



## Mechanisms for Improving Sociological Research on The Management and Development of Social Infrastructure in Small Towns

Kahramon Nozimjonovich Kayumov

Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences, National University of Uzbekistan,  
Tashkent City, Uzbekistan

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### **Abstract**

This article is written about the development of social infrastructure in small towns and villages, including the analysis of existing problems in social infrastructures, sociological methods of studying the development of social infrastructures are determined.

**Keywords:** *Sociological Research; Social Infrastructures; Small Towns*

### **Introduction**

The management of the social infrastructure of society is designed to ensure favorable living conditions for the population, the development of the economic, social and spiritual spheres. Its purpose is the fullest satisfaction of the needs of the population in social, housing, communal, cultural and other services.

In the last two decades, during the period of market reforms in society, radical changes have taken place in this area, which have had both positive and negative effects on the social infrastructure of cities, towns and villages.

The current state of social infrastructure in most regions and cities in the country can be characterized as unsatisfactory, since the potential for infrastructure development is being lost. In the past two decades, during the period of radical economic reforms, the social sphere has developed extremely unevenly. If in some areas of the social sphere there was a rapid growth (trade, fast food enterprises), then in others - stagnation or even degradation. For a long time, due to the lack of opportunities for proper maintenance and overhaul, many infrastructure facilities for various purposes were liquidated, or their target orientation changed, the wear of fixed assets increased, the volume and quality of services provided by them decreased.

## **Review**

One of the most important problems in the management of social infrastructure in small towns is the imbalance of infrastructure facilities, which is manifested in the fact that the social sphere and the corresponding social infrastructure facilities develop unevenly in terms of spatial distribution and the range of services provided to the population. This is especially acutely felt by residents of small towns and villages. As a result, the presence of social infrastructure facilities in a small town does not always guarantee a high level and quality of life of the population.

Uneven infrastructure development exists both between cities and within cities. In the modern period, this is manifested, in particular, in the hypertrophied development of shopping centers and entertainment institutions (giving quick profits) and the lack of preschool institutions, leisure centers and sports complexes, healthcare institutions, etc. In a particular city, specific problems are possible, for example, in some - lack of tailoring and household appliances repair shops, in others - lack of public transport and libraries, and thirdly - hairdressing and dry cleaners.

Along with the imbalance in the development of social infrastructure, a rather acute management problem is the irrational spatial distribution of social facilities, which complicates the use of available resources by the population. This is often aggravated by poorly organized work of public transport, therefore, the principle of "walking distance" of organizations and institutions providing social services is violated.

An important problem that significantly hinders the development of social infrastructure and reduces the population's satisfaction with social services is the discrepancy between the income level of a significant part of the population and the prices set for many social services, as a result of which the services are not in demand due to the low paying capacity of the population. This is manifested primarily in key areas of life: unaffordable housing, high cost of educational services, high prices for quality medical care.

The problem of providing high quality social services is a very acute problem, which is impossible in conditions of high depreciation of fixed assets. It is difficult to pursue an effective policy of reproduction of social infrastructure facilities without innovative replacement of outdated technologies.

Management of social infrastructure in society, particular importance is attached to key issues, the solution of which is most conducive to improving the quality of life. The priority role of social infrastructure in the development of society is determined by the fact that it contributes to human reproduction, his spiritual and physical development, and the creation of comfortable living conditions. The intellectualization of all spheres of activity taking place in the world and the increase in the knowledge intensity of production and everyday life are aimed at raising the role of man. The development of social infrastructure is a necessary condition for improving the quality of life of the population, improving the environment, as well as raising the level of education, professional qualifications, culture, physical health and mental stability of the individual.

It is these reasons that are currently determining in the development of social institutions. Small towns have their own problems, which determine the peculiarities of social infrastructure management, new approaches to the development of methods of providing social services.

Social infrastructure acts as one of the indicators of the population's standard of living. The service sector, social infrastructure facilities, including institutions of education, health care, education, culture and housing and communal services, constitute the necessary and most important conditions for the life of the population. The modern society is faced with acutely diverse tasks of social, economic and

spiritual development. This requires further deepening of the theory of scientific management of social processes, improvement of forms and methods of purposeful and planned development of various spheres of public life.

### ***Discussion***

When analyzing the importance of social infrastructure, it is important to proceed from the fact that this phenomenon is complex, therefore, to solve theoretical problems of its development, close cooperation of representatives of various sciences, primarily social and humanitarian, as well as technical and natural, is necessary. At this stage, the most relevant in practical terms for local governments are studies that are designed to comprehensively study the social infrastructure, identify the most important trends and ways of its formation, functioning and development, develop specific recommendations for infrastructure management. The study of the problem of social infrastructure is a search for additional reserves of more dynamic social development, allowing to activate the material and material basis for managing social processes [10].

The theoretical problems of studying social infrastructure include the ambiguity of the very concept of "social infrastructure" as a sociological category. There are many definitions in domestic and foreign literature. This largely depends on the specifics of the formulation of solving various problems of social development in the country, region, district, settlement, on the classification of the main components of the processes of social reproduction.

The topic is relevant in the field of sociology of management, since the problems of social infrastructure in recent decades have been studied mainly in economic theory, while economic approaches and methods prevailed.

All this determines the increasing attention of both government authorities and sociologists-researchers to the problem of finding more effective ways to use the potential of social infrastructure. The task is to develop adequate strategies and methods for managing the entire social sphere, and in particular, social infrastructure.

Thus, the problem of managing social infrastructure in small towns has been little studied and is especially relevant after the reforms that have led to profound transformations in the entire social sphere.

Researchers have addressed the problem of development of small towns relatively recently. The problems of small towns are studied by the O.V. Kuchmaeva [3], V.L. Kurakov [4], N.E. Egorova [5], I.N. Mitrofanova [5], V.E. Gordin [6], A.V. Tikhonov [7] and others.

To investigate the problem of improving sociological research on the management and development of social infrastructure in small towns, it is customary to use the following methods of sociological research - collecting sociological information:

- mass questionnaire survey;
- expert interview;
- methods of statistical analysis.

A small town has its own specific problems and unique advantages, which determines a certain potential for its development. The social infrastructure of a small town serves as the basis for human reproduction, his intellectual and physical development [9].

Small towns in modern conditions are able to develop social infrastructure on the principles of sustainable development, which will contribute to the creation of the necessary prerequisites for improving the standard of living and social well-being of the population.

The underestimation of the role of social infrastructure management over the years in our society has led to the fact that its elements largely do not meet the needs of the population with economic opportunities, and instead of becoming a factor that enhances sustainable development, the weak formation of social infrastructure elements hinders the further development of a small town ...

Projects, program-targeted methods of social infrastructure management are used to solve large-scale tasks in specific areas of social development, for example, housing and communal services, health care, education. Social programming is a special form of systemic redistribution of resources based on predetermined goals, criteria and the use of available resources for solving specific social problems. On the basis of the adopted social standards, priority directions for the development of social facilities are determined, planning of long-term measures for the creation of social infrastructure facilities is carried out [8].

The study of the practice of managing social infrastructure in small towns shows the relevance and urgent need to solve many theoretical problems. The study of these issues will help to bring terminological, categorical clarity, will give a clearer understanding of the role of the social sphere in the life of a modern small town. The management of the city's social infrastructure is becoming the most important area of activity for the authorities to create comfortable living conditions for the population. This fact is noted in the Action Strategy for 2017-2021 of the Republic of Uzbekistan as: “development of the social sphere aimed at consistently increasing employment and real incomes of the population, improving the system of social protection and health protection of citizens, increasing the socio-political activity of women, implementing targeted programs construction of affordable housing, development and modernization of road transport, engineering, communication and social infrastructures, development of education, culture, science, literature, art and sports, improvement of state youth policy ”[1].

Usually there are problems such as:

- social infrastructure facilities in small towns often develop spontaneously, there is no comprehensive approach to their management;
- organizations and institutions of the social sphere in a spontaneous market develop unevenly (for example, hypertrophied development of trade enterprises and an acute shortage of preschool institutions), which complicates the balanced long-term development of the infrastructure of a small town;
- the principle of “walking distance” is often violated in the provision of social services to the population;
- New forms of service provision, in particular, Internet technologies in servicing the population, are not used sufficiently;
- effective management of social infrastructure is possible based on the integrated use of resources: administrative, organizational, resource of social interaction, regulatory, economic, informational and socio-cultural [2].

Normative indicators and statistical data are used to measure the level of development of social infrastructure. With the help of a comparative analysis of such data, it is possible to evaluate almost any aspect of the development of social infrastructure. There is practically no universal methodology for assessing the socio-economic development of a city and the development of social infrastructure. All existing techniques have their own characteristics and specificity [3]. We will write about this on our next work.

## **Conclusion**

The study of the process of social infrastructure management reveals the contradiction between the standards, statistical data and research results. The data obtained, which testifies to the imbalance of the social infrastructure and to its irrational use. Therefore, optimization and improvement of the efficiency of social infrastructure management presuppose a phased reform and transition to a significant transformation. Without this, it is impossible to solve such problems in the functioning and development of social infrastructure as the complexity of development, the balance of all objects of social infrastructure; the need to introduce new technologies through the development of the Internet infrastructure; compliance with the principle of "walking" accessibility.

The solution of these problems is essential for the life of the population of small towns and will lead to the creation of favorable conditions for the functioning and development of social infrastructure in modern small towns and will contribute to an increase in the standard of living of the population.

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