



Assessment of State Services Quality and Availability in the Socio-cultural Sphere

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ABSTRACT

The relevance of the presented research is caused by distribution of independent tools to assess public administration of the socio-cultural sphere by public nongovernmental organizations and scientific institutes. The objective of the paper is to develop a technique to assess quality and availability of state services in the socio-cultural sphere as components of public administration. An institutional approach has become a leading one; it allows to consider state services quality and availability assessment in the socio-cultural sphere as a complex indicator of the content quality of a resulting effect and quality of services obtained; it is also connected with the comfort of service rendering and their availability for consumers. The elaborated technique of state services quality and availability assessment in the socio-cultural sphere includes the following criteria: The level of state services quality; the level of state services availability; the level of trust that consumers have in service providers. The technique is directed to identify effective measures to provide consumers with available and high-quality state services in the socio-cultural sphere rendered by state bodies and their departments according to the results of a calendar year.

Keywords: Evaluation of Public Administration, Trust of Consumers in Service Providers, Level of State Services Quality, Level of State Services Availability, Socio-cultural Sphere

JEL Classifications: P35, Z13, Z18

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Research Relevance

The sphere of socio-cultural services is one of targets guides for balanced socio-economic development in the regions aimed to reduce the level of interregional differentiation of living standards. Matters concerning the selection of priorities and instruments of public administration development in the socio-cultural sphere at different stages of national economies development are a subject of discussions, both at theoretical and practical levels in most countries of the world. It is caused by dialectic interrelation of state services development in the socio-cultural sphere and increasing interregional economic

differentiation (Aleskerov et al., 2006). It is found out that, on the one hand, development of state services in the socio-cultural sphere is an indicator of efficiency in economy, strategy and tactics of institutional transformations, social and economic policy of any state (Pugacheva, 2009). On the other hand, development of state services in the socio-cultural sphere has considerable impact on a structure and heterogeneity of economic space, causes interregional differentiation in a socio-economic environment and quality of life (Lunev et al., 2014b). Therefore the assessment of state services quality and availability in the socio-cultural sphere can be considered as a component of an integrated indicator reflecting the quality of public administration (Ponomareva and Supryagin, 2005). That makes the outspread of independent tools

of public administration assessment in the socio-cultural sphere by public nongovernmental organizations and scientific institutes a live issue (Lunev and Pugacheva, 2013).

1.2. Features of State Services Quality and Availability Assessment in the Socio-cultural Sphere

It is specified that a feature of state services quality and availability assessment in the socio-cultural sphere is determined by the process of their rendering (Lunev et al., 2014a). The process is a set of interconnected or interacting kinds of activity transforming inputs and outputs. Process inputs are usually other processes' outputs. Therefore, the process is characterized by the following attributes: Aim availability; performance of actions with the use of different resources by groups of people; performers' responsibility; result. An organization that provides services plans the process and realizes it in operated conditions to add value. Thus, state services rendering in the socio-cultural sphere represents an administrative managerial process. State services quality and availability assessment in the socio-cultural sphere can be considered as a strategic instrument to improve the quality of public administration (Zonov and Starikov, 2005).

1.3. The Concept of State Services Quality and Availability Assessment in the Socio-cultural Sphere

It is found out that in America and Europe state services quality and availability assessment is considered within theory and practice of public administration. In the concept of the New Public Management which is based on successful management technologies used in business environment for the system of public management bodies orientation of authorities' activity to satisfy consumers' inquiries acts as a basic value. In this regard it is possible to speak about the change of public administration paradigm and transition from the idea "citizens for the state and the state for functions performance" to the task "the state for citizens" (Kettl, 2012). The quality of public administration is defined by an integrated indicator Governance Research Indicator Country Snapshot (GRICS) proposed by the World Bank. Today GRICS has become a widespread international technique to evaluate the quality of public administration. However, in our opinion, this integrated indicator does not estimate the quality of public administration but it evaluates processes of political administration in the country.

It is specified that state services quality and availability assessment in the socio-cultural sphere in Russia is considered as a component of public administration and is defined on the basis of: (1) Administrative regulations (establishing the sequence of administrative processes and procedures for their rendering, and fixing requirements to organizations that render them), and (2) standard (including indicators of service results, rules of implementation, characteristic of administrative processes and procedures to render them). The analysis of Russian experience concerning state services quality and availability assessment showed that the procedure is directed toward the development and introduction of services standards, administrative regulations to execute state functions and administrative regulations to provide state services; introduction of mechanisms to counteract corruption, to increase the efficiency of interaction with a civil

society and transparency of activity; decrease in administrative barriers; improvement of state services quality and availability; creation of a monitoring system. At the same time, it is ascertained that administrative regulations and state service standard are independent documents accepted by different governing bodies though they are dialectically interconnected. Thereof, there are sometimes contradictions between them.

Insufficient attention is given to methods of measurement in all available concepts of state services quality and availability assessment in the socio-cultural sphere. This can be explained by difficulties of formalization, generalization and analysis of assessment criteria (Protsenko, 2012). The goal of the paper is to develop a technique to assess state services quality and availability in the socio-cultural sphere on the basis of the following criteria: The level of state services quality; the level of state services availability; the level of consumers' trust in service providers.

1.4. The Essence of State Services Quality and Availability in the Socio-cultural Sphere

It is defined that state service quality is completeness and timeliness of service rendering according to applicable regulatory and legal documents.

It is established that state service availability is connected with comfort of its receiving, openness and transparency of administrative procedures execution.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Methodological Approaches to the Research

The leading approach is an institutional one; it considers state services quality and availability assessment in the socio-cultural sphere as a complex indicator of content quality of resulting effect and quality of obtained services associated with comfort of rendering and availability for the consumer.

2.2. Research Methods

In the course of the research the following methods were used: Analysis of normative documents, content analysis, foresight, systematization and generalization of facts and concepts, modeling, expert evaluation method.

2.3. Research Results Approbation

Research results approbation was carried out in social organizations and cultural establishments of the Republic of Tatarstan.

2.4. Investigation Stages

The research was conducted in three stages:

- During the first stage, the current state of the studied problem in economic theory and practice was analyzed.
- During the second stage, the technique of state services quality and availability assessment was developed and introduced.
- During the third stage, systematization, understanding and generalization of research results took place; theoretical conclusions were specified; processing and registration of obtained research results were implemented.

3. RESULTS

The development of a technique to assess state services quality and availability on the basis of the following criteria has become the main result of the research:

1. The level of state services quality characterized by timeliness and efficiency of providing service; compliance with service standard, administrative regulations and inquiries of service consumers.
2. The level of state services availability that considers comfort of expectation and receiving services; simplicity and rationality; sociability and efficiency; openness and transparency.
3. The level of consumers' trust in service providers.

The assessment of state services quality and availability is made according to the size of a complex indicator (Q): $Q = Q1 + Q2 + Q3$ which Q is calculated in scores proceeding from criteria Q1 (the level of state services quality), Q2 (availability of state services quality), Q3 (consumers' trust in service providers).

3.1. The Level of State Services Quality (Q1)

The level of state services quality is defined on the basis of the sum of indicators $Q1 = Q1.1 + Q1.2 + Q1.3 + Q1.4$, where:

Q1.1: A share of cases of services rendered in due time from the moment of documents submission.

Q1.2: A share of consumers expecting a specific service in a queue for no more than 40 min.

Q1.3: A share of consumers satisfied with the quality of specific service rendering.

Q1.4: A share of cases of correctly processed documents.

The way of calculation:

$$Q1.1 = \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{S_{rendering.ij}}{k_j}$$

Where $s_{render.ij}$ - cases of rendering *i-service of a j-type* in due time. k_j - number of services which took part in the assessment based on this indicator.

The way of calculation:

$$Q1.2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{P_{expect..ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{expect.ij}$ - the number of consumers of *i-service of a j-type* who obtained it no later than 40 min. n_j - the number of consumers of *j-type* services.

The way of calculation:

$$Q1.3 = \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{P_{quality.ij}}{k_j}$$

Where $p_{quality.ij}$ - the number of consumers of *i-service of a j-type* satisfied with the quality of a process.

k_j - the number of rendered *j-type* services.

The way of calculation:

$$Q1.4 = \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{S_{correct.ij}}{k_j}$$

Where $s_{correct.ij}$ - cases of providing correctly issued *i-service of a j-type*.

k_j - the number of *j-type* services which took part in the assessment based on this indicator.

Proceeding from obtained values, indicators Q1.1, Q1.2, Q1.3, Q1.4 are scored as follows: A share of cases that makes more than 50% - 5 scores, a share of cases from 20% to 50% - 3 scores, a share of cases <20% - 2 scores. Obtained scores are summarized $Q1.1 + Q1.2 + Q1.3 + Q1.4$ and we receive the value of Q1 criterion.

3.2. The Level of State Services Quality Availability (Q2)

The level of state services quality is defined on the basis of the sum of indicators $Q2 = 2.1 + Q2.2 + Q2.3 + Q2.4 + Q2.5 + Q2.6 + Q2.7 + Q2.8 + Q2.9 + Q2.10 + Q2.11 + Q2.12 + Q2.13 + Q2.14 + Q2.15 + Q2.16 + Q2.17$, where:

Q2.1 - A share of consumers satisfied with the equipment of a place where a specific service is expected.

Q2.2 - A share of consumers satisfied with sanitary and hygienic conditions of the room where the service is rendered.

Q2.3 - A share of consumers satisfied with the esthetic decoration of the room where the service is rendered.

Q2.4 - A share of consumers satisfied with a specific service waiting time.

Q2.5 - A share of consumers satisfied with the possibility to obtain a specific service remotely.

Q2.6 - A share of consumers satisfied with the mode of "one window".

Q2.7 - A share of consumers satisfied with the price of a specific service.

Q2.8 - A share of consumers satisfied with transport and convenient location of the service provider.

Q2.9 - A share of consumers satisfied with physical availability.

Q2.10 - A share of reasonable complaints to the total of served consumers.

Q2.11 - A share of reasonable complaints considered and settled in specified periods.

Q2.12 - A share of consumers satisfied with the existing appeal order.

Q2.13 - A share of consumers satisfied with appeal terms.

Q2.14 - A share of consumers satisfied with politeness of personnel.

Q2.15 - A share of consumers satisfied with the quality of information on services provided.

Q2.16 - A share of cases when documents are correctly completed and submitted at the first attempt.

Q2.17 - A share of services the information on which is available on the Internet.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.1 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{P_{techn.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{techn.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with the equipment of a place where a specific service is expected; n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{P_{sanit.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{sanit.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with sanitary and hygienic conditions of the room where the service is rendered; n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.3 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{P_{esth.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{esth.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with the esthetic decoration of the room where the service is rendered; n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.4 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{P_{rwait.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{wait.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with a specific service waiting time. n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.5 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{P_{dist.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{dist.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with the possibility to obtain a specific service remotely. n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.6 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{P_{mode.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{mode.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with the mode of "one window." n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.7 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{P_{price.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{price.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with the price of a specific service. n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.8 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{P_{transp.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{transp.ij}$ the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with transport and convenient location of the service provider. n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.9 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{P_{phys.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{phys.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with physical availability. n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.10 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{g_{reason.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $g_{reason.ij}$ - the number of reasonable complaints about i -service of a j -type.

n_j - total number of serviced consumers according to j -type service.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.11 = \sum_{i=1}^r \frac{g_{settled.ij}}{r_j}$$

Where $p_{settled.ij}$ - the number of reasonable complaints of i -service of a j -type settled in due time.

r_j - the number of received complaints about j -type service.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.12 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{p_{appeal.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{appeal.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with the existing appeal order.

n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.13 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{p_{terms.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{terms.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with appeal terms.

n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation of:

$$Q2.14 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{p_{polit.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{polit.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with the politeness of personnel.

n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.15 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{p_{inform.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{inform.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type satisfied with the quality of information on services provided.

n_j - the number of j -type service consumers.

The way of calculation of:

$$Q2.16 = \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{S_{correct.ijcorrect.ij}}{k_j}$$

Where $s_{correct.ij}$ - cases when documents are correctly completed and submitted at the first attempt.

k_j - the number of j -type services that took part in the assessment based on this indicator.

The way of calculation:

$$Q2.17 = \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{U_{internet.ijinternet.ij}}{k_j}$$

Where $U_{internet.ij}$ - i -service of a j -type the information on which is available on the Internet.

k_j - the number of j -type services that took part in the assessment according to the indicator.

Proceeding from values obtained, indicators Q2.1, Q2.2, Q2.3, Q2.4, Q2.5, Q2.6, Q2.7, Q2.8, Q2.9, Q2.11, Q2.12, Q2.14, Q2.16 are scored as follows: A share of consumers that makes more than 50% - 3 scores, a share of consumers from 20% to 50% - 2 scores, a share of consumers <20% - 1 score.

Indicators Q2.10 are scored as follows: The relation of more than 0.5 - 1 score, the relation from 0.2 to 0.5 - 2 scores, the relation <0.2 - 3 scores.

Indicators Q2.13, Q2.15, Q2.17 are scored as follows: A share of consumers that makes more than 50% - 6 scores, a share of consumers from 20% to 50% - 3 scores, a share of consumers <20% - 1 score.

The obtained scores are summarized and we get the value of Q2 criterion:

$$Q2.1+Q2.2+Q2.3+Q2.4+Q2.5+Q2.6+Q2.7+Q2.8+Q2.9+Q2.10+Q2.11+Q2.12+Q2.13+Q2.14+Q2.15+Q2.16+Q2.17$$

3.3. The Level of Consumers' Trust in Service Providers (Q3)

The level of consumers' trust in service providers is defined on the basis of the sum of indicators Q3 = by Q3.1+Q3.2, where

Q3.1 - a share of consumers that trust in service providers providing services in the centers of collective use, it is defined quarterly, at a survey of no <1% of the total number of specific service consumers.

Q3.2 - a share of consumers who trust in service providers providing services through Internet resources of the organization, it is defined quarterly, at a survey of no <1% of the total number of specific service consumers.

The way of calculation:

$$Q3.1 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{p_{trust prov.ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{trust prov.ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type who trust in service providers providing services in the centers of collective use.

n_j - the total number of interviewed consumers (not <1% of the total number of those who received a specific service) of a j -type service.

The way of calculation:

$$Q3.2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{P_{\text{trust int. } ij}}{n_j}$$

Where $p_{\text{trust int. } ij}$ - the number of consumers of i -service of a j -type who trust in service providers providing services through Internet resources of the organization.

n_j - the total number of interviewed consumers (not <1% of the total number of those who received a specific service) of a j -type service.

Proceeding from values obtained, indicators Q3.1 and Q3.2 are scored as follows: The relation more than 0.5 - 10 scores, the relation from 0.2 to 0.5 - 5 scores, the relation <0.2 - 2 scores. Obtained scores are summarized Q3.1+Q3.2 and we receive the value of Q3 criterion.

4. DISCUSSION

The works of Aleskerov et al. (2006), Kettl (2012), Protsenko (2012), Ponomareva, Supryagina (Ponomareva and Supryagin, 2005) have an important theoretical and practical value for research in the field of public administration and monitoring of public services. The research of Zonova and Starikov (2005) is of a certain interest; it presents a technique aimed to assess the level of educational services and re-engineering of educational process with the use of a minimax criterion, calculation of discrepancy or mismatch (coefficient) of a higher education institution estimation of its educational service quality and the way a target market in the person of employers and listeners takes it.

However, the analysis of scientific papers showed that the issue of state services quality and availability assessment in the socio-cultural sphere has a debatable character. In the literature the issue of a technique aimed to assess state services quality and availability has not yet been resolved.

5. CONCLUSION

It is established that the developed technique is directed to identify effective measures to provide consumers with available and high-quality state services in the socio-cultural sphere provided by

bodies of public administration and their departments according to the results of a calendar year. The proposed technique estimates the current state of state services quality and availability level; it also forecasts their state for the future to increase service provider activity.

Materials from the article can be useful for experts of the socio-cultural sphere management and heads of social organizations and cultural establishments.

A number of scientific problems and prospective directions can be highlighted with obtained research results taken into account: Generalization of foreign and Russian experience to assess state services quality and availability in the socio-cultural sphere; development of a technique to assess quality and availability of municipal services in the socio-cultural sphere.

The efficiency of state services quality and availability assessment in the socio-cultural sphere will increase provided it is included into the set of integrated indicators reflecting the quality of public management.

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