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**SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF RUSSIAN SOCIETY IN CONTEXT OF
SOCIO-CULTURAL PROCESSES**

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Abstract

Contemporary Russian society is in the process of transition to a new form of social organization, which is constantly undergoing profound transformation. The changes dramatically modified not only the system and the structure of all society's spheres but also public consciousness. This reason explains the Russian society's condition of fragility, instability and socio-economic processes of ambivalent character. All these processes reflect the qualitative development in the Russian society. In recent years, a positive dynamics in the social sphere (health, education, culture) is observed. However, it is impossible to consider that these changes are productive. Development dynamics of the modern Russian society is instable, having difficulties in transition to the market society, reflecting the instability of social institutions, unsustainable development of economy and social sphere. The reforms led to the destruction of the state, social and professional relationships and, as a result, to the changes of social structure. Mistakes, miscalculations in the organization, management and control on the part of the state contributed to the crisis. This situation gives rise to contradictions of social consciousness causing the discontent of the people, provoking a protest phenomenon in society. Instability and imbalance are the reasons giving a strict answer to the question why social norms, moral principles and values are of a temporary nature, which contributes to the manifestation of destructive phenomena.

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1. Introduction

The article is devoted to the social dynamics study of the modern Russian society in the context of sociocultural processes. Understanding the character of socio-cultural processes of contemporary society is one of the most fundamental problems in the social Sciences and Humanities, and this is due to its relevance. The significance of this study is also due to the objective necessity of the determination the activities' mechanisms of the entire Russian society, ensuring its sustainable development. The socio-cultural change as a complex and multidimensional process has two definite vectors in the direction of its development. On the one hand, they seem to improve the complexity and the level of organizational systems. On the other hand, socio-cultural changes possess a regressive direction. Special importance is given to the study of socio-cultural changes in the process of transformation of the social structure having an impact on the public consciousness. In this regard, the aim of the paper is to identify the determinants of social dynamics of the modern Russian society and the factors influencing the processes of social development.

2. Materials and methods

At this stage of civilizational development, the Russian society is actively searching for effective activities' mechanisms that ensure the dynamism of socio-cultural processes, and qualitatively new sources of development. This issue has been of scientific interest among famous representatives of philosophical and social-humanitarian thought of A. Comte, K. Popper, P. Sorokin, who carried out the conceptualization of the definition "social dynamics" (Comte, 2013; Sorokin, 2006). The modern socio-humanitarian thought of A. Akhiezer, T. Zaslavskaya, L.Vasilenko, N. Mironova, A. Sevastyanov (focuses on the explanation of the complex evolutionary processes of sociocultural systems through mechanisms that led to quantitative and qualitative transformations, defining the essence of the modern society's development (as cited in Akhiezer, 1995; Zaslavskaya, 2004; Vasilenko, 2014). This problem is periodically faced by Russian society. Historically in search of effective development models, the Russian society has set goals to catch up the developed European countries in terms of socio-economic development. Such task was set by Ivan IV (the Terrible) and was implemented in reality by Peter I and all his followers. The authors do not set themselves the goal to explore the history of the civilizational path of the Russian state; they aim to analyze social outlook of the modern Russian society for identifying its determinants through understanding existing problems of the modern Russian society. The determination of effective activities' mechanisms for the promotion of the conservation of society's sustainable development is of great importance.

During the research, the determination of the civilizational situation of the Russian society is significant. Nowadays, the Russian society's stage development is relatively free from the "traditional" civilization, with the characteristic static reproduction, aimed at stable development, contributing to the maintenance of all systems in the society. The Russian society is on the way of "liberal" civilization, which is characterized by the intense efficient reproduction. Therefore, one can say that the Russian society is in inter-civilizational "middle" space, combining both progressive and regressive phenomena

that are associated, according to A. Akhiezer, "with the change in the mechanisms of reproduction" reflecting "the dynamics of dual oppositions" (as cited in Akhiezer, 1995)

Russian society after the collapse of the Soviet Union hold a course for the creation of new social organization forms. All this difficult way is associated with the reforms, crises and the deformation processes. Socio-cultural processes to the formation of a new democratic society passed several stages. The first stage of social dynamics (1991-1993) can be described as a period of beginning of modernization processes. This phase was characterized by radical social reforms, the liberal-democratic process against the authoritarian bureaucratic regime. Russia's entry into a new phase of its development has exacerbated the contradictions of the centre and autonomous republics. In addition, the government made mistakes, allying with the former party nomenclature and economists-marketeters. The first reforms failed, the country was in a crisis. The crisis was determined by the fact that the reform process had exhausted the creative potential of the society and took into consideration the degree of readiness of the public consciousness for these reforms. This led to the discontent of the people, which was reflected in the violation of the public order (Zaslavskaya, 2004).

The next stage of the Russian society's social dynamics (1994 - 1999) can be called the period of adaptation of the society's members to the emerging new life's conditions. It was distinguished by a chaotic transformation of the society and had an indeterminate perspective. In the public mind, there have been serious-minded social changes. The fall of the "iron curtain" opened the way to the low grade samples of the Western culture, which had a destructive impact on the consciousness and behavior of the Russians (as cited in Isachenko, 2016). It should be noted that this stage is characterized by ambivalence of social processes. A rapid emergence of private ownership, contributing to the formation of a new social layer of entrepreneurs and owners; the development of market relations are constructive phenomena of this period.

The criminal privatization of the state property can be attributed to destructive consequences; the growth of the shadow economy; poverty; unemployment; rising crime; merging of state structures with criminal elements. At this stage, the collapse of the Soviet system was completed and the emerging new social institutions were unable to improve the efficiency of the Russian economy, social development and the political system. Reforms gave way to a spontaneous transformation that has aggravated the global crisis.

The third stage is associated with the new leader coming to power, Vladimir Putin. His initiatives at foreign and domestic levels have contributed to the strengthening of the statehood, the economic growth and social transformation. The contemporary socio-cultural situation in the Russian society can be characterized as transitional. Dynamics of the modern Russian society is characterized by a diversity of social and cultural processes in the society, in its structure, in social communities, groups, institutions and the way of organizing this society. Still the Russian society has a catch-up position.

Socio-cultural processes have the greatest impact on the social structure of the modern Russian society, which can be divided into four groups. The minority is composed of the rich ruling elite, a high prosperity of which creates the illusion of stability in the country. Another smaller part of Russia is represented by the middle class (only 7 %), according to the head of the Center for the Social Policy Institute of Economics of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Yevgeny Gontmakher. A larger part of

Russian population are people with very low income, low standard of living. They carry the brunt of the socio-economic and political reforms on their shoulders, experiencing economic deprivation. The number of people belonging to the category of poor is filled by that of working people. The country has about 70 million poor people; the number of people living below the poverty line is 11% of the population whose income is below the subsistence level (The Data of Rosstat, 2017). According to the survey of the Russian Academy of Sciences, if more than 10% of the population lives below the poverty line, this should be a critical indicator for the state.

Belonging to a particular social class directly affects the thinking and behaviour of people determining their life priorities. The poor have no access to material and non-material benefits. They do not have the opportunity to get an education, good medical care; cultural and leisure activities are not available to them. Consequently, members of the lower social strata do not experience great pleasure from life, have no active life position, they also have not formed a civil position. Within these population groups, negative emotions are being accumulated, forming a destructive personality type. Therefore, it is necessary to take urgent measures aimed at improving people's lives.

It should be noted that in the course of transition from a socialist to a market society, a strict conflict developed in the public consciousness. It splits the society into those who had adopted to a new morality, to a new system of values, and those who rejected the market "game rules". The contradictions of social consciousness in a negative way influence the behaviour of people and society all together. The source of the contradictions of social consciousness became the media through which people having power, manipulate the public opinion.

In recent years, political, cultural and social spheres have a slight positive trend. The state carries out certain steps to improve health, education, sport, increasing the network of cultural centres. However, positive dynamics is replaced by instability, imbalance in economy and social spheres, which contributes to the change of thinking, value systems, models and patterns of normative culture. As a result, this situation contributes to the maturing threat of destructive social processes, so called "energy of protest" (Kucheryavenko et al., 2016)

Any modifications in a society are results of some factors' effect. In this regard, there is a need to identify external and internal factors that have a significant impact on social dynamics of the Russian society. Conditionally they can be divided into external and internal. The internal ones include all the processes and phenomena occurring in society, without outside influence. A significant impact on the development of the modern Russian society always had political factors. In the process of democratic society's formation in Russia, the political system and structure of society have changed. The existence and functioning of democratic institutions should be included to positive signs that enable citizens to exercise political rights and freedoms. In society, there are public institutions and enterprises, which promote the formation of citizenship. The confidence of people in public institutions is increasing, and as a result, the growth of political apathy of citizens is reducing. People having received the rights and freedoms began to have more trust in state institutions. The government at this stage of development is set the task to consolidate the positive experience for fulfilling social obligations to citizens, ensuring their safety (Isachenko, 2017).

Other factors of social dynamics are the processes associated with changes in the economic sphere. The modern Russian society has changed the attitude to the ownership of the production means. The majority of large corporations' owners, owners of natural resources and private organizations have huge profits. There is no doubt that the Russian economy is gradually adapting to modern conditions, but, unfortunately, fundamental problems are not being solved and properly estimated. The industry is still weakly developed having a low level of productivity. Gross domestic product is focused on the quantitative growth of material means, which does not affect the sustainable development of the economy. Despite the fact that unemployment is suspended, the percentage is still quite high. According to the official data of the Federal State Statistics Service, the unemployment rate in Russia by the end of 2016 was 5.5 % (excluding the data of the Crimea) (The Data of Rosstat, 2017), according to the unofficial data it is much higher. Thus, in the economy of the Russian society at the modern stage, both negative and positive trends are presented.

A certain influence on social development was driven by changes in the social structure of the contemporary Russian society. First, the authors are talking about the formation of new segments of population: businessmen, entrepreneurs, private owners, having the purpose of the accumulation of personal capital. The role of intellectuals in public life has sharply declined, as they are in the minority in terms of life, belonging to the middle class. Contradictions between social layers of society are constantly growing: the bulk of the population and the elite, the rich and the poor. If such sentiments will continue to grow, it can lead to increased social tensions (Chapin, 2015).

There is no doubt that the demographic factor and the change in the ethnic composition of society has a definite influence on the social development. Russian people were and remain the strategic core of the state. However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, 25 million Russians found themselves outside the borders of their country, which affected both the quantitative and qualitative strength of the country. Despite the fact that the part of ethnic Russians is gradually returning, this problem remains acute. Low standards of living do not contribute to the population growth. This occurs despite the fact that the government policy in recent years has created certain conditions, but not enough to form the desire of younger generation to keep the formation of large families.

Great influence on social dynamics has changes in the spiritual sphere, which is based on the principle of pluralism. Citizens have freedom of speech, choice of religion and profession. The state shall guarantee the freedom of creativity, access to media, works of art, literature and cinema. However, the newfound freedom influenced the emergence of negative phenomena in society. There has been a reorientation of the value system that is reflected in the formation of such values as hedonism, utilitarianism, individualism and social egoism. The transformation of value systems had a negative impact on marital relations. Civil marriages, incomplete families undermine the family as the basic unit of society.

A powerful factor of social dynamics of the modern Russian society is information and information technology, which are widely used in science, manufacture, at institutions and at home. Due to the wide spread of information technologies, there can be formation and dissemination of new information elite, people possessing information resources. Active introduction of information technologies into the modern society has expanded the possibilities of society's members. They have

access to information, ability to process, transfer and store it. Information and information technology influence the formation of new spheres and types of activities ("electronic cottages") (Toffler, 2010). Any citizen with the Internet access has an opportunity to receive a distance education, make purchases in different countries, provide various services and contact any person anywhere in the world.

In the modern information society, values serve as normative regulators of public life. In the information society, one of the main values is the knowledge that allows each member of society to change its status. The specific value of modern companies is the information, which plays an important role in the communicative space and in all spheres of society.

Active dissemination of information technology in society brings positive changes and pave the way for the development of negative phenomena. Information as well as information technologies are driving the decentralization of society, being a factor of society's globalization, creating a single global information space (Castells, 1999). Information society creates not only the world economy but also the global information infrastructure, contributing to the development of the global information space.

The spread of information technology brought many negative consequences to the life of the country. In modern society, information has become a weapon, manipulating the consciousness of the masses. Under conditions of society informatization, through the consumption of the same information, the alignment of mass consciousness takes place. Under the influence of negative information, the ethical principle are levelling, a decline in mental abilities contributes to the development of negative attitudes and loss of life meaning. Information affects moral installations, changes the world. Computer games demonstrating violence contribute to the aggression, violence. The information network is used for distribution of radical national and religious fundamentalism. Therefore, it is necessary to create a legislative base regulating the activities of information systems.

The external factors influencing the social dynamics of the Russian society include globalization processes, the contradictions between Russia and the United States, Russia and Europe. In addition, the dynamics of development of the Russian society, trying to influence external forces, are using misinformation, sanctions, political pressure. The distribution of base samples of the Western culture adversely affects the value system, the morals of the younger generation (Lazutina, 2016).

The blurring of moral ideals, the levelling of morality, the distorted view of freedom and democracy have been fundamental to the growth of destructive and self-destructive phenomena.

3. Conclusions and results

Fundamental changes in politics, economy, science, education exacerbated the deformation processes of social life that was the cause of the formation of the contradictions of social consciousness. The public consciousness has tremendous potential; it is able to affect the course of social development and can turn into a real social or political power. The contradictions of social consciousness of the Russians are reflected in the clash of two worldviews, differently interpreting the concepts of truth, law, justice. Analysis of economic and socio-cultural processes in the Russian society showed that a significant part of the Russians, having lost faith in the return of old values, rejecting the new market ideals, and not having found ways out of the situation, lose their life orientation. This situation contributes

to the formation of the phenomenon of "twilight consciousness" in which people being a long time in a depressed condition are subjected to neurosis, contributing to various destructive actions.

Thus, social changes and processes occurring in the modern Russian society, being determinants of social dynamics, are ambivalent. It should be emphasized that many social problems are still actual and require close attention from the government. Analysis of socio-cultural processes in the contemporary Russian society showed that it is characterized by the difference in the variety of dynamic processes. The processes of modernization have a tendency to rise and cover all spheres of society. The dynamism of socio-cultural processes is reflected not only in social change, but also in the minds and behaviour of people.

Historically it was proved that the dynamic development of Russia is of a "catching up" character and all these reckless government borrowings turn into crises. Therefore, the most fruitful strategy of formation appears as a balance between acceleration and resistance. The key figures of the sustainable development are results in socio-economic, spiritual lives (Vidyaev, 2016). It is necessary to create conditions for preservation of the society's development stability, to preserve the best that has been achieved. With this purpose, it is necessary to focus efforts on the preservation of the integrity and unity of the entire Russian society, ensuring the continuity of all elements of society. All society's members must also preserve the ability of the society in the adoption of joint decisions and joint actions to implement the tasks. It is necessary to create conditions for creative realization of personality through the implementation of humanistic principles of governance. Great attention should be paid to the upbringing, education, culture forming worldview of the younger generation with the "orientation to spiritual values, the formation of love and service for the Fatherland" (Pushkarev, 2016). By implementing these principles, Russia, with its natural, intellectual and spiritual capacities, will gain the ability to regain the status of the world superpower in the process of socio-cultural transformations.

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