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Collaborative policymaking: factors of trust in the multipolitical environment

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The article analyzes the features of collaborative policymaking from the position of political trust. Despite the existence of public hearings, the traditional model of policy management is increasingly recognized as one that does not meet needs of an active society. The collaboration is positioned as an alternative option for finding and implementing the optimal solution to a public problem with the involvement of all interested parties. The idea of multilateral cooperation presupposes the formation of an integrated model of trust relations through the synthesis of statically significant variables from institutional and psychological traditions. It comes about monitoring tools, assessing the reliability of the parties, political distance, incentives for further cooperation, as well as the legitimacy of the collaboration process itself. Collaborative policymaking seems to be one of the alternative types of policy development, whereas the level of trust between participants represents both an obvious instrumental goal and a condition for the success of a conceived event. Understanding the principles of trust-building among diverse but equal political actors facilitates reaching an approximate consensus on controversial issues, regardless of political preferences. The author examined and assessed the mechanisms of trust building from the position of rational choice theory and the concepts of social psychology to identify the factors of political trust in the situational contexts of policy development. The article presents the strong and weak correlates of each of the approaches for developing the analytical framework of the collaborative platform. The author also provides formulas for calculating the ideological proximity of opponents, which allow us to assume the level of potential trust between partners on an interactive platform.
Key words: *trust, collaboration, collaborative policymaking, institutionalism, social psychology.*

Introduction. Over the past several decades, collaborative governance has firmly established itself as an alternative to centralized approaches to policy development and implementation [1; 2; 5]. The growing interconnectedness, scale, and number of global problems mean that modern governance systems, characterized by the presence of overlapping polycentric areas, require new approaches to political decision-making. Collaborative policy mechanisms such as multi-stakeholder roundtables, policy forums, advisory councils, and dispute resolution negotiations bring together government, business, and non-profit sector representatives to work collectively on issues of mutual interest. Benefits of collaborative policymaking include improved responsiveness of multidimensional structures, as well as greater flexibility than traditional governance options.

At the same time, some researchers [11; 12] warn that the collaborative policy has shortcomings, such as conflicting goals and objectives between the participants in cooperation, limited financial assets, an unwritten legal basis for joint projects, which complicates the issues of powers distribution, transparency, and accountability. It should be mentioned that the context of collaborative policymaking does not always balance private and public interests, shifting the final decisions in favor of participants with large resources. The diverse spectrum of public and private actors is relevant to defining the conditions under which joint social ties and strong partnerships can be formed. This involves considering and producing the trust factors necessary to initiate a collaborative policy-making process at all political levels.

Collaborative policymaking, as a rule, takes place in a highly politicized context amid increased conflict and time pressure. Consequently, collaboration should not be equated with a long and cumbersome search for unanimous consensus but as a collective effort to establish a shared foundation for solving societal problems through constructive management of differences that "leave room for potential disagreement and discontent" [14, p. 566].

The idea of multilateral cooperation is not new, although the collaboration itself is fraught with some problems. The lack of a tradition of constructive dialogue, past negative experiences of cooperation, and unequal distribution of powers can make it difficult to engage relevant stakeholders in a "fruitful dialogue process" [1, p. 544]. In some political areas involving moral conflicts, collaboration may even increase group polarization among participants or lead to ambiguous compromises based on the position of the least suitable "common denominator" [16, p. 124]. In other cases, cooperation may be limited to promises and empty talk at the expense of real actions. However, well-planned and well-managed collaboration can stimulate the creation of a common ground for constructive solutions to actual problems.

Stakeholder partnerships do seem to be one of the alternative types of forums for collaborative policy development, whereas the level of trust between participants represents both an obvious instrumental

goal and a condition for the success of a conceived event. Understanding the principles of trust-building among diverse but equal political actors is critical in several contexts, especially given the personal orientation of the political nature as such. Resolution of conflicts by political means or the development of a general political vector by several multi-level players involves the collaboration of two or more individuals who must ultimately reach an approximate consensus on controversial issues, regardless of political preferences. For example, in legislatures, harmonious interpersonal relationships help members adhere to a single party line to push certain bills through "possible veto points" [8, p. 444]. Mistrust, especially when it is unfounded, can lead to a dead-end when lawmakers fail to reach agreements or compromises. While interpersonal trust is not always necessary to achieve collaboration or collective action, it serves as "an important catalyst in a wide range of policy-making contexts" [5, p. 136].

Based on the above proposals, we will try to form a more comprehensive view of the variables of political trust as a necessary element of collaboration. The article provides for the synthesis of collaborative management theory, trust concept, and methods for predicting the possible outcomes of political compromise.

1. Institutionalism and Social Psychology: The Search for Integrated Trust Variables

In its simplest form, the rational choice model provides for the presence of a selfish maximizer capable of making optimal choices based on limited information. The trust decision is made taking into account the past behavior of the parties in similar circumstances and incentives to prolong cooperation for a longer period.

Institutional rational choice researchers [4; 6] believe that these incentives are formed through negotiating rules and principles for monitoring the implementation of consensual agreements. The presence of such institutions increases the desire of the collaborator to take on and comply with obligations. Nevertheless, it should be noted that some rational choice researchers admitted the possible influence of cultural norms on the formation of trusting relationships.

The assumptions about the priority of rationality can be refuted by the following hypotheses. Thus, when a society with a high level of generalized trust is subjected to a strict regime of coercion, the individual trust impulse will weaken, which leads to the netting of collaborative practices. Likewise, trust and reliability may peak with weak oversight. I.e. with strict adherence to the rules, players trust primarily the legal system to prevent breaches of contracts, but they do not necessarily trust each other. Another controversial factor relates to the causal relationship between institutions and trust. Institutional rational choice theory predicts that trust is a consequence of the implementation of the right institutions, while social capital

theorists believe that the perception of structures by society occurs only after realizing the lack of trust to stimulate cooperation. Now let`s take a closer look at the trusting factors from the stated concepts' view.

1.1. Rational Choice Theory and Institutional Design

As a rule, attempts to explain the formation of interpersonal political trust were based either on the concept of institutional rational choice or theories of social psychology. Both approaches view trust as a precursor to consensus building and collective action, although they differ as to the prerequisites for its emergence. Thus, institutional rational choice analyses trust as the result of evidence of the reliability of other parties with the requisite of specified institutional rules, while social psychology considers distrust to be an organic continuation of conflicts of beliefs, cognitive limitations, and concerns about the legitimacy of the policy-making process.

Assuming scientific progress by comparing and integrating the explanatory power of multiple theories, we will consider both traditions to identify significant trust variables in a collaborative setting. The trust decision is in most cases made based on information about the past behavior of the parties in identical circumstances, as well as incentives to adhere to agreements in the future. The latter affects whether the participants will keep to negotiate in good faith and fulfill their obligations or ultimately abandon them.

Institutional rational choice researchers [4] suggest that incentives to cooperate are shaped by the existence of rules govern negotiation. Institutional elements include transparency of the principles of accountability for the parties and monitoring mechanisms for ensuring that "consensual agreements are implemented" [4, p.137]. The presence of such institutions increases the desire of each of the participants to make reliable commitments. Thus, formalized rules for collective choice reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings regarding the negotiation process and the terms of the agreement. Monitoring rules assure that potential violators of an agreement are identified promptly, while principles of accountability increase the probability of punishment of exposed defectors. In sum, uniform institutional rules should help build trust and discourage anti-collaboration behavior, since, given strict adherence to the rules, players primarily trust the system to prevent contract breaches. However, they do not necessarily trust each other.

Nevertheless, the results of a study by W. Leach and P. Sabatier indicate only the presence of general decision-making rules is statistically significant for the collaboration, at least within the framework of the institutional trust model. Thus, the "level of trust is lower in partnerships have not decided on the principles of making a collective choice or have not agreed on their necessity" [11, p. 452]. Such data

support the rational choice hypothesis solely regarding the need to establish clear rules of the game that increase confidence in the ability of other participants to be responsible for fulfilling their obligations.

Except for institutional rules, an important factor in trust building for collaborations is the assessment of the parties' reliability. A good reputation and stability in the composition of the community lower the discount rate for each of the participants, increasing their willingness to bear the required costs to benefit from long-term cooperation in the future. There is less incentive for actors planning to leave the political arena to invest funds and efforts in building constructive working relationships.

Variables associated with a reputation as evidence of credibility include (1) the size of the partnership, i.e. the number of participants determined based on interview data and meeting minutes; (2) the percentage of stakeholders interested in continuing cooperation over the next five years; and (3) the percentage of passive observers whose participation is limited to "answering categorical questions" [13, p. 980]. One of the most obvious findings is that trust is higher among members planning to interact with other members of the partnership over the next 5 years. That's why collaborators may build trust by focusing on the length of the negotiation process. Nevertheless, gradual gradations in the success of the negotiations do not predict the formation of trust, although an outright fiasco and a broken relationship between partners do portend a preponderance towards distrust.

1.2. Social Psychology Theories

In the context of the reasons for the trust-building, supporters of social psychology focused on the structure of the advocacy coalition with its hierarchy of beliefs to assess the reliability of other parties through comparative studies between the primary political beliefs and secondary (resulting) positions. Since core ideological values are closely related to specific political disputes, supporting a "particular political pillar provides the foundation for trust or distrust" [16, p. 129]. The use of "heuristic reliability indicators is justified by limited time and computational constraints" [14, p. 567] of personal abilities to process and analyze information, which a priori complicates a systematic assessment of the past behavior of other participants in the collaboration and, consequently, the development of institutional incentives for cooperation.

Consistent with the cognitive dissonance literature, the principle of collaborative coalition building stipulates that preexisting beliefs have a major impact on filtering new data, especially "at the core of politics" [12, p. 440]. Differing interpretations of evidence breeds mistrust, as individuals who reach opposite conclusions on factual issues tend to question each other's motives or reasonableness. Political elites, who do not have a common set of perception filters, tend to consider their opponents as ignorant persons, even relatively ones with unequivocal facts. The initial presence of conflicting points jeopardizes the potential chances of collaboration. So, disagreements over the hierarchy of priority issues are no less significant than disputes over whether the government should pursue liberal or conservative policies in regulating the economy.

Some researchers [9; 15] also attribute the frequency of contacts to the trust components, understood them as the cumulative set of interactions of each of the parties over a certain time. They argue that trust acquired in one social circle often extends to relationships outside it. I.e. it can be expected that the political elite participating in the same basketball team will show a higher level of trust towards their political opponents due to the extrapolation of narrowly focused trust to a more generalized level.

Nevertheless, W. Leach and P. Sabatier concluded that "variable of social networks density, measured as the number of voluntary associations with the participation of a political player with in the collaboration, does not correlate with the level of general trust in people or government officials" [11, p. 494]. However, it should be noted that other studies have not been able to confirm any relationships between the specified variables [13, p. 983].

Trying to explain the inconsistent results, J. Hibbing and E. Theiss-Morse suggest that volunteer groups "do too little for helping people to find democratic solutions of contradictory issues" [7, p. 147] because most groups are either structurally homogeneous or avoid controversial aspects, or encourage "trust in those you know personally" by producing distrust of "outsiders in the group" [4, p. 49].

P. Sabatier [11; 16] proposed another mechanism for analyzing exclusively the political elite, whose social networks are rather dense in comparison with the general public ones. Assuming close ties among the majority of stakeholders, joining a few more voluntary associations is expected to add several additional opportunities to build trust. That is, the positive impact of social networks on the generalized trust format can ultimately turn into a wide platform for the formation of a basic trust impulse. To explain the inverse dependence, it should be assumed that at the level of the politicum, the density of the network reflects the finer structure of social capital, as a result of which individuals do not have enough time or energy to develop strong trusting relationships with other members of the partnership. In other words, after the emergence of general trust platforms, the appearance of additional nodes in the social networks reduces the proportion of persons whom the individual relates with greater trust, that creates additional difficulties for collaboration.

Thus, consideration of social psychology theories and rational choice conception is inextricably linked to

the causal relationship between institutions and trust. Institutionalism implies trust follows the emergence of suitable institutions, while theorists of social capital believe that societies create controlling institutions only after finding out that only trust is insufficient to stimulate cooperation. Consequently, if institutions can be viewed both as predecessors of trust and as a society's response to distrust, then causation may be correlated in both a positive and a negative way. A positive correlation indicates the dominance of the rational choice mechanism, while a negative correlation gives preference to the social capital theory. The inconsistency of the results concerning some variables indicates the need to develop an integrated approach to the causes and assess the trust factors for initiating collaboration.

2. Collaboration: Situational Contexts for Developing a Compromise

Political scientists [3; 4; 8] have often taken an interest in patterns of individual behavior that diverge from assumptions about selfish rationality. Taking rational choice theory as a starting point for modeling political subjects` behavior, we can overestimate some institutional variables by borrowing the strong trust factors from cognitive psychology. Let`s consider the potential integrative variables for building trust between the collaborative participants in more detail.

2.1. Choosing Relevant Variables

If we turn to the variable 'conflict of political beliefs', then the key elements of the personal politics' core, as well as the level of general trust, are difficult to change in a short time. Where distrust arises due to a disagreement over the hierarchy of political priorities, discussions should begin with a collaborative fact-finding and consensus-building on the chief points of the various issues. In this case, the facilitator may also draw the attention of the collaborators to the significance of productive communication. Restricting the participation of those with radical political views will have the added benefit of reducing group size, but may undermine "the perceived legitimacy of the process" [8, p. 446]. Ensuring broad participation for collaborative policymaking will be more successful when political issues are perceived to be of the highest priority and urgency.

In political practice, there is a standard argument when questions related to national security and crisis management should be exempt from the collective discussion due to their sensitivity, belonging to a narrow sphere of competence, or lack of time to find an adequate answer. However, even under these circumstances, opportunities for collaboration can be exploited. In policy areas with a high degree of ideological polarization, deep-seated moral, political, or ethnic conflicts, and high levels of mistrust among stakeholders, "collaborative policy development can be challenging" [1, p. 544].

The variation of political preferences represents the main reason for the loss of authority among the participants in the environment of polyvariant positions. When partners with various perspectives on the best solution to a problem come together to form a common agenda, areas of significant political disagreement invariably arise. On the contrary, a small political distance leads to more constructive dialogue and a willingness to reach a compromise solution. For example, supporters of socialist and liberal ideology may agree to introduce same-sex marriage, but at the same time will fight for a consistent economic policy.

Effective collaboration requires certainty about maintaining or changing the status quo of participants in certain policy areas. If we draw an analogy with coalition governments, then each side has the right to veto for blocking political changes disadvantageous to them. Consequently, a participant demonstrating a stable political course has a much more advantageous position than one who seeks to change the status quo developed over the years. Therefore, it should be assumed that the balance of power within the collaboration is shifting in favor of the parties promising to adhere to the current political standpoint, which increases their reliability in the eyes of opponents.

Variables of institutional design also include the correlation between trust and mutual political deadlock. The matters here are how viable the partners in the collaboration. While partnerships have little ability to limit the rights of their members to appeal decisions, the administrators of collective institutions may limit the paths of appeal, signaling their commitment to respecting decisions made by consensus within the collaboration. Although the deliberative nature of collaboration is intended to balance the hierarchy of power distribution, some researchers [15] points out the viability of the "iron law of oligarchy," even with this approach. The threat of over-loyalty (when a participant has a lot of close contacts with other political players) and the N-square law (as the number of ties increases, parties are at risk of suppressing their ability to actively participate in policy development) are also potential disadvantages for joint management projects.

The strongest correlates of trust from the standpoint of social psychology are the general confidence of the interested parties concerning the legitimacy of the decisions made on the basis of consensus and their confidence in the fairness of a particular process of cooperation, i.e. facilitators should periodically assess participants' feelings about the value of their views and tools for controlling negotiation outcomes. As we can see, the mere existence of procedural rules is not enough to build trust.

2.2. Tools for Assessing Collaborative Potential from the Trust Perspective

The primacy of the above-mentioned variables coincides with the assumptions of J. Hibbing and E. Theiss-Morse [7] that people's attitude to a particular institution is primarily determined by their satisfaction with its actions, but not by the track record of political points planned for implementation. Similar explanations can also be applied to the category of political space, i.e. the distance between the policies preferred by citizens and the activities carried out by the national government. Studies show that political space matters in the cognitive model of interpersonal trust, but only at the level of political values, not from the standpoint of the successful partnership in the actual conclusion of compromise agreements. In particular, trust decreases as the distance between the political values of each participant and the average values of other members of the collaboration increases. In other words, the socio-psychological emphasis on the norms of the negotiation process explains trust better than a rational emphasis on reasoned evidence of the reliability of the parties.

We can assume that the decision of the collaborators will reflect the weighted average of the ideal points of contact for each of the parties. Following the assumptions of L. Martin and J. Vanberg [13], let us assume that a representative of the pro-government structure submits a certain bill b_{min} for the consideration of interested parties, reflecting the power position. The expected political distance (D) between the content of the original draft law and the policy of the median side as a set of compromises between all stakeholders (b_{med}) is calculated using the formula:

$$D = \| b_{med} - b_{min} \|$$

As the ideological distance increases, i.e. deviations from the median position of the participants within the collaboration, the initial proposal should be changed to bring it as close as possible to the point of compromise that satisfies the majority of the participants in the negotiations.

Now let us turn to the model of coalition compromise proposed by L. Martin and J. Vanberg [13, p.994], which, in our opinion, applies to the conditions of collaboration. In this context, the category 'compromise' implies a balanced average position of all negotiators. Let the institute of collaboration C consist of n interested parties. The ideal compromise point j concerning a one-dimensional political space is represented as $p_j \geq 0$, indexed in such a way that $p_{1 \leq} p_{2 \leq} \cdots \leq p_c$. The compromise weight is determined by the expression $w_j \cap (0, 1)$, where $\sum_{j \in C} w_j = 1$. The joint development of a CP policy corresponding to the relative weight of the parties is defined by the expression:

$$CP = \sum_{j \in C} w_j \, p_j$$

Since the distance between the final decision and the submitted one increases as the pro-government structures move away from other interested parties, additional actions are required to bring the introduced draft law in line with the political expectations of opponents. Empirical testing of the result shows the dependence of collaborative policymaking on the weight of each of the negotiators. According to one alternative approach, "the trade-off is equal to the weighted average position of the collaborating partners" [13, p. 994]. Thus, joint policy development is the sum of the weighted attitudes of all stakeholders.

However, the presented equation, focusing on political preferences, overlooks one of the elements of trust within the collaboration, namely the experience of the parties regarding the formation of partnerships. To reflect the dynamic aspect of trust, it is advisable to use the formula proposed by C. Schultz [15, p. 31]:

$$V_{t+1} = v (T_{s, x, t}, O_{s, x, t}, E_{s, x, t}), \text{ where}$$

the collaboration partner's trust V is determined by the trust function v for the principal T, the trust object O, and the environment E by the situation s and the previous experience of cooperation x up to time t.

The integration of various elements of trust is intended to reflect the behavior of the trustee to evaluate meaningful variables in any situational context, depending on the experience of previous transactions. Since the range of functions is not limited to positive values, the trust equation can account for an increase, decrease, or a constant level of trust development from t to $t + 1$. The presented trust equation expands the trade-off model by adding a personalized aspect of trust impulse development. It should be noted that this equation of political trust needs to expand the range of variables regarding the object and the environment of trust, including such elements as incentives for cooperation, legitimacy of the collaboration process, etc.

Consequently, the effect of the political distance between, for example, the problematic pro-government position and the compromise one of the other participants within the collaboration is positive and statistically significant. According to L. Martin and J. Vanberg [13], differences in political values do not have a significant impact on future amendments to the draft law, regardless of the status of the participants on the partnership. This means that the process of reviewing policy options itself is solely a tool for building partnerships and not for raising political doubts. As the ideological distance among the collaborators increases, the initial interpretation of the political decision must change.

Conclusion. The globalization of political issues (the coronavirus pandemic, natural disasters, the risk of terrorist attacks, and global warming) leads to the fact that traditional models of policy development

and implementation do not produce predictable results. Naturally, a lot of countries have an established system of public hearings convened by parliamentary committees to collect information, exchange experiences and opinions between government bodies, stakeholders, think tanks, and the general public. The classical model of negotiation, when each side yields one or more political positions to reach a compromise agreement, is usually associated with the adoption of socially suboptimal decisions for all negotiators. An approach based on taking into account personal interests, when the parties agree to invest time and energy in developing alternative solutions that reflect not only their interests but also the preferences of opponents, is potentially more promising. Unsurprisingly, the past two decades have seen explosive growth in collaborative governance research [1; 2; 5]; moreover, it has recently been suggested that co-governance may spur legislative innovations [11; 17]. Effective collaboration with due consideration of mutual interests is impossible without public disclosure of information about the participants' priorities for further activity on political proposals that can satisfy all players. This condition presupposes a high level of trust among partners within the collaboration, as well as the involvement of a weighty theoretical and empirical base to explain the reasons for its formation.

One of the strategies for implementing and evaluating collaboration is the development of an integrative trust model through the synthesis of institutional and socio-psychological variables. For example, researchers may try to rank the range of political situations when rationality or psychological factors dominate. Some studies show that the social psychology model is especially useful in the case of political decision-making through lengthy negotiations in the presence of differences of opinion, values, and procedures. However, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms are difficult or impossible to create in the case of, for example, negotiations between autonomous and highly heterogeneous stakeholders.

Rationality may prevail in situations where it is easier to calculate the likelihood of fraud, or when interested parties protect direct financial interests as a result of negotiations. Confirmation of this statement would be consistent with the observations of other experts that it is personal interests determine the political preferences of citizens, when the personal costs and benefits are especially obvious or quite significant. Further research will be required to test these assumptions about the rational and psychological roots of trust among political elites.

It should be noted this article does not take into account the influence of the 'devil's shift' factor [17], which remains an important aspect of the distrust syndrome among political elites, presenting the perception of the imbalance of power by the participants within the collaboration. In the case of an accurate perception of the powers' distribution, facilitators should pay particular attention to building trust among politically weaker parties. If the imbalance of power is perceived and exaggerated, mediators may develop a series of exercises to accurately assess the degree of influence of each of the participants in the partnership, choosing the best alternative. One of the goals of establishing rules for consensus-based decision making is precisely the need to equalize the balance of power within the partnership itself, but a separate article should be devoted to this variable.

Consequently, a shift from formal decision-making institutions to collaborative policymaking can help policy implementation theory break out of the narrow analytical frameworks created by targeted teams of officials and take a broader and holistic view of both stakeholder engagement and implementation of current political aspects.

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Колабораційне політичне управління: чинники довіри в мультиполітичному середовищі

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У статті аналізуються особливості формування колабораційної політики з позиції політичної довіри. Незважаючи на існування громадських слухань, традиційна модель політичного менеджменту все частіше визнається такою, що не відповідає потребам сучасного суспільства. Колаборація позиціонується як альтернативний варіант пошуку та реалізації оптимального вирішення актуальної проблеми із залученням усіх зацікавлених сторін. Ідея багатостороннього співробітництва передбачає формування цілісної моделі довірчих відносин шляхом синтезу статично значущих змінних з інституційної та психологічної традицій. Йдеться про інструменти моніторингу, оцінки надійності сторін, політичної дистанції, стимулів для подальшої співпраці, а також легітимності самого процесу співпраці. Колаборація в контексті ухвалення політичних рішень презентує один із альтернативних типів розробки політики, тоді як рівень довіри між учасниками є як інструментальною метою, так і умовою успіху зазначеного підходу. Розуміння принципів побудови довіри між різними, але рівноправними політичними акторами сприятиме досягненню консенсусу щодо спірних питань, незалежно від політичних уподобань. Авторка проаналізувала механізми формування довіри з позицій теорії раціонального вибору та концепцій соціальної психології для виявлення чинників політичної довіри в ситуаційних контекстах розробки політики. У статті наводяться сильні та слабкі кореляти кожного з підходів для вироблення аналітичної структури колабораційної платформи. Авторка також наводить формули розрахунків ідеологічної близькості опонентів, які дозволяють припустити рівень потенційної довіри між партнерами за інтерактивним майданчиком.

Ключові слова: *довіра, колаборація, колабораційне управління, інституціоналізм, соціальна психологія.*