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Nonprofit influence on public policy : exploring nonprofit advocacy in Russia

Ljubownikow, S and Crotty, J

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Participation and Influence in Public Policy:

Exploring the Advocacy of Non-Profit Organizations in a Managed Democracy

This paper examines the advocacy tactics of Russian NPOs. While Russian NPOs and their activities have been widely researched, specific insight into their use of advocacy tactics remains limited. In this paper we address this gap by broadening the understanding of how NPOs engage in advocacy. To do so we operationalize both Mosley's (2012) indirect/insider framework and qualitative data collected from health and education NPOs (HENPOs) in three industrial Russian regions. We demonstrate that Russian HENPOs, whilst having access to various advocacy tactics, fail to employ these tactics effectively vis-à-vis influencing of ruling and governing elites. They are instead used for organizational maintenance and case/client advocacy. In concluding, we discuss a potential typology of advocacy tactics in Russia, the usefulness of Mosley's framework in this context and the implications of the failure to advocate for democratization within the Russian Federation.

Keywords: Non-Profit Advocacy, Policy Influence, Democratisation, Russia

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During the political transition process in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the former Soviet Union (FSU), the Russian Federation has retained a mix of democratic participation and authoritarian rule (Wegren & Konitzer, 2007). This has meant that Russia's *brand* of democratic governance or managed democracy (Wegren & Konitzer, 2007), limits the scope of NPO activity and thus impact the ability of NPOs to engage in activities aimed at influencing public policy – generally referred to as advocacy. To shed light on this issue, we illustrate the nature, type, and use of advocacy tactics by Russian NPOs in the health and education sector; a sector hitherto relatively neglected in the study of Russian civil society (Ljubownikow & Crotty, 2014).

The focus on health and education NPOs (hereon in: HENPOs) offers specific insight into an area which has seen parallels to government failure (Weisbrod, 1978) – the retreat of the Russian state from its social responsibilities (Sil & Chen, 2004) – with the burden falling on HENPOs to plug the gap (Rivkin-Fish, 1999). The health sector in particular has seen an increased demand for services related to issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, mental health, and HIV/AIDS; areas in which Russian practices are said to be lagging behind global best practice (Titterton, 2006). Further, Iarskaia-Smirnova and Romanov (2002) conclude that resource allocation and social service provision by the Russian state suffers from inertia. Given the lack of democratic accountability within a system of managed democracy (Wegren & Konitzer, 2007) it is advocacy by HENPOs which could provide important impetus for necessary changes in this area of public policy. Therefore, we ask how Russian HENPOs advocate in this context. In so doing we address Almog-Bar and Schmid (2014) recent call for a more nuanced understanding of advocacy in different contexts. To do so we structure the paper as follows. We first outline the literature on NPO advocacy, followed by an overview of factors affecting advocacy activities of Russian NPOs. We then describe the research study

from which the findings in the paper derive and present its findings. To conclude, we illustrate the limitations of the study and outline the contributions the paper makes.

NPO and Advocacy Activities

In this paper we understand advocacy as the “expressive function” (James & Rose-Ackerman, 1986, p. 9) or the voice of NPOs. By this we mean their ability to gain *access* to the relevant institutions or individuals and the *capability* to influence them (Almog-Bar & Schmid, 2014). Hence advocacy can be seen as “the term generally used to describe efforts to influence public policy” (Boris & Mosher-Williams, 1998, p. 488) and thus to effect changes in the NPOs’ operating environment (Frumkin, 2002; Moulton & Eckerd, 2012; Suarez & Hwang, 2008). Similar to other contexts, public policy in the Russian Federation is understood as the principles, policies, and practices implement by state power (Wheeler, Unbegaun, Falla, & Thompson, 2000). Advocacy therefore turns NPOs into active governance actors (Chaskin & Greenberg, 2013); non-elected representatives for their constituency or the public (Mosley & Grogan, 2013). Consequently, the objectives of NPO advocacy activities are wide ranging and can include agenda setting, influencing long-term priorities and/or resource allocation (Andrews & Edwards, 2004). In addition, Mosley (2012) observes that NPOs engage in advocacy activities when policy restricts their ability to deliver services, use advocacy to build partnerships *with* the state and its agents, to secure funding, and/or share/promote their expertise. A vital part of NPO advocacy activities also relates to lobbying, the attempt to directly influence legislation or legislative developments (Suarez & Hwang, 2008). Both advocacy as well as its subset of lobbying activities are shaped by the regulatory context faced by NPOs (Kerlin & Reid, 2010).

In this paper we focus on service providing NPOs for whom advocacy is often a secondary activity (Van Til, 2009). However, these organizations due to the nature of their funding arrangements, are often in a good position to access policy makers (Mosley, 2010;

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Moulton & Eckerd, 2012). For many such NPOs advocacy is a crucial support activity (Van Til, 2009). Even though service providing NPOs will have fewer organisational capabilities than their specialist advocacy counterparts (Andrews & Edwards, 2004), their engagement in advocacy is often crucial to achieve both their long-term objectives (Suarez & Hwang, 2008) and creating spaces for social engagement.

Service providing NPOs chose to engage in advocacy for either social benefit (often associated with lobbying in the public interest) or organizational benefits (advocacy for organizational maintenance and/or survival) (Duer & Mateo, 2013; Garrow & Hasenfeld, 2014; Mosley, 2012; Suarez & Hwang, 2008). Nicholson-Crotty (2009) finds that advocacy, in particular its subset of lobbying activities can often lead to costly retribution against NPOs by hostile ruling and governing elites, including the withholding of resources. In turn this means that service providing NPOs have to carefully balance their social justice and public interest goals with their service delivery activities (Sanders & McClellan, 2014; Tomlinson & Schwabenland, 2009). Thus, we now turn to look in more detail at potential advocacy tactics used by service providing NPOs.

NPO advocacy tactics

Mosley (2011) states that NPOs can engage in advocacy that is *indirect* and/or *insider* focused. *Indirect* tactics are used when NPOs advocate without directly participating in the policy making process. Hence, *indirect* tactics are targeted at engaging the public and influencing the public discourse. *Indirect* advocacy activities may include “writing letters to the editor, working with advocacy coalitions, issuing policy reports, and conducting a demonstration” (Mosley 2011, p.441) or utilising social media outlets (Guo & Saxton, 2014). The mobilisation of the public is key to *indirect* tactics and thus such tactics are more conducive to advocate for issues which have a wider social benefit (i.e. benefit the broader public (Garrow & Hasenfeld, 2014)).

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Conversely, where NPOs use their personal connection to influence public policy, Mosley (2011) describes this as *insider* advocacy or tactics. *Insider* tactics rely on the NPO's capability to directly interact with ruling and governing elites. This interaction can take place in a formal, institutionalized setting such as public hearings or committees or informally through personal meetings (Mosley, 2011). To operationalize *insider* tactics NPOs not only require direct access to state institutions but also to individuals embedded within ruling and governing elites. These sort of advocacy activities are more conducive to ensuring organizational maintenance (Duer & Mateo, 2013; Mosley, 2012).

In a democratic context, NPOs seek a balanced combination of both indirect and insider tactics to advance their advocacy objectives. In this way they are able to engage with multiple governance levels (Beyers & Kerremans 2012) and raise both public awareness (*indirect* tactics) and increase direct participation (*insider* tactics) (Mosley, 2012). Lobbying activities, for example, require this sort of balance of tactics (Suarez & Hwang, 2008). Further, in strengthening their advocacy work NPOs often use political ties (Beyers & Kerremans, 2012), establish advocacy networks (Galaskiewicz, Bielefeld, & Dowell, 2006) join specialized umbrella organizations (Balassiano & Chandler, 2010; Kraemer, Whiteman, & Banerjee, 2013), or bolster membership (Schmid, Bar, & Nirel, 2008).

However, these insights into NPO advocacy behaviour assume that such organizations operate in an environment within which a political culture of public participation exists. This is not the case in the context of the Russian Federation (Titterton, 2006). Yet, understanding NPO advocacy in such a context is important for a number of reasons. First, NPO advocacy reflects their capability to influence public policy and monitor government behaviour (Andrews & Edwards, 2004). Second, advocacy reflects the institutionalization of public participation in the political process (Meyer, 2004). Third, advocacy ensures NPO survival by facilitating access to resources (Mosley, 2012). Nevertheless, little is known about the

availability, motivation and use of advocacy tactics in managed democracies and thus warrants further attention. .

The Russian context therefore provides an interesting venue within which to explore advocacy tactics. To provide some context we shortly summarise the literature of Russian civil society development. In so doing we draw on Salamon and Anheier's (1998) suggestion of considering a variety of contextual influences that shape the social space available for NPO activity and action.

A Constricted Social Space: The Advocacy Potential of Russian NPOs

The space in which Russian NPOs operate is still informed by its Soviet antecedents. During the Soviet Union there was no independent 'third sector' as open dissent and public protest was prohibited. Instead Russian society split into two halves, ordinary citizens in one, using ties of friendship and family to hedge against the vagaries of central planning, whilst elites – factory controllers, senior apparatchiks and party members used similar ties to gain favours, obviate rules and consolidate their position and occupied the other half (Mishler & Rose, 1997; Rose, 2000). Thus strong ties existed within these groups but there was no third sector to bridge the space between the two. This fostered mistrust particularly from citizens towards elites. The result was a constriction of Soviet social space.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union this constricted space remained intact. Elites operationalized their ties to secure control of the newly privatised sector, whilst ordinary citizens used their ties to hedge against the uncertainties of shock therapy, privatisation and mass state withdrawal from social services (Mishler & Rose, 1997; Rose, 2000). At the same time organizations like the ones making up the environmental movement which had been so instrumental in taking advantage of the political opportunity of perestroika for mass protest (Tarrow, 1988; Weiner, 2002), splintered into a myriad of small and single

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issue organizations competing for resources (Crotty, 2006), no longer capable of engaging the public in this way.

In addition, factors emerging from within the new Russian state further impeded NPO development. First the public rejected volunteering in formalised settings as a reaction to forced participation in public life during the Soviet period which meant that NPOs have difficulties in recruiting volunteers (Howard, 2002); second as a result of Russia's constricted social space legacy NPOs are parochial and inward looking resulting in a lack of public participation and support of NPOs (Crotty, 2006; Spencer, 2011). Third NPOs were unsuccessful in developing domestic funding channels relying on foreign support directed at activities without public support (Henderson, 2002). Finally, the persistent importance of informal relationships in the Russian Federation (Ledeneva, 2006). As stated above, the nature of central planning necessitated the forming of strong informal relationships, either to access resources or to retain your elite position. Informal relations thus constituted a vital aspect of everyday life in the Soviet Union (Mishler & Rose, 1997) and remain an integral part of political and business life in the Russian Federation (Ledeneva, 2006). However, NPOs are often characterized as being outside these networks with organisations missing informal relations and their associated links (Ljubownikow, Crotty, & Rodgers, 2013), as well as opposition and hostility towards NPOs has impeded the development of *insider* advocacy. In addition, legislative changes since 2006 have limited political opportunity (Ljubownikow & Crotty, 2014; Tarrow, 1988) to engage or bridge the gap between the public and the Russian elite.

The Putin/Medvedev administrations have implemented stricter regulation affecting NPOs, which include rules on the use of funding (Maxwell, 2006), classifying NPOs assessed as politically active (for example those engaging in advocacy activities) and receiving foreign funding as foreign agents (Bennetts, 2012). In addition, large fines for unofficial

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demonstrations have also been introduced (Bryanski, 2012). Alongside these developments, the Russian state has also promoted regional Civic Chambers (*Obshchestvennaya palata*) as the main channel for NPO-State interaction (Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, 2010).

Civic Chambers are government initiated structures meant to encourage scrutiny of public policy making and public administration (Richter, 2009). They are also responsible for the allocation of government funding to NPOs. Further, the Civic Chambers also organize regular roundtables and committees for invited NPOs to raise and discuss their issues (Richter, 2009). However, the invited nature of the Civic Chamber (most members are appointed by ruling and governing elites (Richter, 2009)) and its monopoly on access to state authorities have a potential restricting effect on the advocacy activities of NPOs. Thus legislative, cultural-historic and organizational factors shape a constricted social space for NPO advocacy activity. Tarrow (1988) asserts that for political opportunity to occur, NPOs or social movements need one or a combination of shifting alignments, or division within elite groupings and influential allies, particularly in non-democratic settings, that can protect them from elite response. Within Russia's constricted social space, even if political opportunities arose NPOs appear to be both without allies and the state has already signalled the nature of its response to NPOs seeking to take advantage of any such opportunity – ultimately limiting political opportunities therein.

Despite these negative indicators, there are some recent examples where NPOs have engaged in effective advocacy. This includes criticism of regulatory changes impacting NPOs (Alekseeva et al., 2005) leading to legislative amendments. Javeline and Lindemann-Komarova (2010) also highlight a positive advocacy experiences of NPOs coming together at a regional level forcing the re-routing of a planned oil pipeline around Lake Baikal. NPOs have also been successful in case advocacy and supported individuals in bringing litigation charges against businesses and local councils through the Russian court system (Fröhlich,

2012). However, these examples contrast strongly with the wider literature on Russian NPOs which overwhelmingly indicates that such organisations have limited advocacy potential (Crotty & Hall, 2013).

Thus drawing on the wider and general literature on Russian NPOs we would expect that Russian NPOs are likely to have underdeveloped or constrained advocacy opportunities. To explore this, we focus on Russian NPO engagement in activities of an advocacy nature (including lobbying) and how NPOs understand and utilize these activities. Before presenting our findings we first provide an overview of our research study.

The Research Study

To date, most of the understanding of NPOs in the Russian context has been informed by the study of such organizations in Moscow and St. Petersburg (Javeline & Lindemann-Komarova, 2010). With the experience of organizations in provincial Russia differing, we base our study in the Russian cities of Perm, Yekaterinburg, and Samara. These three cities are representative of Russian cities located in industrialised-provinces, which have a significant defence sector and are over 80% ethnic Russian (Federal State Statistics Service, 2010). We choose these three urban areas as study sites for HENPO advocacy, because they are the location of the respective regional authorities and in provincial Russia it is urban areas where Russia's middle class resides and which is traditional associated with more NPO activity (Salamon & Anheier, 1998). Thus these cities provide the study with a relevant as well as sufficiently similar context to examine HENPO advocacy and minimizing potential regional factors to act as explanatory influences (Miles & Huberman, 1999) enhancing transferability of our insights (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

HENPOs were purposefully selected (Siggelkow, 2007) based on their activities and objectives to fit with the study's focus on health and education. Further we also drew on organizations' own categorisation as to whether they defined themselves as NPOs in the

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Russian Federation often known as *obshchestvennyye organizatsii*, which translates into social or public organisations. Data was collected via a semi-structured interview protocol. This protocol was informed by the advocacy literature and literature on Russian civil society development (a selection of the questions asked were what projects/activities organization do, what factors impact their work, whether they engage in advocacy, what they consider advocacy to be, and which of their activities they associated with advocacy) and allowing respondents to provide a narrative of their organizations *modus operandi* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Such an approach enables us to capture the respondent's own interpretations (Eisenhardt, 1989) assisting us in evaluating how respondents understand and characterize the activities of their organization.

Reflecting Spencer's observation (2011, p. 1080) of Russian NPOs, most HENPOs in this study were also dominated by 'democratic centralism', where the leader's ideas are automatically adopted by full member consent. Thus, the leader's response represents the most relevant opinion to organisational decision-making. Therefore, interviews were conducted in Russian with leaders of NPOs lasting on average 45 minutes. To reduce the risk of self-reporting bias in the interview, this data was triangulate during the coding and analysis process with observational and artefactual data (such as flyers, pamphlets, published material, and other publically available information) collected by attending HENPO events. Appendix A provides an overview of the organizations in this study, their activities, and a proxy measure for size.

To protect the confidentiality of respondents, their responses and organizations were anonymized using acronyms. For analysis all interviews were transcribed and translated into English in situ, calling on the skills of native speakers wherever discrepancies arose. Documents and artefactual data, if the latter contained textual content, were also translated into English. Akin to open coding, inductive coding started with reading and rereading

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interview transcripts, documents, and other textual data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). This process led to the emergence of codes, which were then grouped, into emerging themes. This thematic coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006) led to themes centred on the activities of NPOs, whether respondents defined these as entailing advocacy, and how organizations understood and organized any advocacy activities they saw themselves engaging in. Themes were then assessed for common patterns and/or differences and Mosley's (2011) definition of *indirect* and *insider* advocacy was used to organise data points.

To ensure coding reliability and reduce ambiguities the codes and themes were discussed with field experts during and after the coding process. All interview data was cross-checked against observational notes and data artefacts which also assisted to establish relationships between different parts of the data (Miles & Huberman, 1999). In this process we also compared whether the narratives and discourses by respondents differed based on geographical location. Although there were some differences (for example in Perm respondents made more references to incidents of indirect advocacy tactics however often describing the activities of other non human service organisations rather than their own), our aim was to establish an overarching narrative illustrating the challenges and issues Russian HENPOs faced in a constricted societal space rather than capturing organisational or regional variances. In this paper we present our analysis by drawing on the practices of reporting narrative enquiry outcomes where the aim is to highlight how respondents make sense of their own world (Bruner, 1991). Thus we present the narrative constituting the emergent themes using 'illuminating examples' (de Vaus, 2001, p. 240) from the interviews to exemplify key points.

Findings

Indirect Tactics

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Mosley (2011) suggests a variety of activities that can be characterised as *indirect* advocacy tactics. However, the activities Mosley (2011) describes require the mobilisation of the public – a capability Russian NPOs lack (Crotty, 2009). Despite this, HENPOs in this study did illustrate that they “[wrote] letters to the social protection department” (Respondent 50, Org02Yek) or are “writing a complaint” (Respondent 38, Org13Per) on behalf of their constituents. HENPOs also illustrated that they wrote letters for specific individuals who would approach them directly for assistance. This was not done as part of a planned advocacy campaign but instead part of the organisations case advocacy approach. If these letters were ineffective however, HENPOs appeared to capitulate stating that they “never go to court” (Respondent 48, Org23Per) or followed up failed complaints. Other indirect advocacy tactics were absent from the respondents’ narratives or their use was rejected. Respondent 32, captures the attitude towards demonstrations present at in all the narratives captured by this study.

The authorities turn away from them [organizations which engage in demonstrations] and mainly cooperate with us. Events such as going on to the street and shouting give us this, give us that, we do not do this. We do not want conflict with the authorities or the government (Respondent 32, Org08Per).

Similarly, respondents stated that “I do not like working through demonstrations at all” (Respondent 48, Org23Per), or did “not do big actions and activities like that [demonstrations]” (Respondent 52, Org04Yek). Hence, in addition to the historic lack of organizational capability to mobilize the public and the public’s apathy to engage with NPOs (Crotty, 2006), HENPOs viewed demonstrations or direct protest action negatively. HENPOs perception of elite response (Tarrow, 1988) meant that participation in such events was

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viewed as resulting in antagonising a state that had already constrained NPOs' social space. Thus HENPOs actively rejected the participation therein.

Furthermore, demonstrations and other indirect advocacy tactics required organisations to collaborate with others in for example advocacy coalitions or umbrella organizations (Balassiano & Chandler, 2010). Although, HENPOs did note that they co-operated on for example “organizing a roundtable” (Respondent 47, Org22Per) this interaction was described as “helping us mainly morally” (Respondent 6, Org06Sam) or downplayed as unimportant “[it is] not really cooperation, it is more an exchange of ideas” (Respondent 50, Org02Yek). When the narrative on co-operation was explored further, HENPOs indicated that that “there is no love or friendship lost” (Respondent 27, Org03Per) between organizations. They also and portrayed other HENPOs as “competitors” (Respondent 6, Org06Sam; Respondent, 27, Org03Per; Respondent 49, Org01Yek) rather than partners for a common cause or a member of the same social movement. In pitting one group against another the foreign funding regimes of the 1990s (Henderson, 2002) have contributed to this resistance to collaborate. With competition now for state funding still in place, this is unlikely to change.

The experience of Russian HENPOs suggests that they perceived the majority of indirect advocacy tactics available to NPOs (see Mosley, 2011) as not relevant. The politicisation of NPO advocacy activity by the state via regulation and targeted organisational inspections (Earle, 2013), has dis-incentivized HENPOs from using *indirect* advocacy tactics. Thus HENPOs also saw no need to involve or mobilise the public. This combined with the absence of advocacy coalitions deprived HENPOs of leverage vis-à-vis ruling and governing elites. It seems that the constricted social space in which HENPOs exists limits the use of indirect advocacy tactics and requires them to utilise *insider* advocacy tactics.

Insider Advocacy

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As illustrated above, *insider* tactics were not associated with specific activities, but were instead delineated by the ability of NPOs to directly access ruling and governing elites (Mosley, 2011). For example, Mosley (2012) considers access based on personal relationships as providing a crucial platform for *insider* advocacy. HENPOs in this study illustrated several direct access opportunities to ruling and governing elites. HENPOs sought to “participate in all meetings, committees, roundtables, conferences that are organized by the government” (Respondent 29, Org05Per). Reflecting the importance of personal ties (Mishler & Rose, 1997), respondents also highlighted that they could use connections such as “university friends or friends I made around that time” (Respondent 79, Org30Yek) to gain access to these meetings. However, most pointed out that to participate in these meetings you needed to be “invited” (Respondent 61, Org12Yek). In addition, engagement in such events was often a one-off and did not allow HENPOs to develop an outlet for more systematic *insider* advocacy tactics. Thus HENPOs were aware of the need to “move away from one-time events” (Respondent 64, Org15Yek) as part of developing regular access to ruling and governing elites. As a result a number of HENPOs (Org01Sam, Org07Sam, Org18Sam, Org02Per, Org05Per, Org11Per, Org12Per, Org02Yek, Org12, Yek, Org15Yek, Org30Yek), indicated that they had tried to get elected to the regional Civic Chamber. A place in the Civic Chamber would provide consistent access to the regional ruling and governing elites.

HENPOs were aware that they participate in “manipulated structures” (Respondent 61, Org12Yek), and that these are not “initiatives [that] come from the ground up” (Respondent 33, Org09Per). Nevertheless, this access enabled HENPOs to become “friendly with the government and lets them know we exist” (Respondent 64, Org15Yek). Thus insider advocacy was seen less as a way of influencing decision making by ruling and governing elites but an opportunity to promote “ideas” (Respondent 16, Org17Sam), “where you should speak your mind” (Respondent 64, Org15Yek) or “approach the authorities with a problem”

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(Respondent 48, Org23Per). However, HENPOs were also aware of elite response (Tarrow, 1989) and that the scope of topics that could be discussed within the Civic Chamber was limited because “you will not be re-invited if you raise something they do not like” (Respondent 50, Org02Yek).

Thus, HENPOs in this study did not engage roundtables and committees for *insider* tactics. Instead they were seen as “a good way for the government to tell us about [upcoming] changes to the law” (Respondent 10, Org10Sam) or “try to know what the governments wants to do or wants us to do” (Respondent 29, Org05Per). *Insider* tactics were not viewed as a way to shape the governing and ruling elites policy agendas. Hence, HENPOs viewed roundtables or other meetings, as an opportunity to establish working relationships with the state via “helping [to] build personal relations” (Respondent 50, Org02Yek). Even though this was a vital component of *insider* tactics (Mosley, 2011, 2012) HENPOs in this study did not portray such emerged relationships in this way. Instead these relationships were more useful for day-to-day activities as they facilitated “solving problems that we face when we want to do an event” (Respondent 79, Org30Yek). Thus, as respondent 60 outlines, HENPOs were motivated to engage in these roundtables or committees so that they “will be able to tell the relevant person without the Civic Chamber” (Respondent 60, Org11Yek), rather than using the direct access offered by the state as part of their advocacy tactics.

Using Advocacy Tactics: Case Advocacy

As illustrated above for HENPOs in this study, advocacy was also not about influencing policy but a way of accessing information for dissemination amongst their constituencies (clients as well as members) or providing a service. In so doing, advocacy was viewed as “enlighten[ing] people about their rights” (Respondent 54, Org06Yek).

Thus understanding of advocacy was markedly different from how advocacy is defined in the literature or understood in mature democracies (Boris & Mosher-Williams,

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1998) where such activities are aimed at promoting a common or aggregate interest (Andrews & Edwards, 2004) or organizational maintenance (Mosley, 2012). Moreover in our study, advocacy was done for individuals. Organisations in all three regions therefore saw advocacy not as a way of promoting change at a policy level but as “help[ing] individuals solve their problems” (Respondent 60, Org11Yek; Respondent 14, Org15Sam; Respondent 29, Org05Per; Respondent 32, Org08Per).

The fact that advocacy was focused on the individual rather than shaping public discourse is no doubt an outcome of the constricted nature of HENPOs operating environment. It might also suggest that HENPOs lack the necessary organizational capacity to engage in influencing at the policy level. However, HENPOs in this study stated that advocacy at the policy level at the municipal or regional level bore little fruit because “it is very difficult to change the situation for the better on a regional level (...), because decision are made in Moscow” (Respondent 42, Org17Per). In addition, Respondent 12 described the sentiments of others in highlighting that governing elites at the municipal and regional level lacked the willingness to engage with NPOs and thus enable their participation in policy making.

During the Soviet Union, HENPOs did not do any advocacy work and I think such stereotypes are still there [amongst the ruling and governing elites] (Respondent 12, Org12Sam).

This perceived lock out at the regional and municipal level explains why HENPOs in this study focused on advocacy for individuals to assert their social rights. In turn this meant that HENPOs only engage in advocacy type activities that would not get them into trouble with ruling and governing elites, and thus limited harmful elite response (Tarrow, 1988).

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Consequently, advocacy activities for individuals had become part of the services provision HENPOs offer to their constituencies. The lack of narrative with regards to participation in more systematic ways to influence policy is however, worrisome as it means that interest representation within Russia's ailing welfare sector remains underdeveloped (Cerami, 2009). This service based approach to advocacy allows low level individual grievances to be smoothed out, without presenting a challenge to the overall authority of ruling and governing elites. It also means that current NPO advocacy has limited scope to drive democratisation.

Conclusion

In this paper we examine how Russian NPOs advocate. In so doing we answer Almog-Bar and Schmid (2014) call to add nuance to the understanding of advocacy in different contexts. Little has been known about the availability, motivation and use of advocacy tactics in managed democracies and our paper sheds some light on these issues. Russia's managed democratic context and cultural-historic heritage provide an insight into advocacy tactics operationalized by service providing in this context NPOs.

In this paper we employed Mosley's (2011) framework of *indirect* and *insider* advocacy tactics to structure respondents' narrative on the nature and use advocacy activities. Our evidence indicates that this framework is simplistic in describing the complicated contextual factors affecting NPO advocacy activity choice. Thus the respondent's discourse shows an awareness of a wide variety of *indirect* advocacy activities available but only their limit their use. Although Mosley's (2011) framework is useful in providing an initial description of indirect advocacy, it does not account for the constrictedness of the context in which Russian HENPOs operate and thus the choice of actual advocacy activities available. These choices are limited because HENPOs fear antagonising the state and a negative elite response or retaliation (Tarrow, 1988). Retaliation could be proactive such as unannounced organizational audits (Earle, 2013), blacklisting which restricts an NPO's ability to access

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funding from domestic sources, or passive with ruling and governing elites ignoring organizations and subsequent loss of access. Hence, Russia's managed democracy demonstrate that in a societally constricted context NPOs face a more complex and nuanced consideration when making choices about advocacy and attempting to balance organizational service delivery objectives and social justice goals (Sanders & McClellan, 2014; Tomlinson & Schwabenland, 2009). Therefore in extending Mosley's (2011) framework to managed democratic context where societal space for NPOs is constricted, we argue that we need to establish the subcategory of *limited indirect advocacy tactics*.

Another key aspect of Mosley's (2011) framework is the use of *insider* advocacy tactics. Given the importance of personal relationships in Russian society at large, NPOs require such access in order to navigate their constricted societal space and potentially open up areas for action and democratisation. However, in this context access points to ruling and governing elites are controlled by the state. In effect the Russian state licences access to personal relationships, ensuring that most of the influencing power remains rooted within ruling and governing elites.

This has resulted in a pragmatic response by Russian HENPOs, who see these institutionalized access points not primarily as opportunities to advocate (in the sense of policy influence) but opportunity to build or maintaining personal relations facilitating organizational maintenance or limited case/client advocacy. Therefore, in a managed democratic setting where societal space of NPO activity is constricted we have to refer to *institutionalized insider advocacy tactics*, thus adding a subcategory to Mosley's (2012) insider tactics. Such *institutionalized insider advocacy tactics* also mean that organisations are reluctant to cooperate with each other as access points are limited and thus under organizational competition. Our evidence suggest that organizations perceived that those

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NPOs winning such access points take a more pragmatic and less confrontational approach to ruling and governing elites hence limiting engagement in *indirect* advocacy activities.

Mosley (2011) states that NPOs engage in advocacy via both *indirect* and *insider* tactics and although this suggest that organizations might need to consider trade-off engaging in one and not the other, the assumption of this consideration is based on the potential effectiveness of the various tactics. This also assumes that consistent opportunity for advocacy exists and that organisations have the skills to engage in advocacy and advocacy choices are about tactical effectiveness. However the context of the Russian Federation highlights that organizational consideration about trade-offs focused less on tactical effectiveness and more on organisational survival. Although *limited indirect advocacy tactics* encouraged HENPOs to involve the wider Russian public and give vulnerable sections of society a voice, *institutionalized advocacy tactics* facilitate organizational survival and their ability to provide services to these societal groups. Our insights show that HENPOs felt that it was better to have some interaction with the state and its institutions even if it is controlled, licenced, and directed by ruling and governing elites, rather than no involvement at all and hence trading-off indirect advocacy tactics. Interaction means that the state was aware of HENPOs existence. This constitutes a positive development because in the past ruling and governing elites were altogether ignorant to the existence of NPOs (Jakobson & Sanovich, 2010). In the longer run, human service NPOs maybe able to leverage this attention by influencing public policy and government behaviour (Andrews & Edwards, 2004) and contribute to the democratisation process or widen public participation in political processes (Meyer, 2004).

The conclusions drawn here however do need to be seen in light of the limitations of this study. A larger sample, different methodological approach, different sectors and regions may have pointed to different reactions and narratives and are avenues for future research.

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However, despite these limitations and the papers focus on only two specific types of organizations in three regions, our findings show a strong relationship with the extended literature on civil society in Russia (Crotty, 2009; Jakobson & Sanovich, 2010; Spencer, 2011).

Our findings also suggest that the recently observed success of advocacy activities (Fröhlich, 2012; Javeline & Lindemann-Komarova, 2010) remain singular events and are not yet evidence of the development of an active advocacy culture amongst all types of Russian NPOs. The narratives of respondents indicate that HENPOs both fear elite response as well as lack the relevant capabilities or organizational cultures (i.e. their understanding of advocacy as only a case based activity) to take full advantage of available, albeit institutionalized, advocacy opportunities. Hence NPO advocacy activities in this context remain constrained (Crotty & Hall, 2013). Our evidence lets us to suggest that in a constricted civil society space advocacy tactics need to be classified as *limited indirect* and *institutionalized insider* – rather than just indirect and insider. It highlights that Russian NPOs are pragmatic creatures who have adapted their available advocacy tactics to their context.

Appendices

Appendix A:

| Organisation | Date, Membership/ Staff | Main Objective |
|---------------------|--|---|
| Org01Sam | 1991, 8 S | Civil Society Development |
| Org02Sam | 2001, 1 S | Promoting educational techniques |
| Org03Sam | 2007, 6 S | Charitable programs |
| Org04Sam | 2000, 2 S | Educating volunteers |
| Org05Sam | 1992 (1918), ca. 3000 M | Youth programs |
| Org06Sam | 1991, 2 S | Deaf education |
| Org07Sam | 2003, ca. 20 M | Disability support |
| Org08Sam | 2000, 3 S | Folklore education |
| Org09Sam | 1997 (1993), 3 S | Legal education |
| Org10Sam | 2001, 60 S | Drug addiction and HIV/AIDS support |
| Org11Sam | 2002, 3 S | Language education |
| Org12Sam | 2003, 100 M | Assisting families of Down Syndrome children |
| Org13Sam | 1998, ca. 15 M | Healthy lifestyle promotion |
| Org14Sam | (1924-1933) 1987, 5 S | Humanitarian aid for children |
| Org15Sam | 1999, 7 S | HIV/AIDS support |
| Org16Sam | 2005 (1988), 2 S | Disability support |
| Org17Sam | 1998, 23 S | Disability rights |
| Org18Sam | 1985, 5 S | Healthy lifestyle promotion |
| Org19Sam | 2005, ca 4 S | Organizing Youth exchanges and volunteers |
| Org20Sam | 2007, 3 S | HIV/AIDS support |
| Org21Sam | 1992, 3 S | Children's rights |
| Org22Sam | 1999, 3 S | HIV/AIDS education |
| Org23Sam | 1998, 1 S/ca 10 M | Child health promotion |
| Org24Sam | 2000, ca. 60 M | Assisting the families of autistic children |
| Org01Per | 1999, 3 M | Drug rehabilitation and education |
| Org02Per | 1868, 12 S | Health services |
| Org03Per | 1999, ca 20 S | Disability employment |
| Org04Per | 1995, 6 S | Promoting and organizing Paralympic sport |
| Org05Per | 1938, 38 S | Advocacy for the blind |
| Org06Per | 2006, N.A. | Youth education |
| Org07Per | 1993, 4 S | Disability rights |
| Org08Per | 1926, 22 S | Advocacy for the deaf |

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| | | |
|----------|-------------------------|--|
| Org09Per | 1997, N.A. | Disability rehabilitation |
| Org10Per | 1998, 4 S | Promoting children's rights |
| Org11Per | 1992, ca 18 S | Running museum and human rights education |
| Org12Per | 1998, 4 S | Human rights education |
| Org13Per | 2000, 60 M | Disability rights |
| Org14Per | ca 1997, 70 M | Assisting the families of autistic children |
| Org15Per | 1994, 50 M | Hospice |
| Org16Per | 2005, 10 M | Election monitoring and democracy education |
| Org17Per | 2006, 4 S | Drug rehabilitation |
| Org18Per | 1996, 16 S | Assisting TSOs with marketing and legal advice |
| Org19Per | 2005, 9 M | Housing rights education |
| Org20Per | 2003, 20 M | Citizenship education |
| Org21Per | 1994, 11 S | Health rights education |
| Org22Per | 1998, 3 S | Supporting and implementing social projects |
| Org01Yek | 1988, ca 15 S | Disability rights |
| Org02Yek | 2003, 5 S | Supporting new mothers |
| Org03Yek | ca 2005, 1 S | Disability rights |
| Org04Yek | 1999, 1 S | Disability rights |
| Org05Yek | ca 2000, 5 S | Respite care for the families of disabled children |
| Org06Yek | 2001, 10 S/M | Healthy lifestyle promotion |
| Org07Yek | 2001, ca 5 M | Disability rights |
| Org08Yek | 2002, ca 30 M | Disability rights |
| Org09Yek | ca 2000, 20 S | Drug rehabilitation |
| Org10Yek | 1996, 0 | Disability rights - dissolved |
| Org11Yek | 2000, 7/8 S | Children's rights |
| Org12Yek | 1918, 10 S ca 7000 M | Advocacy for the Blind |
| Org13Yek | 1998, 1 S | Aid to children in poverty |
| Org14Yek | 2004, 1 S | After school education |
| Org15Yek | 2003, 20 M | Disability rights |
| Org16Yek | 1999, 22 S | Providing support to families of those with HIV/AIDS |
| Org17Yek | 1995, 2 S | Organizing special Olympics |
| Org18Yek | 2002, 9 M | Learning disability rights |
| Org19Yek | 2007, 6 M | Education for peace |
| Org20Yek | 1992, 32 M | Support for children's homes |
| Org21Yek | 1999, ca 30 M | Respite for the families of children with cancer - dissolved |
| Org22Yek | 1992, 8 S | Disability rehabilitation |
| Org23Yek | 1996, 2 M | Assisting for children with disabilities |
| Org24Yek | 1998, 3 S | Education of deaf children |

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| | | |
|----------|--|-----------------------------|
| Org25Yek | 1999, ca. 10 S | Student's rights education |
| Org26Yek | 1992 (1918), ca. 17 000 M/ ca 25 S | Youth education activities |
| Org27Yek | 1988, 5 S | Disability rights |
| Org28Yek | 1961, 4 S | After school clubs |
| Org29Yek | 1998, ca. 40 S | Drug rehabilitation |
| Org30Yek | 2003, ca. 450 M | Support MS sufferers |
| Org31Yek | 2004, ca. 3 S | Migrant rights education |
| Org32Yek | 2005, ca. 20 S | Disability rights education |
| Org33Yek | 2000, 1 S | Addiction education |

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