

Social and Political Regional Interactions in the Context of “Reactive Relationships”: The Possibilities of Hybrid Methodology

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Abstract–Social and political interactions are in a situation of rapid transformation of social relations, their qualitative and quantitative characteristics. The paper provides insight into stable traditions of civil initiatives from the position of sociocultural foundations of social and political interaction. In the study of rapidly changing “reactive relations”, new methodological approaches based on the priorities of network methods begin to dominate. It is possible to note the possibilities of interdisciplinarity in this approach, the “open architecture” of the research project itself (discussion, weighting of risks and difficulties, coordination of opportunities, search for additional resources, etc.).

Keywords–social interaction, political interaction, socio-political interaction, “reactive relations”, hybrid methodology, local communities, mobilization, region, sociological research

I. INTRODUCTION

The relevance of the topic is due to the focus of modern sociological science on solving the problem of developing methodological and theoretical approaches to the integrated study of social and political interaction in the regions. The study acquires special significance of such interaction in modern conditions of rapidly changing, “short”, reactive relations.

The need for a methodological and theoretical substantiation of changes in social and political interactions at the regional level is due to, first, the general changes in the nature of interactions of subjects of social and political relations associated with dependence on information flows and their distribution channels. These include new sources and channels of social and political information, other methods of receiving and exchanging information, i.e., fast and focused on network communications. This leads to the fact that there is a gap between the capabilities of individual subjects of social and political interaction and traditional resources and technologies. The use of traditional research approaches often does not allow detect the structural diversity of specific social interactions and

features of civic interests and specific initiatives of the population in social and political interactions.

Secondly, the specific features of Russia related to its deep regional differentiation and the dual nature of social and political interaction, when public communications (initiatives and projects) often do not coincide with the expectations and activities of government officials, and vice versa [1]. It is of fundamental importance that there is no universal solution for various regions of the country. It is necessary to highlight the characteristic features of social and political interactions, and to move from general principles and general recipes to the development of projects based on the specifics of the regions.

Thirdly, the reactive relations of the subjects of sociopolitical interaction are to some extent a threat to political decisions, due to the weak elaboration of the latter because of the need to react here and now quickly. For example, the situation taken place after the fire in the shopping center “Winter cherry” in March 2018, in Kemerovo demanded from the authorities of fast reactions to what was happening, operative information support of a difficult situation. In practice, the authorities activated the traditional methods and mechanisms of socio-political interaction, using mainly a set of declarative and decision-making procedures. Informal, often deliberately destructive and provocative information replaced official one and made participants commit antisocial or illegal actions in a difficult situation.

Solving the problem require an interdisciplinary approach due to the impossibility of studying social and political interactions outside of new information and communication environments and changing methods of interaction between citizens and government, public and political institutions [2].

Socio-political interaction determines the quality and content of regional relations, which makes high importance of research in this direction. In constructive and protest definitions of regional and local political relations, there are gauges of

processes in the territory [3]. Modern dynamic communications with the possibility of transition of subject-object relations allow independently “sound” to social and political projects and statements. Modern dynamic communications with the possibility of transition of subject-object relations allow independently “sound” to social and political projects and statements. The speed of modern socio-political relations, as well as the diversity of tools to achieve their own and collective interests, the articulation of sociocultural resources determines the hybridity of research methodology and interdisciplinarity in the search for “research partners”. Reactive relationships in social and political interactions on the territory can be consolidated or have multidirectional vectors of application of activity and resource potentials. Originality can characterize social relationships. Political interactions depend on the selectivity of resources, the temporality of events and communications. There is a forced transition to a hybrid research methodology; researchers have the opportunity to study the social and political interaction in a holistic way.

II. KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND APPROACHES

The main (key) scientific task of the research is the substantiation and approbation of the possibilities of applying hybrid methodology in the study of social and political interaction of local communities in the context of “reactive relations”. Within the study, we call such relations “reactive” that demonstrate the willingness of the carriers of social and political interactions to respond differentially to external communicative acts, influences, challenges and threats relative to the social group (community).

Citizenship – the opinions and judgments of the social set of unique individuals / participants and local communities in the context of “reactive relations” acquire a new practical sound. The techniques and features of social and political interaction in the region become dependent directly on the assessments of the population and social communities. In the conditions of transformation of social and political relations changes are subject to methodological principles, benefit from the possibility of hybrid methodology.

Rapid reactive changes in social relationships affect the nature and communication of political interactions in society. Significant and / or problematic for society events of modern life require reactive complex methods of interaction on the part of the authorities and the population. The framework of the “permitted”, developed research space limit the possibilities of modern research methods, which is usually a normative and systematically repeated events and / or actions of social life. We believe that the underdeveloped side of social and political interactions of civil communities can be external and internal with respect to the subjects of social and political relations, hybrid methods of analysis (study) [4]. Such an approach is justified from the point of view of the possibilities of researchers to cover fast “reactive” interactions, as well as to use the “missed” not often attracted resources and methods of building social and political interactions in the region. Note that this kind of unrecorded opportunity can probably accumulate in the territories without using traditional, which have become almost routine interaction techniques.

The transformation of the “research field” in conjunction with the universalization of applied research techniques suggests the emergence of complex information, user arrays, databases in the formation and use of which interested citizens and / or groups, local communities can participate. Thus, we can assume the formation of a new research approach in the study of social and political interaction, taking into account the territorial and settlement features, in the perspective of unique public projects of local development / self-development of territories is possible.

III. RESULTS AND PROSPECTS

Russian sociologists such as Zh. T. Toshchenko, G. A. Tsvetkova, A. V. Novokreshchenova, G. S. Poshevneva and others cover socio-political interaction and power relations in the regions. Zh. T. Toshchenko also considers complex, deviant interactions between the population and the authorities, in society as a whole, generating phantomization of relations [5]. The effect of “political contagion” in hidden forms attracts attention in such interactions, bringing into the socio-economic or sociocultural core of protest views and beliefs of the destructive political charge that breaks solidarity, reconstructs the balance of forces, draws the changed configurations of relations in society. Researchers point out another independent problem of social change – the unpredictability and trauma of social expectations (Sztompka P. Social change as an injury // *Socis* .2001, № 1, pp. 6-16.). New information and communication practices of social and political interaction in modern society determine the interest in the possibilities of hybrid research.

The study of regional and urban political relations have interdisciplinary intersections with political and socio-cultural approaches. According to Floyd Hunter (early studies 50-60s of the XX-th century), the structure of political power in the city includes two main parts. The center of power is the elite of a small group of top leaders who dominate urban politics. As a rule, they do not take part in public political structures; prefer informal channels of influence. Inside the elite, there are separate groups (“companies”) that make decisions on important issues of urban policy [6]. After the main issues have been prepared on informal platforms, second-tier leaders and executives come in, who ensured the implementation of the necessary decisions in the public sphere. This direction has the so-called reputational approach, which became the basic research innovation of F. Hunter.

Political analyst R. Dahl and his colleagues viewed political power as the ability of a subject to exercise his will by influencing political decision-making, their analysis focused on studying the role of various groups in this process; accordingly, the research method they used was called “decisional”. For a long time (in the period of 70–80s of the XX-th century), the decision-making approach remained a “popular” socio-political device [7].

According to the American researcher S. Lux, the pluralistic “decisional” approach does not take into account the influence of the “third party of power”. The method “does not see” influential actors acting “behind the scenes”, offering a comparative study aimed at identifying the factors determining the distribution of power, its dynamics and results [8].

An interesting area of socio-economic research in terms of territorial development is the concept of growth machines of Harvey Molotch [9] and John Logan. Growth machines are coalitions of local interest groups that play a crucial role in the development of the city. The technocratic model of the consideration of social and political relations contributed to the formation of a number of interdisciplinary research theories. In particular, the theory of urban regimes allows for a wide variation of urban political systems, considering the growth regime as one of the possible regimes; it assigns a large role to the actual political (subjective) factors, the interaction of various actors of urban politics (V. Ledyayev). Russian researchers of regional and urban sociopolitical processes differ in their approaches and issues of scientific interest [14].

Russian sociology considers the relationship of mobilization processes with the transformation of society. Among the authors of mobilization-transitive approaches are T. I. Zaslavskaya, N. I. Lapina, N. E. Tikhonova, M. A. Shabanov, V. A. Yadova and others.

A number of studies, sociopolitical interaction examine the works of protested activity of Yu. A. Levada, O.I. Shkaratan and others. Another area of research is the resource approach of M. Olson, A. Obersehol, in which, in the process of interaction, the resources of group members are placed at the disposal of this group, accumulated and directed towards the achievement of common goals or to protect group interests.

However, as noted by P. Berger and T. Lukman, the activities of individuals who possess some knowledge in the form of subjective values or collective representations create society.

Members of society consider them real. Moreover, according to researchers, this circumstance does not need evidence for specific citizens, residents, users, etc. As P. Sztompka notes, trust has its own geometry, individualized and collective networks, reliability circles and a public convoy [10]. Describing a culture of trust a sociologist notes the formation of new bonds of trust. As a rule, an acceptable basis for confident interaction is the use of “capital of credulity”, in other words, the sum of the resources and benefits that people receive by giving us trust from other people. Political trust, in our opinion, is framed in the contradictory framework of solidarity of opinions and opinions of the population about power, and also has strict boundaries of legitimate and legal political methods and technologies used by representatives of the civilian population and public politicians in relation to each other and social groups and communities that have no active interest or participation, but are full representatives / carriers of political interests for those territory).

The research results of the Department of Sociological Sciences of Kemerovo State University allow demonstrate a shift in the respondents’ assessment of traditional sources of political information to “digital” (Table I).

Information sources	2017, %	2018, %
Print mass-media	16	14
TV	28.8	24.5
Radio	9.1	7.3
Internet	24.5	20.5
Public speeches of politicians	8.8	7.3
Exchange of information with like-minded colleagues at work / school	7	8.3
Speeches of independent experts	-	13.2
Rumors, conversations in queues or public places	2.6	3.5
Posters, poster advertising, information boards, slogans on buildings, etc.	1.6	1.2
Other	0.8	-
Nothing	0.8	0.2

From 2017 to 2018, there is a decrease in trust in such political information sources as print media, television and radio (-2%; -4.3%, and -1.8%, respectively). There is an increase in respondents’ confidence in such sources as sharing information with like-minded people, work colleagues / studies, speeches by independent experts, as well as the spread of rumors, conversations, and discussions in queues or public places. Internet communications are subject to developmental stages, but already at this stage, an intensive stage of growth and development of social and political interactions characterize internet communications, as well as quick assessments and / or feedback from participating parties, which is difficult to implement within the framework of a traditional research approach.

A hybrid research methodology will use to build situation analysis and characteristics of social and political interaction. The research participants propose a new aspect of the transformation of research results, which consists in the conjugation of managerial and amateur principles in the exercise of power. Up to-date analysis of social and political interaction allows researchers and managers get the invariant basis of social and political relations in modern society.

This changes the traditional approach to the organization and conducts field research, forcing researchers to resort to dynamic methods, techniques and research support techniques previously characteristic only of socio-engineering projects. The use of hybrid, flexible technologies with a high speed of social response, the ability to form a socially responsible behavior of the participants and the project “respondents” becomes relevant. Researchers note a tendency in sociology instead of using survey data, the ability to explore so-called digital traces of transactional data and information in “Event logs” recording simple behavioral facts, descriptions of

TABLE I. SOURCES OF POLITICAL INFORMATION THAT DESERVE THE MOST TRUST AMONG THE POPULATION (SURVEY IN THE KEMEROVO REGION; 2017- 393 PEOPLE; 2018 - 400 PEOPLE)

personal experience, visual images, detailed narratives, comments on certain topics, etc. [11].

Modern challenges and threats of social and political development, dysfunction of traditional organizational and managerial techniques and technologies, the search for new, alternative ways of social and political interaction by the population forces researchers and practitioners in the systems of state and municipal management, business to pay close attention to the possibilities of social and political interaction of communities [12]. At the same time, political interaction on the part of the authorities is as a form of coercive relations, the conjugacy of power coercion and the possibility of promoting social initiatives is necessary. The goal is to develop methodological and methodological approaches to the study of social and political interactions of local communities using hybrid methods in terms of reactive civil relations and “fast” public initiatives.

IV. CONCLUSION

The scientific and applied significance of the results obtained is the use of new methodological approaches in the study of social and political interactions of regional communities in changing conditions. Its reflection is in the concept development of social and political interaction and in the substantiation of a new approach that takes into account the potential effects of reactive relations of social and political interaction (taking into account the priorities of the territory).

The scientific problem solved in this study necessitates the solution of a number of fundamental and applied research problems. The fundamental task of the study is to analyze the social and political interaction in a “reactive relationship”. The applied research objective is the development of approaches to the construction of a hybrid methodology for studying social and political interactions, including in the context of reactive relations between the parties. From a methodological standpoint, the novelty of the proposed project consists in the implementation of the principles of an integral approach, which involves research based on a political science and sociological approach using sociological, mathematical, and statistical methods.

Achieving the objectives of the study related to the development of methodological bases and methods of studying the socio-political interaction requires an interdisciplinary approach, the core of which is political sociology. Within the proposed interdisciplinary approach, we offer to use a number of theoretical concepts. Thus, in our study to operationalize the concept of social and political interaction, we rely on the work of L. L. Shpak, who considers interaction in the totality of everyday social and political practices and the possibilities for realizing people's vitality. We also offer the concept of E. Giddens' resources, which the author uses to describe structures - a sample of social relations that exists at a certain time and in a certain space, suggesting appropriate behaviors of individuals. Resources mean assets – tangible or power – used by individuals to achieve their goals in the process of interaction. Resources can manifest themselves in two forms: in a localized form or in the form of power [13]. This attracts our attention to the study of the characteristics of regional subjects, the principles and forms of socio-political interaction, tools of

social and political mobilization in the interaction process. The theory of P. Bourdieu (considering social space in interconnection / interweaving with other spaces); E. Giddens (localization of spatio-temporal characteristics); M. Castells (flows of a network society); A. Filippova (localization of social phenomena in regional spaces) are of great attention.

At the same time, we have differentiation in the interpretation of the concepts of social and political interaction. Socio-political interaction is a systematic invariant role in social development. Political interaction is indirectly to social development, but it has a set of unique mobilizing properties and techniques inherent in strictly ordered formalized systems of management interaction. We consider the possibilities of mobilization (as a mechanism of self-organization, the appeal of the population to power as a subject of decision-making, mobilization readiness, level of political participation, absenteeism, etc.). We also take into account political mobilization (related to the vertical nature of interaction, making power decisions), as well as prospects of “network political participation” in resolving issues of urban and regional interaction [14, 15].

Based on the concept of power of M. Weber, we share the power relations (1) built on authority; (2) built on coercion, which can be a basis for the typology of situations of interaction and differences of social and political interaction.

Their civic position has an important role in the social and political interaction of local communities, which is a conscious participation in the life of society, conscious actions (actions) that are not imposed from outside on the surrounding social and political space in personal and social terms. Because of a consolidated civic position, it is possible to realize socially significant values in relation to personal and / or group (collective) interests. What is of particular importance in the context of fast reactive relations in society, which may pose a threat to the sustainability of social ties, traditional social institutions?

In our study, we used three layers (levels) of methods focused on obtaining results:

1. Methods focused on collecting mainly quantitative data;
2. Projective and network techniques that allow researchers work with quality indicators;
3. Hybrid methods of collecting, diagnosing and analyzing results.

In terms of “fluid modernity” and reactive relationships, overall results often require targeted follow-up and commenting [16]. Researchers have the opportunity to convert techniques and procedures over almost the entire cycle of sociological research.

The originality of the proposed hybrid model of research lies in the integrated use of political, sociological approaches and their characteristic research methods.

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