E-GOVERNMENT AS A TOOL FOR COMMUNICATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE: LEGAL ASPECTS

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The relevance of the topic is determined by the need to consider e-government not only as a tool for providing public services but also as a channel of communication with the population, especially young people.

Methods: The authors use methods of analysis and synthesis to summarize the experience of different countries, as well as statistical and comparative methods. The source analysis method is also used.

Results: It is determined that despite the established format of interaction, the "State – Electronic Government – Citizens" model takes a step towards the principles of information openness of state bodies. It will concentrate all information in one source, which is an advantage in terms of approaches to publicizing the activities of the state through independent websites or social network pages for individual bodies and departments at the federal and regional levels.

Conclusion: E-government promotes the development of democratic values, allows the building of a trusting attitude of citizens towards political and state institutions, and receives information in a way convenient for citizens. The new culture of interaction between the state and citizens, despite all the advantages, takes a long time to implement. First of all, it is worth focusing on youth, since young people have all the necessary competencies, and communication with young people will increase the level of trust in official information broadcast by the state.

Keywords: E-government. Communication channel. Interaction between the state and citizens (G2C). Public services portal. Youth.

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O GOVERNO ELETRÔNICO COMO FERRAMENTA DE COMUNICAÇÃO COM OS JOVENS: ASPECTOS LEGAIS

RESUMO

Objetivo: A relevância do tema é determinada pela necessidade de considerar o governo eletrônico não apenas como uma ferramenta de prestação de serviços públicos, mas também como um canal de comunicação com a população, especialmente os jovens.

Métodos: Os autores usam métodos de análise e síntese para resumir a experiência de diferentes países, bem como métodos estatísticos e comparativos. O método de análise de origem também é usado.

Resultados: Constata-se que apesar do formato de interação estabelecido, o modelo "Estado – Governo Eletrônico – Cidadãos" dá um passo em direção aos princípios de abertura informacional dos órgãos estatais. Ele concentrará todas as informações em uma única fonte, o que é uma vantagem em termos de abordagens para divulgar as atividades do estado por meio de sites independentes ou páginas de redes sociais para órgãos e departamentos individuais nos níveis federal e regional.

Conclusão: O governo eletrônico promove o desenvolvimento de valores democráticos, permite a construção de uma atitude de confiança dos cidadãos em relação às instituições políticas e estatais e recebe informações de maneira conveniente para os cidadãos. A nova cultura de interação entre Estado e cidadãos, apesar de todas as vantagens, leva muito tempo para ser implementada. Antes de tudo, vale a pena focar na juventude, pois os jovens possuem todas as competências necessárias, e a comunicação com os jovens aumentará o nível de confiança nas informações oficiais transmitidas pelo estado.

Palavras-chave: Governo eletrônico. Canal de comunicação. Interação entre o estado e os cidadãos (G2C). Portal de serviços públicos. Juventude.

EL GOBIERNO ELECTRÓNICO COMO HERRAMIENTA DE COMUNICACIÓN CON LOS JÓVENES: ASPECTOS LEGALES

RESUMEN

Objetivo: La relevancia del tema está determinada por la necesidad de considerar el gobierno electrónico no solo como una herramienta para la prestación de servicios públicos sino también como un canal de comunicación con la población, especialmente con los jóvenes.

Métodos: Los autores utilizan métodos de análisis y síntesis para resumir la experiencia de diferentes países, así como métodos estadísticos y comparativos. También se utiliza el método de análisis de fuentes.

Resultados: Se determina que a pesar del formato de interacción establecido, el modelo "Estado – Gobierno Electrónico – Ciudadanos" da un paso hacia los principios de apertura informativa de los órganos del Estado. Concentrará toda la información en una sola fuente, lo que es una ventaja en términos de enfoques para publicitar las actividades del estado a través de sitios web independientes o páginas de redes sociales para organismos y departamentos individuales a nivel federal y regional.

Conclusión: El gobierno electrónico promueve el desarrollo de valores democráticos, permite la construcción de una actitud de confianza de los ciudadanos hacia las instituciones políticas y estatales, y recibe información de manera conveniente para los ciudadanos. La nueva cultura de interacción entre el estado y los ciudadanos, a pesar de todas las ventajas, toma mucho tiempo para implementarse. En primer lugar, vale la pena centrarse en la juventud, ya que los jóvenes tienen todas las competencias necesarias y la comunicación con los jóvenes aumentará el nivel de confianza en la información oficial emitida por el estado.

Palabras clave: Gobierno electrónico. Canal de comunicación. Interacción entre el estado y los ciudadanos (G2C). Portal de servicios públicos. Jóvenes.

INTRODUCTION

The study of e-government has been conducted for a little over 40 years, which is a new area of scientific research. This affects the theoretical and methodological basis, in particular, the lack of a unified understanding of the essence of e-government and the definition of the phenomenon itself. Nevertheless, a large number of applied studies have been conducted aimed at solving the problems of the existing practice of implementing e-government. External factors, such as COVID-19 and an increase in the level of digital literacy, have accelerated the process of switching interaction with citizens into an online format.

It is necessary to study the history of e-government formation for a detailed analysis of the phenomenon (the development of the concept's theory, structure and functions of e-

government, the stages of the development of e-government in Russia) (Masuda, 1981), the current degree of public confidence in the information published in open sources (Social media and censorship: pros and cons, 2021) and to identify the achieved level of e-government development in Russia. It is also important to analyze the involvement of the youth in the communication process for the subsequent introduction of a new culture of interaction and information exchange between government agencies and citizens. Most of our sources are articles in various scientific publications, materials from specialized conferences, and, to a lesser extent, books, which fully reflects the bibliometric data obtained by Erzhenin (2018) in the course of studying scientific papers on e-government. This indicates the specifics of the development of the e-government phenomenon as a result of the desire of public authorities to obtain a tool to simplify current work processes, rather than build a new integrated system of public administration, which is also noted by Napitupulu and Yakub (2021). In addition, Erzhenin identifies the main fields in which e-government is considered. The leading positions among them are occupied by economics, law, politics, management, computer science, sociology, and medicine. Unfortunately, researchers do not pay worthy attention to the study of e-government as a direct channel of communication between the state and the population and the development of a model of "state journalism", bringing parliamentary journalism to a new level due to a new communication channel (Twizeyimana, Andersson, 2019).

METHODS

The methodological basis of this work consisted of existing works on the phenomenon of e-government and the concepts of its implementation, as well as trends in the consumption of information by young people in Russia and the world. The study focused on various sources of information, including works by the founders of the e-government concept and articles by modern researchers of e-government and G2C (Government-to-Citizen) communications. We also considered implemented practices of interaction between government agencies and the population in Russia and other countries.

Scientometric indicators should be noted as a specific aspect of our study of the theoretical base. Most of the works devoted to this problem were articles and materials for presentations at conferences. Thus, there is a lack of fundamental research and development of a methodology for the introduction of e-government into the work of the state as a channel of G2C communications (Yildiz, 2007).

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The analysis and synthesis methods allowed us to generalize the experience of Russia, Spain, Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico, look at emerging trends in Russia, and find patterns in the interaction of young people with communication channels. Using the systematic approach works by modern researchers were studied and many ideas were summarized, including the assessment of the likelihood and effectiveness of implementing the proposed changes in the practice of e-government in the Russian Federation. Comparative analysis was used in the work to highlight the features of media consumption among young people in Russia and abroad. Statistical methods made it possible to refer to the conducted studies and then compare the results in different countries. The content analysis of the Russian information field and the information published by state bodies allowed us to track the policy pursued in Russia regarding measures for the development of e-government and attracting more citizens to the active use of the e-government portal.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At present, e-government performs exclusively the functions of remote provision of public services. This association has become entrenched in the public consciousness, including among young people. Young people do not see e-government as a communication channel through which information about state activities is transmitted from the primary source. It is impossible to disagree with the fact that state bodies have built communication through the media, which can also serve as protection against reputational losses in case of discontent surrounding published information.

The history of the development of e-government in Russia shows that non-compliance with the general strategic concept leads to a product in the form of an electronic resource that quickly becomes obsolete and cannot be upgraded by expanding its functionality. As a result, the system has to be recreated technically from scratch, only partially using existing developments.

The article by Ermakova (2016) "Russian Society's Trust in the Media: Current State and Development Prospects" analyzes the period from 2001 to 2016 for changes in the level of citizens' trust in the media. The following patterns are established:

- Citizens tend to trust the media that spread positive information;
- Citizens begin to be more critical of any information during any events that negatively affect their standard of living;

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- The media are more willing to interact with government agencies in difficult periods for the country, which is due not only to economic but also ideological motives;

- The level of trust depends on competition among the media, the pluralism of publicly reported opinions, and the independence of editorial offices from political and economic structures.

Correlating the findings with our proposed concept of using e-government as a centralized platform for the dissemination of information, we can talk about the following advantages and recommendations:

- Published information will be positive, and negative aspects will be covered to a lesser extent. It is necessary to adhere to accuracy in the presentation of information;

- In case of crises, trust in the media should fall to a lesser extent, and the authority of the state will act as a deterrent. The media will quote materials from the e-government portal and disseminate the official position of the state;

- Difficult situations for the country will take place with less discontent on the part of citizens due to the support of the media and the stabilization of the information field due to the timely provision of information and the absence of information hunger;

- A simplified mechanism for providing official information to all media will allow them to refer to the source, and not to accredited media, allowing all market participants to act on an equal footing.

Modern technologies make it possible to realize the original concept of Masuda (1981). Society, represented primarily by young people, has sufficient competencies and skills to comfortably interact with e-government. The fact that discounts (30%) when paying fees through the Gosuslugi portal were canceled on January 1, 2023 can serve as an argument for a large number of citizens against the interaction with government agencies using e-government (Filatkina, Davletshina, 2019). However, users of the portal understand the advantages that it provides, so the cancellation of discounts will not affect the activity of registered users, and a different policy is now being applied to attract a young audience. This means that shortly, it will be possible to introduce e-government as a comprehensive system that will be integrated into the lives of citizens and will act as a single channel of communication with the state (The government plans to cancel the discount on the payment of duties on public services, 2022).

Social networks, which are one of the main communication channels, also play an important role in the life of modern youth. About 43% of all young people spend 4 to 8 hours on social networks every day (Popova, 2021). Due to the popularity of social networks among

the young population of the country, who rarely turn to classical communication channels, the Government of the Russian Federation has decided to the mandatory representation of all state structures on social networks. This Government decree serves as an addendum to Federal Law No. 270-FL (July 14, 2022) and entered into force on December 1, 2022. Even before the signing of the listed regulatory legal acts, a significant part of state bodies and services had their pages on social networks. However, the signing of such orders may indicate the formation of a common policy of maintaining social networks among all authorities, which will primarily have a positive impact on the accounts of regional and municipal authorities.

The article by Popova (2021) "Online political communication of youth from Russian megapolises" presents the results of an online survey of young people in large metropolitan areas of the country and an expert survey, the purpose of which was to identify the level of trust in online sources of information and the most popular social networks among Russian youth. First of all, we are interested in the level of trust, which, according to the results of the study, turned out to be very high. Also, every fourth respondent noted that they were interested in the political life of the country. However, a quarter of the group did not make any political decisions and was not interested in the activities of state bodies.

It was found that the trust in a particular communication channel, considered in the examples of social networks, grows over time and is inextricably linked with the formed habit of receiving information in a certain way, dividing the information received through communication channels or the platforms used. This depends on the experience of using the communication channel, which over time, according to the respondents, even allows for understanding the reliability of the transmitted information without checking in third-party sources, This, in our opinion, indicates an increase in confidence in the communication channel. The fact of rational use of time, which is highly valued by young people, has also been repeatedly noted (Social media and censorship: pros and cons, 2021).

These results should also be used in the process of popularizing e-government as a communication channel. At present, young people are actively registering on the Gosuslugi portal to receive the Pushkin Card, which allows them to purchase tickets to various cultural events for a certain budget annually. One of the conditions for obtaining it is registration on the Gosuslugi portal. This is a chance to acquaint a new audience with the capabilities of the platform and introduce functions for the regular publication of information about the activities of the state, ministries, and departments, which would allow building communication with at least 7 million new users (The Pushkin Card program brought together more than 7 million participants, 2022), introduce the rules of information literacy, and show a fully controlled

communication channel broadcasting information. It is necessary to reflect on the values of young people that were outlined earlier in the course of getting acquainted with the functionality of the portal and the ways of interacting with e-government.

It is necessary to carry out systematic work for several years to get the first results, during which the population will form the habit of periodically visiting the e-government portal. In addition, the portal will help to interact with mass media and act as a primary source, which will allow working not with a narrow circle of certified media, but with all actors of the information field of the state.

E-government does not replace other communication channels. The problems of the digital divide within one country, as well as the preferences in obtaining information by citizens, do not allow us to focus on one particular technology. Information should be broadcast through various communication channels, and the media ensure the right to receive information about the activities of public authorities. However, despite the preservation of the described approach, the development of new communication channels will allow interaction with young people more effectively, being in their information field more often. E-government can be a more effective communication channel in cases of receiving services or analyzing the principles of interaction with the state in specific cases (for example, registering personal business), while social networks are preferable for obtaining information quickly. It is preferable to use e-government to present the official position of the authorities for further referencing in the media. This will be a step forward in the development of e-democracy allowing for the building of trusting relationships between authorities and society.

We also want to note the trends in information consumption by young people. A joint article by Filatkina and Davletshina (2019) "Youth Media Consumption: A Theoretical Review of Research (a Case Study of Spain, Brazil, Argentina and Mexico)" was used as reference material. The following statements are made as the conclusions in the research:

- There was a huge increase in media consumption among children in Mexico in the period from 2014 to 2018. At the beginning of the period, only 27.8% of children aged 0-11 years had access to the Internet at least once a month; by the end of the period, this figure reached 50%.

- Teenagers have their system of media consumption, in which the main value is the promptness of obtaining information and the ease of finding the necessary information. It is precisely the new media formats that solve this issue, while the traditional media lose their potential audience.

• In general, teenagers are interested in receiving news information about the activities of the state, but they want to receive information instantly.

The conclusions can be transferred to the Russian youth, even though the media, including federal, adapt to the requirements of the modern audience and consider their wishes in terms of media consumption. State bodies and structures are still in the process of switching to new formats of interaction with the audience.

In our opinion, the path of e-government development outlined in the material is the most optimal, based on the existing experience and the level of information technology development. The development of journalism in this direction will allow one to comply with the principles of information openness of the authorities, and communication with modern youth will become more effective.

The synthesis of research conducted throughout the existence of the concept of e-government allowed us to systematize the accumulated knowledge and identify the optimal concept of e-government, which is a compromise between the original concept by Masuda and highly specialized systems by modern researchers.

Analysis of the features of media consumption by young people allowed us to understand some patterns in the use of new platforms:

• Working with young people is important starting from the first appeal to government agencies for the awareness of the younger generation about the e-government portal;

• To develop a certain habit of accessing the portal of public services, it is necessary to carry out systematic work for several years to obtain the first results; initially, the level of interest of young people in this kind of information is extremely low;

• The policy of maintaining social networks of all institutions and departments in the Russian Federation will make it possible to communicate with young people more often. However, the published content should either refer to materials from the e-government portal in about half of the cases or the publication should inform subscribers about new material;

• Attracting young people by obtaining the Pushkin Card allows for generating a large traffic of young people, with whom it is necessary to build the right interaction and demonstrate the advantages of the portal of public services.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis, several conclusions and recommendations were made that will allow for better building the interaction of state structures with young people and

beginning the process of expanding the functions of e-government. The need to develop communications with young people is manifested in state policy, which at present is expressed in the conduct of social networks by all state structures. This is a step towards further development of their communication channels, which will eliminate the shortcomings identified while working with social networks.

Young people are a difficult group to build communication with the state, but the laying of the foundation and rules of interaction with state bodies for young people will allow them to rebuild the work of interaction with citizens. In addition to the favorable consequences confirmed by many researchers from the point of view of economics and politics, further development of e-government will contribute to the development of journalism and building communications in general.

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