to know something about the regulations specifically. Despite this, the regulations do not limit the availability of services. The only regulation is "registration of a family with 3 and more children (large family)" since in accordance with it, the registration of a large family takes place in the presence of all the members of this family. For example, a person may study in another city, or serve in the army (while on academic leave), but at the same time he or she loses the right to receive special services for a large family.

Interviews with experts - middle-level leaders of the regional ministry, who are responsible for organizing the work of the MFC and executive managers of the district MFC of the city of Omsk revealed the following generalized perception of the ongoing institutional changes:

1) The implementation of the "one-stop-shop" system required a significant restructuring of the personnel management system in the MFC, in particular, both the ongoing process of teaching

new services and the introduction of coaching and mentoring in the workplace. At the same time, due to the use of digital technologies, in particular, the electronic management of the queue of visitors, the “one-stop-shop” system has reduced the time for serving visitors. The burden on ordinary workers has increased, so has the “staff turnover”, but the professionalism of the staff as a whole has increased.

2) The introduction of the “your control” portal has had a positive effect on the attitude of both employees towards the fulfillment of their duties due to the growth of discipline and responsibility. On most requests and complaints on the portal, discussions arise within the team, in case of violations, penalties arise. Visitors mainly leave feedback on the work that does not require a considerable time (sms-answers, etc.)

3) Digital technology has greatly facilitated the day-to-day work of the MFC, although at the initial stage the staff took time to adapt. At the same time, a significant part of consumers still do not use digital technologies, what is explained both by the lack of “digital literacy” and the habits of dealing with state structures, especially of older people.

Results and Conclusion

To summarize, a survey of experts and informants led to the following preliminary conclusions based on the perception of strategic formal institutional changes:

1) in general, the introduction of the “one-stop-shop” system contributed to the improvement of the public services organization by reducing the time to service consumers, universalizing personnel functions and improving the employees professionalism, including through staff development and government agencies digitalization. At the same time, the reserves for improving the customer service quality and speed are associated with the “fine tuning” of the “one-stop-shop” system through the typing of mass services and their division into separate subgroups;

2) the introduction of the “your control” system had a significant impact on the practices of internal control over the quality of public services, while the possibilities of external (social) control were generally not used;

3) the introduction of an e-government system through the institutionalization of the e-government portal gosuslugi.ru is a significant Pareto-improvement, but the transition to the transactional stage of interaction between government agencies and consumers is fragmentary.

Points for practioners

According to the results of a survey of experts and informants, the introduction of the “one-stop-shop” system in Russia improved the quality and accessibility of state and municipal services. To improve the system effect we propose:

- 1) to implement a “fine-tuning” of the “single window” system by dividing typical services into separate subgroups and deeper employees specialization;
- 2) to develop the possibilities of external (social) control over the public services quality by involving consumers.

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