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As a manuscript

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MAKING MANAGEMENT DECISIONS BY GOVERNMENT BODIES IN RESPONSE TO INACCURATE SOCIAL INFORMATION
(using the example of the central executive bodies of state power in the Moscow Region)

5.4.7 Sociology of Management

Abstract of the Dissertation Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Candidate of Sociological Sciences

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The relevance of the research topic is determined by:

– the growing role of information in social management processes amid the digitalization of society, the expansion of information flows, and the increasing dependence of the quality of managerial decisions on the reliability, completeness, and timeliness of incoming information;

– the increasing impact of unreliable social information on public consciousness and social behavior, and the emergence of new risks to public trust, socio-political stability, and the effectiveness of interaction between the state and society;

– the insufficient development of theoretical and methodological approaches to managerial decision-making under conditions of information uncertainty, taking into account the specific nature of unreliable social information, the mechanisms through which it affects management actors, and the possible social consequences of decisions made;

– the practical need to develop scientifically grounded mechanisms and algorithms for managerial decision-making that ensure the timely detection and assessment of unreliable information, minimize the associated management risks, improve the effectiveness of public administration, and strengthen citizens' trust in government institutions.

The main problem addressed by the research is associated with a social contradiction between the need of managerial decision-makers (public authorities) for sufficient and reliable information and their inability to fully meet this need amid the growing flow of incoming unreliable social information. Consequently, the question arises as to the effectiveness of managerial decision-making and the identification of methodological approaches to the actions of management actors (public administration bodies) when unreliable information is received. This makes it relevant to develop an algorithm for managerial decision-making in the context of receiving a significant amount of unreliable social information, in order to reduce undesirable effects resulting from misinterpretation or deliberate distortion.

The working hypothesis of the research is that the receipt of unreliable information changes the decision-making environment by increasing its uncertainty; changes the priorities of the stages of managerial decision-making by enhancing the importance of the first stage (analysis and selection); and necessitates the use of collective heuristic decision-making methods and decision modeling.

The object of the dissertation research is social information as an inherent component of public administration.

The subject of the dissertation research is the process of managerial decision-making upon receipt of unreliable social information.

The aim of the dissertation research is to identify the specific features of managerial decision-making and determine the most effective sociological methods and modeling methods used by public administration bodies in the process of managerial decision-making upon receipt of unreliable social information.

Achievement of this aim involved formulating and addressing the following objectives:

– to analyze scientific approaches to the study of social information;

– to identify the theoretical and methodological foundations for studying managerial decisions made upon receipt of unreliable information;

– to characterize the problem of unreliable social information in the context of social management;

– to identify the impact of unreliable information on the decision-making environment at the level of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation;

– to identify the characteristic features of the various stages of managerial decision-making in order to detect unreliable information;

– to determine the specifics and potential of applying sociological methods and modeling methods in the process of managerial decision-making upon receipt of unreliable social information.

Theoretical and methodological foundations of the dissertation research.

The study is based on the following approaches:

– the systems approach, which makes it possible to develop a comprehensive theoretical understanding of the objective processes involved in the development of social information, taking into account various factors (economic, cultural, and political), as well as the system of managerial decision-making upon receipt of unreliable information in light of the relevant conditions and circumstances; it also makes it possible to identify two groups of factors contributing to the formation of unreliable information (socio-cognitive and socio-affective);

– the institutional approach, on the basis of which the process of managerial decision-making by public administration bodies—as state institutions—is examined in relation to social information and depending on the level at which the decision is made;

– the historical-genetic approach, which made it possible to trace the formation and development of the concept of "social information" in the context of societal evolution and the emergence of the information society.

The research employed both general scientific methods and methods specific to sociological research. The method of critical analysis was used to study existing fundamental and applied research by Russian and foreign scholars, as well as social information received by public authorities. The classification method made it possible to distinguish several types of information and identify five types of unreliable information. The modeling method made it possible to forecast and present a model of managerial decision-making upon receipt of unreliable social information, and also to propose a matrix for assessing the extent to which information deviates from reliability criteria. The expert survey, conducted in the form of a structured interview, made it possible to obtain comparable, standardized expert assessments reflecting the practice of managerial decision-making under conditions involving the receipt of unreliable social information, as well as enabling their quantitative and qualitative processing. The structured interviews were conducted with heads of departments of a central executive authority of the Moscow Region, which includes the Ministry of Information and Youth Policy of

the Moscow Region, the Ministry of Territorial Policy of the Moscow Region, and the Main Directorate for Regional Security of the Moscow Region, who make managerial decisions, as well as with employees working with social information, by means of a questionnaire survey.

The empirical basis of the dissertation research comprises three complementary data blocks, each of which serves an independent analytical function.

1) Materials from public authorities, including decisions, directives, and other official documents accompanying the managerial decision-making process. This body of sources is used to reconstruct the formalized logic of management responses, identify the sequence of decision-making stages, and analyze institutionally established procedures for working with social information. Analysis of these materials makes it possible to identify discrepancies between declared and actual management practices.

2) Regulatory legal acts and other official documents of the Russian Federation governing relations in the information sphere. Their analysis is aimed at identifying the regulatory framework within which managerial decisions are made upon receipt of unreliable information, as well as determining the degree to which requirements for the verification, assessment, and use of social information are formalized. This block of empirical data links the research to the theoretical and methodological foundations of social management and makes it possible to correlate management practices with the regulatory context.

3) Materials from the author's own research—an expert survey conducted using the method of standardized (formalized) interviews (developed on the basis of the approaches of M.K. Gorshkov, F.E. Sheregi, and V.A. Yadov). Two coordinated standardized interview forms were developed for this purpose: one for managers making managerial decisions and the other for employees working with social and analytical information. The expert nature of the survey was determined by the respondents' professional competence and direct involvement in the processes under study, while interview standardization ensured the comparability of

responses, their coding, and subsequent formalized quantitative processing. A total of 133 experts took part in the survey. Fieldwork dates: Stage 1—April–May 2022; Stage 2—August 2024. A description of the survey methodology and sample is provided in Appendix 1, the standardized interview form in Appendix 1a, and the survey results in Appendix 2.

The scientific novelty of the research is as follows:

– the concepts of "social information" and "unreliable social information" have been refined from the perspective of the sociology of management, taking into account the specific ways in which they have been interpreted at different stages of societal development and the development of scientific knowledge;

– five types of unreliable information capable of influencing managerial decisions have been identified;

– a criteria-based matrix for assessing information unreliability has been proposed, taking into account deviations from reliability (truthfulness) and assessment against seven reliability criteria;

– the specific features of the algorithm for managerial decision-making upon receipt of unreliable information at the level of a constituent entity of the Russian Federation have been identified;

– it has been established that the use of heuristic and expert methods at various stages of managerial decision-making is appropriate for improving the forecasting and modeling of managerial decision-making, taking into account the possibility of receiving unreliable information.

Theses Submitted for Defense

1. From the perspective of the sociology of management, social information is data and knowledge transmitted by an individual or collective actor for the purposes of social interaction and changing the surrounding reality by prompting action, which in turn leads to the emergence of new social information. In this regard, reliable social information acquires particular importance in management. To assess the extent to which social information deviates from the

criteria of its reliability (truthfulness), it is proposed to use the criteria-based matrix developed in the dissertation. The assessment criteria are: the significance of the information, source reliability, corroboration by other sources, logical consistency, completeness, timeliness, and sufficiency of information.

2. Unreliable social information is information about events, facts, processes, and phenomena in the social sphere that does not correspond to reality (truth), contains false, distorted, fabricated, or incomplete data, and may be disseminated either unintentionally (through negligence) or deliberately (in the form of disinformation), thereby creating a distorted perception of reality among management actors and objects. The risks associated with unreliable information are intensified by the growing importance of social media, artificial intelligence, and algorithms in the formation of information bubbles, as well as by conditions in which information technologies contribute to the scaling up of problems and the creation of new forms of disinformation.

3. In managerial decision-making, a cyclical relationship between social information and management becomes apparent: social information is simultaneously the initial basis for decisions and the result of management activities, since managerial decisions themselves become part of new social information. Contemporary challenges to decision-making include: increasing volumes of information; increasingly complex filtering, processing, and reliability assessment; the use of modern technologies (digitalization, artificial intelligence, and automated systems); and the growing importance of intelligent analysis and big data processing systems. Particularly dangerous is unreliable information that contributes to inciting ethnic hatred, terrorist threats, and political destabilization.

4. The receipt of unreliable social information complicates the managerial decision-making process, increases the role and importance of the analytical stage of decision-making, and requires the use of special methods for its processing and analysis. Three main groups of methods are used: formal methods (mathematical, probabilistic, and statistical); heuristic methods (analogies, simulations, modeling, and brainstorming); and expert methods (surveys, scenario

methods, the Delphi method, etc.). Formal methods are sufficient for standard and well-structured problems. When unreliable information is received, uncertainty increases and, consequently, the role of heuristic and expert methods (which are effective in solving ill-structured and complex problems) becomes more significant.

5. Among the tools for assessing and forecasting the consequences of choosing alternative decisions, the following models can be distinguished: flexible (adaptive, dynamic, logical, and statistical), multifactor (descriptive, economic, economic-mathematical, and cybernetic), and static (analog, simulation, and static) models. The most effective models when unreliable information is present are game theory models, simulation models, and linear programming models. The main difficulties of modeling under conditions of unreliable information include unknown initial data and information constraints, management actors' fear of making mistakes, a lack of competencies in applying models, and the high cost and resource intensity of modeling. To improve modeling effectiveness, the integration of the systems approach (feedback between the management subject and object), the institutional approach (consideration of social institutions and the structure of relations), and the network approach (involvement of society and stakeholders) is proposed. A four-stage decision-making modeling framework is proposed for practical use, making it possible to account for information unreliability, assess risks, determine the model composition, and verify its correspondence to reality.

Theoretical significance of the research. The research findings contribute to the development of the sociology of management, particularly the study of managerial decision-making under conditions in which the information received is unreliable. The dissertation findings can be used to improve the effectiveness of managerial decision-making and enhance information support technologies for the activities of public authorities. The dissertation materials may serve as a basis for further research into the specific nature of unreliable social information and managerial decisions.

Practical significance of the research. The proposals and recommendations

developed in the course of the research can be used by management bodies in managerial decision-making, in developing methods for assessing information reliability, and in technologies for working with society. Specific scientific and applied developments that contribute to transforming social technologies for managerial decision-making and information-handling algorithms in regional structures are of practical value. The findings may also be used in teaching the courses "General Sociology," "Sociology of Public Service," and "Sociology of Management," as well as in preparing textbooks and teaching materials on the study of management processes and the development of a secure information environment.

Approbation of the dissertation research findings. The research findings were presented at symposia, international and national scientific-practical conferences, and seminars: the symposium "Resilience and Stability of States in the Digital Age" (February 2022, Moscow, National Research Institute for Communications Development); the international scientific-practical conference "Current Trends in the Development of the Information Environment" (March 2021, Khimki, Moscow Region, Academy of Civil Protection of the Ministry of the Russian Federation for Civil Defence, Emergencies and Disaster Management named after Lieutenant General D.I. Mikhailik); the international conference session "Public Administration and the Development of Russia: Designing the Future" (May 2021, Moscow, Institute of Public Administration and Civil Service, RANEPA); the international conference session of the Institute of Public Administration and Civil Service, "Public Administration and the Development of Russia: Global Trends and National Prospects" (May 2022, Moscow, Institute of Public Administration and Civil Service, RANEPA); and the international scientific-practical conference "Russia and the World: Dialogues—2022" (April 2022, Moscow, National Research Institute for Communications Development).

The main findings and theses of the research are reflected in 11 publications with a total volume of 6.31 printed sheets, published in academic journals, including 6 publications in journals included in the list of peer-reviewed academic

publications recommended by the Higher Attestation Commission under the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation for publishing research submitted for the degree of Candidate of Sciences.

In publications recommended by the Higher Attestation Commission:

1. Simonov P.Yu. Foreign Agents as an Information Actor and Their Influence on the State's Information Environment // Mission of Confessions. No. 7. 2021. pp. 742–749 (0.56 printed sheets).

2. Simonov P.Yu. The Country's Information and Image Policy in the Cultural Paradigm // Communicology. No. 1. 2020. pp. 180–187 (0.56 printed sheets).

3. Simonov P.Yu. Relations between Communication Actors: The Degree of Trust in an Information Source // Communicology. No. 3. 2021. pp. 181–190 (0.56 printed sheets).

4. Simonov P.Yu. Theories of Social Stability // Communicology. No. 1. 2022. pp. 41–50 (0.53 printed sheets).

5. Murashko S.F., Simonov P.Yu. Information and Psychological Warfare in Contemporary Socio-Political Communication // The Power of History – The History of Power. No. 35. 2022. pp. 43–51 (0.53 printed sheets).

6. Komleva V.V., Simonov P.Yu. Unreliable Social Information: Forms of Dissemination in New Media // Communicology. Vol. 13, No. 1. 2025. pp. 85–96 (0.73 printed sheets).

In other academic publications:

7. Simonov P.Yu. Information Security in Contemporary Russia: Risk Management // Russia and the World: Dialogues—2022: Proceedings of the 6th International Scientific-Practical Conference. 2022. NIIRK Publishing House. pp. 86–92 (0.56 printed sheets).

8. Simonov P.Yu. Current Trends in the Development of the Information Environment // Contemporary Media Space and Information Activities of the EMERCOM of Russia: Proceedings of the 31st International Scientific-Practical Conference (Section No. 23). No. 1. 2021. pp. 5–9 (0.31 printed sheets).

9. Simonov P.Yu. Digital Specialists in Public Authorities: Goals, Objectives, and Specific Features // Public Administration and the Development of Russia: Designing the Future: Proceedings of the International Conference Session. 2022, Vol. 2. pp. 108–118 (0.87 printed sheets).

10. Simonov P.Yu. Relations between Communication Actors: The Degree of Trust in an Information Source // Communicology. 2021; 9(3):181–190 (0.6 printed sheets).

11. Simonov P.Yu. The Phenomenon of Fake News in Political Competition among Actors for Public Opinion // Scientific-Practical Conference "Social Policy in Russia: Specific Features at a New Stage of Development" (0.75 printed sheets).

The structure of the dissertation research is determined by its overall aim and objectives. The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters (each comprising two sections), a conclusion, a bibliography, and appendices.