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SPECIFICS OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL PROJECTS REALIZATION IN MODERN RUSSIA

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Abstract

In Russia, state cultural institutions play a crucial role in forming and meeting the cultural needs of society, creating conditions and technologies for the comprehensive development and creative self-realization of personality, ensuring active cultural leisure activity, and maintaining the proper level of culture as a material and spiritual environment for human existence. Various socio-cultural projects that have spread widely in Russia in recent decades are developed and implemented for these purposes. The goal of the present study is to identify the specific characteristics of the realization of socio-cultural projects in the cultural institutions of Moscow. Socio-cultural projects that had been realized in the cultural institutions of Moscow in the 2000s serve as the object of the study. The study methods comprise theoretical analysis of project documents, the practices of formation and realization of socio-cultural projects in the cultural institutions of Moscow, as well as practical participation in the measures and projects of cultural institutions and the development of socio-cultural programs. The study concludes that the projects and programs of district cultural institutions are actualized by specific social problems of individual social groups (children, adolescents, adults, and pensioners). The main direction of socio-cultural activity aimed at resolving social problems is the organization of psychological support for families in solving family problems. Further improvement of sociocultural activity can be achieved through restructuring the content and forms of said activity in the direction of strengthening its social targeting.

Keywords

Social and cultural activity – Educational activities – Design – Russian culture – Social problems

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Introduction

Culturologists note that the cultural level of the Russian population decreased in the 2000s, which is especially true for the younger generation of citizens. Therefore, the modern stage of development of Russian society calls for an innovative state socio-cultural policy. A significant role in its realization is played by cultural institutions that apart from the organization and realization of socio-cultural projects also execute the functions of education, development, upbringing, and production. Project realization requires active creative thinking that changes society for the better. What makes socio-cultural design innovative is that a project is developed consequently based on in-depth analysis of the present socio-cultural situation, critical thinking, and identifying the problems the solution of which will prevent their emergence in the future and improve the situation ensuring stable development of society.

Socio-cultural design and the realization of socio-cultural measures and programs in state cultural and recreational institutions were studied by researchers in the field of sociology (Berger P., Luckmann T., Ionin L.G.), culturology (Ariarskii M.A., Kamenets A.V.), and pedagogics (Baklanova T.N., Dudchenko V.S., Isaeva I.Iu.). All these scientists note the importance of the design of cultural education programs and measures for organizing cultural leisure, developing the culture of Russian society, and expanding the socio-cultural space of the new generation but pay insufficient attention to the specifics of socio-cultural project realization in the cultural institutions of the Russian capital.

Methods

The theoretical foundation of the study is formed by scientific conceptions in the field of culturology¹ and sociology², as well as scientific works on the fundamentals and specifics of socio-cultural activity³ and studies on the activity of cultural institutions, particularly the educational projects⁴.

¹ M. A. Ariarskii, *Prikladnaia kulturologiia* (Saint Petersburg: Saint-Petersburg State Institute of Culture, 2001); A. V. Kamenets, *Vvedenie v teoriiu sotsialnogo vzaimodeistviia* (Moscow: Russian State Social University, 2015); A. V. Kamenets, *Kontseptualnye osnovy kulturnoi politiki* (Moscow: Moscow State Institute of Culture, 2005) y A. V. Kamenets y E. N. Selezneva, *Osnovy dukhovno-nravstvennogo vospitaniia v sisteme dopolnitelnogo obrazovaniia* (Moscow: Russian State Social University, 2015).

² P. Berger, T. Luckmann, *Sotsialnoe konstruirovaniie realnosti* (Moscow: Medium, 1995) y L. G. Ionin, *Sotsiologiia kulturnoi deiatelnosti* (Moscow: Higher School of Economics Publishing House, 2004).

³ E. I. Grigoreva, *Sovremennye tekhnologii sotsialno-kulturnoi deiatelnosti: Ucheb. posobie* (Tambov: Tambov State University publishing house, 2002); A. D. Zharkov, *Tekhnologiia kulturno-dosugovoi deiatelnosti* (Moscow: Moscow State Institute of Culture, 1998); L. G. Ionin, *Sotsiologiia kulturnoi deiatelnosti... y N. N. Iaroshenko, Istoriia i metodologiia teorii sotsialno-kulturnoi deiatelnosti* (Moscow: Moscow State Institute of Culture, 2013).

⁴ A. V. Kamenets y E. N. Selezneva, *Osnovy dukhovno-nravstvennogo vospitaniia...; V. E. Triodin, "Teoriia sotsialno-kulturnoi deiatelnosti: obekt i predmet issledovaniia", Magister num 1 (1998): 26–36; M. V. Pereverzeva, N. I. Anufrieva, M. G. Kruglova, Value of the art-therapeutic and gaming technology based on folk music in rehabilitation and socialization of children with health limitations. The 45th International Scientific Conference on Economic and Social Development – XIX International Social Congress (ISC 2019): Book of Proceedings (Moscow: 2020), 848–856 y N. E. Shafazhinskaya; V. M. Shcherbinina; E. Y. Ivanova; T. E. Belyakova y M. V. Pereverzeva, "Learning about world art culture as a method of forming a universal cross-cultural communication competence", *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews* Vol: 7 num 6 (2019): 1225–1229.*

The study methods comprise theoretical analysis of project documents, the practices of formation and realization of socio-cultural projects in the cultural institutions of Moscow, as well as practical participation in the measures and projects of cultural institutions and the development of socio-cultural programs.

Results

The basis of socio-cultural activity is formed by a certain socio-cultural environment that includes the entire society united by a common culture, as well as the results of its functioning, the material and spiritual conditions for the formation, existence, and development of society, traditional social norms, spiritual and materially beneficial values and social orientations derived from the social experience of many generations and established at the state level in the form of moral obligations and the consciousness of society and social practice. This basis ensures the integrity of society and the interrelation of all its members, thus, society influences the development and functioning of an individual.

Socio-cultural activity creates conditions and becomes a form of translation of universal interests, world problems, moral and ethical norms, and social orientations to the new generation of citizens. Joint creative cultural activities present the place where the interchange of thoughts, ideas, experiences, and initiatives occurs. Meanwhile, the acquisition of socio-cultural experience changes, updates, and improves a person. Socio-cultural activity operates with a wide range of methods based on the activity and communicative approaches. This includes the methods of sociological studies, methods of stimulation, activity organization, and the formation of socio-cultural experience, the methods of learning and self-education.

Modern Russian cultural institutions differ by various criteria. The source of funding (a form of support) divides cultural institutions into two categories: the non-commercial and commercial organizations. Cultural institutions are subject to the subjects of federal, regional, or local governments. Moreover, cultural institutions are differentiated by the types of activity: the preservation of cultural and historical heritage (preservation of the cultural identity of the peoples inhabiting the Russian Federation, promotion of the achievements of theatrical culture and literature in Russia and abroad), activity in the cultural sphere (leisure organization, familiarization of citizens with art as a means of humanizing a person, development and popularization of art, promotion of cultural programs), development and upbringing activity (assisting moral, spiritual, and patriotic upbringing of youth, meeting and forming the aesthetic needs in art), creative activity (creating and distributing the works of art, organizing entertainment, cultural recreation, and leisure), as well as the activities of professional membership organizations (professional unions of composers, artists, writers, etc.).

In recent years, a trend of a combination of two different types of sociocultural activity, namely the educational and recreational activity, in a single cultural institution has emerged. The most famous universal organizations in Moscow include the “ZIL” and “Alye parusa” cultural centers, the “Gaidarovets” palace of culture, Moscow multifunctional cultural center, and the “Integratsiia” State Museum and the Cultural Center named after N.A. Ostrovsky.

The process of socio-cultural project realization, as well as the comparative analysis of such projects, was conducted on the example of measures and programs

realized in the state budgetary institution of culture of the city of Moscow “Experimental Center for Social Adaptation and Creative Development of Children and Adolescents “Tvorcheskii Litsei”. The projects and programs of the center follow two strategic objectives of the state cultural policy aimed at the preservation of traditional culture and the introduction of innovative elements.

The leading objective of the activity of the “Tvorcheskii Litsei” center is the creation of conditions for forming and meeting cultural requests and spiritual needs, developing initiative, and realizing the creative potential of various age categories of citizens, primarily children, adolescents, youth, and their families. The mandatory steps of project development in the “Experimental Center” include the analysis of the socio-cultural situation (comprehensive diagnosis of problems and clear identification of its source and nature) and the identification of priorities in socio-cultural activity; searching for and developing the options of resolution of the identified problem (at the industrial and social levels) taking into account the available resources and the assessment of the possible consequences of the implementation of each option; choosing the most optimal solution (socially acceptable and culturally substantiated recommendations able to produce the desired changes in the field of project design) and its project formalization; developing the organizational forms for the introduction of the project into social practice and the conditions ensuring the realization of the project in the material and technical, financial, and legal sense.

The priority objectives of socio-cultural design of the “Experimental Center” are related to the resolution of acute social problems of Russian society of which we can distinguish those directly related to social well-being and physical self-preservation of the majority of Russian residents (the problems of unemployment, low standards of living, social deviations and dependencies, crime, immorality, etc.), as well as the resolution of problems of socialization and creative self-realization of the so-called difficult adolescents, orphans, and children from dysfunctional families.

Priority types of activity of the center include the cultural education activity, organization of citizens’ leisure, and production and intermediary socio-cultural activities in the interest of society. The target audience of the “Experimental Center” projects is represented primarily by children and adolescents with various socio-cultural and personal problems. The formation of projects in the center derives from the study of the problem situation in the socio-cultural sphere of life of children and adolescents of the Zelenogradsky district of Moscow to whom the projects are addressed.

The projects of the “Experimental Center” are aimed at the acquisition of role relationships between people effective from the point of social and personal significance, as well as the mastery of new ways of effective interpersonal communication within specific programs and measures by the members of society to whom the participation in project realization serves as a means of cultural fulfillment of life and a unifying and socializing factor. The social orientation of modern socio-cultural activity is determined by the need to resolve acute social problems of the Russian society of which we can distinguish those directly related to social well-being and physical self-preservation of the majority of Russian residents: the problems of unemployment, low standards of living, social deviations and dependencies, crime, immorality, etc. The social orientation of the projects of the center distinguishes its activities from the activities of other centers.

Social ill-being of society stems from its spiritual ill-being, which, in turn, presents a result of losing the meaning of life, ideals, and values promoting the improvement of personality, the development of creative abilities and civic awareness. Therefore, the following progression can be observed: value crisis and lack of ideals – spiritual ill-being – social problems of society – financial distress – social deviations and dependencies in individual members and groups within society⁵. In this regard, the formation of the value sphere of the modern life of a person where the socio-cultural activity takes one of the most important positions becomes extremely sought after.

The most widespread “social distresses” of the preschool age include the lack of adaptation for the conditions of group activity and group interaction in many preschool children; the fact of congenital inclinations and predispositions as the basis for the development of the corresponding abilities remaining undetected which negatively affects the development of the child’s personality; various deviations in psychophysical development even within the medical norm mainly related to intrafamily distress. In this case, the available psychological correction technologies are insufficient since it is necessary to create appropriate social conditions compensating and eliminating these shifts in the individual development of preschoolers⁶. The potential of socio-cultural activity, in this case, lies in the development and realization of gamified social correction technologies since play presents the leading activity of the age in question factually becoming a child’s way of living⁷. In this regard, we cannot but note that modern preschool pedagogics currently experiences a deficit of specially developed games contributing to the resolution of the identified social problems of this age group. The predominant type of activity of the “Tvorcheskii Litsei” center is the development and realization of projects for social adaptation and creative development of the so-called “difficult” children and adolescents, as well as orphans and children from dysfunctional families.

Among the most common social problems of children at the age of primary and secondary school we can identify many children’s lack of adaptation for positive interaction with other members of the class; performance problems caused by students’ personal characteristics not related to their learning ability (for example, lack of interest in learning, insufficiently developed will, etc.); inability to build collectivist and collaborative relationships in the student community due to the lack of such an experience in many children at the preschool age. In this regard, the socio-cultural activity of the representatives of this age group can present a wide variety of opportunities when not mechanically duplicating the regulations of educational institutions and accompanied by a search orientation of the created leisure groups and communities. The “Experimental Center” realizes several projects for children at the age of primary and secondary school. The “Dobroznanie” (“Knowing the good”) club functions at the center for young people fond of creativity, regular “Volshebnaia lozhechka” (“Magical spoon”) masterclasses take place, as well as the masterclasses in watercolor portrait painting, free individual sessions with a speech therapist titled “Govorim pravilno” (“Speaking correctly”), a “V poiskakh podsnezhnikov” (“In the search for snowdrops”) baby quest, English speaking club, and a “Dolgoletie” (“Long life”) program uniting young students with their mothers and grandmothers. All clubs and masterclasses are finished with exhibitions of works and crafts of the “Experimental Center” students.

⁵ G. V. Osipov y L. N. Moskvichev, *Osnovy obshchei teorii* (Moscow: NORMA, 2003).

⁶ M. V. Pereverzeva; N. I. Anufrieva y M. G. Kruglova, *Value of the art-therapeutic...*

⁷ A. V. Kamenets, *Kontseptualnye osnovy kulturnoi politiki...*

The main problem of adolescents is their marginality consisting of an intermediate social status (between children and adults). The representatives of this age group are “leaving behind” their childhood while not being fully accepted into the “world of adults”. This results in a state of social loneliness, apathy, rejection, resentment against all other people, and emerging inferiority complexes experienced by many adolescents. The situation is further complicated by the fact modern Russian society lacks a stable labor market for adolescents and a developed social initiative for this age group.

For adolescents, the “Experimental Center” holds concert and educational and club programs: the “Kem ty sozdana?” (“Who are you created by?”) academic concert and the “Podrygi” (“Girlfriends”) pop music concert, regular meetings of the “Ia ego peredelaiu” (“I will remake him”) discussion club, and the “Eti nezhnye tsvety” (“These tender flowers”) meeting-concert with the “Lia-lia-fa” (“A-A-F”) vocal group as a part of “Lyceum Fridays” – weekly evening lectures-conversations for the adolescents of Zelenograd on the topics of modern music of various genres, popular artists, dances, theatre, cinema, and television⁸.

Among the fundamental social problems of youth, we have to indicate the lack of opportunity for creative self-realization in accordance with the professional education they received or are receiving faced by many people. The lack of sufficient employment “in accordance with profession” leads to deep dissatisfaction with life in many representatives of this age group, as well as the loss of life meanings and orientations that are not adequately offset by the existing recreational interests. Another problem is the preparation for creating one’s own family and maintaining its well-being. Considering the fact that over half of marriages in Russian society break up, it can be stated that here we face a serious social problem the main reason for which is presented by the low culture of premarital and marital relationships.

Youth is involved in the following projects of the “Experimental Center”: the “Small steps across a big country” exhibition project presenting a series of photo exhibitions about interesting and little-known places in Russia personally visited by the project participants and informative meetings with traveling photographers participating in the project. The opportunity to present the little-known nature corners, tell about them, and share one’s love for the Motherland was given to those young people who love to travel and search for rare natural and geographical phenomena of Russia. In 2014, the authors of the project were awarded the Moscow Government Prize in the nomination “For the Best Implemented Project in the Field of Culture”. Moreover, young men and women conduct fieldwork with children from boarding houses: individually conduct the “Goncharnoe delo” (“Pottery”) and “Skazochnoe lukoshko” (“Fairytale basket”) master classes, the “Studiia testoplastiki” (“Dough-plastics studio”) and “Techstilnaia studiia” (“Textile studio”) clubs, and other projects. The problems of lack of communication and socialization among orphans and foster children were discussed as a part of discussions and conversations of the “Family Club”. The general poll of the district activists determined the decision to develop and implement the “Protiani ruku pomoshchi” (“Lend a helping hand”) project involving the organization of masterclasses and club meetings with children from boarding houses following a mutual cooperation agreement between the “Experimental Center” and boarding houses No.No. 36 and 42 of the city of Moscow.

⁸ S. S. Aksenova; M. G. Kruglova; V. A. Ovsyannikova; M. V. Pereverzeva y A. V. Smirnov, “Musical hermeneutics, semantics, and semiotics”, *Journal of Advanced Research in Dynamical and Control Systems* Vol: 12 num 3-Special (2020): 779-784.

The representatives of the middle-age category also have their own set of social problems that are partially resolved through the organization of socio-cultural activity in the “Experimental Center”. The main problem is presented by the low standards of living, which are experiences especially acutely in relation to one’s own created family. To avoid poverty, many middle-aged people are forced to combine several types of work experiencing serious psychological and physical overload in the struggle for a decent existence.

The deficit of free time experienced by the representatives of this age group cannot be fully compensated by diving into watching television and using a computer. Another problem is found in the crisis of life values and meanings. The essence of this problem lies not only in the notorious “midlife crisis” but also in the frustration with the ideals of modernization of the Russian society, the results of which have only been fully used by a very small part of the population.

The whole set of socio-economic and psychological factors of the depressive and stressful states emerging in this case in this age group manifests, in particular, in chronic fatigue syndrome the causes of which, as demonstrated in special studies, lie in the spiritual sphere. Overcoming the latter becomes possible through the organization of various types of social activity and family leisure compensating the lack of socio-cultural activity promoting the acquisition of new life meanings and goals.

The older age group includes both the working and non-working pensioners whose problems certainly differ a lot. Along with differences, there are similar problems of which we can identify a significant decrease of interpersonal contacts largely determined by health issues and awareness of the completion of the life cycle. Another problem is the sense of not being demanded as the carriers of life experience, mastery, knowledge, and numerous skills that can be significant for the society that many members of this age group share. The excessive passion of modern Russian society for innovative projects and novelty without reliance on certain social and cultural traditions and the experience of the previous generations often lead to rash, hasty decisions and negative consequences for a range of life spheres.

The “Semeinye kollektsii” (“Family collections”) project has been functioning in the “Tvorcheskii Litsei” State budgetary institution of culture of the city of Moscow for several years and was designed with the goal of supporting collecting as one of the nicest family traditions. Knowing about the hobby of one of the family members, relatives bring new items for the collection from travels as souvenirs thus making the collection truly family-friendly. During the existence of the project, collections of bells, decorative spoon-holders, figurines of mice, frogs, owls, hippos, penguins, angels, cats, dogs, etc. were presented. Information about the project was spread through social media and a survey of members of the club formations of the “Experimental Center”. The goal of the project is the promotion of family values and the support of family dynasties.

Moreover, the “Vtoroe dykhanie” (“Second wind”) art festival for the elderly people takes place yearly on the eve of the International Day of Older Persons, October 1st. The festival involves an exhibition of creative works of elderly people participating in the festival. The goal of the project is to support older people in expressing their creative abilities and talents and to help them present their creations to the audience. The projects of the club formations “Kompiuternyi dizain” (“Computer design”), “Batik” (“Batic”), “Mezhdunarodnoe obshchenie: delovoi angliiskii” (“International communication: business

English”), “Masterskaia obshcheniia dlia detei i vzroslykh” (“Communication workshop for children and adults”), the “Chasha serdtsa” (“Cup of Heart”) guest room, and the “Fantasiia” (“Fantasy”) pop vocal and instrumental ensemble were specifically designed for the members of the older generation. The spheres of interests and hobbies of the older generation of the district residents to which they would devote their free time at the “Experimental Center” were identified via a sociological survey.

Discussion

The social problems of various age groups examined above require the corresponding improvement and in some cases reconstruction of the system of socio-cultural activity organization. T.L. Stenina notes that socio-cultural activity design involves “competency analysis of a specific situation, the development and implementation of projects and programs optimizing the main components of human life, and new conceptions of upbringing activity”⁹. The construction of a project starts with the analysis of socio-cultural problems and the search for the causes of their emergence, in accordance with which goals and objectives are set. The achievement of said goals and objectives leads to the resolution of the identified problems and the restoration of the subject’s condition in accordance with the historically established norms and principles of society, as well as state policy in the field of social development and culture.

As previously noted, the development of the creative abilities of children presents another important objective. In the Soviet period, the objective of the development of personal creative potential was met in the form of mass amateur artistic and technical creativity¹⁰. In modern Russia, the nature and content of sociocultural activity solving the tasks of involving various groups of people in diverse creative activities have changed¹¹. As Triodin notes, the “cultural vacuum” that emerged in the post-perestroika period “lead to a change in mentality”¹². This relates to the fact that the understanding of the term “creativity” has broadened, now encompassing all forms of human activity able to create the world “according to the laws of kindness and beauty” starting from amateur music-making and ending with creativity in human relationships. This broad approach to creativity is determined by a number of circumstances:

- the degradation of boundaries between the elite and mass cultures and the consequent involvement of an increasing number of amateurs who were far from following the established artistic and aesthetic criteria and evaluations in their work in creative activity;

⁹ T. L. Stenina, *Sotsialno-kulturnoe proektirovanie: metodicheskie ukazaniia* (Ulyanovsk: Ulyanovsk State Technical University, 2009).

¹⁰ T. N. Baklanova, *Pedagogika khudozhestvennoi samodeiatelnosti: Uch. posobie* (Moscow: Moscow State Institute of Culture, 1992) y I. lu. Isaeva, *Dosugovaia pedagogika: ucheb. posobie* (Moscow: Flinta, 2010).

¹¹ V. Z. Dulikov, *Institutsionalnye izmeneniia sotsialno-kulturnoi deiatelnosti kak otrazhenie tsennostno-smyslovoi dinamiki rossiiskogo obshchestva*. In: *Tsennostno-smyslovoe sodержanie sotsialno-kulturnoi deiatelnosti v sovremennoi Rossii* (Moscow: Moscow State Institute of Culture, 2012) y E. O. Kuznetsova; N. E. Shafazhinskaya; A. V. Kamenets; E. A. Meleshkina y N. G. Orlova, “Change of Postmodern Paradigm in Cultural studies and Socio-cultural Practice”, *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities* Vol: 12 num 1 (2020)

¹² V. E. Triodin, “Teoriia sotsialno-kulturnoi deiatelnosti...”

- the routinization and mechanization of the system of social interactions and human relationships in the informational computerized and bureaucratic society that actualized the problem of individual self-expression in any socially accepted form;

- the widespread introduction of market relations that also affected the sphere of amateur creativity claiming professional status and closed to those wishing to join the work disregarding the market demands.

Conclusion

District-specific problems actualized the projects and programs of the “Experimental Center” of the city of Zelenograd Specific district of the corresponding range. The organization does not encroach on the social and cultural problems typical for the majority of Russian regions, which can be solved within the framework of federal programs. The objective of the local projects of the center is resolving the problems of a specific social group.

The main direction of socio-cultural activity aimed at the resolution of social problems is the organization of psychological support for a family in solving family problems where a special place can be attributed to therapy programs that implement the achievements of artistic and gaming culture: art therapy, bibliotherapy, music therapy, and drama therapy.¹³

The examined opportunities for further improvement of socio-cultural activity as a social policy instrument allows us to conclude on the importance of reconstruction of the content and forms of said activity in the direction of strengthening its social targeting. The main accent of socio-cultural activity should be put on its social nature since the set objective involves the restoration and development of new landmarks of interaction and solidarity corresponding to the present situation in which there is an acute deficit in modern Russian society¹⁴. Therefore, the collaboration of psychologists and socio-cultural activity organizers in the preparation of general psychotherapeutic and psychocorrectional programs appears highly promising.

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¹³ V. S. Dudchenko, *Innovatsionnye igry: metodologiya i metodika*. In: *Sotsialnoe proektirovanie v sfere kultury: igrovye metody* (Moscow: Russian Institute for Cultural Research, 1988); M. V. Pereverzeva; N. I. Anufrieva y M. G. Kruglova, *Value of the art-therapeutic... y N. E. Shafazhinskaya; V. M. Shcherbinina; E. Y. Ivanova; T. E. Belyakova y M. V. Pereverzeva, Learning about world art culture...*

¹⁴ A. D. Zharkov, *Tekhnologiya kulturno-dosugovoi deiatel'nosti...*

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