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UNDERSTANDING PECULIARITIES OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION: STATE-ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

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*This article presents the topical issue of political corruption in the light of public administration, focuses on the conceptual and categorical apparatus and social component of corruption in the political sphere. The most dangerous for society is political corruption. Political corruption is not only bribery of officials and politicians at different levels at its core. First of all, it is corrupt actions that affect the process of government formation and cause the changes in political decision-making. The point is that political corruption can be either offense or completely legitimate activity. If sanctions provided by law, this type of corruption can be qualified as a crime. Accordingly, it's easier to bring to justice the offenders. Unfortunately, as it often happens, offenders have the opportunity to create an appropriate legal framework were their activity is fully authorized. It creates a certain incident when norms are substituted and public opinion on government dishonesty is formed. The manipulation of such kind with regulatory framework to some extent can be exposed by international standards due to its invariability. The difficulty lies in the fact that often political corruption is only assumed if political motives of obtaining, preserving or distribution of power is present. That's why the use of all opportunities to overcome such a phenomenon is important. It is important to attract the general public, conducting educational and information campaigns etc. The activity of NGOs in anti-corruption activities, especially in the political sphere, can really hinder the illegal or harmful actions and forming public opinion on this issue.*

**Keywords:** *political corruption, administrative activity, authority decisions, bribery, civil society.*

**Beglycia W.P. Specyfika rozumienia korupcji politycznej: aspekt publiczno-administracyjny.**

*W artykule przedstawiono aktualny temat korupcji politycznej w świetle administracji publicznej. Skupiono się na definicjach i komponencie społecznym korupcji w sferze politycznej.*

**Słowa kluczowe:** *korupcja polityczna, zarządzanie, decyzje władzy, lapówkarstwo, społeczeństwo obywatelskie.*

**Беглиця В.П. Особливості розуміння політичної корупції: державно-управлінський аспект**

*У статті розглядається актуальне питання політичної корупції крізь призму державного управління, робиться акцент на понятійно-категоріальному апараті та соціальній складовій корупційної діяльності в політичній сфері.*

**Ключові слова:** політична корупція, управлінська діяльність, владні рішення, хабарництво, громадянське суспільство.

**Беглиця В.П. Особенности понимания политической коррупции: государственного-управленческий аспект**

*В статье рассматривается актуальный вопрос политической коррупции через призму государственного управления, делается акцент на понятийно-категориальном аппарате и социальной составляющей коррупционной деятельности в политической сфере.*

**Ключевые слова:** политическая коррупция, управленческая деятельность, властные решения, взяточничество, гражданское общество.

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Introduction

When Ukraine had chosen European way of development the fight against corruption and its negative effects actualized. Such phenomenon can nullify many positive initiatives and transformations. Political corruption is characterized by especially negative impact, which exists in society, and can be latent at the same time. The scales of this type of corruption indicate on its inalienability in everyday life of Ukrainian society. So, for the further development of Ukraine and reforms implementation it is urgently needed to overcome the corruption that rooted in Ukrainian politics.

Uncorrupted style of behavior is only entering into everyday life in Ukraine, especially in political and authority activities. There is still strong resistance to fight with political corruption or worse, the use of such a fight in its own interests for getting rid of the opponents.

Law enforcement is a very vulnerable under the conditions of the operation of corrupt leaders. Although they were entrusted with the function of fighting corruption, they are powerless if any corrupt act is formally legal. The complexity of solving such a significant problem, reduces the effectiveness of governance, casts doubt on the fact of legitimacy of power, stimulating public disbelief in democratic norms and may even become a threat to national security.

Analysis of recent research

Numerous Ukrainian scientists devote their research to the issues of political corruption. The works of the following scholars is dedicated to theoretical and methodological understanding of this phenomenon: D. Klymenko [2],

G. Kokhan [3] M. Melnyk [5], M. Semendyay, and V. Grygoryev [9]. Research of A. Tinkov [10] is dedicated to the place of political corruption in the functioning of public administration, socio-political side of corruption in politics is examined by E. Nevmerzhytskyi [6] and O. Pukhkal [8]. O. Busol devotes his thesis to the legal description of political corruption [1]. Studying a psychological component in O. Lozynskyi's research is also found appropriate [4], and comprehensive analysis of political corruption in the informational and analytical materials of the Razumkov Centre [7].

Results

Understanding complexity of the phenomenon creates certain terminological diversity. The definition of political corruption according to international anti-corruption organization "Transparency International" is somewhat laconic. Thus, political corruption means "the abuse of political power for private benefit." Such a brief statement does not allow describing the whole picture concerning this type of corruption, but only gives a general concept. At the same time it's accompanied with definitions. Thus, the subjects are the people who are politically empowered, officials. The purpose of political corruption is to receive personal benefits, private wealth. The content of the actions is determined by the change of collective goods in private by the use of authorities. It is noted that political corruption is characterized by the abuse of the legal norms. And if the previous determination is quite acceptable, the latter is quite wrong, since the hold of political office provides an opportunity to create one's own rules. Accordingly, the most favorable conditions for corruption that formally will not be defined as one can be created [9, p. 90].

Naturally, this type of corruption could be qualified as a crime if it defined by legal sanctions. Accordingly, it would be much easier to bring offenders to justice. Unfortunately, as it often happens, offenders have the opportunity to create an appropriate legal framework were their activity is fully authorized. It creates a certain incident when norms are substituted and public opinion on government dishonesty is formed. The manipulation of such kind with regulatory framework to some extent can be exposed by international standards due to its invariability. The difficulty lies within the fact that often political corruption is only assumed if political motives of obtaining, preserving or distribution of power is present.

It is typical for political corruption that it can be either offense or completely legitimate activity. It is quite originally described in the studies of the Razumkov Centre. "Political corruption is something more than a deviation from formal, written legal norms, professional codes of conducts and court orders. Political corruption occurs when politics abuse (violate) laws and regulations, ignore or bypass them or make laws and regulations so as to promote their private interests" [7, p. 6].

As for the term itself, Razumkov Center gives broad and detailed definition. “Political corruption is an illegitimate use of capabilities and powers by political actors and public authorities to obtain personal or group benefits (rent). Thus, there can be different forms of the benefits (rent) - from directly material to symbolic (power for power, social prestige, etc.) and the mechanisms of use of powers (capabilities) may take an illicit forms” [7, p. 7].

We believe that the accurate definition of political corruption is given by researchers M. Semendyay and V. Grygoryev. They understand political corruption as a separate type of corruption, which is a system of illegal acts, were the person endowed with administrative functions and public confidence acts within his selfish interests or interests of the third parties or organizations [9, p. 92].

The determining factor in the existence of political corruption is the motivation of its subjects, which can be divided into two categories.

The first category includes a group or personal enrichment. With the help of power significant financial, material and other resources are arrogated. It can be implemented in different ways, both illegal and entirely under the current legislation. The violation of moral norms and political commitments given before receiving the official post are the only things evident.

The second category of political corruption goals includes obtaining, expansion and preserving of power. Achieving the goal in a legitimate or illegitimate way and adjusting the regulatory framework under oneself is also takes place. To achieve purposes of the second category, the following means are used:

- A purchase of votes or political loyalty;
- A manipulation of law enforcement and supervisory authorities to avoid punishment;
- A purchase of specific government decisions;
- The use of budget funds to finance election campaigns and political parties general activity, and obtaining administrative position.

In this case, the range of subjects significantly expands through the candidates for deputy participation or a certain position. Due to this administrative system is especially vulnerable because thus unreliable people can get the power.

The existence of goals of two categories creates “full corruption cycle”. With the existence of such a scheme funds are used for gaining power, then for the empowerment and finally for the opportunity to manage budget funds. Eventually the cycle can be repeated many times [7, p. 5].

M. Johnston identifies the main types of political corruption:

- Bribery in the financial sector, based on black market activity, tax evasion, manipulation of financial documents and illegal financial transactions;
- Patronage system - occurs during the implementation of illegal agreements by the limited number of persons who attempt to usurp power;

- Nepotism is unjustified appointment on posts of relatives, partners, preference in tenders, trading, currency transactions, etc.;
- Crisis corruption is the activity of a significant number of big business representatives toward obtaining the necessary political and administrative decisions; as a result significant political changes or even a change of power may occur [3, p. 138].

Political corruption, as well as the other kinds of corruption inherent in almost all countries of the world, regardless of development level. Such social phenomenon can be found in both countries that are rising, and those that are recognized as a standard of democracy. However, the differences in this problem solving are sufficient. Some countries have rare cases that are quickly exposed to the public, and the participants are responsible politically, legally and morally. In other countries political corruption is common, accompanies social and political life at all levels, and most importantly - almost not exposed.

It is connected first of all with the politicization of the administrative apparatus. The scheme is forming within which officials depend on political parties, which in its turn depend on big capital. This situation helps create obstacles to positive social changes, and discredits the country in the global space [10, p. 227-228].

The researchers point out that political corruption is not only bribery of officials and politicians at different levels at its core. First of all, it is corrupt actions that affect the process of government formation and cause the changes in political decision-making. Also the accent is put on the element of betrayal of the civil society from the corrupt official of this kind. Actually corrupt behavior becomes a kind of a norm, which is relayed by political and administrative institutions. Society even may have tolerant attitude toward such crimes.

For a better understanding of political corruption it is advisable to consider the main features inherent in this phenomenon.

The first is so-called "kliyentyzm." Basically it is public relations, which are characterized by an activity of a politician or an official in the interests of his patron. Such behavior is placed higher than the sequence of democratic principles, the professional performance of duties etc.

The second place holds the statement that political corruption directly related to considerably less number of participants. In this case, corruption is mostly often hidden, and average citizen can not participate and not even aware of it. The offense participants are primarily the most authoritative representatives of the state political elite.

The third is such feature as the absence of material component in many cases. Corruption is often expressed in illegal actions, in using one's position to support individuals and groups. It helps to form some kind of barter where happens mutual exchange of services.

Fourthly, there is an opportunity to reveal political corruption in almost every sphere of socio-political life, since politicians and administrators, especially of higher level, have the ability to influence society in general.

Next feature - political corruption differs from ordinary by its almost legitimate character. Political circles, in the majority, perceive such facts as acceptable; ordinary citizens do not always judge it or even perceived it as an offense. Even if the public understands the harmfulness of political corruption, the attitude towards it is rather controversial and indifferent.

And, finally, political corruption latency. It may look like quite an ordinary procedure, about which the public do not even guess due to the complexity and multidimensionality of relationships [10, p. 230-231].

For societies that are in the process of civil society formation the following factors of political corruption are distinguished:

1) a disparity of the legal framework with the level of political culture of citizens - the availability of secured rights and freedoms does not mean its implementation, because society can be guided by other established standards;

2) the state systematically interferes in economic life and the private sector. This is due to fact that public needs an intervention because of the complexity of democratic state formation and the obstacles on the way to establishment of civil society;

3) a secretiveness of decision-making at all levels, minimization of citizen participation in this process;

4) the lack of clear allocation of the essence of political necessity and public interest – often the decisions of imperious nature are made in the interests of politicians, but explained as the state necessity;

5) the lack of openness of political parties and transparency of political parties creation and ways of financing - the parties are created not as much by ideological principle but by the business project [10, p. 231-232].

According to foreign researchers, business and government on the first stage are connected by the way of funding of parties with a big capital. This creates a corrupt government, and the parties lose public support.

In Ukraine, most political parties are created not on ideological basis, but based on business interests and temporary public preference. So instead of ideological postulates and evolutionary tendencies come pragmatic interests and the use of gullible citizens for own purposes. This is what explains a great number of political parties in Ukraine, as well as its creation for specific election campaign. It is negative for society that it is difficult to deal with the great variety of parties, to set realistic and populist program provisions.

The increase of business and policy is possible due to the following reasons:

- Membership fees are barely enough for party activities;

- Parties basic financial activity is not supported by state institutions;
- Control function is hardly used by the public and the state [7, p. 9].

Bureaucracy and politics in Ukraine is difficult to separate. Many problems prevent it from happening, among which are the four main:

- Rather high level of capitalization of powers, which creates wide field for corruption;
- Conventional political or national development programs have declarative character and insufficiently specified; it creates perspectives of manipulation of public opinion;
- It is quite difficult to separate policy and bureaucracy that entails the establishment of symbiosis of policy and bureaucracy;
- Semi legal or illegal activity is perceived as acceptable during policy implementation [10, p. 233].

According to D. Klymenko, when considering corruption it is needed to focus on the following aspects:

- Political – the symbiosis of criminal elements and the political elite and the use of its capabilities in useful, and sometimes criminal, purposes;
- Socio-economic - the distortion of state decisions in socio-economic sphere, access of unreliable persons to economic leverage;
- Legal - lobbying the interests of business circles when developing legal acts.

Scientists unanimously support the idea that corruption is a complex social phenomenon. It combines political, economic, legal and moral aspects of public life. The social nature of political corruption lies in the following:

- Social conditioning;
- Availability of social price that society pays for corruption;
- The impact on the most important social processes;
- Global nature;
- The ability to adapt to any changes, to develop a sort of immunity to fight it [2].

According to the researchers, political corruption tends to collectivization, because the nondisclosure of information on corrupt activity and the participation in it is much easier than revealing the information about corruption and confrontation. Isolated plots quickly turn into a permanent practice of criminal interaction of leaders, subordinates, partners or colleagues. According to the growth of political corruption, its public perception can change. The life in conditions of permanent corruption pushes to the belief in the inevitability of corruption [3, p. 144-145].

Political corruption can directly influence the formation of state structures and leads to the following consequences:

- The power is taken by people who by professional and personal qualities do not deserve to hold received office under the general party lists, on which the voters have no influence;

- The government seeks not to solve socially important issues and public interests, but is working primarily on getting their own benefit and to create favorable conditions for individual businesses.

Supporting the idea that political corruption is characteristic for different countries; researchers still distinguish some identical symptoms. For example, it is said about solidarity in the practice of illegal use of budget funds, loss-making contracts, the distortion of priorities of economic activities etc. Besides, there is a quite common practice to issue false information about opponents to voters in the political process. Such practice enables to remove unwanted people from power or vice versa - to create visibility of political struggle. In fact, the antagonists can work together to achieve common goals and to play their role to the public. Separately appears the lack of any responsibility for the political decision-making, failure to fulfill pre-election promises, and most importantly - the presence of parliamentary immunity and indemnity. It also said that broad use of administrative resources and leverages in the electoral process, combining it with explicit or implicit bribery of voters are a manifestation of political corruption. One of the destructive features that make it difficult to fight against political corruption is the fact that appropriate regulations cause legitimization of actions which are harmful to society, but are formally legitimate [2].

Conclusions

Politicians or officials that are exposed in political actions, mostly often avoid any punishment. This is due to their official status, which allows using political, governmental and financial impact nullify the activity of the law enforcement and regulatory authorities. The complexity and ambiguity of the legal system contributes to this decision. Moreover, corrupt officials have the possibility to use their own position to form an appropriate legal framework. In addition, there is a real opportunity to influence the police not only to conceal their own involvement in the infringement. The negative thing is that they may use it to get rid of competitors or press unwanted representatives of law enforcement or regulatory authorities, deal with them.

Political corruption is often called one of the most destructive factors. It has negative impact on the social life of the country; create the conditions for crime development and citizens' distrust regarding politicians and officials. So this type of corruption is the most dangerous for society. That's why the use of all opportunities to overcome such a phenomenon is important. It is important to attract the general public, conducting educational and information campaigns etc. The activity of NGOs in anti-corruption activities, especially in the political sphere, can really hinder the illegal or harmful actions and forming public opinion on this issue.

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