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ORIGINAL PAPER

Organizational Culture in Civic Associations in Russia

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Abstract The organizational culture of nonprofit organizations is affected by the context in which they are embedded. Based on a qualitative study of local civic associations in Novosibirsk, Russia, this article illustrates how nonprofit organizational culture has been shaped by historical and contemporary social and cultural conditions. The fluid situation for civil society in Russia has generated varied organizational culture across nonprofits. Interview data reveal different value orientations, distinct group identities, and different images of the ideal civic association: as a social establishment, as an outlet for self-expression, as a network of experts, or as a social startup. This resulting diversity of organizational culture has implications for the potential for partnerships among nonprofits, between nonprofits and government, between nonprofits and businesses, and also for the organizational survival of nonprofits in this setting.

Keywords Organizational culture · Russian Federation · Qualitative research · Nonprofit organizations · Informal associations

Résumé La culture organisationnelle des organismes sans but lucratif est influencée par leur contexte. En se basant sur une étude qualitative d'associations civiques locales de Novossibirsk en Russie, le présent article illustre comment la culture organisationnelle desdits organismes a été façonnée par des conditions sociales et culturelles historiques et contemporaines. La fluidité de la situation de la société civile en Russie a favorisé la création de cultures organisationnelles variées parmi les organismes sans but lucratif. Des données tirées d'entrevues ont révélé la présence de différentes orientations des valeurs, d'identités de groupe distinctes et d'images variées de l'association civique idéale : comme institution, comme voie d'expression personnelle, comme réseau d'experts ou comme nouvelle entreprise sociale. Cette diversité a donc des implications sur les partenariats possibles entre différents organismes sans but lucratif, entre ces derniers et le gouvernement ou encore entre ces organismes et les entreprises, ainsi que sur la survie organisationnelle des organismes sans but lucratif dans ce contexte.

Zusammenfassung Die Organisationskultur gemeinnütziger Organisationen wird von dem sie umgebenden Kontext beeinflusst. Beruhend auf einer qualitativen Studie lokaler Bürgervereinigungen in Nowosibirsk in Russland zeigt dieser Artikel, wie die Kultur der gemeinnützigen Organisationen von den historischen und aktuellen sozialen und kulturellen Bedingungen geprägt worden ist. Aufgrund der dynamischen Situation für die Bürgergesellschaft in Russland haben sich verschiedenen Kulturen in den gemeinnützigen Organisationen entwickelt. Interviewdaten offenbarten unterschiedliche Wertorientierungen, Gruppenidentitäten und Vorstellungen über die optmale Bürgervereinigung: als eine soziale Einrichtung, eine Möglichkeit zur Selbstentfaltung, ein Expertennetzwerk oder ein neues soziales Unternehmen. Die daraus entstehenden diversen Organisationskulturen haben Auswirkungen auf potenzielle Partnerschaften zwischen gemeinnützigen Organisationen, zwischen gemeinnützigen Organisationen und der

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Regierung und zwischen gemeinnützigen Organisationen und Wirtschaftsunternehmen sowie auf das organisatorische Überleben der gemeinnützigen Organisationen unter diesen Rahmenbedingungen.

Resumen La cultura organizativa de las organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro se ve afectada por el contexto en el que están enclavadas. Basándose en un estudio cualitativo de asociaciones cívicas locales en Novosibirsk (Rusia), el presente artículo ilustra cómo las condiciones culturales y sociales históricas y contemporáneas han dado forma a la cultura organizativa de las organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro. La fluida situación de la sociedad civil en Rusia ha generado una cultura organizativa variada en las organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro. Los datos de entrevistas revelan diferentes orientaciones del valor, identidades grupales distintas, y diferentes imágenes de la asociación cívico-social: como establecimiento social, como salida de la autoexpresión, como red de expertos o como "startup" social. Esta diversidad resultante de la cultura organizativa tiene implicaciones para el potencial de asociación entre las organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro, entre las organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro y el gobierno, o entre las organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro y las empresas, y también para la supervivencia organizativa de las organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro en este escenario.

Culture can be defined as "collectively made, reproduced, and unevenly shared knowledge about the world that is both informational and meaningful" (Patterson 2014, p. 5) which "provide[s] predictability … and meaning in human actions and interactions" (p. 7). Organizational culture, or that knowledge and meaning inside an organization, is "a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group … which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel" (Schein 2010, p. 8). While organizational culture has been studied in businesses since the 1980s (Morrill 2008), similar studies in nonprofit organizations followed more recently with the growing interest in the professional management of nonprofits (Lewis 2001). Because organizations are always embedded in their social and cultural context (Maran and Soro 2010; Mahalinga and Suar 2012; Bassous 2015; Duncan and Schoor 2015; Roy et al. 2015), this study expands existing scholarship on the organizational culture of nonprofit organizations (Teegarden et al. 2010) by describing nonprofits in an international setting.

This article makes four contributions to the research on nonprofit organizations. First, we examine the organizational culture of a sample of civic associations in Russia. Second, we explore how the organizational culture of these civic associations has been shaped by values, traditions and habits specific to this social and cultural context. Third, we examine the implications that organizational culture has for partnerships among nonprofits, between nonprofits and government, and between nonprofits and businesses, and for the organizational survival of nonprofits in this setting. Fourth, we illustrate the usefulness of qualitative research for examining organizational culture contributing to our better understanding of nonprofit organizations and civil society.

Literature Review

Studying Organizational Culture

Schein describes three levels of organizational culture: "artifacts" (visible structures or behaviors), "espoused ideas and beliefs" (ideals, goals, and values) and "basic underlying assumptions," forming the taken-for-granted backdrop to all other activity (Schein 2010, p. 24). Scholars of organizational culture in for-profit organizations have generated frameworks for categorizing these observed behaviors, norms and beliefs of individual companies into generic types along certain dimensions. A few frequently utilized typologies include: five "cultural dimensions" of power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term/short-term orientation (Hofstede et al. 2010); four "core areas" of involvement, consistency, adaptability and sense of mission (Denison and Mishra 1995); and the "competing values" framework, involving four typologies of hierarchy, clan, market, and adhocracy (Cameron and Quinn 2011). Despite Schein's call for qualitative research on organizational culture (Schein 2010), many of these frameworks are based upon quantitative surveys, which are prone to over-abstraction and overgeneralization.

Scholars have described several factors which shape organizational culture, including leadership, values, industry setting, and social and cultural context. Founders play an important role in generating the norms and values that become the basis for organizational culture (Schein 1983). Leadership style (Roy et al. 2015) and type of leadership (transactional or transformational) shapes the type of organizational culture (Bass and Avolio 1993). Values espoused by both founders and members can cause one group's organizational culture to differ from another (Kwan and Walker 2004). "Local contingencies" in the environment can also influence organizational culture (Roy et al. 2015). The sector or industry in which an organization operates can shape organizational culture (Gordon 1991).

Firms operating in diverse national contexts display a diversity of organizational culture (Hofstede et al. 2010; Dastmalchian et al. 2000), in which both the values of the host country and values in country of the organization's origin make a difference (Lau and Ngo 1996). Management research has illustrated how organizational culture is "embedded in and shaped by national cultures" (Fey and Denison 2003, p. 687). Researchers studying business organizations have argued that "culture, whether Japanese,…British… French, or American, shapes the character of organizations" (Morgan 2006, p. 122). In studies of corporations, the varieties of capitalism literature argues for the recognition of unique national differences across countries (see Hall and Soskice 2001). A diversity of local cultural contexts leads to diverse forms of organizations, even within industries (Orru et al. 1997).

For example, Hofstede's research argues for differences in organizational culture based on shared values which differ across countries, such as long-term versus short-term orientation, individualism versus collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and gender relations (Hofstede et al. 2010). People in different countries have distinct sets of values, which Cameron's competing values framework seeks to capture: these values influence the organizational culture observed in those countries (Dastmalchian et al. 2000).

Organizational Culture of Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofit organizations are distinguished from their for-profit counterparts not only by legal form but by an emphasis on values (Knutsen 2013; DiMaggio and Anheier 1990; Duncan and Schoor 2015). This unique focus on values gives rise to a distinct type of organizational culture: "commonalities across many nonprofit organizations' cultures… arise from the theoretical, legal, and situational boundaries that distinguish nonprofit organizations from other types of organizational structures" (Teegarden et al. 2010, p. 3). This distinct type organizational culture forms part of the sense of "nonprofitness" (DiMaggio and Anheier 1990).

However, scholars have also observed a diversity of organizational culture across nonprofit organizations (Kezar 2011). One study applied Cameron's competing values framework to explore one type of collaborative organizational culture which improved the satisfaction of volunteers (Jensen and McKeage 2015). Denison's four core areas were used to examine the dimensions of organizational culture in religious organizations (Givens 2012). Another study relied on Hofstede's cultural dimensions to illustrate how NGOs in Kazakhstan shared the organizational culture of their Western donors but were out of alignment with the local population they were trying to serve (Nezhina and Ibrayeva 2013).

Nonprofit management studies have highlighted the impact of organizational culture on outcomes for nonprofit organizations. For example, organizational culture shapes internal relations with employees and volunteers (Bassous 2015; Jensen and McKeage 2015). Organizational culture influences overall nonprofit performance (Givens 2012) and effectiveness (Mahalinga and Suar 2012). Organizational culture can shape the innovativeness (Jaskyte 2004) and risk taking (Langer and LeRoux 2017) of nonprofits, shaping crucial managerial decisions such as pay-for-performance (Brandl and Guettel 2007), and other nonprofit governance questions (Duncan and Schoor 2015). Managerial decisions such as including women in leadership positions are also influenced by organizational culture (Maran and Soro 2010). As aspects of organizational culture, shared values and language affect interorganizational collaboration (Moshtari and Gonçalves 2017), the outcome of mergers (Giffords and Dina 2003), and the success of potential nonprofit partnerships (Kezar 2011). Partnerships, alliances and mergers are more successful among nonprofit groups which share values and norms. Similarly, partnerships with organizations across sectors also require some level of shared values and outlooks.

Organizations cannot partner or accomplish their goals if they do not survive. Organizational survival is shaped by a range of external and internal factors (Wollebaek 2009). Newer, smaller organizations are more likely to fail (Vermeulen et al. 2016; Hager et al. 2004; Wollebaek 2009). Leaders' decisions, particularly about partnerships, also play a role (Wollebaek 2009). Organizations with extensive external ties, institutional linkages, or affiliation with a larger hierarchical structure are more likely to survive (Vermeulen et al. 2016; Hager et al. 2004; Wollebaek 2009). Exploiting alternate funding streams positively influences organizational survival (Besel et al. 2011). While acknowledging the seriousness of funding, leadership and other factors in survival, this article focuses on the link that has been suggested between organizational culture and sustainability (Lewis 2003).

Organizations and Culture in Russia

Organizational Culture in Russian Business

Western businesses and NGOs both arrived in the former Soviet Union in the early 1990s. At that time, a number of generalizations were proposed to explain organizational behaviors observed in Russia business settings, such as lower ambition and initiative among managers, which contradicted Western expectations (Puffer 1993). Examining Hofstede's cultural dimensions, researchers suggested that Russian managers scored relatively high on uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and paternalism, and relatively low on individualism (Naumov and Puffer 2000). Applying Denison's four core areas, another study found a greater reliance on adaptability and flexibility, uncovered a greater "tendency to dissemble" among managers and workers, and found a "unique time perspective" and a "unique set of subcultures" among workers (Fey and Denison 2003). Other researchers illustrated how Cameron and Quinn's competing values framework describes employee satisfaction in Russia (Zavyalova and Kucherov 2010). Different understandings of organizational culture were at the root of difficulties Western owners experienced in managing organizational changes in Russian companies (Michailova 2000). Some have suggested that Russian folklore and myth provide a cultural framework for understanding leadership in contemporary Russia (Shekshnia et al. 2007). More recent research on international joint ventures in Russia has demonstrated that traditional values are typically held among older upper management, while Western values are held more often by younger staff, or those with more direct exposure to Western management (Kobernyuk et al. 2014).

Civic Associations in Russia

Civil society in contemporary Russia draws on a legacy of citizen initiative groups found as early as the eighteenth century (Jakobson et al. 2011; Skalaban 2005); some citizen groups also persisted during the Soviet era (Bradley 2009; Buxton and Konovalova 2013). With the 1990s, Western organizers and foundations arrived in Russia to promote the growth of civil society by founding and funding nonprofit organizations across the country (Henderson 2003). Many of these Western-funded groups represented the goals and values of their funders better than those of the communities they served (Henderson 2003).

In 2006, new legislation was introduced which, along with other restrictions, limited the ability of Russian organizations to accept foreign funding (Ljubownikow and Crotty 2014). More recent political changes include the 2012 enactment of Federal Law FZ-121, which permits the label of "foreign agent" to be applied to any civic association accepting foreign funding (Daucé 2015), a label which allows property to be confiscated and activities terminated. These restrictions on foreign funding sources have made it more difficult for civic associations to operate as they navigate a continually fluctuating regulatory environment (Daucé 2015).

Nonprofits in Russia today face a "dual reality" of increasing restrictions and increasing funding (Salamon et al. 2015), comparable to the "carrot and stick" policy adopted by the Chinese government for its NGOs (Xiao and Lin 2016). Russian federal and local government authorities have increased funding for nonprofit organizations (Crotty et al. 2014) in many sectors but especially social services. Apolitical, service-focused organizations, (so-called "socially oriented nonprofit organizations") are more likely to receive these social service contracts (Benevolenski and Toepler 2017). Some scholars see a positive development in this increased federal and municipal funding, which encourages greater cooperation between government and civic associations (Javeline and Lindemann-Komarova 2010). Others argue that this type of funding reduces the autonomy of the third sector (Crotty et al. 2014).

Nonprofits' reactions to the state depend in part on the type of activity, funding sources, and professionalism of the nonprofit organization (Cook and Vinogradova 2006). In Russia today, both liberal and conservative political viewpoints are represented in civic associations, with the latter having closer relations to the state (Chebankova 2015). Many civic associations voluntarily cooperate with the state while others appear to be controlled from above, although Hemment argues that such groups still allow for authentic citizen participation (Hemment 2012). Others avoid interacting with the state in their focus on cultural, moral or religious activities (Caldwell 2012). Groups such as human rights organizations (Daucé 2014) or disability rights organizations (Fröhlich 2012), continue to engage in some opposition to the state. Many professional or occupational associations engage in advocacy, although like their counterparts elsewhere they are also multi-functional (Ivanova and Neumayr 2017).

Previous research has emphasized the importance of legal form for the operation and perception of civic associations (Mersiyanova and Jakobson 2007b). Some scholars have used the type of legal form as a criteria by which organizations are sampled for national research (Krasnopolskaya and Mersiyanova 2014, p. 47). A wide array of legal forms coexist in Russia: nongovernmental organizations, nonprofit organizations, civil associations, religious associations, charitable foundations, neighborhood associations, are all registered under separate laws and governed by separate regulations (Statistics 2016). For example, in 2011, there were over 108,000 registered "civil associations" (*obshchestvenniye obedineniye*, "social entities") and over 85,000 "noncommercial organizations"; by 2015 those numbers had changed to 104,000 "civil associations" and 90,400 "noncommercial organizations" (Statistics 2016). However, scholars have suggested that less than 40% of registered civic associations are currently active (Mersiyanova and Jakobson 2007b) (Jakobson et al. 2011, pp. 17–18).

Writing before the 2012 legal changes, Henderson argued that the greatest challenges facing nonprofit organizations in Russia were not legal restrictions, but the apathy of Russian citizens (Henderson 2011). Russians seem hesitant to volunteer in civic associations, a pattern observed also among Russian immigrants in Israel (Khvorostianov and Remennick 2017). This reluctance may relate to the legacy of the Soviet state's emphasis on mandatory participation in "voluntary" Saturday work ("subbotniki") (Ashwin 1998, p. 192), the opposite of civil society (Anheier et al. 2010, p. 1392). Recent research suggests that Russians who engage in some form of corporate volunteering are more likely to volunteer in other settings as well (Krasnopolskaya et al. 2016). Comparative research has suggested that in post-socialist countries, volunteering only increases after an increase in civil liberties, but not uniformly (Kamerāde et al. 2016).

Few citizens belong to civic associations: according to survey data, on average the estimate of the population volunteering in or belonging to a civic association has been about 5% (Mersiyanova and Jakobson 2007a). Most civic associations have small staff: one national sample reported that 47% of NGOs had 10 or fewer staff, 15% had over 10 staff members, and 33% had no staff (Mersiyanova and Jakobson 2007b, p. 24). 28% of the sampled organizations had no volunteers, 43% had up to 30 volunteers, while only 22% of organizations ever had more than 30 volunteers (Mersiyanova and Jakobson 2007b, p. 28).

According to nonprofit management research, several factors improve the sustainability of nonprofit organizations, for example, organizational age (Hager et al. 2004), older age and larger size (Wollebaek 2009), and affiliation with a larger hierarchy (Vermeulen et al. 2016). Russian organizations have few staff and correspondingly small budgets (Salamon et al. 2015, p. 2185). More than half the groups in a previous survey were less than ten years old (Mersiyanova and Jakobson 2007b, p. 8). With ties to foreign NGOs all but forbidden, and faith-based organizations very rare, few civic associations in Russia are affiliated with any larger hierarchies, religious or otherwise. Many factors would thus suggest an overall high failure rate for Russia nonprofit organizations.

Organizational Culture in Russian Civic Associations

There has been little research focused on organizational culture in civic associations in Russia. One overview of Russian civil society suggests that three distinct time periods are characterized by differences in organizational culture. During the late Soviet era, groups "largely imitated Soviet patterns of organizational culture" (Jakobson and Sanovich 2010, p. 284), and "bore a strong imprint of Soviet bureaucratic culture due to insufficient knowledge of other patterns" (p. 285). In the 1990s, civic associations "closely connected with Western donors tried to reproduce their behavioral standards, relations, etc., with the utmost accuracy, while the other segment mostly reproduced the patterns of the Soviet bureaucratic practice or of nascent Russian business" (Jakobson and Sanovich 2010, p. 289). Finally, in the years since 2000, they report a lack of one dominant organizational culture: some groups "proceed from foreign models borrowed in the 1990s, others from bureaucratic patterns of the state machinery and still others from the experience of for-profit corporations, while some have a bizarre mixture of cultures" (Jakobson and Sanovich 2010, p. 297). In their assessment, the internal culture of most civic associations "largely depends on the origin and contacts of the organization," usually characterized by "strong leadership and weak influence of the ranks and constituencies" (p. 297), that is, groups dependent on leaders.

However, some studies have described values, norms and behaviors inside Russia civic associations without using the term "organizational culture." For example, one study contrasted the values and norms of religious communities engaging in social service provision with the values of the development NGOs in that sector (Caldwell 2012). Another study examined the persistence of Soviet traditions of patronage and personalistic leadership and Russian cultural norms of drinking tea (*chaepitie*) in Russian civic associations (Spencer 2011).

Research Question

Third sector groups Russia include an array of NGOs, nonprofit organizations, civil society organizations, grassroots associations and informal citizen initiatives, which we collectively label with the term "civic association." In this article, we address the following questions: What characterises the organizational culture of civic associations in Russia? How is organizational culture shaped by the social and cultural context in which civic associations are founded and operate? What implications might organizational culture have for partnerships and the survival of these civic associations.

Data and Research Methods

In Russia, as in many other countries, civil society includes more than formally registered NGOs, but also grassroots associations, unregistered associations, and various informal groups (Buxton and Konovalova 2013; Spencer 2011). The combination of unregistered but active groups and registered but inactive groups makes it very hard to accurately portray the third sector through quantitative research. For this reason, many studies of civic associations in Russia focus on a particular city or region so that they can rely on local knowledge for finding existing and active groups. Studying the full range of formal and informal groups requires qualitative research.

The local context for this study is Novosibirsk, Russia, a city of over 1.7 million in western Siberia, founded in

1893. Located on the intersection of the Ob' river and major train lines, with an internationally airport, Novosibirsk is geographically and economically at the crossroads of Siberia (Spencer 2004). The military-industrial complex was once crucial for Novosibirsk, and though many Soviet-era factories now stand idle, the city has survived the post-Soviet period thanks to its position as a transportation and commercial center for Siberia. Companies have chosen Novosibirsk as a logistical center, and people, goods and money from Siberia, Central Asia, and the northern oil regions intersect in the city. Future economic development rests not only on flourishing wholesale and retail trade, but also on the technology being developed in the numerous universities and institutes for which Novosibirsk has long held a national reputation.

Research for this article was conducted from February to May 2011 by the authors and a team of undergraduate students. We designed an interview guide to measure organizational culture and related topics, based on our experience with civic associations, including measures of artifacts, beliefs and assumptions (Schein 2010). We trained students on conducting these semi-structured, in-depth interviews, and together with the students conducted 54 interviews varying from 30 to 90 min. It is important to note that we conducted interviews in 2011 before the enactment of FZ-121 on "foreign agents," so our respondents had not yet experienced those restrictions.

In selecting organizations we employed purposive sampling, based on the following criteria: length of the organization's existence (more or less than 5 years); both formally registered and informal groups; diverse spheres of activity; and whether groups were oriented only toward their own members or toward reaching outsiders. Student researchers assisted in contacting the informal youth groups included in this research. We also included groups based around Web sites. Within each organization, interviews were conducted initially with the group's leader and then through snowball sampling from one to three additional group members. In total, 54 interviews were conducted, comprising leaders and members from 19 groups (see Table 1). The spheres covered in this research include social work, sports, culture, religion, business or economics, ecology, legal rights and local self-governance, among others. Space does not permit detailed descriptions of all the organizations, but the pseudonyms we chose suggest the groups' areas of activity (in Table 1). We did not consider the type of legal registration as a criteria for selection, but in selecting groups across various spheres of activities and interests, a total of five different types of legal forms were included in this study: religious association, NGO, neighborhood association ("TOS" in Russian), civic organization, community foundation, and informal movements and social groups.

In this research, we considered "formal" ($N = 14$) all the associations that were officially registered with the government under any legal type, which requires by-laws (*ustav*), a bank account, and certain staff such as president and accountant. (see Table 1). Informal groups ($N = 5$) are those groups that are not legally registered, but are cohesive enough to promote themselves as a distinct group of people with distinct activities, arranged around a particular leader or specific topic (Table 1). Without legal registration, these groups have only limited access to government grants or other funding sources for certain one-time, short-term or temporary projects or events. Although we tried to include equal numbers of formal and informal groups, we were unable to identify and locate as many informal groups as we had intended, even with the assistance of local experts.

Five years after our initial interviews, in 2016, through the assistance of local colleagues, we were able to learn something about the original organizations. Additional research funding was not available, so we were unable to conduct follow-up interviews, but through phone calls or email contacts, we were able to ascertain which organizations still existed, which still had the original leaders, and which had closed, as discussed at the end of the section on results.

Results

In this section, we discuss findings from our interviews about organizational culture in Russian civic associations. First, we briefly describe the demographics of participants. Second, we describe two distinct sets of values which emerged in our interviews. Third, we describe two different structures of the leader and group which were described in interviews. These features combine to form a portrait of three "types" of group cultures which we observed among these civic associations. Fourth, we present four different images of civic associations described by our respondents. We then suggest implications of organizational culture for outcomes related to potential partnerships and organizational survival.

A Portrait of Leaders and Members

In Russia, many volunteer organizations were traditionally led and staffed by middle aged women (Sundstrom 2002), seeking solutions to social problems which were seen as traditional "women's domains." While some of our respondents certainly fit this profile, we also found more men among the leaders we interviewed than we had anticipated, for example the religious, ecological, sport, public safety, and advice groups. Many groups in our

Table 1 Organizations included in the study and list of interviews

	Organization (pseudonym)	Sphere of activity	# Years	Formal status	Member versus other orientation	# Interviews
1	Student Theater Club**	Arts and culture	> 5	Formal	Members	4
2	Local Religious Group	Religion	> 5	Formal	Others/members	1
3	International Church**	Religion	> 5	Formal	Others/members	3
4	Sports Club	Sports	> 5	Formal	Members	3
5	Neighborhood Association**	Neighborhood	> 5	Formal	Others	4
6	Youth Business Club	Business	> 5	Formal	Members	1
7	Women's Support Group	Women	> 5	Formal	Members	2
8	Women Helping Women	Women	> 5	Formal	Members	1
9	Local Associations Fund	Neighborhood	< 5	Formal	Others	4
10	Preserve Russian culture	Arts and culture	< 5	Formal	Others	1
11	Public Safety	Neighborhood	< 5	Formal	Others	1
12	Youth Spiritual Group	Religion	< 5	Formal	Others/members	3
13	Large Family Club	Family	< 5	Formal	Members	4
14	Assist the Orphans	Family	<5	Formal	Others	4
15	Ecology Today	Ecology	< 5	Informal	Others	2
16	Advice Association*	Legal	< 5	Informal	Others	4
17	Crowdfunding*	Business	< 5	Informal	Others	4
18	Informal Street Performance*	Arts and culture	< 5	Informal	Others	4
19	Informal Cultural Group*	Arts and culture	< 5	Informal	Members	4
	Total number	> 5 years	8	Formal 14	Members 7	54
		< 5 years	11	Informal 5	Others 9	
					Both 3	

Interviews conducted May 2011 by authors and student research team. We aimed for 4 interviews per group but did not always succeed

* Denotes Internet-based group

* Denotes group affiliated with larger hierarchical structure

sample were led and staffed by young adults (ages 21–30), with both men and women equally represented in this younger age. All the leaders and most of the members had completed higher education or were enrolled in university, confirming previous research which finds civil society in Russia to be an activity of the middle class (Jakobson and Sanovich 2010). We also found in our sample various leaders in their 40s (both men and women) starting civic associations after leaving successful or less successful careers in business. They bring with them business language and overall business experience which they apply to their civic associations.

Diverse Values

In interviews, we asked leaders to reflect on why they started the group and the group's current goals. Analyzing the transcripts, we found two broad distinct categories of values: a "normative" orientation, centered on morality and identity, and a "project" orientation, focused on actions and tasks rather than moral justification. Although all groups describe projects, some groups create an identity around morality (who we are) while others focus on tasks and activities (what we do). This leads to observable differences in organizational culture and divergent priorities among groups. Groups with a normative orientation often do not understand the task-oriented groups, while the latter have little use for the former's moralizing, we observed almost no collaboration across this divide (see Table 2).

Normative Value Orientation

In the first category, leaders and members evoke normative and moral language to describe their group's identity and activities. As one would expect, the three religious groups express this orientation, as observed elsewhere (Caldwell 2012). One church leader's description is typical:

> "… someone told me 'our faith is our way of life,' I remembered that phrase, and … I strive to teach in the first place my children… so that it will be their way of life, so that I don't have to require (*zastavlyat'*) them to do something, but that it would be a desire just to live that way. Therefore, we live,

> rejoice, try to raise (*vospitivat'*) our children [at church]…. my goal as president of the congregation is to help other people discover their talents, uncover their potential and possibilities" (Leader, International Church)

Another leader channeled her pedagogical training through her organization, determined to "raise up" (*vospitat')* residents of the city to become more "cultured" (*kul'turnii)* with a greater appreciation for literature and reading. In these normative groups, the leader, representing a guide, a "trainer" (*vospitatel),* or a "shepherd," aims at the transfer of moral values, focuses on the construction of relations, and emphasizes the education or upbringing (*vospitanie*) of the whole person in their target group.

Unexpectedly, a similarly moral, normative orientation was also observed in several nonreligious groups, including the student theater group, youth sports club, and the neighborhood association. For example, the sports leader describes their overall goal as the "upbringing (*vospitanie)* of the harmonious development of the individual. … We want to see a person, a citizen, a patriot, and a reasonably lettered (*gramotnii)* person" (Leader, Sports Club). This leader also spoke approvingly of "continuing traditions" from previous generations. In this context, "traditions" refers to reproducing the socialist-era use of sports clubs to foster both good health and patriotism (Riordan 1988).

In short, these "normative" groups plan a wide range of activities which encompass the "whole person," whether for a specific target group (sportsmen, neighbors) or for newcomers (evangelistic churches). These organizations focus on "who we are" rather than only activities or projects. Leaders and members ascribe a moral or ethical character to the goals and activities of their organizations, though internally, as in all organizations, there are differences of opinion about the relative moral significance of specific activities.

This normative orientation carries with it echoes of the Soviet past: Soviet civic groups included among their various themes pedagogical discourse and the idea of "nurturing the new person" (*vospitat' novovo cheloveka*) (Zudin 1999). We found this nurturing, normative discourse today particularly among civic leaders of an older generation and those related to religious, social services, educational and some cultural activities.

Project Orientation

In the second category, leaders and members focus not identity or on the 'whole person' but on activities and events. They use language of rational planning, means-ends calculations, or a focus on functional requirements. As might be expected, groups with business goals explicitly display this project orientation, of which the following quantitative quote is typical:

> "In a year from May to May, we did 23 projects, of which 7 were educational events and the others were unique social projects, from culture festivals, to working with homeless children, projects aimed at making Siberia attractive to foreigners. In all these [projects] we included approximately 15 thousand people. About 40 foreigners came, and 45 of our [members] travelled abroad" (Leader, Youth Business Club).

However, leaders of other groups also expressed an emphasis on concrete, time-limited projects with explicit aims and made no mention of norm-based aims or moral justifications. Surprisingly, one of these was the organization helping large families (three children or more), a group defined by the Soviet regime as marginalized and needy. Having previously met other large family groups, we expected this group to demonstrate a more normative

Table 2 Values, priorities, role of leader and group metaphor

Value orientation	Normative identity	Project-task	Project-task
Group priorities	Group identity	Solve problems Reach a goal	Solve problems Communicate with society
Role of leader	We	We	I'm with them (or) they're with me
Perceive group as	Collective	Team	Social network
Observed in the following groups	Local Religious Group International Church Youth Spiritual Group Sports Club Student Theater Club Neighborhood Association Women Helping Women	Large Families Club Assist the Orphans Public Safety Youth Business Club Local Associations Fund Preserve Russian Culture Women's Support Group	Ecology Today Advice Association Crowdfunding Informal Street Performance Informal Cultural Group

approach to self-help among large families. However, this leader emphasized projects and tasks, including fundraising and lobbying for government action, as well as collecting donations of money or goods, instead of an emphasis on norms or upbringing. As she describes:

> "there were a lot of projects, 14 projects we issued, and that was just to achieve the most important goal … if you look at the projects we offer now, they are all donating projects, that is, they all, in principle, are that type—donations. We have a project of humanitarian aid, well, it is not even a project, but just humanitarian aid, when we appeal to patrons" (Leader, Large Families Club)

Note that she uses the word "project" when she herself recognizes it was not exactly a project, and could have chosen another word. A discussion of norms, morals and identity was missing from this leader's detailed explanation of her organization's goals and activities. She was focused on improving the financial situation for large families and winning legal benefits in courts.

We observed this project orientation more commonly within recently established organizations, which suggests a trend line for new civic associations in this setting. Young leaders, or those returning from the business sector, focusing either solving problems or planning events as projects, also display this orientation.

In these groups, especially among the young professionals, we observed a tendency toward eschewing socialist-era terms. For example, one young leader verbally rejects a traditional government term: "our big idea is to support some of the biggest 'socially significant' projects that we can–I don't really like the term 'socially significant,' but for the moment call it that" (Leader, Crowdfunding). This group, like others with this orientation, preferred discussing "investors" and "financing" and other financial terms, which terms are typically absent in the groups with a normative orientation. These project-oriented groups seem to be moving toward a more pragmatic, business-oriented view of fitting solutions to situations which represents a new development for Russian civil society.

Almost all the leaders we interviewed mentioned projects in some way. Many civic associations receive funding from the local or federal government through competitive grants, public procurement, or set-asides, all of which fund "events" or activities rather than overhead. Contemporary Russian government leaders prioritize funding countable events and activities and concrete short-term projects, and encourage a "project culture" (Ganopolskii and Tyumentseva 2012) in organizations which partner with them. Leaders who rely even in part on government funding learn to explain their activities in terms of the projects they have accomplished, and may thereby echo this "project culture" at least rhetorically. The major difference we observed is between groups who emphasize morality and identity and those who do not.

Group and Leader Relations

From interviews, we observed specific patterns in how both leaders and members described the position of the leader in the group. In some groups, the leader is considered part of the group, included in the idea of "we." This "we" has two subtypes, drawing on different tropes from Russian culture: "we as *kollektiv*" (collective) or "we as *komanda*" (team). In a third type, leaders describe members as separate from themselves, "they're with me," in other words, a network type of group. This section gives a few examples of these patterns of leader/group relations; the list is summarized in Table 2.

We as Kollektiv

In Soviet society, school children, college students and coworkers were formally organized into "collectives" (*kollektivi),* small groups with relatively fixed membership, shared goals, shared activity and a strong sense of group cohesion (Kharkhordin 1999). Over time, the notion evolved from a structural to a cultural phenomenon, a description of the close, intimate quality of personal relations, similar to "communal" ties in contrast to more impersonal, objective "societal" ties (Toennies 1957). Many formal organizations, informal groups and workplaces across Russia are characterized by this personal, intimate sense of *kollektivnost'* (collectivity) (Spencer 2009).

In our interviews, we found that leaders and members in the organizations with a normative orientation use terms reminiscent of *kollektivnost'*: they think of their groups as "family" or "community." For example, the leader of one group volunteered: "here we really feel ourselves to be one family" (Leader, Sports Club). In one church congregation, the leader explains that all serve voluntarily to help each other: "spiritually … I do this work as service, I spend my time, energy, for serving members in the congregation, at the same time, most of the members also [serve]" (Leader, International Church). The leader of the Neighborhood Association describes how cooperation among neighbors leads to a greater sense of community cohesion:

> "these are the people, simple factory workers, directors of schools, teachers, … who make up the membership of our neighborhood association, these are the people with whom we together are trying to make our neighborhood (*mikroraion)* cleaner, better, more beautiful… I saw active people, I suggested, let's try creating a community organization,

> suggested myself as leader, and residents supported it" (Leader, Neighborhood Association).

The leader of a youth spiritual movement describes the social support or communal sentiment she feels with fellow members of her local small group:

> "when I had a hard life situation, well, probably, my friends help me the most, but recently, … I faced a huge decision, specifically the ones from our movement, … there are different relations … but in principle, there are those who are close, in such difficult questions, for me the most important thing is such support, of course, everything will be okay" (Leader, Youth Spiritual Group).

In contrast, when the interviewer asked her about the "kollektiv" at the large annual national gathering for her group, she answered with words for "team":

> "yes, there is a brigade (*brigada)* who are directly involved, …. they don't change, but the members of the team *(komandi*) changes, each time youth come from different cities" (Leader, Youth Spiritual Group)

Here she makes a clear distinction between the close communal relations of the local group and the positive but less personal, more objective, relations of fellow members from other cities (an intimate "community" versus an impersonal "society") (Toennies 1957).

In short, several leaders who expressed a normative orientation also described internal relations of their local group a feeling like family, friends, or community, that is, warm "communal" relations. In general, members of these groups describe rituals of taking tea together, or of celebrating birthdays and holidays together, which in Russian society both mark collectivity (*kollektivnost'*) and serve to reproduce it (Spencer 2011).

We as Team

As noted above, in the 1990s, Western NGOs and foundations spent time and money to encourage the growth of civil society in Russia through properly funded, well-run NGOs. The groups thus funded often reflected the values and organizational culture of their donors rather than the surrounding culture, a pattern observed in several settings (Wedel 2001; Nezhina and Ibrayeva 2013). Part of the Western organizational culture introduced to local NGOs included a professional, business-like management culture, including business language.

In our interviews, some of the groups described a sense of "we" as a "team." In Russian, the term *komanda* (team), borrowed from French and German, is used to describe sports teams, business teams, or military units. In Russian culture, this term evokes images of skilled individuals cooperating as professionals, a more civic, public or "societal" (*obshchestvennoye*) relationship rather than a private, family, communal relation. For example, one leader explains how her group is a team of specialists:

> "…here we have an immediate team (*komanda)* of specialists, who travel out and work directly with the [target population], [but] we financially … cannot maintain such a team of specialists in every region. … we provide support to the specialists who will work with the [target population], but who do not know how to do it. That is, we provide educational, training seminars, consulting (*konsultingovie*) (Leader, Assist the Orphans).

In her focus on expertize, she specifically emphasized that for their projects "we do not use volunteers." For this leader, the "we" is a set of trained and equally competent specialists, not volunteers of unknown expertize. The above excerpt also illustrates the linguistic borrowing of Western business language ("consulting") common in Russian businesses.

Another leader described her organization, a group of about ten people who have known each other a long time:

> "really wonderful, good people, sincerely interested that something should change for the better…." "Some people wanted to be simply co-founders … we have a perfectly concrete group (*gruppa)* who make important and serious decisions together, we have a certain understanding" (Leader, Local Associations Fund).

While they are also friends, in their roles in the organization, they maintain professional standards of behavior. Although the interviewer asked about her "team" (*komanda)* in subsequent questions, the leader never used that term, but did describe their success building trust with residents by saying "because we have a good group (*kompania)*" (Leader, Local Associations Fund).

In short, this subset of groups with a project orientation are characterized by a sense of "we as a team," based on professional "societal" (Toennies 1957) relations, in contrast to the norm-oriented groups focusing on "communal" relations. Members in these groups sometimes described celebrating major holidays as a team, but did not mention birthday celebrations or taking tea; in Russia this level of interaction is considered professional, impersonal behavior in a workplace (Spencer 2009).

"They're with me:" Network Relations

In contrast, the other subset of groups with the project orientation expressed a sense of the leader-member relation being "I'm with them" or "they're with me," without any sense of "we." Instead of a team or a collective, these associations are networks of individuals, much as network forms of workplace organizations differ from traditional workgroups (Podolny and Page 1998). Some of these groups share with the previous subset an emphasis on expertize of specialists, as the following leader explains:

> "In our by-laws we always have had a limited number of people, the director, the accountant, a coordinator. All the other people currently we take by contract, depending on the subject of a specific project. If we need a sociologist, then we make a contract with a sociologist, or economist, lawyer, and other specialists, we have a database. … sometimes there are very rare specialists of which there are only one or two in the whole country, more often than not, they work in Moscow. We work with them because we try always to work with real experts. …This project should live as an independent network, we seek coordinators and editors on a competitive basis" (Leader, Advice Association)

The "I/they" sentiment was not only among highly formal and contractualized organizations such as this one. The ecology group we studied was an informal, network-based group, led by a man who valued diversity and creativity. When asked about others on the project, he described their relations thus: "I am the leader, obviously, the coordination starts with me, I can give an example, … I do something and hand over part of the responsibility to colleagues (*kollegi)*" (Leader, Ecology) He later explains his activities, "it's super, I really grew a lot (*realizovovatsya*), through what I built, I ran around to the administration, made arrangements with the musicians" (Leader, Ecology). When asked who else participates, he explained, "they are absolutely diverse people, socially, by age, and all possible variants of ages" (Leader, Ecology). The student interviewer characterized members of this group as "nonstandard" people (*nestandartniye liudi)*, or obvious nonconformists.

In short, leaders and members in these groups think of networks of individuals rather than a single cohesive whole. When we asked about group traditions, members and leaders in these groups did not mention any birthday or holiday celebrations. For some, the absence of traditions such as taking tea was perceived as less structured and liberating.

Images of Organizations

From the interviews, we were able to distinguish four distinct images of a civic association. Leaders and members characterize their groups as either: (1) a social establishment; (2) an outlet for self-expression; (3) a network of experts; or (4) a social startup. A few examples are provided below; the list of images as portrayed in specific groups is provided in Table 3.

Civic Association as a Social Establishment

The image of a "social establishment" (*sotsial'noye ucherezhdenie*) characterizes some of the "socially-oriented NGOs" that focus on traditional social problems, collaborate with the government and fulfill contracts for social service provision (Benevolenski and Toepler 2017). Outsiders might consider these groups as indistinguishable from "the establishment," but leaders of these groups often distinguish themselves by emphasizing their "innovative social technologies" as new solutions to old problems.

For example, one leader emphasized, "we were motivated by one single [idea], that we have a completely … new approach… a new vision for solving a problem…. We work with sponsors with a different approach, a partner relationship" (Leader, Large Family Club). Another leader described their long-term relations with the government: "in fact we subsist very little on grants, that money is not permanent, just for a project. … [Our sources] are first, the city budget, that is, we work on city contracts. Our second source of financing is charitable foundations" (Leader, Assist the Orphans). She describes their distinct social technology as providing training rather than direct service: "we offer support to those specialists who would wish to work with [the target population], but do not know how to do it. We run educational training seminars and consulting … our second goal is the adoption of these approaches in other regions of Russia" (Leader, Assist the Orphans). The new approach to a traditional problem and close cooperation with government in providing social services are key features of this "social establishment" image.

Civic Association as an Outlet for Self-Expression

The image of a group to promote self-expression or self-realization primarily characterizes groups related to culture and religion. Unlike other civic associations we met, these groups welcome newcomers and outsiders. One leader explained, "I see a lot of youth who really want to change something, act, create something, develop themselves" (Leader, Youth Religious Group), and they invite anyone to join. Another young leader describes his cultural group: "Here, everything is open, any person can join, but it's

Table 3 Images of civic associations

Value orientation	Normative identity	Project-task	Project-task
Group priorities	Group identity	Solve Problems Reach a Goal	Solve Problems Communicate with Society
Role of leader	We	We	I'm with them (or) they're with me
Perceive group as	Collective	Team	Social network
Group as social establishment	Sports Club Neighborhood Association Women Helping Women	Assist the Orphans Large Families Club Preserve Russian Culture	
Group as outlet for self-expression	Student Theater Club Local Religious Group International Church Youth Spiritual Group	Local Associations Fund Women's Support Group	Informal Street Performance Informal culture
Group as Network of experts			Advice Association Ecology Today
Group as Social StartUp		Public Safety Club	Crowdfunding

probably simply easier for young people" (Leader, Street Performance); furthermore, this leader was proud of the fact that he did not know everyone who belonged to the group. He wanted to help members unlock their creative potential: "our event is a very notable example of how you can generate such an event from nothing, which would be hard to imagine if you are oriented to think that 'nothing is possible'" (Leader, Street Performance). His attitude to local government is also typical of these groups: "I try the opposite of collaboration, I try to do what the government is not participating in… I don't need anything from them. If I needed money, I would be doing something else" (Leader, Street Performance). The openness to outsiders, to creative self-expression, and avoiding government involvement are characteristic of this image of civic association.

Civic Association as a Network of Experts

The image of a civic association as a network of experts characterizes groups for whom knowledge, information and expertize is crucial, accompanied by a feeling of obligation to educate others. One leader explained "we included legal advice because all other problems relate to this sphere, through access to information." (Leader, Advice Association). He later added:

> "this network is for self-enlightenment and self-defense, where people not only receive advice or documents from someone, but in the process they establish a defense of their own interests, help others prosper and learn and become more independent … they gradually become citizens, actually self-reliant" (Leader, Advice Association).

Another leader also emphasized the importance of informing the public: "I advise them, I arrange with the administration and so forth, because really, there is a huge pile of administrative things which hinder citizen initiatives." (Leader, Ecology). Later, he continues:

> "Even when we work with initiatives from outsiders too, we don't only support some events [*aktsiya*] but we actually guide them into the necessary channel, since we understand that what people imagine is good for nature is very different from what is actually good for nature. …that is why all the initiatives which come to us from the outside, we try to participate in all of them to varying depths and intensity" (Leader, Ecology).

The importance of knowledge and expertize and the obligation to educate and create informed citizens as essential to civil society are characteristic of this image.

Civic Association as a Social Startup

The image of a civic association as a social startup characterizes groups with leaders who have returned from the business sphere, and this experience shapes how they understand their group in the civic sphere. These leaders, unlike others we interviewed, might be described as social entrepreneurs; they can describe their market niche and their competition, and see no need for government handouts. As one leader described, "there isn't a comparable [project] in the country, without either municipal or federal money, and without any local government officials—we got started only by means of community and business support" (Leader, Public Safety). As he later added, "if you don't want to, don't depend on the government, everything is in your hands" (Leader, Public Safety). Comparing his group to others in this sphere of activity, he continued, "for the same money, they get from us more for free than [other] businessmen offered them, plus we are the only ones who integrate our work with the police" (Leader, Public Safety). Another leader described how their group collaborated with the local business startup incubator:

> "They gave us a concrete set of projects, those in the cultural sphere, or among students, or some informal organizations. When we got another interesting project which we couldn't finance ourselves, we decided to open the first crowd-funding project in Russia" (Leader, Crowdfunding).

Comparing themselves to and collaborating with businesses is typical for these groups. The use of market language, commercialization, and avoiding government support are also characteristic of this image.

Discussion

As illustrated in Table 3, these four images intersect with our other classifications. The "social establishment" image was observed in some "we as *kollektiv*" groups and some "we as team" groups, but not among any of the network groups. The "self-expression" image was observed in the religious subset of the *kollektiv* type, one of the team type, and the two culture groups of the network type. The image of "network of experts" was observed only in the network groups. The image of "social startup" was observed in one team and one network type but not in any of the kollektiv type. These patterns suggest that these images correspond to particular cultural and structural characteristics of organizations and represent part of their organizational culture.

Organizational Legal Form

Organizations registered as distinct legal forms may be governed by separate legal requirements, but we found no observable differences in organizational culture across legal form in the organizations in our sample. That is, a "foundation" and a "civic organization" have similar organizational culture, and there was no distinction between the legal types of "civic organization" and "nongovernmental organization" in their norms, values or reported behaviors. The religious associations, for example, differ in their norms toward including outsiders due to their missionary goals, not because of their legal form.

The differences we observed in organizational culture were between formally registered organizations and informal associations. Formally registered groups had either normative or project orientation, but the informal groups were all project-oriented. These were not necessarily projects funded by grants or contracts, but activities that took on a short-term, project-like quality. Formally registered groups had either the "we as kollektiv" or "we as team" identity, while informal groups considered themselves only the "they're with me" having a network-based identity. None of the informal groups considered themselves as a "social establishment," and avoided that image in emphasizing the "start up" or "expert" image.

Outcomes of Organizational Culture for Civic Associations

In this section, we discuss implications of organizational culture for the success of partnerships and organizational survival. While these outcomes certainly depend on a range of external and internal factors, we argue that organizational culture should be included in that list of factors.

Potential Partnerships

Differences in fundamental values has been shown to hinder collaboration among civic associations (Parker and Selsky 2004; Kezar 2011). Cross-sector partnerships require compatible institutional logics, or shared values and understandings to survive (Ashraf et al. 2017). In our sample, normative groups misunderstand the values of groups with project orientation, and vice versa. While some groups do not partner because of personal disagreements between leaders, the diversity of organizational culture also makes it difficult or unlikely for civic associations to partner with each other. Eschewing mergers and partnerships with other groups, organizations remain small, with small budgets and small-scale projects.

Second, the diversity of organizational culture also suggests that different groups may have natural affinities to different funding sources. Groups who align their organizational culture with current government priorities and values (such as project orientation, or the image of "social establishment") may be better able to secure government funding and maintain partnerships with government. Over time, some of these groups might become what have been called "marionette" groups (Cook and Vinogradova 2006), representing state interests rather than independent civil society. Other organizations may find congenial funders or partners in the business community by focusing on a team identity, or expressing the image of startup or expert. Over time such groups may become more isomorphic with the values of the business sector.

Organizational Survival

When a civic association displays values in harmony with elements of the larger society, it can be perceived as more effective (Mitchell 2015). This may strengthen the organization's ability to receive donations or volunteers from the community. Sharing the values expressed by local government improves chances of receiving municipal funding: Chinese NGOs who receive government contracts learn to operate within the values framework established by the government (Zhao et al. 2016). In contrast, when an organization and potential funder have differences in organizational culture, leading to fundamental misunderstandings, it can make securing funding from that source more difficult. In China, for example, the fact that grassroots NGOs receive little support from local foundations is associated with cultural differences between foundations and NGOs is (Shieh 2017). Thus, organizational culture can impact organizational survival through its impact on funding arrangements.

Fundamental values of identity ("who we are" (normative) versus "what we do" (project)) represent core elements of organizational culture, and internal disagreement about identity has been associated with overall lower organizational performance (Voss et al. 2006). It can also lead to potentially fatal internal disputes. In our sample, the leader and the members of one service organization had different visions of the direction the organization should take: five years later, the leader was pursuing her own vision in another city, while the group turned its activities in a new direction to increase their government contracts. Without tapping into this reliable government funding, the group would have simply disbanded. Internal agreement on organizational culture, not always guaranteed, is another of the factors which contribute to organizational survival. Ways in which values, priorities, leader's role and image of the organization intersect with organizational survival for our sample is suggested in Table 4.

In interviews, we asked members whether they thought the group was sufficiently institutionalized to survive the exit of the leader/founder, or whether it depended on the specific leader for survival. In our initial interviews, three groups were affiliated with a hierarchical structure (religious denomination, university, government office), five additional groups seemed sufficiently institutionalized to survive a leadership transition, but eleven of the nineteen groups were dependent on the leader for survival. Five years later, when we tried to determine which groups still existed, we found that most of the groups had survived, defying the expectations that new, small organizations without a larger hierarchy are at risk of failure. As suggested in Table 5, formal registration and formal organizational structure play a role in organizational survival, with institutionalized groups more likely to survive over time. However, registration and structure themselves are choices that have to be valued by group members.

We found some groups, all with the project orientation, which did not value organizational survival, but were focused only on a particular task or activity. For example, the ecology group had the goal of raising ecological awareness, and when the public acknowledged the problems, the group shut down. The crowdfunding group, likewise, had a goal of funding certain projects, and when

Table 4 Organizational culture and organizational survival

Value orientation Group priorities Role of leader Perceive group as	Normative identity Group Identity We Collective	Project-task Solve Problems Reach a Goal We Team	Project-task Solve Problems Communicate with Society I'm with them (or) they're with me Social network
Survived 5 years	Student Theater Group Local Religious Group International Church Neighborhood Association	Youth Business Club Women's Support Group Local Associations Fund Preserve Russian Culture Large Family Club Assist the Orphans	Advice Association Informal Street Performance
Did not survive 5 years	Sports Club Youth Spiritual Group	Public Safety	Ecology Today Crowdfunding Informal Cultural Group

Table 5 Five years later 2016

Level of formalization	Total in 2011	Still operating in 2016	Same leader?
Formal organizations (total)	14	10	7
Institutionalized	7	5	2
Dependent on leader	7	5	5
Informal associations (total)	5	3	2
Institutionalized	2	2	1
Dependent on leader	3	1	1

they met their goals, they closed. The informal cultural group was never interested in creating a formal group, when they felt that their activities of self-expression were no longer interesting, they discontinued meeting. These leaders and members manifested an organizational culture that values informality and short-term projects over organizational survival.

Organizational scholars might count these closures as failure, but leaders and members of those groups see closure as part of a natural process—gather together, solve a problem, dissolve the group, repeat as needed. For such groups, who take the idea of "organization" as a temporary phenomenon, perhaps it is a slight misnomer to use the term "organizational culture," instead, during their brief existence, members and leaders share values and norms in a small group "idioculture" (Fine 2014). These groups reject the value of organizational sustainability and formal structure and acted accordingly; their shared culture helped to influence their outcomes. In contrast, other groups valued organizational survival, and either supported the founder or built an organizational structure to withstand a leader's eventual departure. By encouraging or disparaging the desire for sustainability, organizational culture plays a role in organizational survival.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research makes four distinct contributions to the literature. First, we illustrate how organizational culture varies among nonprofits in this city, even with a common local context. We uncovered two divergent value orientations ("normative or who we are" vs "project or what we do"), three distinct group identities ("collective," "team" or "network"), and four different images of the ideal civic association ("social establishment," "self-expression," "expert network" and "social startup"). Second, while rapidly changing funding and legal restrictions affect nonprofits, their organizational culture is shaped in part by norms, values and practices embedded in social and cultural historical context; differences in organizational culture are in part explained by groups drawing on different themes and values from the broader culture. The normative orientation, the "we as *kollektiv*," and the "social establishment" image echo Soviet organizational legacies, while "we as team" identity and the "social startup" image reveal the influence of prior Western "professional" training for NGOs, and the emphasis on "project culture" aligns with contemporary Russian government priorities. Third, our data illustrate concrete ways in which organizational culture can influence potential partnerships and organizational sustainability. Along with the other factors affecting survival, organizational culture can contribute to or undermine organizational survival, through value harmony with funders, through internal value consensus, and through a shared value for sustainability, since not all groups want to build a sustainable organization. Fourth, in-depth qualitative research has allowed us to identify specific elements of the social and cultural context which shape civic associations; interviews and observations of concrete details allow us to avoid the overgeneralizations resulting from a reliance only on surveys and frameworks.

Limitations and Future Directions

As with any qualitative research, this study can accurately describe one location while may be more limited in characterizing nonprofit organizational culture across Russia. We expect, for example, that the Soviet notion of "upbringing" (*vospitanie*), of the *kollektiv*, and the "social establishment" image will form an important cultural backdrop for any post-Soviet setting, but future research must examine how organizations in other cities reflect these legacies. Because "project culture" characterizes government decision-making across contemporary Russia, we would expect project orientation to characterize many groups in other cities. On the other hand, some informal groups we studied may reflect a type of informal culture specific to this city. Future research should conduct comparative research in other Russian cities to begin the process of drawing more general conclusions about the organizational culture of nonprofits in Russia.

The second limitation is temporal: while we attempted to contact organizations to find out which had survived, a full longitudinal study has not yet been conducted on nonprofit organizational culture. A more complete follow-up should specifically address changes in organizational culture and its impact over time. An important stream of future research should be to examine groups for whom the question of organizational survival is not important, as in the informal groups we studied, to determine whether this is only a local trend or a broader trend across civic associations in Russia.

Third, another limitation of this research is that interviews were conducted before the 2012 law on foreign agents was enacted. This research illustrates nonprofit organizational culture in a specific moment in time after foreign funding was forbidden and after Russian funding began to increase, but before nonprofits had been accused of being "foreign agents:" we do not know what effect this further restrictive environment has had on nonprofit organizational culture. Future research should examine how changing legal restrictions interact with social and cultural understandings in shaping the organizational culture of civic associations in Russia. Further examination of organizational culture in Russian civic associations can fully help us understand the achievements and challenges facing civil society in Russia today.

Implications

As this research has illustrated, local context can shape organizational culture which in turn has implications for the ability of groups to achieve their objectives, partner with other groups or government, and even survive. While this connection may be observed anywhere, the link between local culture, organizational culture and nonprofit outcomes is especially significant for emerging democracies and other social contexts in which nonprofit organizations represent a new or distinct form of social action. In particular, where international agencies have funded nonprofit organizations, the resulting nonprofit organizational culture may be at odds with local social norms or practices. Understanding how nonprofits' organizational culture can be shaped by funders and by local social context can help us be aware of and avoid such contradictions in other settings.

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Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of interest The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Ethical standards Data were collected from interviews conducted with NGO leaders and members in Novosibirsk, Russia. Names of individuals and their organizations are kept confidential; therefore, pseudonyms of organizations are used in the article to conceal identities of groups and their leaders. Individual respondents were explained the purpose of the research, were given a choice whether to voluntarily participate in the study, gave informed consent to audio recording and subsequent transcription of the interview, and to have their statements used in research publications.

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