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**IMAGE FORMATION OF THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS AUTHORITIES: A
SOCIO-TECHNOLOGICAL APPROACH**

An abstract for the dissertation
for the degree of candidate of sciences (sociology)

in specialty 5.4.7 Sociology of management

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Relevance of the topic of the thesis research.

At the moment, according to official statistics, there is a decrease in crime rates in Russian society, which, among other reasons, is due to the effective work of the internal affairs agencies.

Despite the overall reduction in crime and the strengthening of public order in Russia, it is more necessary now than ever to establish constructive interaction between internal affairs officers and the public, and to improve their public image.

Improving the image of the internal affairs bodies is an integral component of successful cooperation of the civilian population with these law enforcement agencies. Increasing citizens' trust in internal affairs bodies will contribute to improving their performance, reducing social tensions and crime rates.

Thus, the relevance of this study is driven by the need of:

- refining the theoretical and methodological principles of sociological analyzing the image as a sociological category, revealing the influence of social realities on the development of the image of the internal affairs bodies;
- validation of applying a socio-technological approach to the formation of the image of the internal affairs agencies;
- comprehensive analysis of the image of the police in the eyes of the public;
- identifying the main areas of improvement in social technologies for shaping a positive image of the internal affairs agencies.

In the above context, the sociological study by Yuliya Valerievna Kiryukhina is highly pressing.

The aim of the thesis research is to identify and substantiate the main directions of improving the social technologies for the formation of the image of the internal affairs bodies on the basis of a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Objectives of the thesis research are:

- to analyze the main theoretical approaches to the study of image as a sociological category;
- to identify the impact of social realities on the genesis and development of

the image of the police;

- to justify the application of a socio-technological approach to the study of the image of the internal affairs authorities;

- to give a comprehensive description of the formation of the image of the internal affairs authorities by the modern media;

- to analyze the image of the police and identify the factors influencing its formation;

- to identify the main areas for improving social technologies for shaping a positive image of the internal affairs agencies.

The object of the thesis research is the image of the internal affairs authorities.

The subject of the thesis research is social technologies of image formation of internal affairs bodies.

Scientific hypothesis of the thesis research.

The image of the police is an integral part of the successful interaction between the police and the public. Unfortunately, at the moment the image of the police is rather low in the minds of the population. A positive image will contribute to the effectiveness of interaction, increase public confidence in the staff, which will have a positive impact on the level of social order and security in turn. Thus, improving the image of the internal affairs authorities should be one of the priorities of modern social development. It is necessary to develop social technologies that would enhance the image of the internal affairs bodies, which would lead to the highest efficiency of their activities.

The theoretical and methodological basis of the thesis research.

The theoretical basis of the work consisted of the main concepts, conclusions and theories of domestic and foreign researchers who have studied image formation in general and image formation problems of internal affairs bodies in particular. The analysis of the investigated problems was carried out using universal methods (analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction), sociological (structural and functional methods, integration, etc.) methods applied in related

sciences: sociology of public opinion, social psychology, political sociology, image science, etc. In the process of analysis the following scientific approaches were used: comparative and historical, allowing to study the activities of internal affairs bodies as a social institution neo-institutional; allowing to identify the impact of social realities on the development of the image of internal affairs bodies; structural and functional, contributing to the study of the structure of internal affairs bodies as a hierarchical social organization, the activities of the agency officers in terms of the functions they perform; social modeling method, which opens the possibility to study the structure of internal affairs bodies as a hierarchical social organization. The integrated application of these methods allowed us to research the studied processes in detail, to identify existing contradictions, and to give a full characteristic of the image as a complex social phenomenon. In the process of empirical analysis, quantitative (population surveys, expert surveys of internal affairs officers, content analysis of television and social networks) and qualitative (focus groups with employees of the agency, in-depth expert interviews with representatives of the management staff) were used.

The results of the empirical sociological research were processed using the SPSS for Windows 29 package. The results were interpreted using linear frequency distributions, contingency tables and correlation analysis.

The empirical basis for the study.

1. Official, statistical data from regional authorities and territorial bodies of state statistics.
2. Results of all-Russian studies.
3. Research conducted with the direct involvement of the author.

The main scientific results obtained by the author and their novelty.

1. Based on a comprehensive analysis of sociological theories and concepts (systemic, structural and functional, neo-institutional, comparative and historical), the sociological interpretation of the concept of image is clarified, including objective (informational-practical) and subjective (evaluative) components.

2. The study of the genesis and development of the image of the internal affairs agencies has revealed interconnection between the dynamics of social realities and the image of MIA, which consists in the negative impact of socio-economic and socio-political crises on the image of the internal affairs bodies and its improvement when coming out of this state.

3. The expediency of applying a socio-technological approach to the formation of the image of the internal affairs bodies, ensuring the selection of relevant and adequate content for various target groups and audiences, is substantiated.

4. The social portrait of consumers of content related to the coverage of the activities of internal affairs bodies has been compiled and a set of measures (thematic films and videos, social advertising, PR companies) has been developed to form the image of the department in the media and expand the audience.

5. Based on integrative research methodology, an analysis of the image of the internal affairs bodies was conducted, and objective factors related to the activities of the internal affairs bodies and subjective factors related to the professional and personal qualities of employees that influence the image of the department have been identified.

6. The main directions for improving the social technologies for shaping a positive image of the internal affairs bodies (identification of target groups, attributes, integral characteristics, their consolidation) are defined and the sequence of application stages is substantiated.

The statements made for the defense.

1. In sociological interpretation of this category, image is understood as a certain judgment or opinion based on subjective and evaluative component and objective (informational and practical) component, created on the basis of an emotionally colored image formed in the minds of social actors interacting with each other about specific social and cultural phenomena, which have such characteristics as dynamic, energy, variability depending on circumstances, consumer needs, changes in group co-creation

The image of the internal affairs bodies in the dissertation research is understood as an emotionally colored and adaptable to circumstances opinion formed among the population on the basis of subjective assessments of the activities of the department (depending on the personal experience) and / or information obtained from various sources.

2. Socio-political and socio-economic crises caused by the cyclical development of civilization led to the state of social anomie (which, in particular, occurred in the period of the 1990s), aggravation of social contradictions, emergence of new criminal groups, increased deviant behavior practices, which had a negative impact on the efficiency of the internal affairs agencies and on the image of the agency. On the contrary, the measures of state regulation aimed at overcoming these destructive phenomena had a favorable effect on the image of the agency.

3. The allocation of components of the technology of forming a positive image of the internal affairs bodies allows us to algorithmize the process of image formation, i.e. to determine those main directions, which in combination can lead to the improvement of the image of the internal affairs bodies.

Segmentation – the identification of target groups of the population differentiated on the basis of their attitude to the internal affairs bodies and having different social attitudes and expectations.

Positioning – defining the attributes that will directly affect the image of the police in different segmented groups.

Designing – the formation of an integral characteristic including mythological level, virtual and stereotypical level and concrete level where the analysis and selection of certain archetypes, symbolic images suitable for the current situation, the development of desirable social actions of the agency's staff takes place.

Entrenchment – the final consolidation and fixation of the agency's image in the public's mind.

4. The following will have a positive effect on the formation of the image: creating TV shows, which would highlight heroic deeds, high professionalism, the latest techniques and technologies used by employees of the department; releasing social advertising and PR companies that popularize the activities of this law enforcement structure; broadcasting films, TV series and blockbusters, where the main characters - law enforcement officers - would not have deviant behavior.

In order to expand the audience of consumers of police-related content it is necessary to use actively information platforms such as video hosting sites and social networks; to increase the culture of public communication between the agency's staff and the public choosing such a range and format of issues to be discussed that will be of interest to both the media and the audience.

5. The main factors positively affecting the image of the internal affairs bodies directly related to their activities are: combating corruption; prevalence of preventive measures over repressive ones; improving the quality of staff selection; increasing penalties for administrative and disciplinary offences; increasing the professionalism of heads and staff qualifications.

The main factors negatively affecting the image of the internal affairs authorities directly related to their activities are: corruption and bribery; the use of official position for personal gain; patronage in matters of career promotion; arbitrariness; inappropriate actions; and untimely responses to citizens' appeals.

The main factors that have a positive impact on the image of the internal affairs agencies are related directly to the professional and personal qualities of the officers:

- legal awareness, strict observance of the law, professionalism, loyalty to duty, readiness to help at all times, competence;
- honesty, courage, patriotism, integrity, reliability, fairness, conscientiousness, politeness, stress resistance, discipline.

The main factors affecting the image of the internal affairs authorities negatively are related directly to the professional and personal qualities of employees:

- incompetence, low professionalism, low level of legal culture, bad faith in the performance of official duties;

- rudeness, callousness, excessive emotionality, conflictedness, poor communication skills, indifference.

6. The logical sequence of the application of social technologies for the formation of the image of internal affairs bodies includes four stages:

Segmentation – identification of the following population groups: officers directly from the agency, as well as from other law enforcement agencies; political leaders at various levels of government; citizens who are not directly related to the police and other security and law enforcement agencies; criminalized segments of the population.

Positioning – based on the set of universal attributes that are the main carriers of the image and are specialized for each segmented group, but reflect the goals of the organization as a whole.

Designing – the stage, where the image is formed through the combination of functional, contextual and comparative perspective.

- the functional perspective is determined by the specific activities of the internal affairs bodies (improving the system of personnel selection, tightening the fight against corruption, increasing wages, developing a system of incentives (orders, diplomas, medals), organizing training and carrying out activities to improve the professional skills of employees);

- the context perspective depends on the specific content of its implementation (leader, colleague, victim);

- the comparative perspective consists in a comparative analysis of the activities of the internal affairs bodies and close departmental structures in various spheres of public life (social, spiritual, etc.).

Entrenchment – the final most complex and multifunctional stage of the socio-technological approach to the formation of the image of the internal affairs bodies. At this stage the image of the department is consolidated in the minds of the population, loyalty to internal affairs officers is formed, which can become the

basis of cooperation between different segments of society and internal affairs bodies, popularizing their activities. Entrenchment is largely related to the management decision-making process.

Compliance of the thesis topic with the requirements of the VAK (State Commission for Academic Degrees and Titles) specialty passport.

The topic of the dissertation corresponds to specialty 5.4.7. Sociology of Management: Item 12. Social Technologies in The Management System.

The reliability of the results of the thesis research is ensured by: a deep detailed analysis of monographs, periodical publications, conference materials touching on the study of the activities of internal affairs bodies in general and the image in particular; a clear structured work, logical validity of theoretical, empirical and applied research results; the representativeness of sociological empirical research conducted, quantitative and qualitative perspective and adequacy of using of modern technologies for processing and analyzing the information obtained.

The theoretical significance of the research findings.

The scientific results of the thesis expand the basis for further theoretical and practical developments in the field of image research of internal affairs bodies. With their help, it is possible to improve theoretical approaches and models for the study of the essence and content of the image, the mechanisms of its formation in relation to a broader object of research - the image of the authorities.

Scientific and practical significance of the research results. The proposed results, which were obtained during the dissertation research, may be in demand in the activities of internal affairs bodies to build an effective model of interaction between this law enforcement structure and the population.



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