

18th PCSF 2018
Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future

**ANTI-CORRUPTION CONSCIOUSNESS AS AN ELEMENT OF
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

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Abstract

Anti-corruption programme can never be successful if there is high corruption tolerance in society and the government doesn't have a strict strategy of fighting corruption. System analysis of this social phenomenon requires both to research all acts of corruption and to reveal its perception in public consciousness. Studying evaluation and perception of anti-corruption policy held by the government allows to improve the strategy and to develop anti-corruption climate in society. Speaking about the connection between a society and a government, it is important to realize that the mediator between these two groups is public service itself. The key role of organizational culture of public service belongs to core values and ethics which main element is anti-corruption consciousness. All organizations of a state or commercial significance must have a special document which declares the core values shared by all members of the organizations, it is so called «Code of Ethics» which is wide-spread in most European and American structures. This article presents the sociological research results of people's perception of corruption itself and anti-corruption programmes. The research was conducted by a scientific group of Saint Petersburg State University in 2017/2018. It shows all controversy and conflicts of public opinion concerning the issues under discussion and people's own attitude to these issues. As a result we believe it is more important to develop our social reality by creating new ways of forming anti-corruption climate in society at all levels.

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Keywords: Anti-corruption consciousness, anti-corruption policy, organizational culture, public service, values.



1. Introduction

Nowadays we face many problems and challenges that may threaten stability of a country. We also observe a difficult and tense situation in the Russian Federation that is demonstrated by the declining level of public trust to government which reason is high corruption (according to the sociological survey held in 2015 by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center).

Public service is an important administrative institute that plays a great role in public management. Its main task is to work for citizens' welfare and to implement decisions made by the legislative branch. And the behaviour of public servants usually becomes a significant indicator of a whole political system since public servants communicate with citizens every single day and a society may judge government according to the behaviour demonstrated by public servants. That is the reason which makes a problem of ethics and values to be so serious.

While we are talking about public trust to government, we should firstly pay attention to public service as a main political representative. So, it is necessary to increase professional and ethical standards of public service's work in order to provide stability and increase public support and trust. The most important thing that seems to be a base of people's behaviour is a system of values as most decisions are made on the basis of personal attitude and values. And here we should mention anti-corruption intolerance as one of the main values of public service because "corruption and trust are two important determinants of the quality of public sectors" (Fritzen, Serritzlew, & Svendsen, 2015, p. 117). And we can overcome the problem of lack of trust only combining the symbiotic activities of all social and political actors (Dzgoeva & Kolesnikov, 2014).

This question becomes incredibly urgent as anti-corruption policy held by the government of the Russian Federation doesn't really work. New strict laws against corruption don't give any results for selective enforcement. Fighting corruption becomes a political game and a struggle between the wealthy and influential groups. It is obvious that the system of fighting corruption works at the lowest level among ordinary citizens and requires to reveal quantitative statistics of breaking the laws. This situation is mostly accepted by a society which means there is no anti-corruption climate so that there is no anti-corruption programme which is able to work efficiently within these conditions. Under the term "anti-corruption climate" we understand, on the one hand, attitudes, values and social rules which determine behaviour intolerant to corruption and, on the other hand, creating professional culture which main value is anti-corruption consciousness. Under professional culture we preferably mean organizational culture of public servants. So, in this case we have two sides which should be responsible for creating anti-corruption climate – public servants and a society.

2. Problem Statement

We believe that a society with high level of corruption needs specific methods of influence to social consciousness to be included in anti-corruption programme. It is much more important to implement intolerant attitude to corruption at all levels. In order to develop such technologies, we need to reveal mechanisms and factors that work on perception of corruption as a social phenomenon and evaluation of governmental programmes effectiveness.

One of effective methods of anti-corruption policy is to create specific type of organization culture which norms and values are firstly based on Ethic code and moral principles. Anti-corruption consciousness, same as sense of justice and moral consciousness, defines attitude of a person to corruption and this attitude reflects concept of civic duty, responsibility and solidarity.

It is significant to mention that both a society and a government can deal with corruption only if they share common values and these values should be taught and declared in such a specific document as Code of Ethics. If to speak about the experience of foreign countries which successfully fight corruption, then it becomes obvious that the positive achievements are possible for harmonious relations of citizens and public institutions which relations are based on common values (Dixon, Bhuiyan, & Ustuner, 2018). Although there is the Code of Ethics and Public Servants' Behaviour in Russia, it resembles a typical document which has some written notes but they are not approved by all the members of the public service system meaning it is just a legal document but not a moral one. It means that the behavior of public servants and their attitude to corruption influences the perception of corruption in society and reflects the behavior of the government.

3. Research Questions

This article is meant to show if it is suitable and possible to implement intolerant attitude to corruption and specific values into professional culture of public servants in order to provide anti-corruption behavior. So the question is also concerns the general condition of Russian society now. How intolerant is attitude of the citizens to corruption and are they ready to confront different facts of corruption demonstrating their personal civil activity and professional duty? What are the measures necessary for creating anti-corruption climate according to the staff? Are we ready to develop new generation of people who would be intolerant to any practice of corruption? Having both a society and public servants to demonstrate their present attitude to corruption, we should mention that the system of public service and public servants themselves are a very specific group to research. According to the law, while being a part of an executive branch of power, they must be neutral and objective but at the same time they should organise their work to provide services to citizens in an appropriate way. On the one hand, the function of public servants is limited by the services they provide and the laws they have to obey to, but on the other hand, they are performed as representatives of the Government and the quality of work of public servants, their attitude to people and their behaviour, which includes their attitude and involvement into corruption, becomes a significant part of people's trust to the whole state system.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to reveal specific features of anti-corruption consciousness of the Russians as a factor of creating their professional culture. Does this type of consciousness include intolerance to corruption and how does the staff members assess anti-corruption climate of their organization?

The subject of the research is norms, values and social attitude which are the core base of anti-corruption climate and professional culture. Here the subject is presented by the citizens of Saint Petersburg and Leningrad region and the main object is the specific features of their perception of corruption and anti-

corruption policy. The case of Ethic Code's influence to professional culture of a worker is demonstrated on the example of public service system.

5. Research Methods

Anti-corruption consciousness may be formed by creating specific conditions of negative attitude to corruption which are highly connected with responsibility for reputation as a human and a professional in any sphere. Such kind of professions as 'public servant' belongs to a group of professions which are usually characterized by high corruption possibilities. And here the main priority belongs to influence of a society, its culture and civil activity, which means civil participation and control, and organizational, or professional culture.

Studying these aspects, same as creating new techniques of implement to collective consciousness and possibility of forming anti-corruption professional culture, is based on the main ideas of structural-functional analysis (Parsons, 1971) and genetic structuralism (Simiand, 1985). The research was also built on theoretical and methodological ideas of Baudrillard's concept of symbolic exchange (Baudrillard, 1995). Analysis is based on theory of intellectual capital and a model of organizational culture of Schein (Schein, 2010) and Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). Moreover, the research used methodological ideas of studying specific impact of structural and valuable context on transformation of professional culture in Russia (Petrov & Karaseva, 2015).

The discussed topic of perception of corruption is based on social attitudes theory. The theoretical and methodological ideas of empirical research of perception of corruption and anti-corruption policy in Russia stand on social attitudes theory of W. Thomas and F. Znaniecki, the theory of value – behaviour relations. Classic meaning of social attitude clarifies the interaction between personal consciousness and its social activities. Social attitude becomes a specific double of social value in personal aspect. Here it becomes clear that any form of an action is always a link between them (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1996, p. 22). Despite the fact that social attitudes make an individual to act in a proper way it still doesn't mean there are no controversy and tense between values and real behaviour of a person.

Empirical base of the research is presented by the results of sociological survey, conducted by the authors with the help of Research park of St.Petersburg State University "Center for Sociological and Internet Research" in May/June 2018. The method of data collecting is personal interview. The respondents are citizens of Saint Petersburg and Leningrad region aged 18 and over, regularly living at the territory. Quota sample is to be used in the survey. Condition monitoring descriptor – gender, age, type of a territory.

Measuring representation was suitable for Leningrad region and Saint Petersburg using the data of population in specific localities and areas (Population census 2010). Leningrad region: places of interviews – local units of different types in the region, 10 districts. A sample of Leningrad region represents correct proportion of citizens in different types of local units, territories with various level of infrastructure development, localities at different distance from the district centre. The total amount of the sample is 701 respondents. Saint Petersburg: places of interviews – 9 districts of the city, proportional sample. The total amount of the sample is 802 respondents.

As a result, the conducted survey reflects a general situation concerning perception of corruption in public consciousness as it covers different types of territories which are characterized by various social and

economic features and quality of life. Nevertheless, we have to admit that it mostly represents the public opinion of citizens of a major city. But in order to reveal the problem of creating the professional culture of a “specialist of future”, Saint Petersburg becomes a significant model for its diversity in professional employment and high level of social activity of its citizens.

6. Findings

The results of the sociological survey among Saint Petersburg and Leningrad region citizens demonstrate that perception of corruption is considered to be at the high level of significant problems which require targeted measures of the state and society. Almost the half of the respondents (48%) point out the high level of corruption in their regions, while assessment of an anti-corruption programme, held by local authorities, and dynamics of changes in corruption spread are low-estimated. Most of interviewees (45,2%) believe that revealing facts about corruption doesn't change anything and almost the same quantity of respondents (48,5%) think that methods of fighting corruption, applied by local officials, aren't improving and stay at the same position. Nevertheless, there is also a positive shift in assessment of anti-corruption policy as there are more people who suppose it becomes better. 14% of the respondents feel that measures of fighting corruption are getting better and 16,1% believe that spread of corruption gets lower. Interestingly the positive changes were pointed out by the citizens with high level of income. Middle class respondents (those whose income are 3-5 times higher than a poverty level) are more critical to the official anti-corruption measures.

Widespread corruption in Russian society is proved by the answers of the respondents, as the quarter of them claimed that they personally were involved into corruption situations within last year and at the same time most among them (61%) had already known what they should do and how to give a bribe and there are also a lot of them (68%) who believe it is an ordinary situation which doesn't scare them at all. But we have to admit that almost 10% of interviewees stated that even being involved in corruption situation, they never gave a bribe to officials or could find another way to solve a problem. Anyway 7% of the citizens confessed that they give bribes and remunerations regularly if it a custom in a place. These most corrupted places at daily routine level which the interviewees usually face to in their everyday life within the last year are police (including the State Road Traffic Inspectorate), health-care facilities, educational establishments, housing and communal services, bodies of State and municipal authority, courts (Figure 01).

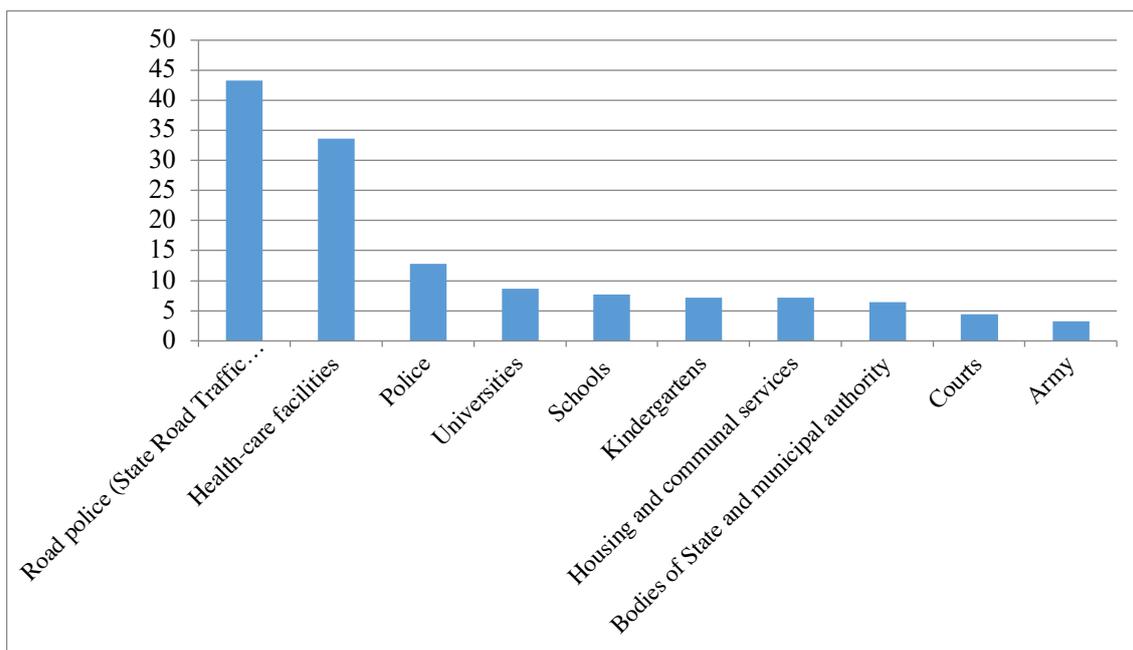


Figure 01. Establishments which are considered to be the most corrupted according to the personal experience of the respondents within the last year (the percentage shows a number of all those who were told about their involvement in corruption situations) (%)

In Russian reality corruption is highly associated with «top» corruption at the highest levels of politics and business, bribes to officials and so called «kickback» which means a person gets a part of a payment in exchange for huge contract benefits with the government department or a large company. Only one in two respondents believes that corruption also includes gratuities such as presents and monetary reward which they give to thank staff members of establishments. It creates a tolerant attitude to corruption. According to other research, conducted in another region of Russia, we see the same attitude of interviewees to this phenomenon: “Bribes to the officials for solving own problems, gifts for doctors and teachers, in opinion of people, are not the corruption itself” (Martynov & Gaberkorn, 2017, p. 82). And here we see clearly that the lower level of income the higher is a level of tolerant attitude to presents and rewards as ordinary thing which is not associated with bribes. It proves a common connection of a type of social structure and spread of corruption in such type of a society.

Interesting that the statement «While there are poverty and social inequality in the country, it is impossible to overcome corruption» is supported by 75% of interviewees whose income is equal or a bit higher than a level of living wage and 50% of interviewees whose income is 5 times higher than this index. At the same time, it is known that a high level of social inequality and a low level of middle-class representatives create the conditions for spreading so called «black», or «shadow» public services. Obviously, it undermines the very foundation of morality and creates specific social environment which declares the norms of corruption because all people there do actions somehow connected to corruption. Especially it becomes urgent within the behaviour of chief executives at different levels and spheres. A famous proverb “The fish rots from the head” proves the common rule. Almost everybody (87,5%) are agree with the statement “While the chief executive takes bribes, all the staff members would also do the same”. But is it fair to blame only the leaders and moral behaviour of elite representatives? Here we have a very important social and cultural problem which is highly connected, firstly, with the loss of the belief

that every person himself is responsible for implementation of anti-corruption policy, secondly, with a low development of anti-corruption consciousness, thirdly, with widely spread paternalism.

Unfortunately, more than a half (53,1%) supports the statement “Personally I can’t do anything with corruption, it doesn’t depend on me”. It demonstrates very low civil culture among the respondents and proves the saying “lazy activity” used by Voronkova in order to describe the situation when the publicity is not satisfied with the government but they do nothing except for expressing their opinion (Kholodkovskii, 2018, p.179). Anyway, here we also have a difference between civil consciousness of citizens of big cities and small villages. Among all those who took part in the survey in Saint Petersburg there are 31% of those who are not agree with the previous statement while there are 22% villagers of Leningrad region who don’t support it. The biggest part of those who stand for personal civil involvement into anti-corruption police are young people under 30 years old (35%), with higher education (34,3%) and high level of income (50%). While those who accept the statement that nothing depend on them are seniors over 60 years of age (85,3%) and the poor. And at the same time we have to admit that 5% of the interviewees claimed that they personally told about some facts of corruption, including Support Services of law enforcement agencies. And there are even more among those who filed complaints against officials or poor-work of establishments (23,8%). The main pattern that was revealed through the statements defining civil activity is that most of complaints were filed by people with higher education which means it is very important to implement anti-corruption consciousness programmes in classes at universities. Trying to incorporate it as a crucial value of educational programmes for future public servants would allow to explain an incredibly significant role that public administratirs play every single day in our lives (Molina & McKeown, 2012).

The following part of the empirical research is focused on anti-corruption climate in organizations and creating suitable professional culture. First of all, here we should point out that the respondents are quite optimistic about the fact that it is absolutely possible to create anti-corruption climate in modern Russian conditions. There 52,3% of the interviewees who support this statement while 19,1% of those, who took part in the survey, felt difficulties to answer. And it stresses the importance of education in the sphere of anti-corruption policy. Here it ceomes obvious that people feel the public serbice is a closed structure in Russia so it is necessary to work out the new instruments which would allow to show transparency of the system in order to increase a level of people’s trust (Douglas & Meijer, 2016).

When it comes to personal organization and the modern situation inside the organization, then there are much less people who can describe anti-corruption culture of it. 35,2% of the respondents believe that there are no facts of corruption in their organizations, 9,1% say that there are some isolated incidents of corruption but generally they can speak about anti-corruption climate to exist, 19,3% confessed that corruption is widely spread in their organizations. Among the respondents there are 29,3% of those who doesn’t work at the time of the survey to be taken and if we don’t count them than the previous percentage becomes higher by about one third.

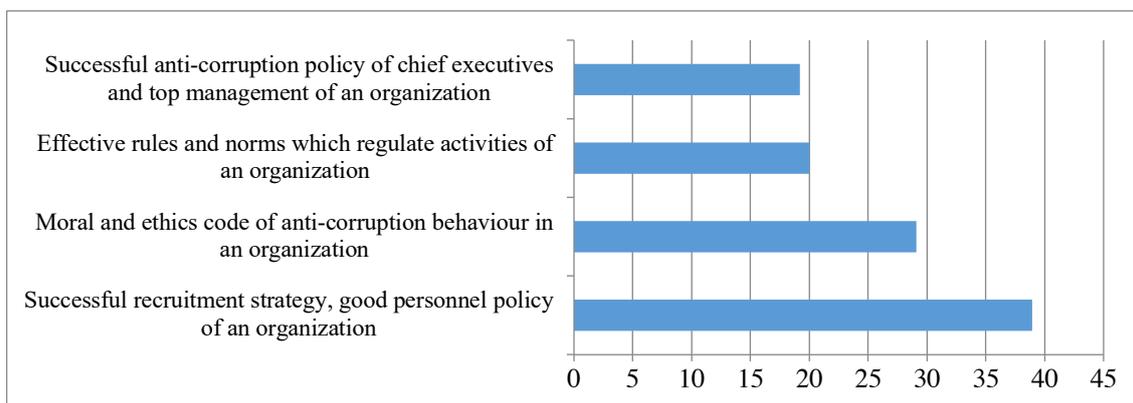


Figure 02. Personal opinion of the staff of organizations with positive anti-corruption climate to explain the success of the policy (%)

The staff members of organizations believe that the success of overcoming corruption inside companies is surely explained by good recruitment strategy and effectiveness of norms, rules and values of an organization. The policy of present authorities takes only the 4th place which means that the staff of successful organizations realize the significant roles of HR and professional culture as a base for creating anti-corruption climate. At the same time the staff of the organizations, which failed anti-corruption policy, told the main reason of failing was lack of interest in anti-corruption policy by the chief executives (40%) and the staff themselves (26,7%).

According to these results, it becomes useful to see the additional measures of creating anti-corruption climate which were suggested by the respondents themselves based on their own experience (Table 01).

Table 01. Measures to reduce corruption in an organization (to the view of the staff, %)

Additional Measures of anti-corruption activities	Total	St. P.	Len. region
Greater responsibility of the executives and control over top management activities	29,5	27,6	31,6
Salary increase and its timely payment	27,0	24,3	30,1
Creating possibilities for career development and growth for everyone, including measures of additional education and advanced trainings	15,4	15,3	15,5
Creating information transparency, regular information and education activities dedicated to fighting corruption	16,1	17,8	14,1
Creating friendly atmosphere, team-building, mutual assistance	14,1	15,2	12,8
Strict control and sanctions to any misconduct and breaking rules of an organization	27,6	27,2	28,1
Documented anti-corruption policy and ethics, adoption of the Ethics code of an organization	12,2	13,1	11,1
Another	3,3	3,1	3,6
There is no corruption in our organizations	9,8	11,2	8,1

On the one hand, these measures traditionally consist of strengthen control on activities of top management and the staff. And it seems to be wise as here we speak about fighting corruption which is an illegal phenomenon. But on the other hand, all the answers, concerned the measures of anti-corruption character, show that people see how wide is the problem of creating anti-corruption climate and how

difficult is its connection with the whole system of measures which significant role is given to preventive measures of corruption behaviour.

Researching professional culture and possibilities of creating anti-corruption consciousness as a part of the system of norms, values and symbols seems to be a very difficult task. Firstly, complexity of this task may be explained by the fact that there is no common opinion on the definition of professional culture in modern organizations and the way which is possible to study it. Secondly, one of the most important methodological problems is an aspect of revealing the influence of structural and symbolic context in development of anti-corruption professional culture as nowadays most of the research in this sphere studies professional culture separately. Researchers don't pay enough attention to the social and historic aspects in changes of organizational culture while these changes play an important role in increasing significance of anti-corruption consciousness as a factor of creating professional culture.

Here we see a reason that makes it necessary to search for another approach of studying professional culture. This approach presents professional culture as a complicated multilayered system of stable social communication in a labour team which is determined by specific incorporated norms, values, knowledge and experience. Researching organizational culture is incredibly urgent as it helps to create a new system of public sector. Organization usually influences individual behaviour of a servant by existing ethical climate among the staff which makes a new organization member to become a part of ethic culture of a company (Tremblay, Martineau, & Pauchant, 2017). Professional culture is a symbolic resource, a cultural capital of a company, which distinguishes one from another. But the quality of it depend on a company itself and special features of its team. Using this approach, we can even research a company as a culture itself which is performed as a system of values and symbols, created and reproduced in a process of constant communication among the staff members. And here anti-corruption consciousness becomes an essential part of an organization as a culture. It becomes a norm and a value in communications of management and the staff, an organization and its immediate environment (clients, stakeholders, state structures). And the possibilities of developing anti-corruption consciousness highly influence a level of trust to an organization which is very important index as competitiveness and effectiveness of activities of a company is defined by a level of trust. It is especially fair speaking about trust to a government as nowadays the purpose of state development is to create a strong country which is a significant part of stability and its main strength is trust and support of its citizens (Shestopal, 2015).

While making a research, we shouldn't forget about the studying of transformation of structural and symbolic context in professional culture development. This transformation is realized by modern global processes connected with the influence of controversial economic and cultural globalization processes (Holton, 2005; Stiglitz, 2006). These are the processes that create social and historic context of professional culture transformation and set out the development of anti-corruption consciousness. Moreover, corruption and development of modern forms of organizations become incompatible with the help of global transformation processes and here we should mention several reasons of this irreconcilability:

- 1.Changes in global production system connected to transnationalization, radical automatization, informatization and labour market intelligence;

- 2.Changing role of social trust to an image of modern companies and increasing dependence of sales figure and an attitude of stakeholders to company's activities;

3. Increasing dependence of income, implementation of development strategies and possibilities of maintenance and expansion of customer capital and implementation of corporate social responsibility principles;

4. Growing importance of companies' social resources in creating the basics of competitiveness in modern social and economic reality;

5. The need to increase competitiveness of the staff members in relation to increasing demand for new skills, experience, information in the context of creating and global spread of «Learning Society» structures (Stiglitz & Greenwald, 2014).

The complex of these reasons defines an opportunity of creating anti-corruption consciousness as modern organization try to integrate into global economic, political and social structures, while this type of integration is impossible without adoption of new norms of professional culture and ethics.

We have started with the statement that professional culture in an organization is something very difficult to research but here we should mention that our research task was to reveal the specific features of public service professional culture which seems to be even more complicated task to do. Here we can clearly see that public service system is difficult to study as it has very specific status and is known as a closed structure. Moreover, such type of a system undoubtedly requires social and historic context for studying.

We have to stress that public servants are the key representatives of a system of state management and may be associated as a personal representation of state department which functions and tasks they realize. That is why morality and ethics are the most significant principles of state administration efficiency and these both features strongly influence such aspects as «bureaucracy, bribery, corruption, low social responsibility» (Magomedov, 2013, p. 110). Assuming that values are a significant part of public servants' profession, the fact is in Russia there is still no effective Ethics Code. Although there is the Typical Code of ethics and public servants' behaviour in the Russian Federation, but, as it was admitted by the Expert Committee under the Government of the Russian Federation in 2014, the Code is just a document that consists of texts copied from Federal Laws, and the decision of the Expert Committee was to rewrite and improve the Code. Probably the situation happened because the large wide-spread public discussion didn't exist and a society didn't take part in creating the Code (Volkova, 2014, p. 117). What is important to understand is that every Ethics Code is not just a legal document but a moral one, that should contain a list of values which are shared by the society and the Government. But nothing would work without understanding the core idea that ethics of public service and anti-corruption programme should be based on democratical principles and the activities of civil society (Suk Kim & Yun, 2017, p. 621). That is why nowadays it becomes obvious that public service needs to be modernized and improved by implementing successful work practices of foreign countries that could achieve high positions in developing civil service system. Such development of Russian public administration may be possible in case of «collaboration of researchers, civil society activists, public officials, and politicians» (Nezhina & Zaytseva, 2018, p. 339).

7. Conclusion

Russian experience of professional culture development based on values and attitudes is only in the process of its formation. Answering the research questions, we have to say that the general condition of Russian society may be estimated as positive for changes nowadays and the citizens of big cities are ready

to take own responsibilities for the development the culture. The attitude to corruption is till very controversial but there are much more people who start to believe that they themselves can change something if they are not indifferent and unconcerned.

And this statement becomes highly important if to speak about organizational culture of public service which is the main connection between the power and the society. Being based on anti-corruption consciousness, it created a unique platform for development. The world is changing very fast and European and American countries are trying to implement new methods into everyday lifestyle of the public service departments, which are based on values and intolerant attitude to negative social processes. Nowadays Russian state also borrows new achievements and what is really necessary to do is to work out specific educational programmes at University departments which prepare future public servants and to make these programmes to be based on the values of intolerant attitude to corruption.

New type of public servants, who would be brought up being intolerant to such kind of crimes, would also create a new attitude to public service and a government in total as a level of trust to these institutes would increase which means more stability in the state. So the new professional culture of public service that is based on anti-corruption consciousness can even influence the whole political system and create harmonious and balanced environment of the society.

Acknowledgments

This article is based on scientific research performed with the help of the Research park of Saint Petersburg State University “Centre for Sociological and Internet Research”.

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