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Development of Social Entrepreneurship in the Republic of Tatarstan: Population Attitude

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Abstract---The article examines the phenomenon of entrepreneurship, its author's interpretation is given, taking into account foreign and domestic research on the problem. They analyze the evolution of social entrepreneurship in the Republic of Tatarstan, its organizational and legal support, the forms and practices of NGOs in the region. The article presents the results of the author's comprehensive empirical research (Republic of Tatarstan, 2020): a mass survey of the population, revealing its attitude to the practices of social entrepreneurship in the republic and semi-formalized interviews with government officials, socially oriented non-profit organizations, public organizations, giving a picture of opinions and assessments concerning the problems and features of the non-profit social sector operation in the regional economy. They concluded that socially oriented non-profit organizations and social entrepreneurship in the republic are actively developing and maintain a high level of service There is an active interaction of various state, provision. administrative and public structures with the institutions of social entrepreneurship in the region, there are various programs to support the activities of NGOs, a special regional model of public-state partnership is being developed in this socio-economic sphere.

Keywords---charity, social entrepreneurship, social services, socially oriented non-profit organization.

Introduction

In modern Russia, during the implementation of reforms, a large complex of socio-economic problems arises, some of which can be most effectively solved by social entrepreneurship. This institution represents the optimal interaction of public and commercial interests, allows to overcome the social problems of the regions and use human capital harmoniously, the development of which is one of the priority trends of the Russian Federation development strategy until 2030. Social entrepreneurship as a new sector of the economy and social interactions has always been of interest to domestic (Radaev, 2006; Moskovskaya, 2011; Khairullina et al., 2019), and foreign scholars as a subject of study (Mair & Marti, 2006; Bornstein, 2007; Yunus, 2009). The role of social entrepreneurship is to meet the urgent needs of socially vulnerable groups of the population at the regional or local level, which do not always reach state support. These activities in the course of their entrepreneurial activity are carried out by enterprises and organizations that are interested not only in income and economic benefits, but also in population urgent problem solution and in increase of vulnerable social group employment. In the scientific literature, the understanding of social entrepreneurship is closely related to the functioning of socially oriented nonprofit organizations (SO NPOs) due to the similarity of goals and objectives of their activities. In recent years, the phenomenon of social entrepreneurship began to develop rapidly, thanks to the administrative and legal consolidation of its essence and role within the framework of Russian legislation (Omogho, 2021; Imomiddinova, 2021).

Among the regions where many socially oriented non-profit organizations have emerged, registered and successfully operate, the Republic of Tatarstan occupies one of the leading positions, and is the leader of the Volga Federal District. Let us analyze the documents of the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Tatarstan concerning the functioning of NGOs, their organizational, legal, informational support and public control. Since 2020, only 5847 NGOs have been created (1754 public, 1987 religious, 2062 other non-profit organizations). Also since 2014, within the framework of the State Program "Economic Development and Innovative Economy of the Republic of Tatarstan for 2014-2024", a special subprogram "Support for socially-oriented non-profit organizations in the Republic of Tatarstan for 2014-2024" has been designated. Its purpose is to provide targeted support to SO NPOs, which must effectively solve urgent social and economic problems of the population, provide high-quality social services to vulnerable groups within the framework of social policy, and contribute to interfaith and social stability in the region. The Public Chamber of the Republic of Tatarstan, represented by its 60 representatives, acts as the curator who exercises control and coordination of the program and the activities of social entrepreneurship institution in the republic as a whole. Local commissions on social development issues, the public councils under the ministries and municipalities of the republic (8, 32, 44, respectively) perform their work in the region (Seelos & Mair, 2005; Wiguna & Manzilati, 2014).

A social innovation in this type of activity is the creation of inter-municipal resource centers in the Republic of Tatarstan that implement informatization and digitalization of the social services sector, organize coaching courses, train NGO

representatives and consumers. The centers have been operating for five years not only in the capital city of Kazan, but also in such cities as Naberezhnye Chelny, Almetyevsk, Buinsk, Chistopol, and Kukmor. On the basis provided by the Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, as well as the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Protection of the Republic of Tatarstan, support for social entrepreneurship, the provision of social services to the population by non-governmental organizations is carried out in the form of a number of advanced training and additional education programs (retraining) in the immediate field of activity for leaders and staff (Sekliuckiene & Kisielius, 2015; Peredo & McLean, 2006). These are the courses in social design, social project management, development of documentation for inclusion in the NPO register, and financial support obtaining.

Last year a new step towards the institutionalization of social entrepreneurship in the republic was the creation of the non-profit organization "Republican Resource Center for the Support of Socially Oriented Non-Profit Organizations", ANOO "Egoza Education Center", and Charitable Foundation "Springs of the World" under the auspices of the Public Chamber of the Republic of Tatarstan (Kravtsov et al., 2021; Aquino et al., 2018). The success of social entrepreneurship in the region during recent years can be attributed to the victory of 85 socially significant republican projects, with a total amount of funds raised in 155 million rubles during the competition of the Presidential Grants Fund of the Russian Federation, ten socially oriented NGOs receiving the grants for implementation of public-private initiatives to preserve, popularize development of the languages of the peoples living in the Republic of Tatarstan (the amount of one million rubles), and support for the initiatives of scientists, educational and public organizations for the preservation and development of the Tatar language outside the Republic of Tatarstan (the amount of 500 thousand Despite the existing various successful practices entrepreneurship in the Republic of Tatarstan, there is a need for an empirical study of the current situation in order to develop proposals for optimizing the mechanism of functioning the institution of social entrepreneurship at the regional level, first of all, through expanding the involvement of the population as a subject and consumer of social services (Groce & Hoodkinson, 2019; Nyandra et al., 2018).

Method

In order to study the attitude of the population of the Republic of Tatarstan to the non-profit social sector, their opinions and assessments of NGOs development in the region, a mass questionnaire survey was conducted, in which 396 people took part. The tasks were set to reveal the degree of awareness of the Tatarstan people about social entrepreneurship, understanding of development trends and spheres to cover, what social problems and tasks are urgent. Also, in order to present the most detailed picture of the state and development prospects of the third sector in the region, semi-formalized interviews were conducted with the representatives of government, social business and socially oriented non-profit organizations (n = 15). The data obtained allowed us to identify regional features and trends in the social sector development.

Results and Discussion

As for the awareness of the respondents and familiarity with the concepts of social entrepreneurship and socially oriented non-profit organizations, 44% of the respondents answered that they are familiar with these concepts, about a third (29%) said that they "have heard something about it" and the same number of respondents found it is difficult to answer. The data obtained indicate a good, but still insufficient, level of the republic population awareness about the socioeconomic sector (See Figure 1).

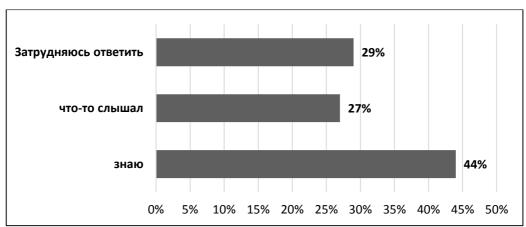


Figure 1. Awareness of social entrepreneurship and socially oriented non-profit organizations

затрудняюсь ответить - I don't know; что-то слышал - I heard something; знаю - I know about it

As for the question of the benefits of the third sector of the economy, the overwhelming majority (76%), to one degree or another, pointed to the social significance of social organization activities, and only 8% of respondents are convinced that there is no benefit. And despite the fact that every sixth respondent (16% of the sample) found it is difficult to answer this question, the data nevertheless indicate significant public support for social entrepreneurship in the region (See Figure 2).



Figure 2. Assessing the benefits of socially oriented nonprofit organizations and social entrepreneurship

затрудняюсь ответить - I don't know; небольшая - weak use; пользы нет - useless; большая - very useful

The next thing that interested us was the awareness of the local population need to develop the social sector. So, to the question: "Is there a need to develop socially oriented NGOs and social entrepreneurship in our republic?" the overwhelming majority of respondents (71.4%) answered that it is necessary to do this, and only 8% of respondents believe that there is no such need. It is worth noting that this situation was most likely influenced by the difficult socioeconomic situation in Russia as a whole, as well as the situation with the coronavirus infection pandemic, which led to the population's demand increase for social services, especially among the elderly. In the course of the survey, respondents were asked to assess the real effect of socially oriented non-profit organizations and social entrepreneurship activities in social problem solution (Weerawardena & Mort, 2006; Sahasranamam & Nandakumar, 2020). About a third of the respondents (33.1%) believe that the activities of social organizations affect the solution of social problems to one degree or another. A fifth of the respondents (19%) found it is difficult to answer this question, which again indicates a lack of the population awareness about the formation of this socioeconomic sector (See Figure 3).

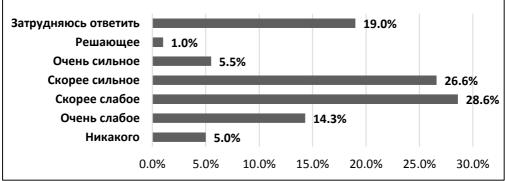


Figure 3. The degree of social organization influence on the solution of social problems

затрудняюсь ответить - I don't know; решающее - decisive; очень сильное - very strong; скорее слабое - rather weak; очень слабое - very weak; никакого - none

One of the important questions was whether the quality of social services would improve if they were provided by social entrepreneurs. The majority of respondents (57%) still believe that the quality of social services will improve, since commercial organizations will perform their tasks more efficiently in a competitive environment than government services (See Figure 4).

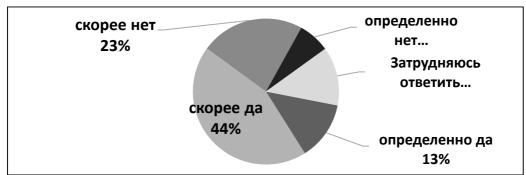


Figure 4. Assessment of changes in the quality of social services during the transition to the commercial sector

скорее нет - probably not; скорее да - rather yes; определенно нет - definitely not; определенно да - definitely yes; затрудняюсь ответить - I don't know

When they asked in what directions the activities of socially oriented non-profit organizations and social entrepreneurship should develop, the majority of respondents (55%) believe that in the field of maternity, parenthood and childhood protection, and in the field of child homelessness overcoming. A third of the respondents (33%) believe that their activities should be aimed primarily at health protection and the development of medicine, almost a quarter of respondents (23%) indicated the protection of socially vulnerable groups of the population as a priority task of the socially oriented economic sector (See Figure 5).



Figure 5. Areas of activity of socially oriented organizations

физкультура и спорт - physical education and sports; благоустройство жилья, дворов, улиц; в том числе осуществление реформы ЖКХ - improvement of

housing, courtyards, streets; including the implementation of the reform of housing and communal services; образование (среднее, высшее, непрерывное) и повышение квалификации - education (secondary, higher, continuous) and advanced training; помощь социально уязвимым слоям населения (инвалиды, престарелые, малоимущие, и т.п.), включая проведение пенсионной реформы - assistance to socially vulnerable segments of the population (disabled, elderly, poor, etc.), including the implementation of pension reform; охрана здоровья и медицина - health care and medicine; охрана материнства, родительства и детства, преодоление детской беспризорности - protection of motherhood, parenthood and childhood, overcoming child homelessness

We supplemented the results of the questionnaire survey with the data from expert interviews with the representatives of socially-oriented organizations, the representatives of government structures related to their activities. Based on the analysis of the expert community opinions, we concluded that the Republic of Tatarstan pays special attention to the development of the third sector of the economy (Felício et al., 2013; Algharabat et al., 2018). There is an increase in investments, the authorities have an understanding of the need to develop this sector in the region. At the same time, problem areas were identified in the development of social entrepreneurship and socially oriented non-profit organizations. Among the problems raised, the following are worth highlighting:

- Excessive bureaucracy of the mechanism for obtaining grants, financial and informational support;
- The problem of social business interaction with the representatives of power structures;
- Insufficient information coverage of social entrepreneurship and socially oriented non-profit organization activities;
- Imperfection of the legal framework for the development of social entrepreneurship.

Conclusion

It should be noted that nowadays there is no generally accepted interpretation of "social entrepreneurship" concept and clearly defined boundaries of its definition. The consequence of this is the use of this term in completely different meanings, and two extremes are noticeable: on the one hand, it is commercial activity aimed at making a profit and, on the other hand, it is charity for gratuitous assistance to the population (Kumar & Malegeant, 2006; Suratao et al., 2021). But on the whole, the ideas about social entrepreneurship have a neutral or positive connotation in the minds of the respondents we surveyed. It can also be concluded that information coverage of social entrepreneurship activities is still insufficient, which becomes the problem of citizens' lack of knowledge about real practices and work experience of socially oriented non-profit organizations and social business, the range of social services they provide. Assessing the effectiveness of non-profit organizations and social business activities in social problem solutions within the Republic of Tatarstan, the respondents believe that this process is proceeding slowly in general and requires active support from the authorities. Many believe that the transition of social services from the public sector to the commercial sector will improve the quality of these services.

Summary

The results of our sociological research demonstrate the need for further development of social entrepreneurship in the region, for the development and application of additional targeted programs, the introduction of targeted benefits, support measures, not only financial, but also informational ones. These initiatives will support those who are already working in the field of social business and give incentives to those who are just planning to engage in social entrepreneurship. In modern society, social entrepreneurship can become a national idea, construct new views of Russian entrepreneurs, contribute to social problem solution, and can also make a significant contribution to the economy development.

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