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Safety culture as a factor of national and governmental relations

Yuriy Dreval, Olena Sharovatova, Bohdan Tsymbal, Sergey Artemiev

National University of Civil Defence of Ukraine, Department of occupational safety and technogenic and ecological safety, 94 Chernyshevskaya str., Kharkiv, 61023 Ukraine

Abstract. It was considered the issue of importance of socio-cultural dynamics in the process of forming and realization of state policy for social and national safety. The basis for the analysis is the thesis about management measures. In the field of safety they are based on the principle of the priority of life and human health as the highest social value as well as the principle of systemic. In accordance with the main direction of safety ensuring are inseparable and harmoniously concerted integrity. In view of the above the thesis that culture is one of the important factors for ensuring safety at all levels of society is filled with concrete content. It was formulated and substantiated position that social, state-political, corporate and personal levels of social relations should be the main structural components of maintaining a proper state and development of a safety culture. Depending on these levels state policy should be specified and state-administrative activity should be adjusted in the field of social and national safety.

Formulation of the problem

Today the problem of the safe existence of society as a whole and of each person is of particular importance which is explained by the rapid exacerbation and multiplication of various threats and dangers. The relevance of this issue is substantiated by the complexity of the phenomenon of safety. It undergoes significant changes depending on the complex set of social and technogenic and environmental factors. According to the hierarchy of human needs, which was developed in the 1950's by A. H. Maslow, the needs of safety is the second in importance to physiological needs (thirst, hunger, sleep, etc.). Moreover ensuring safety in various spheres of public relations largely depends not only on public authorities and responsible persons but also on the person's abilities and skills. In this sense importance must be given away to a safety culture which in a general sense just means the ability and desire of the individual to be involved in maintaining a proper safety status.

Analysis of recent research and publications

Numerous writings on the issues outlined present a modern understanding of safety as a complex social and technogenic environmental phenomenon as well as attempts to link the notion of safety with management relations and with various spheres of life (see for example the articles of Z. Bauman, U. Beck, A. Wolfers, G. Hofstede, M. Douglas, N. Luhmann, R. McCray, M. Collins and R. Ulman). Also noteworthy the writings that substantiate new approaches to understanding national safety in today's challenging conditions. For example, A. Etzioni, analyzing the correlation between global and national

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safety has no reason to argue that not only nation-states but also a complex set of supranational and domestic states of social relations are valid subjects of such safety [1, p.193-194]. Moreover two safety paradigms are clearly summarized in a generalized way: (1) a structural-functional paradigm based on interpreting safety as a direct response of diverse public relations actors to threats and dangers; (2) a systemic paradigm based on understanding safety as an integral feature of the life of society and individual social groups.

Just in this sense is utmost importance that the culture of safety as a complex social and purely functional phenomenon. Increasingly not only theoretical generalizations but also the elucidation of the role which played by safety culture in various fields of production and in the sphere of social labor relations are becoming the subject of analysis. Particularly deserved attention are those studies in which the essence of this phenomenon is derived from general social development as well as based on the harmonious unity of the categories "culture" and "safety". Thus, in the 1990s, M. Douglas formulated and substantiated the thesis on the impact of cultural context on the assessment of risks in different spatial and temporal planes (insisting that the risk and danger are culturally conditioned concepts [2, p.3]).

Highlighting unresolved issues

At the same time one should also take into account the fact that the term "safety culture" is characterized not only by functional orientation and significant content filling but also by some substantive blur. Any activities of social and social safety and the participation of responsible persons in the provision of natural and technogenic safety and finally one of the important components of human safety in the various spheres of social and labor relations are also referred to in this term. The issue of the peculiarities of the formation of a safety culture depending on the levels and spheres of regulation has not become the subject of separate research yet. There is no a clear boundary line between a culture of safety and organizational measures that must ensure the proper protection of people at work and the safety of production processes. In fact, miscount or negligence in the production process are often explained by an exceptionally low level of safety culture.

The purpose (task) of writing

Taking into account the above arguments the task of the article defines the importance of socio-cultural dynamics in the process of formation and realization in various areas of social and national safety.

Discussion of results

Safety is a complex and multifunctional category that sometimes covers the conflicting interests and values of different social groups. At the same time it's an operational concept and a rather specific phenomenon that manifests itself in specific circumstances and conditions of life. The basic goal of safety in it's various manifestations is the person as well as finding the optimal balance between the interests of the individual, the state and society as a whole. Actually social groups and individuals should not only be the object of protection by the government but also by conscious and active participants of the safety process. Therefore it becomes important the cultural level of participants in social, group and intra-group relations (in the latter case first of all it's mean the culture of safety in the process of industrial relations implementation).

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The highest-level concept of "safety culture" was first formulated by the IAEA in 1986 in the process and as a result of the analysis of the causes of the Chernobyl accident. In particular, it was acknowledged that a lack of a safety culture was one of the main causes of this accident. Around the world this development is considered to be a kind of "birthday" of this direction in the sphere of safety research.

At that time the concept of "safety culture" was interpreted as a set of characteristics, features of organizations' activities and behavior of individuals. This set established that the problems of safety of the power plants, that having the highest priority, are given attention determined by their importance. It's that the interpretation of this term is given in the «General Provisions for the Safety of Nuclear Power Plants» which were approved by the State Nuclear Regulatory Administration of Ukraine on 09.12.1999 and which in 2007 became lapsed. For today the following interpretation is formally define in the «General Provisions of Nuclear Power Plants» on 19.11.2007 and differs from the previous one in only some nuances: « The safety culture is a set of rules and features of organizations and separate person which determine that the problems of safety of the power plants, that having the highest priority ,are given attention determined by their importance"[3].

It should be noted that the above interpretation in general terms correspond the definition in one of the basic publications of the International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group [4, p. 107]. This, in turn, demonstrates the harmonization of national legislation with international standards in the field of nuclear safety.

Moreover, at the level with the basic term "safety culture" are increasingly used other related concepts such as "life-safety culture ", "culture of safe behavior" and "culture of safety life". For example life-safety culture is defined as a certain level of development of a person and society, which characterized by the importance of the task of ensuring the safety of life in the system of personal and social values, the prevalence of stereotypes of safe behavior in everyday life and in the conditions of dangerous and emergency situations, the degree of protection against threats in all spheres of life.

However in our estimation the term "safety culture" is the basic and generic to other related terms. This is explained by the structural and semantic load (the basic ones are just "culture" and "safety", everything else is aimed at revealing purely functional aspects of safety) and the need for the correct translation from English the word "safety" (in this case should be used the term "Safety" which is precisely related to direct human activity [for more details see: 5, p. 61]).

State policy in the fields of national safety and defense according to Art. 3 of the Law of Ukraine "About National Safety of Ukraine", aimed at protecting: human and citizen - their life and dignity, constitutional rights and freedoms, safety conditions of life; society - its democratic values, prosperity and conditions for sustainable development; the state - its constitutional order, sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability; territory, the environment - from emergencies [6]. Therefore individuals, groups and responsible persons must have the appropriate level of awareness and general culture necessary to ensure full safety in all areas of social relations.

An in-depth understanding of safety culture as a complex social phenomenon firstly must depend on the basic characteristics of culture as a social phenomenon. It is well known that the scientific research of culture as a complex social and anthropological phenomenon has been going on for several decades. However even today there is no single and generally accepted interpretation of the phenomenon (according to recent estimates the number of definitions of culture is steadily approaching four hundred). For example in the 1970s A. Mole generally denied the possibility of providing a "closed" definition of culture, because it could only increase the already significant number of definitions [7, p. 35]). Modern scientist L. Anolly also clearly states: "If the concept of culture is the basic for human existence (without culture today the person cannot survive) and if culture gives

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shape and meaning to a person, wherever it may be, it is difficult to curb and enclose a single agreed theoretical network" [8, p.13].

Culture, according to the figurative expression of N. Smelser, is the basis of the building of social life [9, p. 48]. And, as A. Akhiezer rightly points out, "the more complex the human reality became, the more difficult it was to solve the problems in the sphere between culture and human relations, and the greater was the danger of losing one's ability to reproduce one's own life, the danger of death in the chaos of disorganization" [10, p.30].

It should take into account the main thesis that the culture is characterized by a complex and branched structure and that "in the open" contains only its purely formal features or artifacts. Just the latter aspects can be directly influenced by managerial influence, all the rest is a product of long-lasting social development and national traditions.

All of this have a paramount importance for the improvement of public policy and public administration in the field of providing a safety culture in various spheres of social relations. Moreover, management measures in the safety sphere should be based on the principle of priority of life and human health as the highest social value Also they based on the principle of systematicity, according to which the main directions of safety are inseparable and harmoniously concerted integrity.

In this sense, as already mentioned in our research, the first issue should be about ensuring by public authorities and the management a harmonious balance of interests of society, the state and individuals, as well as the effective protection of human and citizen's rights and freedoms. It is also important to concentrate the efforts of all public authorities and stakeholders on ensuring a decent intercultural and inter-denominational dialogue. Thereby providing the basis for a civilized resolution of diverse conflicts and conflict situations (as a matter of priority understanding the conflict as an integral feature of the organization, functional and dysfunctional conflicts, ability to find the compromise and the search for an effective solution from the conflict situation) [11, p. 35].

Public administration activities in the field of safety culture should also be carried out taking into account to which addressees or groups of the population the relevant information is sent. Traditionally three interconnected levels of safety are distinguished: the public safety, state safety and personal safety. Sometimes more specific levels are added to them such as regional safety, city social safety, rural social safety and more.

In our estimation the main levels of maintaining a good state and developing a culture of safety should include: (1) the public level, (2) the state-political level, (3) the group or corporate level and (4) the individual or personal level.

At the level of society a prominent place is given to the appropriate cultural level of the population and to the idea of safety as an integral feature of life, a broad outreach is carried out, as well as the development and promotion of various actions based on the importance of safety for the life of the whole society and a specific person. Also important is the issue of forming a sense of safety among the population as an integral part of social policy. The ontological basis for the development of a safety culture at this level is the awareness by all interested parties in true fact that socio-cultural dynamic is a product of long-lasting social development and only partly defies to managerial influence.

At the state-political level the legal background is provided for legal support of human safety as the highest social value. The same formed the legal basis for maintaining and developing the safety culture of all layers of the population. Public administration activities are also adjusted accordingly in particular financial and resource opportunities and provided for the development and revitalization of safe behavior of the population. As well as provided uninterrupted work of public administration bodies in the field of safety culture.

The collective or corporate level already covers a set of specific safety measures of safety in the organization and at each workplace. It is at this level is possible to fully develop a corporate (group) safety culture. It should also take into account the writers with

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relevant issues of G. Hofstede which are increasingly finding support in the scientific environment that culture in general has a pronounced group character. The author in particular claimed that culture (1) is an attribute not of an individual but of a group; (2) is not directly observed but manifested in behavior; (3) is shared by some and not all people [12, p. 15].

The individual or personal level is noted by the fact that worldview landmarks and safety ideology is a base of the individual values, which becomes the principal for maintaining and developing a safety culture at all levels of government and public administration.

Conclusions

The management process in the fields of social and national safety should be based on the identification of all factors that collectively influence on the protection of the society against diverse threats and dangers. And in this sense is important involvement in safety studios the socio-cultural phenomenon. The culture is the factor that forms the basis for managerial influences at all levels of safety and life of society.

Moreover the essence and orientation of management measures in the field of safety culture should be adjusted depending on the levels of social relations: at the level of society due attention is paid first to the general socio-cultural dynamics and educational work, at the state-political level is being formed a set of relevant regulatory and administrative measures, at the corporate level it is already possible to implementation of specific influences on the safety culture in the organization and at each workplace, at the individual level the safety ideology becomes one of the foundations for the civilized life of society.

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