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Structure of Political Success Factors as an Indicator of Political Direction in Electoral System Development*

Abstract

The article presents a conceptual model of democratic electoral system development and analysis of empirical data on factors of political success in the electoral situation. Various participants of the electoral process (population, politicians, journalists, government employees, analysts-politologists) evaluated the political success factors; and comparative analysis of these evaluations made it possible to determine the main vectors (“reverse” and “manipulative-mystifying”) affecting deviations from direct electoral system development in modern Ukraine.

In Ukraine, for more than ten years there has been experience gained of democratic elections. Based on this experience (positive, as well as negative), electoral campaign practices develop technologies for improvement of electoral process efficiency. Now Ukrainian elections essentially differ from the first free elections of 1989 to the Parliament of the USSR. At that time most of active electoral campaign participants were people whose political ideas pushed them to help the certain politician. Electoral “headquarters” of candidates consisted mostly of political enthusiasts-confederates. As a rule, a candidate and his team were “amateurs” without any professional experience in political activity.

Ten years passed, and the situation changed totally. Now we cannot imagine an engineer, scientist, economist, doctor, writer, worker or a taxi

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Translated from the Ukrainian text “Struktura chynnykiv politychnoho uspikhu yak pokaznyk politychnoi spriamovanosti rozvytku elektoral'noi systemy”, *Sotsiologhiia: teoriia, metody, marketingh*, 2002, № 4, pp. 39–62.

driver who starts electoral campaign having no sufficient experience and financial resources apart from a group of confederates. From previous elections to the next ones this activity became more professional for politicians and their “staff” (people who organize electoral activity of a candidate to a certain level of power). Now in Ukraine, electoral campaigns are organized and implemented (more or less professionally) by people of new professions (political technologists, image makers, pollsters, PR-agents) when they establish temporary unions or registered organizations (companies, agencies, centers, foundations). Functions of these professionals are to prepare and conduct an electoral campaign for a politician who pays but not whose proponents they are. A part of the PR-agencies’ work relates to sociological investigations providing politicians and their teams with the necessary feedback — information about public opinion that makes it possible to correct if not the political position but at least declarations and a way of behavior promoting politician’s successful existence in the political arena.

So what ensures the desired victory of political elections in the modern society? Which factors determine political success at the current stage of electoral system development in Ukraine? After all, what determines an electoral choice of an ordinary person who approaches a ballot-box — **his or her own interests** (being realized in a free democratic choice) or **achievements and possibilities of electoral technologies** being developed and applied due to sufficient investments and making possible to win elections for practically every rich one.

Analysis of these aspects needs discussions on general laws of democratic electoral system development and empirical research of political electoral success factors the structure of which could reveal the specific features of democratic electoral development in Ukraine.

Vectors of Political Development in the Democratic Electoral System

Political sciences generally accept the concept that *one of the principal criteria of democratic development level in a country* is an ensured *possibility of free elections* based on universal suffrage that gives every adult citizen possibility to elect (with political competition of a number of parties) and to be elected [1]. Specific features of electoral systems enable to draw a conclusion about tendencies and prospects of democratic development in these countries.

We think that ideal model of democratic elections involves two main poles of the process.

1. Political subjects contending for being elected to power bodies (political parties, political leaders) present their programs to people (their strategy and tactics on principal political directions) that they will carry out if they win these elections.
2. Electorate gives their votes to the candidate (party or political block) whose program corresponds with their personal interests (economic, social, ideological).

So, democratic electoral systems gives possibility to every citizen for making a political choice of the political force whose activity will serve improvement of their well-being (level and quality of life).

In other words, the key idea of representative democracy is a possibility for every citizen in the country to make their **rational choice** of the one who will represent their interests in power bodies in order to ensure that further policy will be carried out according to these interests (first of all, economic). Of course, this is the ideal model.

Analyzing prospects of democratic systems development, American politologist I. McAllister writes that in most parliamentary concepts the dominant model is “more voices are given to party platforms than to personal qualities” [2, p. 280]. But there are no countries where electoral process totally correspond to these rational principles, especially at the first stages of their development.

Any transition to a new social and political system (from totalitarian to democratic, in particular) supposes the start from rejection of old means and methods for achieving key positions in power bodies. This process even if seems to be mild (“velvet”) is never painless. Firstly, it deals with interests of a part of society, as a rule, it is elite (first of all, those who held posts in the old political system). Secondly, political forces playing active roles in transformations of social, political, constitutional and legal conditions of social life usually do not have enough experience and knowledge of governmental work when these transformations begin.

Having in mind democratization of society by implementation of representative democracy principles, active forces of society (potential of new power) think of the ideal model for electoral systems and, as a rule, undergo some **romantic stage** of the system development.

At this stage, interests of those who participate in radical social transformations are concentrated on destruction of old state machine (this machine more or less resists). New actors of the political process (including electoral one) are, as a rule, amateurs without sufficient training and

knowledge necessary for taking up new political posts. So, the main features of the first stage of democratic electoral system development making it possible to determine as *romantic* are the following: 1) *personal enthusiasm* (that compensate lack of professional training and experience in carrying out of electoral campaigns); 2) choice motivation determined by *social and historical aims*; 3) essential *freedom from social control* (lack of the corresponding laws; independence not only from the previous government apparatus but also from social links and obligations which burdened “new politicians” at their previous social positions; weakening value-normative regulation of social relations, etc.). Romantic stage is accompanied by an illusion that the country hit the road of democratic transformations, and it only needs some time for stabilization.

No doubt, a direct transition from the romantic model to the rational one would be the shortest way of the democratic electoral system establishment. Unfortunately, lack of stable legal basis and differently directed interests (both long-term and immediate) of various participators in this political process start up mechanisms that form other vectors of the electoral model development. In our opinion, there are two dominant vectors: “reverse” and “manipulative-mystifying” among all possible that take aside from the direct democratization way.

In conditions of post-communist transformation, the reverse vector means gradual involvement of old electoral machine (that seems to be already given up) into a new electoral system. First of all, we talk about administrative influence on electoral processes that becomes accepted with wide opportunities. The ideal reverse model is total administrative control over electoral processes. This vector is directed oppositely to the rational democratic model development. Possibility of its dominance is determined by the number of citizens whose economic interests coincides with paternalist policy of the country and with existence of political forces (leaders and parties) programs of which declare the corresponding aims. Some indirect impact on the vector’s development is produced by social and political uncertainty of the mass consciousness (political anomy). Political anomy is characterized by a big part of citizens who have not identified their long-term economic interests and by uncertain political positions of candidates (parties and blocks with political platforms and strategies that could not be understood not only by electorate but often even by leaders of these parties).

If we talk about modern electoral technologies, then the reverse model needs them only for turning the electoral system development back — to the direction where as a result we have the only (memorable) “electoral technology” — dictate of the state machine.

While an electoral system transforms democratically: the political field differentiates, modern electoral technologies develop as social and psychological means for influencing electors, various participants of the electoral process get used to them, then the next vector of electoral system development becomes evident. It could be determined as “manipulative-mystifying”. Here we understand mystification as “deliberate deception of somebody” by “initiated” ones [3, p. 822]. The reason why this vector appears and its indicators relate to immediate interests and advantages of various subjects taking part in political processes (ordinary electors and political leaders, representatives of the mass media and other groups of corporate interests). We refer mostly to material interests that, within market economy, have a very clear equivalent — money. Orientation to *immediate pragmatic interests* (money), on the one hand, and lack of legal and moral social control, on the other hand, forms “force lines” of the field setting up the manipulative-mystifying vector of the electoral system development.

What is the difference between an immediate pragmatic interest and a long-term economic one?

When we talk about real economic interests of people, first of all, we refer to guaranteed income sources that provide them with the level and way of life the people expect. For some of them, these income sources relate to market economy because their material status depends on entrepreneurship. Others more depend on governmental social guarantees of acceptable level of life. This is more often true for people with limited working abilities (pensioners, disabled, etc.) and those who simply do not want to spend their time and efforts on labor intensive well-paid job, they think that quality of life is more determined by free time than material well-being. When people realize their long-term economic interests, this pushes them to the corresponding political choice — to support candidates (or parties) with clear and consistent attitude towards principal transformations in social, economic and political spheres. Such interests of people are directed to stability and rising quality of life in the future. Possible income sources are assessed according to their sustainability and, as a result, secure prospects in the future. Long-term economic interests differentiate citizens as to their social and political preferences.

Immediate pragmatic interests force people to use any income sources that you can get *today*, because you do not know what will be tomorrow. “Grab and run” — this principle of immediate advantage leads to the electoral situation when various subjects of political process attach themselves to the political force from which they can get something, it does not matter what, it matters that it would be “here and now”.

Electors who have not identified their long-term economic interests, on the one hand, and fuzzy political positions of candidates, on the other hand, form social and political basis of the “manipulative-mystifying” vector. The higher uncertainty of social and political basis is observed, the more intense impact of the manipulative-mystifying vector leading to deviations from democratic way of development.

The very important characteristic of the manipulative-mystifying vector is its instability. The vector is always ready to change its direction and forms permanent deviations (variously directed) from the main way. As a result, general development of electoral system does not go directly from the romantic stage to the rational one, its way is rather winding. The weaker main vector and the stronger and more changing the manipulative-mystifying one, the longer and more winding way is ahead the electoral system formation, the way with possibility of returning to the old electoral system.

For specific periods of time, directions of the manipulative-mystifying vector depend on “force lines” — interests of those who participate (actors and agents) in the electoral process.

Participators (Actors and Agents) of Electoral Process

Among participators of electoral process consisting of all citizens possessing the suffrage, we would like to pick out active social subjects whose activity relates to purposeful impact on electoral choice — actors and agents.

The set of **actors** includes the main participators of electoral process who directly affect the election results:

- **Electorate** (population structured according to their political preferences and levels of their certainty on political choice) represented on the electoral scene by **electors** who give their votes to a candidate (on the day of elections), and by **public opinion** as a set of political preferences (according to the data of sociological surveys);
- **Politicians** — political parties, blocks and their leaders being candidates (in democratic countries political career of them is directly connected with their electoral success).

As a democratic electoral system develops, the pre-electoral process starts to involve other active participators (not only actors). They are **agents of electoral process**. While analyzing negative (collateral) aspects of political field development during the democratization, French sociologist P. Champagne writes about formation of certain social subjects pretending to an active involvement into electoral processes. “The

political 'democratization' process seems to be strongly connected to autonomy and growing inner differentiation, that is to emergence and development of sub-fields being also rather autonomous social agents — political journalists, politologists, polling specialists, communication experts, etc., who more or less directly take part in a political game with their own ways, interests, and specific bids". [4, p. 32]. The author of "Making Opinion: New Political Game" mostly pays his attention to the negative aspects of "new agents" activity (the politologist and a "whole set of specialists-professionals in interpretation and manipulation"). "Dominance of these agents who pretend to a scientific approach, directly take part in the political game always wanting to have neutral and objective point of view on this game is to be the most important obstacle for the true scientific analysis" [4, p. 33]. Critical analysis by P. Champagne is based on the real practice (elections in France) and so mainly focused on the real practical problems related to activity of agents of political field. However, a theoretical rational model of electoral system regards agents of electoral field as necessary elements with constructive functions. In our opinion, agents of electoral process are meant for productive communication between electors and politicians. Within the ideal rational model of electoral system development, politicians need objective information about social and psychological characteristics of electorate (their interests, needs, opinions, value orientations, specific features of their perception of politicians and political situations), and electors need clear understanding of actors' political positions, personal and business qualities of politicians in order to make the rational choice. Progressive role of agents is that they promote political communication development (they draw and use knowledge from scientific spheres, sociology and psychology in particular, they implement and develop technical means of efficient communication, etc.). Another thing that in reality agents' activity being affected by pragmatic interests of people who perform functions of social agents of electoral process becomes manipulative and its efficiency significantly depends on a number of mystifying attributes.

For example, we can discuss the following mystifying attribute of the electoral scene: "political rating". Publication of political ratings during an electoral campaign always brings up intense emotions and hot discussions. People talk about trust and distrust in sociological surveys as a whole and the published ratings in particular. In his work "Polls and Elections", D. Butler writes: "Despite public distrust in polling results, there is no better way to bring all participants of electoral process on the scene. Politicians and journalists are full of desire to know public opin-

ions: they want to find their positions in advance and tune to what can happen" [5. p. 238]. If it is considered rationally, a political rating is an indicator of popularity and success of various political subjects, and regular information about it helps these subjects to compare results of their activity with public opinion dynamics. During electoral campaigns, ratings usually become a matter of cult for most electoral participants. For politicians, the published rating can be a "fright" or a "banner", for political journalists, it could be an object of invocation. They start asking sociologists to bring up a "figure" ("if you cannot then you are not sociologists"), and then by comparing these "figures" they openly demand from sociologists repentance, division into "clean" and "dirty", they manifest their "true" desire to "understand" how different sociologists got different "figures". Rational explanations about different kinds of surveys and other professional aspects that were many times repeated and described specially for journalists are still beyond their comprehension. Also journalists cannot understand evident political uncertainty of positions for most competing parties and blocks. Such fuzzy and changing political platforms cannot give stable political preferences among electors; as a result, they cannot be registered by stable "figures". They do not want to see differences between sociologists (scientists who study society development) and pollsters (specialists-technologists who conduct polls). We think this is no mere chance: sociologists represent scientific impartiality and objectivity, while pollsters consider ratings of competing political actors to be the "philosophers' stone" that they have to obtain at this electoral part of society life otherwise they will die politically and financially.

So if actors of electoral process reveal the poles of electoral system development: "totalitarian" — "democratic", then agents mostly form the manipulative-mystifying vector which strength and direction influence the winding character of democratic way in electoral system development.

Among such agents we can mention the following main social categories.

1. **Government officials** being on high positions in executive power bodies. This group can be considered as an agent of electoral process due to the following indications. Firstly, they have their pragmatic interests because, despite the fact that political success in executive bodies is determined more by promotions and posts than by election success, each of them cares about the election results: it really matters **who** will come in power, their future promotions (or dismissal) definitely will depend on the elected one. Secondly, being bosses in executive bodies, these people possess the

corresponding administrative resources that could be used for electoral campaigns.

2. **Representatives of the mass media, journalists (political correspondents)** working in the “electoral field” and facilitating communication of the main actors of electoral process in publications, television and radio programs.
3. **Analysts (politologists)** and **technologists** conducting analytical and service work during electoral campaigns.

We consider as analysts (politologists) all qualified specialists who conduct scientific analysis of electoral aspects (sociologists, political psychologists, historians, economists, philosophers, political correspondents, etc.) and have scientific publications in this field. Technologists are those who work in PR-companies and other services for application of electoral technologies in order to improve chances of any candidate who asked them for this and pays for this work.

Is it true to regard analysts, who conduct analytical work and pretend to scientific impartiality and objectivity, for a place that is over any electoral scenes, as agents of the electoral field and put them together with technologists into the same category? The following statements will confirm our positive answer to this question.

First, analysts working on the electoral scene consist of scientists-specialists (who have got a proper professional training and serious scientific publications in this field) as well as active “**impostors**” pretending to be scientists (without professional education and professional publications). It is not necessary to prove that during electoral campaigns there appear a lot of “analysts” without any qualification apart from enterprising abilities and desire for gaining political and, even more, financial capital. As it usually happens namely they register a center with the corresponding name, call themselves “politologists” or “sociologists” and plunge into electoral processes as “analysts”. With the help of the principal social capital of scientists (public trust in science as a whole, in its objectivity and unbiased character), they have a number of advantages comparing to scientists: their developed feeling of political and mass media conjuncture; their lexicon and logic that are closer to wide range of consumers than a scientific language; the factor of pragmatic (financial) motivation. That is why they are often in the avant-garde of the mass media space of electoral communications. Lack of professional knowledge in public speeches is even better for amateurs: there are no specifying digressions, grounds explaining limits of conclusions and other things that irritate journalists because ordinary people perceive them as dull and obscure. So despite evident difference between

specialists and “impostors” (presence or absence of professional qualification and scientific publications), both have the same social capital in public opinion as well as the same image on the public electoral scene – “scientific competence and objectivity of analysts”.

Second, even if we deal with competent analysts who present their objective analysis during electoral campaigns, their statements and prognoses “work” for certain political forces. Also biased “transmitters” spread out the results of this analysis (carried out in electoral rush).

So, analysts working as politologists and talking to the public during electoral campaigns must be considered belonging to the same group of influence as technologists — representatives of PR-service, advertisers, political consultants, etc.

Empirical Research of the Electoral Political Success Factors in Ukraine

The research goal was to reveal the specific features of democratic electoral system development in Ukraine basing on comparative assessment of political electoral success factors (we talk about appraisals for different participants of electoral process).

Organizational and Methodical Features of List Composition of Political Success Factors

The first stage of the empirical research was to compose a list of political success factors. Unfortunately, we could not find any direct studies on this topic in accessible stores. That is why we decided to ask for opinions (about political success in electoral campaigns) of the main competent participants of electoral process: politicians, government officials, journalists (political commentators), and analysts (scientists studying political sociology and politology). We were interested in their opinion about political success as a whole and about the role of sociology in electoral campaigns in particular (as we know it is usually reduced to calculation and publication of political ratings).

Unfortunately, public and political interest in sociology especially if we talk about politicians and political correspondents of the mass media is “seasonable”: it rises sharply during electoral campaigns and goes down after the elected have taken up their desired posts.

Taking into account the grown interest in electoral aspects during such periods, Department of Socio-Political Processes (Institute of Sociology, NAS of Ukraine) conducted the “Political Success: Criteria, Sub-

jects, Factors” round table in October 1999 (before the elections for the President of Ukraine). Among participants there were specialists on political sociology and social psychology, politicians, political correspondents from the mass media. After the opinions of the participants were analyzed, there was composed a list of political success factors. The list includes the factors that (in opinion of qualified specialists) affect political success of candidates in electoral campaigns:

- Plenty of financial opportunities;
- Abilities in demagoguery and populism;
- Attractive image (good look, speech, manners);
- Personal leader’s charisma;
- Leader’s striving for the power;
- Wide access to the mass media;
- Plenty of administrative opportunities;
- Qualified headquarters and team;
- Successful previous activity and good reputation;
- Application of “dirty” political technologies to competitors (libel, falsification, etc.);
- Clear and consecutive political position (reflecting interests of certain groups of population);
- Membership of real political force (real party);
- Political rating (calculated according to public opinion polls and published in the mass media);
- Lucky concurrence of circumstances (lucky chance).

Some of these factors characterize a rational model of electoral process (for example, “clear and consecutive political position reflecting interests of certain groups of population”). They help electors to make a purposeful choice. Other factors more relate to manipulative procedures (like “application of ‘dirty’ political technologies to competitors”) and possibilities for their realization (“plenty of financial opportunities”). Side by side with the factors characterizing the main vector of democratic electoral system development, there is a factor related to the reverse development — “plenty of administrative opportunities”. We can understand how the administrative power can be essential in the election results when we see the total failure of the free democratic election idea and, as a result, a grown influence of the reverse vector on democratic development as a whole.

The next stage of the empirical research was aimed to get an expert assessment of every factor’s influence on political success of candidates in

electoral campaigns. A group of experts consisted of all active participants of electoral process classified as qualified and unqualified experts. In the group of qualified experts, we included the following actors and agents: politicians (with experience of electoral success), government officials (with experience of “appointment” political success), analysts (scientists who professionally study electoral topics), and journalists (political correspondents working in the mass media). In this case, from our point of view, unqualified expert is population (as a potential electorate).

Sample

Sampling set of qualified experts consisted of 100 people: 25 politicians (deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine representing all fractions and chosen proportionally to the number of members of each fraction in the Parliament on the date of the interview); 25 government officials whose posts are heads of ministry division or higher; 25 journalists (political correspondents of the most popular TV programs and periodical press); 25 political analysts (scientists with publications on electoral topics in professional journals).

The random sample of Ukrainian population (potential electorate) consisted of 1810 respondents representing the adult population of Ukraine with respect to oblasts, place of residence (city, town, village), sex, age, and level of education within every oblast.

Methods

Methods for evaluation of political success factors imply the question:

“In your opinion, to what extent do the following factors affect political success in electoral campaigns?” with the enclosed list of 14 items — factors of political success, each of them has to be evaluated according to the 11-point scale (from 0 point — “Does not affect” to 10 points — “To the highest extent”) keeping in mind the influence of this factor on political success in electoral campaigns.

These methods were included in the expert questioning and the public poll conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the NAS of Ukraine within the “Ukrainian Society at the Gateway to the 21st Century” program.

Apart from the main methods, an expert questionnaire contained questions about their attitude to sociological surveys (trust, references to results, etc.) and organizations conducting public opinion polls.

The questionnaire for population (apart from every-year monitoring ones) included questions about political choice of respondents in the electoral campaign of 1999 (elections of the President of Ukraine): “For

whom did you vote?” (In the 1st and 2nd rounds), and the open question about their motivation — “What mostly affected your choice?”

Respondents filled questionnaires on their own. In our opinion, absence of interviewers served to provide more confidence in answers to the questions about political choice.

The peak of electoral success determined the time of the survey: just after the Presidential Elections; the expert questioning was conducted in the end of November — beginning of December 1999; the public poll — in January 2000.

The Results of Survey

Evaluation of Political Success Factors by Different Participants of Electoral Process

Comparative analysis of assessments on political success factors revealed that both, population and qualified experts, have a general idea about the main *factors* determining candidate's election victory. Both experts and population give the highest ranks to the following factors: plenty of administrative opportunities; plenty of financial opportunities; wide access to the mass media; qualified headquarters and team (see Table 1). There are differences in assessments made by experts representing different participants of political process. For example, journalists give the highest appraisal of the “wide access to the mass media” factor and rather low assess the “successful previous activity and good reputation” of candidates. Politicians, like population, give the first place to the “plenty of financial opportunities” factor. Government officials assess “qualified headquarters and team” as the most important. Analysts think that the first place has to be taken by “plenty of administrative opportunities”.

The less influential factors in electoral competition (according to the results of expert and public polls) are “political luck” and “political management”, *publication of political ratings*, in particular. Both in expert's and people's opinions publication of political ratings calculated as a result of public opinion surveys has an insignificant impact on candidate's political success. We would like to mention that such a low appraisal does not correspond to the ideas of legislators who included a two-week moratorium on publication of sociological survey results in the Law on Elections.

Table 1

**Assessment of Political Success Factors
by Different Participants of Electoral Process***

Factors of political success	How does this factor affect success in an electoral campaign: Assessment according to the 11-point scale from 0 to 10 points											
	<i>Government officials</i>		<i>Politicians</i>		<i>Journalists</i>		<i>Analysts</i>		Experts in a whole		Ukrainian population	
Plenty of financial opportunities	8.26	4	8.67	1	7.95	3	7.41	3	8.11	2	8.64	1
Wide access to the mass media	8.35	3	8.30	5	8.40	1	7.64	2	8.17	3	8.39	2
Plenty of administrative opportunities	8.43	2	8.33	4	8.30	2	8.10	1	8.30	1	8.30	3
Qualified headquarters and team	8.52	1	8.59	2	7.45	5	7.41	4	8.04	4	8.14	4
Successful previous activity and good reputation	8.04	5	8.56	3	5.65	8	6.91	6	7.40	5	7.90	5
Clear and consecutive political position (reflecting interests of certain groups of population)	7.57	6	7.30	6	4.80	12	5.82	7	6.47	7	6.89	6
Personal leader's charisma	7.26	7	6.56	10	7.58	4	7.36	5	7.14	6	6.23	7
Leader's striving for the power	5.48	10	5.48	13	5.44	9	4.67	12	5.28	13	6.12	8
Attractive image (good look, speech, manners)	7.00	8	6.26	12	6.10	6	5.58	10	6.30	9	6.05	9
Membership of real political force (real party)	6.22	9	7.11	7	4.45	13	5.55	11	6.47	8	6.05	10
Published rating	5.22	11	6.59	9	5.25	10	3.95	14	5.33	12	5.82	11

End of Table 1

Factors of political success	How does this factor affect success in an electoral campaign: Assessment according to the 11-point scale from 0 to 10 points											
	Government officials		Politicians		Journalists		Analysts		Experts in a whole		Ukrainian population	
Application of “dirty” political technologies to competitors (libel, falsification, etc.)	4.43	12	6.54	11	5.05	11	5.71	9	5.48	11	5.39	12
Abilities in demagoguery and populism	4.26	13	6.93	8	5.68	7	5.82	8	5.73	10	5.31	13
Lucky concurrence of circumstances (lucky chance)	4.26	14	4.89	14	3.75	14	4.24	13	4.33	14	4.63	14

*Factors were ranked according to the population assessments; the range numbers of factors given by other expert groups are presented in bold.

While comparing factor structures by different participants of electoral process, we can see the two main features, which we named as “*isomorphism*” and “*corporate variations*”.

Isomorphism

For different participants of electoral process, the structures of political success factors are rather isomorphic. Some of them are highly assessed by all groups of experts (including population as an unqualified expert): “plenty of financial opportunities”; “plenty of administrative opportunities”; “wide access to the mass media”; “qualified headquarters and team”. Almost all the groups of experts assess other factors significantly (quite) low. For all groups, there is the same general hierarchy of the political success factors: as we have already mentioned, the most important ones are administrative and financial, then we have personal factors, the next are factors of party and political force as well as political management, and the last one is political luck.

Corporate Variations

Along with the isomorphism, there were revealed some deviations from the “general line”. They are presented in the picture that illustrates the data of Table 1 (see Fig. 1)

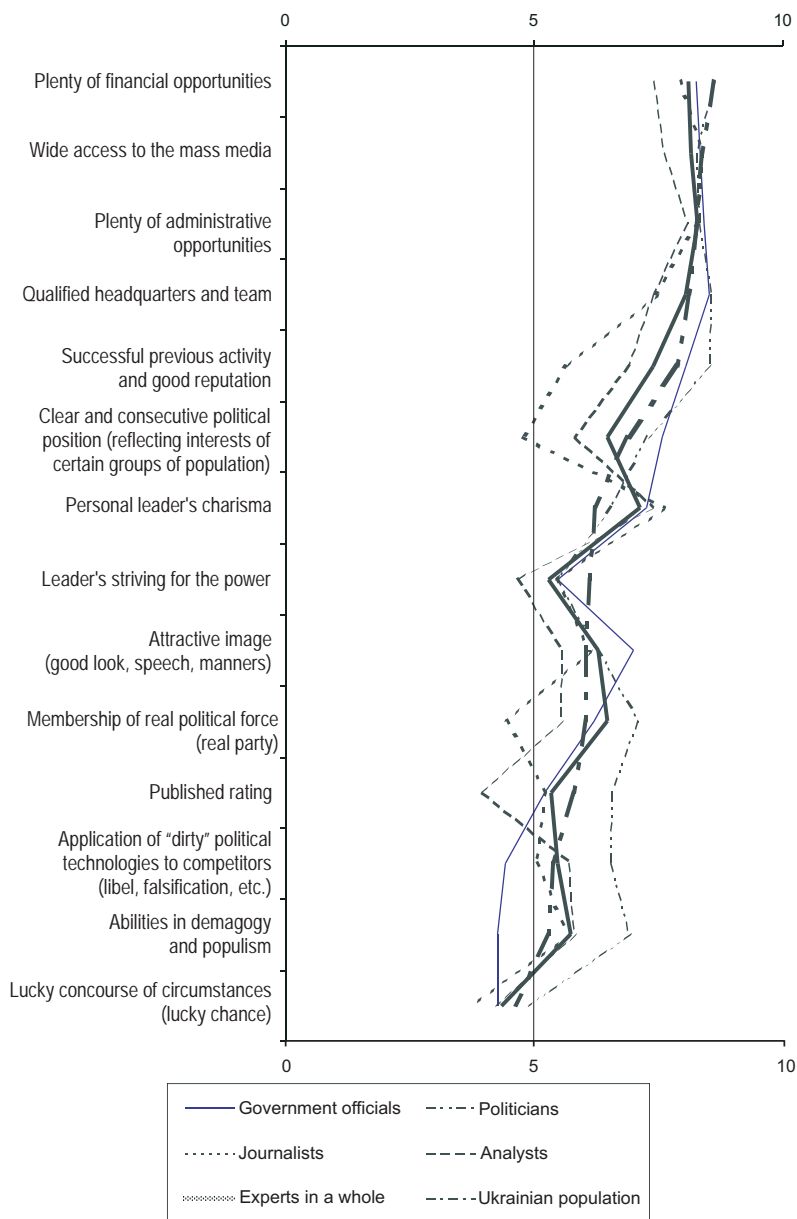


Fig. 1. Illustration to the Table "Assessment of Political Success Factors by Different Participants of Electoral Process"

First of all, we would like to mention the most common structural features in political success factors assessment by different participants of electoral process.

1. Mean assessments of the whole group of qualified experts better correspond to the assessments of population than those made by different groups of experts on each factor of political success.
2. The most isomorphic factor structures are those reflecting assessments by population and politicians (the main actors of electoral process).
3. The most deviating from the “general line” assessments were given by journalists.

General structures of political success do not differ significantly among different groups of experts. But there were revealed very principle differences on the variety of assessments characterizing the consistency of experts’ opinion. On some factors, different experts give rather similar assessments; on the others, we can see their significant variations. The meaning of these factors enables to conclude about corporate interests and corporate mentality of participants (actors and agents) of electoral process.

Corporate features of assessments are seen even in choice of the first factor in the range structure. Population as a whole and experts-politicians gave this position to the “plenty of financial opportunities”, while journalists chose the “wide access to the mass media”, and the decision of high government officials was the “qualified headquarters and team”.

More detailed consideration of differences in expert assessments of political success factors provided us with features of corporate consciousness in various groups of experts.

The most consistency of assessments differences between which are of no more than 1 point we got in two cases.

1. “*Plenty of administrative opportunities*” (“administrative resources”). Range of this factor is 0.3 point (from 8.1 points given by analysts to 8.4 points given by government officials).
2. “*Wide access to the mass media*”. Range of this factor is 1.0 (from 7.4 points given by analysts to 8.4 points given by journalists).

Medium consistency of assessments made by different participants of electoral process (when range is over 1 point but under 2 points) can be seen for the following six factors of political success.

1. “*Lucky concurrence of circumstances (lucky chance)*”. Range of this factor is 1.1 points (from 3.8 points given by journalists to 4.9 points given by politicians).

2. *“Qualified headquarters and team”*. Range is 1.2 points (from 7.4 points given by scientists-analysts to 8.6 points given by politicians).
3. *“Plenty of financial opportunities”*. Range is 1.3 points (from 7.4 points given by scientists-analysts to 8.7 points given by politicians).
4. The next three factors have the same range (1.4 points) but their effect on political success was evaluated differently: *“Leader’s striving for the power”* (from 4.7 points given by analysts to 6.1 points given by population); *“Personal leader’s charisma”* (from 6.2 points given by population to 7.6 points given by politicians), and *“Attractive image (good look, speech, manners)”* (from 5.6 points given by analysts to 7.0 points given by government officials).

At last, **low consistency** of assessments made by different participants of electoral process (range is over 2 points) was registered on the following six factors of political success.

1. *“Application of ‘dirty’ political technologies to competitors (libel, falsification, etc.)”*. Range of this factor is 2.1 points (from 6.5 points given by politicians to 4.4 points given by government officials).
2. *“Membership of real political force (real party)”*. Range of this factor is 2.6 points. The highest evaluation is 7.1 points given by politicians; the lowest one is 4.5 points given by journalists.
3. *“Abilities in demagoguery and populism”*. Range of this factor is 2.6 points; the highest evaluation is 6.9 points given by politicians, the lowest one is 4.3 points given by government officials.
4. *“Published political rating”*. Range of this factor is 2.7 points (from 6.6 points given by politicians to 3.9 points given by analysts).
5. *“Clear and consecutive political position (reflecting interests of certain groups of population)”*. Range of this factor is 2.8 points (the highest evaluation is 7.6 points given by government officials, the lowest one is 4.8 points given by journalists).
6. *“Successful previous activity and good reputation”*. Range of this factor is 2.9 points. It gives the **maximal variety of assessments** (from 8.6 points given by politicians to 5.7 points given by journalists).

So, we can see that the most consistency in assessments was registered on factor of administrative possibilities; the most discrepancy was on “Membership of real political force (real party)” and “Successful previous activity and good reputation”.

Factors taking the highest positions in structural hierarchy of all participants of electoral process (“plenty of administrative opportunities”, “plenty of financial opportunities”, and “wide access to the mass media”) have not only the highest figures of evaluation but are of the most consistency among all experts (“external consistency”).

According to the results of analysis, in consciousness of electoral participants, “means of political fight” are represented by the one general factor of “administrative-media-financial potential”. This fact is confirmed by coefficients of internal consistency for these factors (Cronbach’s alpha) in consciousness of population (α amounts to 0,80) and consciousness of experts ($\alpha = 0,69$).

The most consistency of assessments is registered on the “reverse” factor of electoral system development (“*Plenty of administrative opportunities*”), while the maximal variety of assessments among different electoral subjects was inherent in the factors forming the “rational” and “manipulative” vectors of electoral system development. In our research, factors of the “rational” vector include the following: “Membership of real political force (real party)”, “Clear and consecutive political position (reflecting interests of certain groups of population)”, “Successful previous activity and good reputation”. Factors of the “manipulative” vector (in our research) include: “Application of ‘dirty’ political technologies to competitors”, “Abilities in demagoguery and populism”, “Published political rating”.

As one can see from the above-presented data, factors of the rational vector are of the less consistency of assessment among all the participants of electoral process represented by different groups of experts. However, these rational factors are of the most assessment consistency among the main actors of electoral process: population and politicians. Population and politicians give a high appraisal of rational factors of political success, while journalists and analysts (agents of electoral process) assessed them rather low.

Generalizing **corporate differences** in assessments of political success factors by different participants of electoral process (actors and agents), we should pay attention to the following:

1. **Journalists** (apart from the highest and unanimous appraisal of “*Wide access to the mass media*”) assess higher than other electoral participants the factors like “*Personal leader’s charisma*” and “*Attractive image (good look, speech, manners)*”. So, these qualities might be the most attractive for journalists in their professional opinion when they work with politicians in the mass media

space. Manifesting their strong interest to results of sociological surveys during election campaigns, journalists rather low assessed “*Published political rating*” as a factor of political success. It means that their attention to the results of sociological surveys is more mystifying than rational by nature. Their corporate interest can be seen in the high appraisal of role played by political journalism in electoral process.

2. Comparing to other participants of electoral process, **politicians** give the highest appraisal to “technological” factors: “*Published political rating*”, “*Application of ‘dirty’ political technologies to competitors (libel, falsification, etc.)*”, “*Abilities in demagoguery and populism*”; and the factor of luck — “*Lucky concurrence of circumstances (lucky chance)*”.
3. **Scientists-analysts** agree with politicians giving the highest (in comparison to other participants of electoral process) appraisal of “*Application of ‘dirty’ political technologies to competitors (libel, falsification, etc.)*”. Their corporate interest could be seen in the fact that they can help during election campaign because they are keepers of knowledge on electoral technologies.
4. **Government officials** gave the first position to “*Qualified headquarters and team*”. They are close to politicians in their appraisals of administrative and financial factors but there are significant differences between their evaluation of “technological” factors and those made by politicians and scientists. Professional interest of government officials in the electoral situation can be seen in their high appraisal of organizational and administrative possibilities.

As a whole, experts’ assessments clearly revealed corporate interests that form manipulative-mystifying vectors of electoral process development. The strongest manipulative-mystifying vector relates to the agent of electoral process named representatives of the mass media — political journalists.

Motives of Electoral Choice and Level of Political Identification of Ukrainian Population

Along with the methods of expert assessment on political success factors, the public poll included questions helping to get information about the political choice of people made in the second round of the Presidential Elections held just before the poll. Due to this information, while analyzing factors of political success, we could compare opinions and as-

assessments of those who voted for L. Kuchma to the ones of those who voted for P. Symonenko. The questionnaire for population included an open question about motives determined the vote for their candidate for the President of Ukraine.

Analysis of the data revealed certain (statistically significant) differences between the electorate for L. Kuchma and the electorate for P. Symonenko. Comparing to the electorate for L. Kuchma, the electorate for P. Symonenko give more high appraisal to financial possibilities, access to the mass media, administrative possibilities, membership of party and application of “dirty” political technologies; the electorate for L. Kuchma assess higher successful previous activity, good reputation and personal charisma.

In the poll conducted in January 2000 (two months after the Presidential Elections), respondents got an open question: “What did mainly influence your choice?” 1335 people of 1810 (73.8%) answered this question. This unusually high percentage of answers to the open question of a questionnaire (especially when people filled the questionnaire on their own) means that this topic is urgent for respondents.

The answers to the open question were divided into following groups according to the kind of motivation.

1. **Solidarity** (the same views, positions) choice. This group consists of answers where respondents manifested trust in candidate, acceptance of his program, personal kind feelings, and positive appraisal of his previous activity.
2. **Compromise** (forced) choice — the answers like “there was not the best”, “to choose the lesser of two evils”, “afraid of changing”, “better not to change”, etc.
3. **Protest** choice — “against his competitor”, “others are worse”, disappointment, fear (“against communists”, “do not want the old times” or “against Kuchma, not satisfied with Kuchma’s work”).
4. **Choice of hope** — the answer like “I hope life is going to be better”, “I hope that this candidate will stabilize the economy”, “I hope that inflation will stop”.
5. **Determined** choice because of the living conditions, situation in the country, prospects of development (“bad living conditions”, “bad economy”, “worried about the future of Ukraine, children”, etc.)
6. **Conforming** — conciliating, company choice (affected by family, friends, mass media, propaganda, pressure).

7. **Without explanation** choice — evasive answers (“do not know why”, “can not remember”, “does not matter”, etc.)
8. **Other** answers.

Table 2 presents the data on motives due to which people voted for one candidate or the other.

Table 2

Motives of Political Choice (The 2nd Round of the Presidential Elections of the 1999) According to Political Preferences*

<i>Kind of choice motivation</i>	<i>Electorate for L. Kuchma N = 735</i>	<i>Electorate for P. Symonenko N = 375</i>	<i>Total (Answered the open question) N = 1335</i>
Solidarity	41.4	39.5	37.1
Compromise	19.5	1.9	12.1
Protest	11.0	21.9	16.2
Choice of hope	9.1	15.5	10.0
Determined	1.9	9.1	4.5
Conforming	8.6	5.1	7.3
Without explanation	5.4	3.1	8.5
Other answers	3.1	3.9	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

*The table does not include the data on the respondents who did not vote in the 2nd round for L. Kuchma or P. Symonenko (did not take part, voted against both, cannot remember for whom they voted).

The kind of electoral choice motivation reflects the level of people's political identification as one of the indicators related to the general level of their political culture.

Here we regard political identification as an understanding of a person of his/her social and economic interests as well as clear idea about what political forces (political parties, leaders) he/she is ready to make representatives of his/her interests in the power bodies. The higher level of political identification among population exists, the more favorable situation for the rational model of democratic electoral system.

“Solidarity” motive of choice means not only political identification but also political solidarity when people know the political platform acceptable for them and find certain representatives of this political force

in the political spectrum. “Compromise” and “protest” motivation mean that people have some idea about political force which could correspond (or not) to their interests but they cannot find an adequate representative in the list of candidates (so they choose “the less bad” or vote against the worst). Motivation related to hopes (as a rule, for the better life) or applying to the current conditions (“it is impossible to live like this”) means that political identification has not formed yet but some grounds for it have been laid (people see links between their living conditions and political choice). At last, “conforming” (advice of family, boss, etc.) or “without explanation” (“do not know why”, “do not remember”) motives mean the low general level of political culture without any starting basis for political identification.

If we restructure the data on choice motives according to the level of political identification, we can have a distribution of Ukrainian population as to the level of political identification (see Table 3).

Table 3

**Level of Political Identification in Dependence
on Political Preferences***

<i>Level of political identification</i>	<i>Electorate for L. Kuchma N = 735</i>	<i>Electorate for P. Symonenko N = 375</i>	<i>Total (Answered the open question) N = 1335</i>
High level (Identification with solidarity)	41.4	39.5	37.1
Middle level (Identification without solidarity)	30.5	23.8	28.3
Low level (Grounds for identification)	11.0	24.6	14.5
Lack of identification (General low political culture)	14.0	8.2	15.8
Other answers	3.1	3.9	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The presented data show a rather low level of political identification among Ukrainian population. Even the part of people who made their choice on the day of election includes only 40% of those who have solidarity with the politicians they voted for. It could be mostly explained by the weak political spectrum presented for making choice on the political

“market”: many electors could not find “their” candidates and were forced to vote according to compromise (12%) or protest (16%) motives. The compromise and protest motivation is an evidence of people’s identification potential: they know whom they want (or do not want) to see in the ballot but they cannot find these candidates there. Such a “forced” choice means that 28% of electors have a certain level of political identification although cannot find candidates whose political positions and personal qualities could make them ready for the solidarity choice totally corresponding to their interests. Hopes as a motive for voting or applying to a wish to live in better conditions are evidences of a low level of political identification when living in democracy, people do not totally realize that conditions of life considerably depend on their political choice. So, approximately 15% of electors are of low level of political identification. At last, 15% of electors make their choice with the help of advice taken from family, friends, bosses or simply cannot explain their choice; this part has a low general level of political culture.

Finally, 60% of electors who did not manifested their solidarity with a certain political force presented on the all-nation elections consist of 28% who could not find the candidate corresponding to their interests on the political scene and 32% were not ready to democratic elections.

Although both parts of voters having solidarity with their candidates, L. Kuchma and P. Symonenko, are similar in quantity (near 40%), there are certain differences in their structures of electorate’s political culture. For example, L. Kuchma’s electorate has more people who identified their political interests but had no solidarity with the candidate presenting their interests (30.5% of L. Kuchma’s electorate versus 23.8% of P. Symonenko’s electorate), whereas P. Symonenko’s electorate has more people with a low level of political identification (24.6% of P. Symonenko’s electorate versus 11.0% of L. Kuchma’s electorate).

However, these differences do not change the main conclusion that the current electoral situation in Ukraine is characterized by a low level of political solidarity of electors with candidates who pretend to being representatives of their interests. In our opinion, the low level of electors’ political identification is (to a great extent) a consequence of “poor political market” — lack of political figures with clear political programs adequate to the main economic interests of citizens.

In the electoral situation, the low level of political solidarity among Ukrainian citizens (caused by the “poor political market” and the “low level of political culture and political identification of population”) becomes not only a “factor of uncertainty” of political success for a candi-

date in elections (results of election are almost unpredictable), but also hampers general development of democratic model for electoral system.

Conclusions

1. In evaluation of political success factors by various participants of electoral process (experts and population), there are common tendencies and certain corporate differences. *The general tendency is isomorphism of hierarchy structures of political success factors*: the highest appraisal (by both experts as a whole and population) was given to administrative and financial possibilities of candidates, their access to the mass media; then, as to a significance order, personal features of candidates; factors of party and political force; factors of political management (political technologies), and, at last, political luck factor. The assessments given by experts as a whole are close to the ones made by population, but *different groups of experts* representing various professional communities which take part in electoral processes (politicians, politologists, journalists, high government officials) *revealed certain differences in evaluation of political success factors*. Analysis of these differences is an evidence of corporate interests — an intention to make the appraisal of their professional activity in provision of electoral candidates with political success higher.
2. Now in Ukraine, the most influential factors of electoral political success are the following: a) plenty of administrative opportunities; b) plenty of financial opportunities; and c) wide access to the mass media. Firstly, these factors are leading in the structure hierarchy according to evaluations of all participant of electoral process; secondly, they have the most “external consistency” — between assessments of all expert groups and population (a narrow range of assessments). Moreover, in people’s comprehension, these “means of political fight” are combined in the one (decisive) factor of “administrative-media-financial potential”, this fact is confirmed by coefficients of internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha) for these factors. Taking into account that Ukrainian laws declare: a) impossibility to combine governmental post and business with “plenty of financial opportunities” and b) independence of the mass media, we can suppose that assessments made by participants of electoral processes were affected by the real political practice in Ukraine (contradicting to laws of the country). As a result, these factors (administrative, financial and informational)

unite in a single moving force of political success. The point is that the unity of these factors in people's comprehension confirms that now in Ukraine most population as a norm of political life accepts corruption.

3. The current electoral field of Ukraine is characterized by *a low level of political positions certainty* for the main actors of electoral process (political forces, on the one hand, population, on the other). Political regrouping of parties and blocks — the principal sides competing for electors' votes are often out of any political logic, even qualified politologists cannot follow it in time. In this situation, it is practically impossible for electors to comprehend the specific features of political positions, programs, strategies of different parties and blocks. In addition, political culture of people is characterized by a big part of those who have not determined their political identification.
4. Significant importance of the “administrative resources” factor (supported by financial resources and the mass media) together with a low level of political identification for the main actors of electoral process (both politicians and population) essentially strengthens a “reverse” vector of democratic electoral system development.
5. In Ukraine as in other countries, while the democratic electoral system develops, there develop agents of electoral process — groups of interests professional activity of which can actively affect electoral process (politologists, journalists, political technologists, pollsters, etc.). When ruled by corporate interests, immediate pragmatic advantages start to prevail over professional ethics, in the electoral field, there appear manipulative-mystifying vectors that distort a direct line of rational development for the democratic electoral system. In the current period of electoral system development in Ukraine, the most manifested “manipulative-mystifying” vector is determined by pragmatic interests of such an electoral process agents as journalists (political correspondents). However, population and qualified experts did not assess “technological” (“manipulative”) factors of political success very high.
6. For the current period of democratic electoral system development in Ukraine, the principal obstacle is a “reverse” vector that; a) forms due to possibilities of providing political success in elections with administrative resources; b) is strengthened by legitimization (in the mass consciousness) of the fact that administrative, financial and informational means are combined in a single factor of electoral success (this is an evidence of a low level of juridical culture); and c) has favorable

conditions for spreading because of low political identification of people being an evidence of low political culture.

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