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Екатерина Вячеславовна Королёва
[Ekaterina V. Korolyova]¹,
Наталья Николаевна Пачина
[Natalia N. Pachina]²

Доктринальные подходы и методы
исследования деятельности
политических партий

Doctrinal approaches and methods of
research on the activities of political parties

^{1,2}Липецкий государственный технический университет, г. Липецк, Россия /
Lipetsk State Technical University, Lipetsk, Russia
¹<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4353-1966>
²<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2356-9713>

Автор, ответственный за переписку: Екатерина Вячеславовна Королёва, katysha-lip@mail.ru /
Corresponding author: Ekaterina V. Korolyova, katysha-lip@mail.ru

Аннотация. Верное определение методологической основы исследования является необходимым условием его успешности. Методы познания определяются тем объектом, который выбран в рамках исследования. В статье уделено внимание вопросам определения метод исследования деятельности политических партий, под которой следует понимать процесс, в рамках которого результатом является достижение поставленных целей. В свою очередь деятельность политических партий реализуется через выполнение определенных функций. Перечень функций политических партий можно сформулировать на основе анализа действующего законодательства, регламентирующего отношения в данной области, а также путем выявления особенностей деятельности политических партий через призму политических наук. Наиболее важными следует признать следующие функции политических партий: идеологическая, которая выражается в формировании политической воли населения; артикуляционная, связанная с выражением сформированной политической воли путем ее закрепления в программе партии, направления обращений в государственные органы, общественные организации и т.п.; политические, направленные на участие в выборах, референдумах и т.п.; представительские, которые реализуются путем представления и обеспечения соблюдения интересов электората при взаимодействии с различными институтами государства. Методология научных исследований деятельности политических партий должна основываться на комплексном применении методов различных отраслей науки. В первую очередь следует отметить методы политологии и правовых наук. Изучение политических партий с точки зрения подходов политических наук позволит проанализировать концепции возникновения политических партий, особенности их функционирования в социальных и политических условиях различных государств, а также иные аспекты деятельности данного феномена общественно-политической жизни. Однако анализ функционирования политических партий не может осуществляться только в рамках политических наук, правовые аспекты их деятельности также имеют существенное значение. В рамках исследований деятельности политических партий политико-правовой метод является одним из базовых, который позволяет провести анализ не только оценочных критериев деятельности политических партий и ее практическую реализацию.

В числе правовых методов исследования в первую очередь применим сравнительно-правовой метод, который позволяет проанализировать особенности деятельности политических партий на различных исторических периодах. Применение сравнительно-правового метода особую актуальность приобретает с учетом опыта нашего государства в регулировании взаимодействия государства с политическими партиями, в первую очередь в период существования СССР. Для полноты анализа деятельности политических партий необходимо также использовать психологические методы, которые позволяют выявить особенности поведения лидеров и их влияние на популярность политической партии, уровень доверия населения. Оценку результативности деятельности политической партии необходимо проводить также через анализ ее целей и задач, их соответствия объективным потребностям общества, а также путем выявления уровня доверия электората к той или иной политической силе. Достижения данных задач возможно путем применения социологических методов, таких как статистический метод, метод сбора и анализа информации, интервьюирование. Указанные методы позволяют выявить отношение общественности к политической партии, ее программе, выдвинутым тактическим установкам и т.д. В заключении делается вывод о достаточно широком перечне методов исследования деятельности политических партий, при этом применимыми являются методы различных уровней и отраслевой принадлежности. Однако отмечается, что обоснованными является применение, в первую очередь, политико-правового метода.

Ключевые слова: политическая партия, деятельность политических партий, функции политических партий, метод научного исследования, методы правовых исследований, социально-психологические методы, политико-правовой метод

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Abstract. *The correct definition of the methodological basis of the study is a prerequisite for its success. The methods of cognition are determined by the object that is selected in the framework of the study. The article pays attention to the issues of determining the method of studying the activities of political parties, which should be understood as a process in which the result is the achievement of goals. In turn, the activities of political parties are realized through the performance of certain functions. The list of functions of political parties can be formulated on the basis of an analysis of the current legislation regulating relations in this area, as well as by identifying the features of the activities of political parties through the prism of political science. The following functions of political parties should be recognized as the most important: ideological, which is expressed in the formation of the political will of the population; articulatory, associated with the expression of the formed political will by fixing it in the party program, sending appeals to state bodies, public organizations, etc.; political, aimed at participating in elections, referendums, etc.; representative, which they are implemented by representing and ensuring compliance with the interests of the electorate in interaction with various institutions of the state. The methodology of scientific research on the activities of political parties should be based on the integrated application of methods of various branches of science. First of all, the methods of political science and legal sciences should be noted. The study of political parties from the point of view of the approaches of political sciences will allow analyzing the concepts of the emergence of political parties, the peculiarities of their functioning in the social and political conditions of various states, as well as other aspects of the activity of this phenomenon of socio-political life. However, the analysis of the functioning of political parties cannot be carried out only within the framework of political sciences, the legal aspects of their activities are also essential. Within the framework of research on the activities of political parties, the political and legal method is one of the basic ones that allows analyzing not only the evaluation criteria of the activities of political parties, but also determining the impact of existing*

legal norms on the activities of a political party and its practical implementation. Among the legal methods of research, first of all, we apply the comparative legal method, which allows us to analyze the features of the activities of political parties in various historical periods. The application of the comparative legal method is of particular relevance, taking into account the experience of our state in regulating the interaction of the state with political parties, primarily during the existence of the USSR. For the completeness of the analysis of the activities of political parties, it is also necessary to use psychological methods that will reveal the characteristics of the behavior of leaders and their influence on the popularity of a political party, the level of public confidence. Evaluation of the effectiveness of a political party's activities should also be carried out through an analysis of its goals and objectives, their compliance with the objective needs of society, as well as by identifying the level of trust of the electorate in a particular political force. Achieving these tasks is possible through the use of sociological methods, such as statistical method, method of collecting and analyzing information, interviewing. These methods will reveal the attitude of the public towards a political party, its program, put forward tactical installations, etc. Conclusion, it is concluded that there is a fairly wide list of methods for studying the detail of political parties, while methods of various levels and industry affiliation are applicable. However, it is noted that the application, first of all, of the political and legal method is justified.

Keywords: political party, activity of political parties, functions of political parties, method of scientific research, methods of legal research, socio-psychological methods, political and legal method

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Introduction. Each researcher, setting himself a scientific task, inevitably decides on the choice of methods of scientific knowledge that are necessary and permissible to apply in order to achieve specific goals. The correct choice of cognition methods allows you to optimize the process and increase its efficiency. As A. G. Anufrieva, K. A. Golovin, A. B. Kopylov correctly point out: “a prominent philosopher of the 17th century. F. Bacon associated the method of cognition with a lantern illuminating the way for a traveler walking in the dark. Another famous scientist and philosopher of the same period, R. Descartes, outlined his understanding of the method as follows: “By method... I mean precise and simple rules, strict adherence to which... without unnecessary waste of mental energy, but gradually and continuously increasing knowledge, contributes to that the mind achieves true knowledge of everything that is available to it” [6].

P. V. Vasiliev correctly spoke about the need for the correct choice of research methods and due diligence when using them. The author drew attention to the fact that in modern research the category of methods of cognition occupies a certain secondary place and does not receive proper understanding. “When studying the subject of research, the cognizing subject keeps only it in the focus of his attention, while missing out on the methodological component of the process of obtaining new knowledge. This phenomenon is described by Michael Polanyi. Distinguishing between explicit (explicit) and implicit, peripheral (implicit) knowledge, the philosopher showed the very significant importance of both the first and the second” [10]. This indicates the need for a conscientious and responsible approach to the choice of methodology when conducting research of various types.

Materials and research methods. The problem of the research is to determine approaches and methods that can reveal the specifics of the activities of political parties.

The purpose of the research within the framework of this article is to analyze the approaches and methods of scientific knowledge of the activities of political parties. Achieving this goal can be achieved by solving the following tasks:

- analysis of the concept of “activity of a political party” and identification of its relationship with related categories;

- choosing an approach and determining a list of applicable methods for studying the activities of political parties;
- determining the role and significance of the political-legal approach and appropriate methods for studying the activities of political parties.

As part of the analysis of the main categories of research, it is necessary to determine the content of the following concepts: “research methods”, “activities of political parties”, “functions of political parties”. N.V. Lipchik and K.I. Lipchik offer the following definition of method: “Method (Greek - way of cognition) – in the broadest sense of the word – “the path to something”, the method of activity of the subject in any of its forms” [18, P. 45]. A more detailed concept of the method of scientific knowledge is given by G.I. Ruzavin: “in the broad sense of the word, a method means an orderly and organized way of activity aimed at achieving a certain practical or theoretical goal” [22, P. 14]. The above definitions indicate that methods of cognition and the correctness of their choice are a necessary condition for the comprehensive and consistent achievement of the scientific task.

In order to understand what should be understood by the activities of political parties, it is necessary to dwell on the general theoretical concept of activity. According to the Explanatory Dictionary of T. F. Efremova, activity should be understood as “work, occupation in any area” [11]. A similar concept is contained in the Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language, edited by D. N. Ushakov: activity is “work, the systematic application of one’s forces in some area” [24]. The concept of activity has also been developed within the framework of philosophical sciences. In the Philosophical Encyclopedic Dictionary, activity is proposed to be understood as follows: “a specifically human form of active relationship to the surrounding world, the content of which is its purposeful change and transformation” [13]. Based on the above concepts, we can conclude that activity is always the directed activity of a subject in a certain area. In addition, within the framework of philosophy, the approach has been adopted that every activity includes a goal, a means, a result and the process itself. Accordingly, when determining what should be understood as the activities of political parties, it is necessary to start from the goals that they set for themselves. In accordance with the provisions of Art. 3 of the Federal Law of the Russian Federation of July 11, 2001 No. 95-FZ “On Political Parties”, political parties are created for the purpose of “participation of citizens of the Russian Federation in the political life of society through the formation and expression of their political will, participation in public and political actions, in elections and referendums, as well as for the purpose of representing the interests of citizens in government bodies and local governments” [5]. Accordingly, the activities of political parties should be understood as a process in which the result is the achievement of their goals. The activities of political parties are realized through the performance of certain functions. A.V. Kurochkin proposes to understand the functions of political parties as “the main aspects (directions) of their activities, determined by the goals and objectives facing them” [17].

Research results and their discussion. From the analysis of the provisions of the above article 3 of the Federal Law of the Russian Federation of July 11, 2001 No. 95-FZ “On Political Parties” [5], we can conclude that political parties perform the following functions:

- formation and expression of the political will of citizens;
- participation in public and political events;
- participation in elections and referendums;
- representing the interests of citizens in state authorities and local governments.

However, in scientific publications, taking into account historical experience and analysis of the activities of political parties in foreign countries, broader lists of functions of political parties are proposed. In the scientific literature, attempts are being made to develop a list of functions of political parties, as well as approaches to their classification. Thus, V.I. Timoshenko and D.N. Salykov, based on an analysis of scientific literature, formed the following list of functions of political parties, which are most often noted in research:

- aggregation (unification, accumulation) of socio-political interests, identification of content of a generally significant (political) nature in personal and group interests;

- articulation of socio-political interests, that is, the expression of aggregated interests through generally accepted political forms (statements, open letters from platforms, etc.); articulated interest is a clearly expressed and made public interest;

- formation of collective goals for society by proposing specific and strategic goals, programs and models of social development;

- political socialization of citizens, formation of their qualities and skills of political participation, improvement of the political culture of citizens;

- functions of carrying out practical social (humanitarian) actions, providing social assistance to citizens;

- socio-political control over the activities of state authorities and local self-government;

- the function of developing party platforms and programs (ideological, doctrinal function);

- selection and recruitment of political, especially party, leaders and elites for all levels of the political system;

- the function of the struggle for power, including through participation in elections to government bodies (constitutional path), a forceful (revolutionary) struggle for power is also possible;

- function of participation in government, participation in the political management of society;

- the function of political opposition in a developed democratic society” [23].

A.V. Kurochkin paid much attention to the issues of classifying the functions of political parties in his article “Functions of a political party: political and legal nature.” The author notes that in scientific research there are different approaches to classification. Thus, a number of authors propose to distinguish the following types of functions of political parties: “1) the functions of the party, characterizing its connection with the class (social base), including the functions of articulation and social representation; 2) functions in relation to the political system as a whole and its individual institutions, meaning the function of social integration (or social mobilization); 3) functions of “internal order” that determine the content of intra-party life: the function of political socialization (solves the problems of transferring experience, traditions, political values and political information; forming ideas and attitudes towards politics, political institutions; involving young people in active, organized and purposeful public political activity); ideological function; function of developing and implementing a political course” [17].

Also, A.V. Kurochkin points out that a number of authors (M.L. Ostrogorsky, Yu. Yudin, V.F. Kuznetsov) propose to classify the functions of political parties into external and internal. It is proposed to include external functions: “the struggle for the conquest and use of political power in the interests of one or another group of the population on the basis of the implementation of one’s own program for solving both domestic and international problems; ensuring communication between the masses and government structures, institutionalizing the political participation of citizens and replacing spontaneous forms of socio-political activity of the population with formalized, controlled ones, combating political apathy, passivity, and alienation; selection and recruitment of political leaders and elites at all levels of the political system, participation with their help in managing the affairs of society; coordination of one’s own interests, goals, programs with other participants in the political process; implementation of political socialization of citizens” [17]. Internal functions may include such as “replenishing the party treasury; regulation of property and other relations between primary structures, the party elite and ordinary members, etc.” [17].

Based on the analysis of the above scientific positions and relying on the current legislation, we can conclude that currently the activities of political parties are implemented through the following functions:

- 1) ideological, which is expressed in the formation of the political will of the population;

- 2) articulatory, associated with the expression of the formed political will by consolidating it in the party program, sending appeals to government bodies, public organizations, etc.;

- 3) political, aimed at participating in elections, referendums, etc.;
- 4) representative, which is implemented by representing and ensuring compliance with the interests of the electorate when interacting with various state institutions.

The study of the activities of political parties, based on the above approach, determines a list of methods that allow a comprehensive analysis of the selected object.

In the framework of scientific research devoted to the analysis of the activities of political parties, the ways of their influence on public life, and the use of stabilization mechanisms by these associations, in our opinion, it is necessary to use methodological approaches of at least two interrelated sciences - political science and jurisprudence. The study of political parties from the point of view of the approaches of political sciences will allow us to analyze the concepts of the emergence of political parties, the features of their functioning in the social and political conditions of various states, as well as other aspects of the activity of this phenomenon of socio-political life. However, the analysis of the functioning of political parties cannot be carried out only within the framework of political sciences; the legal aspects of their activities are also of significant importance.

Political parties are an important mechanism for the participation of citizens in political and public life, which determines the need for clear legal regulation of their activities by the state. In addition, as B. A. Isaev points out: "the complexity of the party phenomenon in modern society lies ... in its desire for all-penetration: from government structures to the last "man on the street"" [14]. Such a large-scale impact and penetration of political parties into the sphere of public life dictates the need to establish rules for their activities from the stage of creation to the possibility of participation in parliamentary elections. Currently, this function is performed by the current legislation, which defines the main provisions regulating the activities of parties in Russia. First of all, it is necessary to take into account the provisions of the Federal Law of the Russian Federation of July 11, 2001 No. 95-FZ "On Political Parties" [5]. This law is a special normative legal act that defines the basic principles of the functioning of political parties, the main ones of which are the principle of multi-party system and freedom of association in political parties. It should be noted that in the history of our state, such approaches to regulating the activities of political parties have not always existed. During the USSR period, there was a one-party system, where the state-forming party was the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and in subsequent periods - the CPSU. The main feature of the legal regulation of the status of this party was the absence of special regulatory legal acts, because regulation was carried out at the level of constitutional norms. The Constitution of the USSR of 1936 defined the right of citizens to associations, the list of which did not include political parties. From the analysis of the provisions of Art. 126 of this act, we can conclude that it was allowed to join only one party: "the most active and conscious citizens from the ranks of the working class, working peasants and working intelligentsia voluntarily unite into the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which is the vanguard of workers in their struggle to build a communist society and representing the leadership core of all workers' organizations, both public and state" [2]. Subsequently, as A.P. Kalachev correctly points out, "the Communist Party is the leading and guiding force of Soviet society, the core of its political system, state and public organizations" [15], which was also enshrined at the level of constitutional norms.

Thus, taking into account the peculiarities of the legal status of political parties as a type of political institutions, it is necessary to conduct research using methods of both legal and political sciences. Yu. A. Nisnevich points out in this regard: "The fact that laws and by-laws reflect both regulatory and legal aspects and mechanisms for regulating social relations, as well as political ones, including the organization and regulation of the activities of the system of state power and management, allows the use of acts normatively - the legal system of a modern state as a documentary factual basis for conducting research on political institutions and processes in a given state using a method that is proposed to be called the method of political and legal analysis" [20]. As methods that are used within the framework of political sciences, the main ones in the study of the activities of political parties are the historical method, which allows for the analysis of

phenomena in their historical development, as well as the institutional method. The authors of a political science textbook edited by V.I. Zhukov propose to understand the institutional method as: “prevailing in the legal sciences, it analyzes political life through the activities of political institutions, explores official structures and formal rules of decision-making” [21]. This concept once again emphasizes the close connection between political science and jurisprudence as spheres of scientific knowledge.

Within the framework of research into the activities of political parties, the political-legal method is one of the basic ones, which allows one to analyze not only the evaluative criteria for the activities of political parties, but also to determine the influence of existing legal norms on the activities of a political party and its practical implementation. Since the analysis of the activities of political parties, their role and mechanisms of influence on public life should be based on the study of the legal foundations of their activities, the formal-logical (dogmatic) method becomes of great importance. The formal-logical method allows us to understand the content of legal norms and their essence. This activity is closely related to the use of rules for the interpretation of terms adopted in the philological sciences. The texts of legal acts are presented using certain linguistic and terminological techniques that make it possible to formulate provisions designed for repeated use. Characteristic of legal texts is the use of legal terminology. Moreover, within the framework of different legal systems, the same term can have different meanings, which justifies the relevance of using the comparative legal method in this area of research.

In the framework of scientific research into the activities of political parties, it is justified to use a fairly large set of methods of knowledge, both general and general scientific, and special. The division of methods into general (philosophical), general scientific and specific scientific is classic for science [18, P. 45]. The universal methods of cognition include dialectical and metaphysical methods. The metaphysical method of cognition is currently being replaced by the dialectical one for a number of reasons. Firstly, the metaphysical method of cognition does not recognize the fact of self-development in the objects of research, and secondly, the objects of research are recognized as isolated from each other, not influencing each other. These circumstances are fully true in relation to studies of the activities of political parties. The analysis of various political institutions may be “static” in nature, but such studies will not be comprehensive. Various issues related to the activities of political parties must be studied based on an understanding of the relationship between various areas of life and issues of their mutual influence.

The dialectical method of cognition, in turn, involves the study of phenomena based on taking into account the connections between objects of the surrounding world. A. S. Kravets proposes that the dialectical method is understood as a system of “interrelated and interdependent principles, requirements, guidelines and rules that prescribe a certain order of actions aimed at cognition or transformation of objects” [16, P. 15].

The dialectical method of cognition is applicable within the framework of research into the activities of political parties, both from the point of view of political and legal sciences. Political and legal research can only be comprehensive when an analysis is carried out taking into account past experience of legal regulation of the activities of political parties and the practice of achieving their goals; such approaches make it possible to determine trends in the development of political institutions, the influence of historical experience of legal regulation on the current situation of political parties. This circumstance is clearly illustrated by the various approaches described above to regulating the activities of political parties, which were characteristic of the USSR period and exist at the present stage. In addition, political parties cannot be considered as an isolated phenomenon; their activities are closely connected with economics, sociology, in some cases with theology and a number of other sciences, which does not allow conducting research in isolation from these spheres of knowledge. However, there is no need to completely abandon the use of the metaphysical method of cognition within the framework of political and legal research. It is important for identifying any characteristics of the object under study. In the framework of research into the activities of political institutions, this makes it possible, for example, to identify

the characteristics of political parties that distinguish them from other types of public associations, which makes it possible to determine the specifics of their activities.

It should be taken into account that “philosophical methods set only the most general regulators of research, its general strategy, but do not replace special methods and do not determine the final result of knowledge directly and directly” [8, p. 16]. General methods of cognition in research practice are concretized and given practical application through the use of cognition methods of subsequent levels. General scientific methods of cognition are a set of research tools that are applicable within several areas of cognition. Among these methods, the use of which is justified in analyzing the activities of political parties, can be called analysis, the method of induction, deduction, and comparison.

The method of analysis involves the study of phenomena by decomposing them into their component parts. From the point of view of political research, this method allows for the study of legal systems by identifying their constituent elements, identifying their characteristic features, which will allow a more detailed and in-depth analysis of the ongoing processes and identify their similarities and differences. As part of the study of the activities of political parties, the analysis method allows us to differentiate the functions of political parties and determine their main areas of activity. At the same time, decomposing the object of research (in this case, the activities of political parties) into its component elements allows us to more accurately determine the research methodology in the future.

The methods of induction and deduction are more of an applied nature, because based in part on the use of experimental results. In the field of application of certain types of political mechanisms in our state, this method has received its practical application. Thus, in order to assess the possible consequences of political and legal decisions, quite often political mechanisms are extended to certain territories of the state or certain categories of persons for certain periods. Based on the results of the experiment using legal mechanisms, a final decision is made on the necessity or inadmissibility of the selected methods. The methods of induction and deduction acquire particular significance in the framework of drawing conclusions based on the results of experiments. In addition, quite often, within the framework of studies of the legal regulation of certain relations, including with the participation of political parties, it is necessary to identify general and specific aspects in their interrelation. Thus, when studying the activities of political parties, it is necessary to take into account that they are a type of public association of citizens. In this regard, the study should be based on the principle, first of all, of studying the general norms of law - the provisions of the Federal Law of the Russian Federation of May 19, 1995 No. 82-FZ “On Public Associations” [4] with the gradual identification of the content of special legal norms - the Federal Law of the Russian Federation of July 11, 2001 No. 95-FZ “On Political Parties” [5]. Thus, the method of moving from the general to the specific is applied.

Within the framework of scientific research into the activities of political parties, the comparison method is of no small importance. The use of this method allows us to determine the features of the implementation of the functions of political parties at various stages, as well as to identify the influence of processes occurring in the state or society on the activities and tasks of party structures. It is also important in a number of studies to conduct a comparative analysis of the activities of various parties when addressing issues of a certain focus, as well as identifying the similarities or differences in the results achieved. The general scientific method of comparison within the framework of research into the legal regulation of the activities of political parties has received additional development. In jurisprudence, a special method has been formed - comparative legal, which is used to identify the general and distinctive features of legal phenomena; or the same institutions in different historical periods or in different legal systems and states. The use of the comparative legal method in studying the peculiarities of legal regulation of the same institutions in different countries allows us to more fully identify the interrelationships of various spheres of social life. Using this method in relation to the activities of political parties will make it possible to determine how the social norms formed in the state, the peculiarities of the

traditions of public administration, the specifics of religious worldviews and other factors influence the development of these political institutions, their composition and performance.

The comparative legal method is essential when analyzing the ideological function of political parties. From this point of view, our state has a unique experience, which is most clearly demonstrated by the analysis of the role and significance of the Communist Party at various historical stages of the development of society. In Art. 6 of the USSR Constitution of 1977 stated: "The leading and guiding force of Soviet society, the core of its political system, state and public organizations is the Communist Party of the Soviet Union" [3]. This legal norm is a reflection of the state ideology of that period and the specifics of building public administration in the Soviet state. The provisions of this norm are not relevant and are not applicable in modern political conditions, however, the study of historical experience allows us to evaluate modern legislation and the practice of its application through the prism of historical experience, taking into account positive and negative results. T. M. Bazhenova, N. N. Zipunnikova, A. S. Smykalin note that the dual nature of historical and legal sciences, "developing at the intersection of history and scientific jurisprudence, determines significant potential and constructive combinations in research activities" [7, С 6]. Thus, the analysis of the ideological function of political parties must be carried out using the comparative research method, as well as the comparative legal method as its private scientific subtype.

Within the framework of research into the activities of political parties, the use of a number of historical methods is justified. Historical and legal research allows us to identify the dynamics and trends in the development of legal institutions. On this matter, one should agree with the opinion of O. I. Chistyakov, who noted that the specificity of historical and legal research lies in the study of law in its historical development (law in dynamics), while branch legal sciences study the current law (law in statics) [25, P. 89]. In our state, issues of the influence of political parties on public administration and various spheres of public life have special aspects. As indicated above, this is most clearly manifested when analyzing the activities of the Communist Party, which was the only political force during the Soviet period. The Communist Party continues its activities to this day, but its status and role in the state have undergone significant changes. Currently, this party is no longer the only one in the state, which is determined primarily by the provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, which in Art. 13 consolidated multi-party system and political diversity [1]. However, the analysis of the activities of the Communist Party does not lose its relevance, because it had a significant influence on the formation of Russian statehood.

The use of historical methods of knowledge is permissible for all functions of political parties, and not just the ideological one. In particular, the implementation of the articulatory function of the Communist Party had significant features during the existence of the Soviet state. Party decisions as an expression of the will of the ruling class were consolidated through decisions of the CPSU Congresses, which essentially had binding force. Moreover, in certain historical periods, in particular during the collectivization of agriculture, there was an actual replacement of legal acts with party decisions that had a direct effect.

When analyzing the articulatory function of political parties, it is also necessary to use a special method of political research associated with the analysis of textual materials - the method of content analysis. This method is primarily associated with the study of documentary materials, for example, programs of political parties, materials of election campaigns, texts of media articles, etc. The content analysis method is associated with identifying certain text indicators in various texts, determining the frequency of use, and the context of their use. The collection of relevant information can be aimed at achieving various goals. Firstly, as part of the analysis of documents of political parties, including slogans, it is possible to identify textual structures that allow you to quickly and efficiently achieve the goals that have been set. Secondly, analysis of materials from media publications or Internet resources can reveal the peculiarities of perception and assessment of the activities of a political party by society. K. P. Borishpolets points out that "the main advantages of content analysis are considered to be that, firstly, its technology does not distort the

results of information processing due to interaction with the social or subjective background of the research being conducted, and secondly, that this method gives an idea of objects that the researcher does not directly observe" [9, P. 89].

It should be taken into account that the assessment of the effectiveness of a political party must also be carried out through an analysis of its goals and objectives, their compliance with the objective needs of society, as well as by identifying the level of trust of the electorate in a particular political force. Achieving these objectives is possible through the use of sociological methods, such as the statistical method, the method of collecting and analyzing information, and interviewing. These methods will allow us to identify the public's attitude towards a political party, its program, its tactical guidelines, etc. The importance of using these methods is due to the fact that the activities of political parties are primarily associated with representing the interests of certain groups of people at the political level. Accordingly, only through the analysis of information indicating the readiness of citizens to cast their votes in elections for a specific party can one draw conclusions about the extent to which the activities of these types of public associations are necessary and sufficient. M. G. Ivanova and V. G. Ivanov note that within the framework of political sociological research, "empirical studies are carried out, which examine the features of Russian electoral behavior, "phantoms" of modern Russian society, features of mass consciousness, problems of corruption, processes of transformation and formation of civil society" [12]. Thus, the use of sociological methods of cognition makes it possible to conduct research into the representative functions of political parties. Social-psychological methods are also applicable in the analysis of political demands of various segments of the population. Political parties, as part of their activities, are forced to focus on the existing social conditions in the state, which necessitates an analysis of the characteristics of political consciousness and its stereotypes among different segments of the population, identification of political motives and their social conditionality, identification of habitual connections, characteristic behavior, the process of political socialization, political explosions of public consciousness and their conditionality, methods of extinguishing of political activity, etc.

To fully analyze the activities of political parties, it is also necessary to use psychological methods that will reveal the characteristics of the leaders' behavior and their impact on the popularity of the political party and the level of public trust. Such studies are based on the use of a behavioral method, which is aimed at analyzing the characteristics of the behavior of party leaders in various conditions, a behavioral method, aimed at studying the characteristics of the behavior of social groups in various political conditions, as well as a behavioral method associated with the study of the characteristics of the response of political systems to various negative impact factors. As indicated in the educational literature on political science, the use of the behaviorist method "allowed the use of quantitative and qualitative indicators for measuring political phenomena and motivation of behavior. This method is effective in analyzing election campaigns in conditions of competition between different parties and leaders" [21]. The use of psychological methods of cognition will allow us to analyze the features of the implementation of the representative function of political parties, as well as, to a certain extent, the political function, because the success of a political party's participation in elections and in other forms of political activity largely depends on the level of public trust in a particular party leader.

Conclusion. Based on the results of the study, we can conclude that the activities of political parties are a directed, active process associated with the performance and implementation of certain functions. In the scientific literature, there is no unified approach to determining the list and classification of the functions of a political party. The following types of functions of political parties can be distinguished: ideological function, articulatory function, political function and representation function. Analysis of the concept of "activities of political parties" and the functions as its component element allows us to determine the research methodology. We can conclude that general (philosophical), general scientific and specific scientific research methods are applicable in this area. Taking into account the peculiarities of the legal status of political parties, scientific research should be based on the integrated application of methods of knowledge

of political and legal sciences. The use of socio-psychological methods in the framework of studying the activities of political parties is justified, which will allow assessing the results and prospects of the activities of political parties, the features of the formation of their political technologies, as well as adjusting the activities taking into account the specific prevailing socio-economic conditions. Thus, the study of the activities of political parties should be based on the use of a fairly wide range of methods that will allow achieving a comprehensive nature of the study, reflecting various aspects of the analyzed object. However, in our opinion, it is fair to talk about the formation of a special method for studying the activities of political parties - political and legal, which allows us to take into account the specific legal provisions of political parties and their role in the state as an active participant in political life.

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ИНФОРМАЦИЯ ОБ АВТОРАХ

Екатерина Вячеславовна Королёва – кандидат юридических наук, доцент, Липецкий государственный технический университет, Липецк, Россия

Наталья Николаевна Пачина – доктор психологических наук, профессор кафедры социологии, Липецкий государственный технический университет, pachina_2017@mail.ru

INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Ekaterina V. Korolyova – Cand. Sci. (Law), Associate Professor, Department of Criminal and Civil Law, Lipetsk State Technical University, Lipetsk, Russia

Natalia V. Pachina – Dr. Sci. (Psychol), Professor, Sociology Department, Lipetsk State Technical University, Lipetsk, Russia, pachina_2017@mail.ru

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