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IMPACT OF HOUSING SERVICES MODERNIZATION IN RUSSIA ON THE POPULATION SOCIAL IDENTITY

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the analysis of the formation of a new social identity within the modernization of housing and communal services. The interaction of national economies, migration processes, values, norms of behavior of the population are changing within the global changes caused by the formation of sovereign Russia. The raise of a significant number of owners of premises in apartment buildings has led to crisis phenomena in the field of housing services. The pluralistic interpretation of their rights and opportunities had a negative impact on the essence of property and the owner's responsibility for their property. Therefore, the changes introduced by the legislator in recent years, like state policy, are generally aimed at creating a new social identity of the population, increasing its interest in improving its position. An example of one of the typical apartment buildings shows how the tenants walked from the prerequisites of creating to a real community of owners, how strong the identity crisis is among the owners of the older generation, who are still unable, for various reasons, to adapt to changing living conditions. The first successes of self-organization of the population contribute to the identification of leaders and active participants in relations in this area with local communities, city administration, associations of chairmen of apartment buildings. Their relationships contribute to the constant updating of knowledge in the housing sector, the formation of local territorial ties aimed at solving both housing and city problems.

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1. Introduction

The issues of identity formation in modern Russian society are becoming increasingly relevant in the context of global changes. Since the publication of his works by the founder of the theory of identity, Erikson in the 1950s, researchers have made significant efforts to identify the most important aspects of its formation. In domestic science, the problem of identity has become relevant since the late 1980s and is constantly updated with new studies. At the same time, the issues of the functional foundations of social identity and its civil, legal, ethnic, and other components are becoming more relevant. It promotes self-realization and protection of their rights in various types of activities, since a person included in various social groups is more socialized, feeling mutual influence and solving various problems of housing.

2. Problem Statement

The article considers the impact of the modernization of housing and communal services in the Russian Federation on the change in the social identity of the population.

3. Research Questions

The subject of the study is the dynamics of the social identity among the owners of an apartment building in the city of Mytishchi, Moscow Region during the process of receiving housing and communal services.

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is to identify the impact of modernization of housing and communal services in Russia on the change in the social identity of the urban population.

5. Research Methods

The research methodology is based on the principles of the dialectical approach to considering changes in social identity in modernization. The characteristics of people's behavior, their assessment of reality, and the basis of activity that determine the change in the identity of individuals and their associations are described using observation and narrative methods. The combination of abstraction methods and theoretical analysis of the observed material reveals elements of social identity and describes the modern Russian society.

6. Findings

A cognitive component in the structure of social identity is one of the main part of the study. It indicates person's associations with a group being its representative and the affective part that characterizes the "emotional relationship of a person to this group and the understanding of the importance of his participation in it" (Gulevich, 2007, p. 47).

As you know, issues of identity become relevant during periods of profound social changes that cause a change in the value orientations of society. The modernization of all aspects of life with the formation of the Russian Federation provoked a search for “new values and rules of behavior, norms and principles of social organization” (Didkovskaya, 2018; Rassadina, 2015). In this regard, the sphere of housing and communal services of the country (hereinafter referred to as housing and communal services), which includes not only housing, but also resource supply, improvement of settlements and specific forms of consumer services, has become an important component of the reforms. Created on the basis of domestic and advanced foreign experience, forms of consumer participation in the management of their property are spreading slowly, but it is they who are able to budge part of the housing problems. Consider the most common system of consumer relations with management companies in Russia.

The privatization of residential premises led to a situation when each family was forced to make an important choice - to sign the ownership documents of their living space or to leave it in the ownership of municipalities. Statistics show that the majority of Russians living in apartment buildings in the early years of privatization left their housings for property despite the fact that this has led to an increase in the differentiation of the population. Some of the housing funds has been developed, while others actually lost the opportunity to improve their living conditions due to reduced social support for housing problems from local budgets. According to this fact there appeared crisis phenomena in the housing and communal services. It required not only changes in legislation, but also the position of each owner in solving their housing and communal issues.

In search of the most effective ways of managing, the legislator introduced the concept of “house council” with “chairman of the house council” in 2011. The law supposed to establish closer and more effective cooperation with management organizations and solve problems. However, despite the opportunity to influence the activities of management companies, the population of the Moscow region was in no hurry to create self-government structures, since in 2013 they were available in only 15 % of houses, in 2018 – 95 %, and companies did not perform a number of works, as a decisive role in their order under the law was the meeting of the owners. Therefore, the deepening problems of each house actually led to the need to convene the first meeting and create a council of the house with the chairman. In our case, residents of several neighboring houses, identified “they” organized repair of engineering systems, roofs, etc. The neighbours were wondering why they cannot solve the housing problems together as did others. This was the beginning of social identity issues among residents of the house (Dawes et al, 1990). Permanent accusations of inaction by the management company were intensified until several residents began correspondence with the management company. In response to complaints, she suggested creating a council at home, but no one dared to organize it, however, awareness of general helplessness was growing. Therefore, on the one hand, during this period, tenants gradually began to realize the commonality of their existence of “We” in a single 50-year-old house, on the other hand, they had not yet decided to make a decision on his self-government, fearing responsibility. The older generation focused on the fact that there are a majority of such houses with no home tips in the city, therefore, there is no hope for development. Later the tenants in the house turned out had no idea whether they were official owners or not, despite the fact that their apartment was privatized by them. Many people did not accept

the idea that the owner also had obligations with respect to common property. Such positions indicate a negative identity, which in itself characterizes a low degree of social formation in this area.

At the same time, many of them remembered Soviet times managing system with housekeepers, but it had no real positive changes. All this indicates a weak formation of civic competence of citizens, which is an integral part of civic identity. Therefore, it is not surprising that the residents believed that all the changes in the neighbors are the result of the fact that relatives of the city administration settled in their homes. This approach to explaining the situation is very typical, because the practice of such changes still exists in Russia.

In order to move the situation and organize a meeting, several activists decided to offer the initiating role to one of the new owners, whose interest and legal knowledge were sufficient for the chosen goal. As a result of the awareness of the active group there appeared the identity of “We” (Mersiyanova, 2010). One of the members of the active group was chosen a chairman of the house’s council. He “mobilized the participation of others to achieve a collective goal” (Hogg, 2001, p. 187). The formed circle of owners was able to start quite effective work with the management company, to defend the interests of owners in violation of their rights, to help improve housing conditions and landscaping.

The result of the interaction was not only a change in the attitude to belonging to their group from negative to positive, but also the active participation of home owners in socially significant actions: discussing tariffs, adopting repair plans, repairing common property, ennoblement of the house territory, etc. In 2016, when organizing the council of the activists' house, there were only four activists. Now, the owners of 26 apartments are actively interacting with each other, attracting the rest of the residents to solve the most important problems together. Owners have significantly expanded their competencies regarding the functioning of the housing sector, demonstrate a higher level of civic identity through a more competent use of their rights in relations with the management company, city administration, and local deputies. Most of them, through joint communication and experience, have mastered numerous automated services and mobile applications to quickly solve problems. At the same time, the peculiarity of chatting was the formation of a network identity, which does not require biographies or the history of long-standing relations of neighbors (Kharchenko, 2017). Despite the short-term anonymous identity, its effectiveness in achieving the goals of the group is assessed as positive. The described strategy of identity construction becomes important to study (Zaitseva, 2016).

Positive changes taking place in the life of individual multi-apartment houses and urban spaces would not have been possible if their activists had not discuss the issues in the level of city and regional administrations. The regional portal “Dobrodel” was created as part of the reform of the Moscow housing and communal services for operational interaction of the population with executive authorities. Through it residents used to participate in the Association of Chairpersons of apartment buildings of the Moscow Region and gained the necessary information and assistance. Participation in the successful resolution of constantly arising conflict situations both in relations with the management company and with the city administration forms a feeling of greater confidence among the united residents, the ability to achieve the exercise of their rights, ultimately strengthens group identity.

One must note the result of the participation of owners in the state repair program “My Entrance” of the Moscow Region, the prices of apartments for free sale have risen substantially, the owners who are

renting their apartments have made repairs and began to offer them for rent for those we needed. The name of the program itself is aimed at reflective perception and activity. Initially 12 apartments out of 80 apartments were rented, then after the repair 4 of them joined the self-management housing system. Relations between the owners today are becoming more intense due to the special group chats, communication on social networks, help in solving everyday problems of neighbors. Such social capital contributes to a more comfortable and secure human living within an apartment building.

The contingent of tenants of apartments in the house has also changed. Globalization has significantly affected migration flows, especially in the Moscow region. Russians or immigrants from Ukraine began to settle, which may indicate an exacerbation of group (ethnic) identification and the presence of discrimination against landlords within the existing community of residents. On the one hand, it serves as a latent justification for unequal access to resources. On the other hand, according to the studies (Putnam, 2009), greater ethnic diversity lowers people's willingness to identify with such a group, reduces its unity, interdependence and further manifestation of activity. Therefore, for our situation, we should agree more with another study (Gesthuizen, Van der Meer, & Scheepers, 2009), which argues that it is not ethnic heterogeneity at all, but economic foundations that underlie the changes.

7. Conclusion

Once involved in all kinds of social practices, a person constantly undergoes transformations, deepening and developing his social identity. One of the important components that influence the emerging identity of Russians is the modernization of the housing sector. The consensus found by individual local communities in this area changes human behavior and helps to form a layer of competent homeowners. It allowed the owners of residential premises to shift the emphasis from self identity to a wider range of social identities, realized in participation in socially significant communities. In modern Russia, one can note an increase of desire to improve the quality of life for themselves and their housemates, which indicates the increasing influence of reform projects in the housing and communal services on the formation of civil, legal, ethnic and other components of a person's social identity.

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