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SCIENTIFIC AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE FORMATION OF CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING ALTERNATIVE POLITICAL DECISIONS IN UNCERTAIN CONDITIONS

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The scientific article reviews and analyses various scientific approaches to the evaluation of alternative policy decisions in order to determine their effectiveness and efficiency. The main approaches are quantitative, qualitative and combined. It is found that the quantitative approach is based on mathematical methods and statistical analyses, which allows for an objective assessment of alternatives using numerical data. The qualitative approach, on the other hand, focuses on the qualitative aspects and characteristics of decisions, taking into account social aspects and ethics. The combined approach, in turn, combines the advantages of quantitative and qualitative analysis to provide the most objective and complete solution to problems.

Specific methods and approaches, such as innovative, strategic, scenario, heuristic, and social analysis, are explored to complement and clarify the main approaches. The importance of criteria in political decision-making is emphasized, taking into account uncertainty, conflicting interests, the influence of emotions and stereotypes. Taking these aspects into account in the process of forming criteria for alternative political decisions contributes to the effectiveness, efficiency and stability of governance. The use of adaptive criteria and risk management, taking into account social justice, sustainable development and innovation, contribute to a more objective and balanced political decision-making in uncertain conditions.

The stages of evaluating alternative political solutions in conditions of instability are highlighted. The main stages include: situation analysis, setting goals, identification of alternatives, identification of criteria, evaluation of alternatives, selection of the optimal alternative, review and adjustment.

Criteria for evaluating alternative solutions in conditions of instability have been formed.

Key words: *policy effectiveness, policy decisions, efficiency, alternative policy decision, risk, uncertainty of the political environment.*

Скібіна Т. І. Науково-методичний підхід до формування критеріїв оцінки альтернативних політичних рішень у невизначених умовах

У науковій статті розглянуто та проаналізовано різні наукові підходи до оцінки альтернативних політичних рішень в умовах невизначеності з метою підвищення їх ефективності та результативності. До основних підходів віднесено кількісний, якісний та комбінований.

Проаналізовано переваги та недоліки кожного із основних підходів формування критеріїв оцінки альтернативних політичних рішень в умовах невизначеності. Виявлено, що кількісний підхід ґрунтується на математичних методах та статистичних аналізах, що дозволяє об'єктивно оцінювати альтернативи за допомогою числових даних. З іншого боку, якісний підхід сфокусований на якісних аспектах та характеристиках рішень, враховує соціальні аспекти та етику. Комбінований підхід, у свою чергу, поєднує методи двох підходів. Використання комбінованого підходу створює основу для врахування переваг кількісного та якісного аналізу для найбільш об'єктивного та повного вирішення проблем при формуванні критеріїв для оцінки альтернативних політичних рішень у невизначених умовах.

Досліджено специфічні методи та підходи, такі як інноваційний, стратегічний, сценарний, евристичний та соціальний аналіз, які доповнюють та уточнюють основні підходи до формування критеріїв оцінки альтернативних політичних рішень в умовах невизначеності. Підкреслено важливість критеріїв у прийнятті рішень у політичних сферах, з врахуванням невизначеності, суперечливості інтересів, впливу емоцій та стереотипів. Урахування цих аспектів у процесі формування критеріїв для альтернативних політичних рішень сприяє результативності, ефективності та стабільності управління. Визначено,

що використання адаптивних критеріїв та управління ризиками, з врахуванням соціальної справедливості, сталого розвитку та інновацій, сприяють більш об'єктивному та збалансованому прийняттю політичних рішень у невизначених умовах.

Виокремлено етапи оцінювання альтернативних політичних рішень в умовах нестабільності.

Сформовано критерії оцінювання альтернативних рішень в умовах нестабільності.

Ключові слова: *ефективність політики, політичні рішення, результативність, альтернативне політичне рішення, ризик, невизначеність політичного середовища.*

Conditions of instability pose a challenge for any decision-making, and this is especially true in relation to political decisions. It is the effectiveness of a political decision that determines the improvement or deterioration of an unstable, negative situation in the country, the elimination of conflicts in society, and the maintenance of stability, legitimacy, and efficiency of governance. In such conditions, it is important to have clear criteria for analyzing alternative political decisions that will allow making an objective choice, ensuring stability and efficiency in the country's governance.

The relevance of the topic of forming criteria for analyzing alternatives to political decisions in conditions of instability is extremely important in the current political context. The growth of political crises, social conflicts and economic turbulence poses an urgent task for political leaders to resolve difficult situations and establish effective management strategies. The conditions of instability are often accompanied by increased uncertainty, ambiguity and a large number of alternative options. In this regard, the development of objective criteria for analyzing and evaluating alternative policy decisions becomes critical.

Problem statement. In an environment of instability, it is important to develop objective and effective criteria for evaluating alternatives when making political decisions. Instability can arise for various reasons, such as economic crisis, political instability, natural disasters or geopolitical conflicts. Instability can greatly complicate the decision-making process and require quick and effective action from political leaders and authorities. Therefore, the formation of criteria for choosing alternatives for political decisions is an important and relevant problem for scientific research. Formation of criteria for political decision alternatives in conditions of instability is related to important state goals of Ukraine and can solve urgent problems in these areas.

Thus, one of the main state goals of Ukraine is to ensure stability and security in the country. Developing adequate criteria for choosing alternative political solutions helps to avoid the negative consequences of instability and maintain peace and order in society.

Another important goal of the country is to ensure economic and social development of the country. The formulation of effective criteria helps to choose alternatives that will contribute to economic growth, improve the living standards of citizens and develop infrastructure.

Ukraine is committed to strengthening democracy and protecting human rights. The formulation of criteria for choosing alternatives helps to ensure transparency and openness of the decision-making process, as well as respect for fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens.

Ukraine actively cooperates with international partners and members of international organizations. Formulating criteria for policy alternatives helps to ensure that national strategies and goals are in line with international standards and obligations.

Thus, the development of criteria for assessing policy alternatives in an unstable environment is an important component of achieving Ukraine's important state goals,

contributing to stability, development and protection of citizens' rights. Solving such important and urgent problems for Ukraine became the basis for formulating the purpose and defining specific tasks of the research.

Formulation of the purpose and main objectives of the article. The main purpose of the study is to investigate the evaluation criteria for choosing alternatives for making a political decision in an unstable environment. To achieve this goal, the following tasks have been formulated: to review the literature and research on the formation of criteria for evaluating alternative solutions in unstable conditions; to formulate methods and criteria for evaluating alternative political decisions which would be adaptive and effective in unstable conditions; to analyse various methods used in political decision-making in unstable conditions, to determine the stages of evaluating alternatives in political decision-making, to formulate scientific and theoretical foundations for the criteria for evaluating alternative political solutions in conditions of instability.

The solution of the above tasks will help to deepen understanding and find ways to solve the problems of forming criteria for evaluating alternative political decisions in an unstable environment.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The study of the criteria for making political decision alternatives in conditions of instability is a relevant and interesting area in modern political science. A significant number of scientific works are devoted to this topic.

Significant studies of the criteria for forming alternatives to political decisions in conditions of instability include the works of Robert Kagan [1, 2]. The American political scientist, author of the book «Present dangers: crisis and opportunity in American foreign and defence policy» [3] studied crises in American politics and their impact on political decision-making, drew attention to the important criterion of adaptability of political decision-making and analysis of possible risks.

The research of V. Tertychka [4], a Ukrainian political scientist, is devoted to a detailed analysis of politics and political instability and crisis situations in the country.

The main areas of the author's research include: analysis of the causes of political instability in Ukraine, study of political conflicts, factors of socio-economic influence on the political situation, and analysis of political crises [5]. An important contribution of the author to the analysis of political reforms and government strategies to prevent crises is the identification of the key role of state institutions in the strategic management of the country. The author also takes into account specific aspects of political instability, such as corruption, electoral processes, public opinion, and relations with the media [6]. The author's research creates a basis for understanding the difficulties faced by modern society in the context of political instability and the importance of timely and effective political decisions to prevent crises.

Scientists Peters G. B., Pierre J. [7] investigate the relationship between political instability and political decision-making in different countries. Among the main factors that cause political instability, the author identifies social conflicts, economic crises, and political corruption schemes. Their research is aimed at analysing the impact of political instability on governance processes and political activities, with special attention paid to the impact of international factors and global processes on political stability.

A number of scholars focus on analysing the effectiveness of various political strategies and their impact on society and the economy [8, 9, 10]. At the same time, considerable attention is paid to the specifics of analysing decisions in various fields, such as economics, foreign policy, ecology, etc. At the same time, determining criteria for assessing the effectiveness of political decisions remains a difficult task. Many

researchers question whether the criteria used correspond to the real needs and goals of society [11, 12]. Insufficient attention is paid to the aspects of sustainable development and environmental sustainability in the context of political decision-making. There is a lack of research that would fully consider the relationship between political decisions and public opinion, as well as mechanisms for involving citizens in the decision-making process. Identification of these unresolved issues can contribute to the further development of research in this area and create a more complete and objective understanding of the political decision-making process.

Discussions in the scientific community also arise on the issue of forming alternatives in political decision-making in conditions of instability, which are considered from different perspectives and include the following aspects. For example, some studies focus on taking into account the risks and negative consequences of decision-making in an uncertain environment [13, 14]. They highlight the importance of risk assessment and identification of strategies to minimize the negative impact.

A number of scientific papers [11, 14, 15, 16] have debatable views on the concept of adaptive management, which involves constant review and adjustment of strategies in response to changes in the environment. They emphasize the importance of flexibility and the ability to respond quickly to new circumstances, identifying the difficulty in achieving this criterion [14,16].

These different approaches, research papers, and the discussion questions they raise help to understand the complexity and diversity of problems related to the formation of alternatives in political decision-making in an uncertain environment.

Presentation of the main material. The evaluation of alternative policy solutions can be based on different scientific approaches that help determine the effectiveness and suitability of each. The main scientific approaches include: quantitative approach, qualitative approach, and combined approach (Fig. 1).

Let's take a closer look at each of these scientific approaches.

The quantitative approach is based on mathematical methods and statistical analyses [4]. It uses numerical data to compare and evaluate alternative strategies. Quantitative analysis methods may include mathematical modelling, regression analysis, optimization methods, and others. Quantitative methods, such as mathematical modelling and statistical analysis, provide an opportunity to objectively evaluate alternatives through numerical data. They allow for a detailed analysis and forecasting of the consequences of various decision options. However, these methods do not measure important aspects such as social impacts or emotional impacts. They may also fail to take into account unpredictable changes in an unstable political situation.

The qualitative approach focuses on the qualitative characteristics and aspects of alternative solutions, such as social impact, cultural aspects, ethics, etc. Methods of qualitative analysis include case studies, expert assessments, focus groups, interviews, etc. [10]. Qualitative methods contribute to a deeper understanding of the context and can reveal important factors that are not taken into account in quantitative methods. However, qualitative methods can be more subjective and less objective, as they rely on expert judgment and interpretation. They may also be less effective in identifying outliers or general trends.

The combined approach combines qualitative and quantitative methods for a more complete and objective analysis of alternative solutions. It allows to take into account both numerical data and qualitative aspects to gain a more complete understanding of the problem and find optimal solutions [15]. The combined approach combines the advantages of qualitative and quantitative analysis, which creates the basis for a more complete

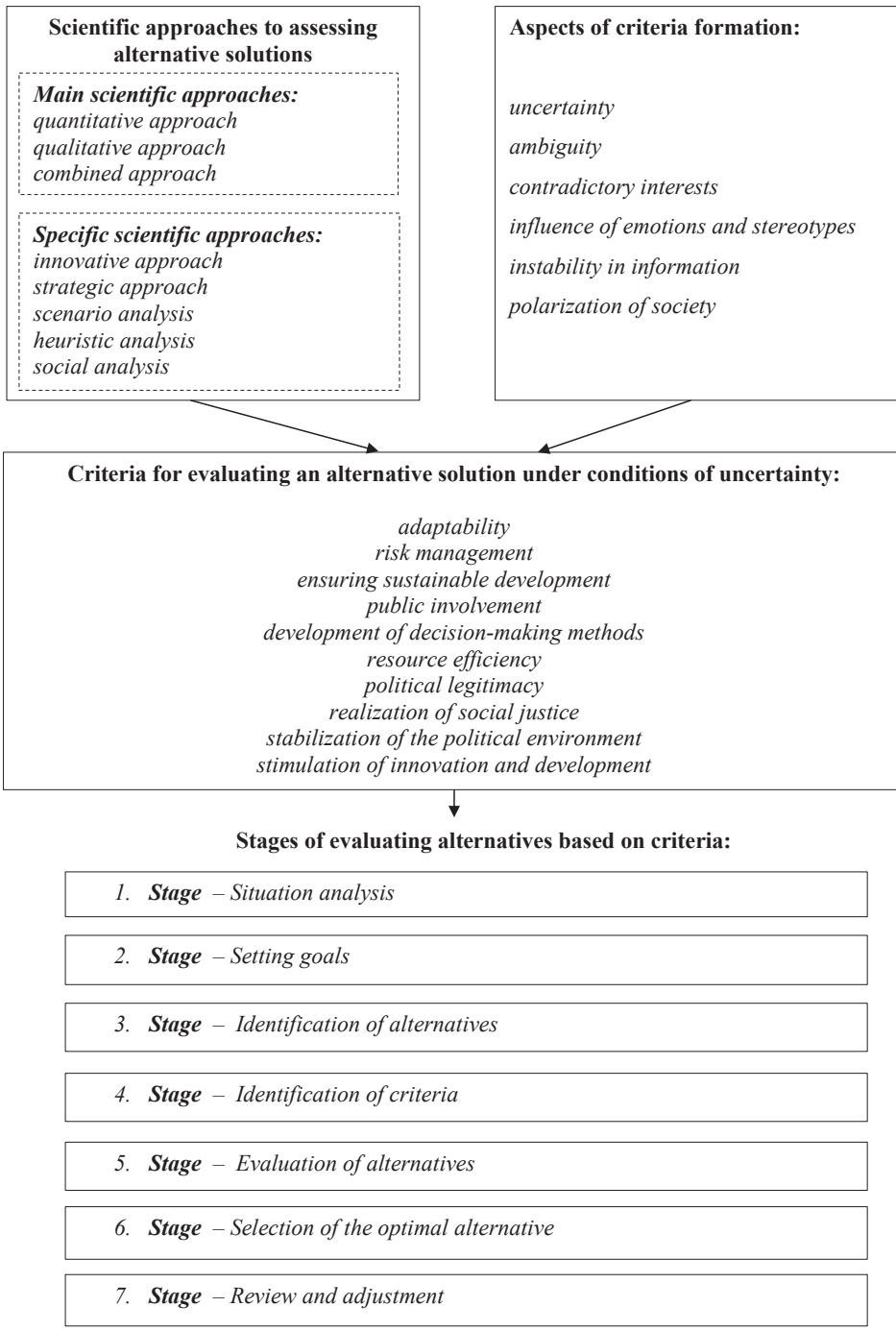

Figure 1. Scientific and theoretical foundations for the formation of criteria for evaluating policy decision alternatives in conditions of instability (created by the author)

understanding of the problem. The combination of the two methods allows to compensate for the limitations of each individual approach and provides an opportunity to ensure objectivity and a deep understanding of the problem. However, the use of combined methods can be complex and require significant resources for data collection and processing.

A combination of different approaches can be most effective for evaluating alternative strategies. Each of these approaches has its own characteristics and requirements when formulating the criteria for selecting an alternative.

In addition to the main scientific approaches to the assessment of alternative solutions, there are specific methods and approaches, which include: innovative approach, strategic approach, scenario analysis, heuristic analysis and social analysis [5,11,16]. Specific methods and approaches complement the main scientific approaches and provide a more complete and objective assessment of alternative solutions. The choice of a particular approach depends on the nature of the problem, the purpose of the study, and the available resources.

For example, the innovative approach focuses on the development of innovative and creative solutions that can lead to significant advantages in a competitive environment. The use of innovative methods and technologies allows to identify new opportunities and predict future trends and create a basis for further development of the country [4].

The strategic approach focuses on strategic planning and analysis. It takes into account the long-term goals and strategies of an organization or system to determine which alternative strategy best meets the strategic goals [6].

Scenario analysis involves considering various possible scenarios and their impact on strategies. By analysing different scenarios, it is possible to identify potential risks and opportunities and prevent the negative consequences of different scenarios [9].

Heuristic analysis is based on the expert experience and intuition of decision-makers. It is used where there is insufficient data or where it is difficult to determine quantitative indicators. Heuristic analysis relies on rational thinking, experience, and professional intuition to identify optimal solutions [11].

Social analysis takes into account social aspects and the impact of strategies on society, the public, and other stakeholders. Social analysis allows to take into account the interests of different groups and ensures the sustainability of strategies in accordance with significant social values.

There are several aspects to consider when formulating criteria for policy alternatives in an environment of instability:

1. Uncertainty and ambiguity: Conditions of instability are often accompanied by uncertainty about the causes and consequences of the situation. This makes it difficult to formulate criteria, as multifactorial and possible risks need to be taken into account.

2. Conflicting interests: In complex political situations, different interest groups may clash and have different views on which criteria are most important. Formulating objective criteria can be challenging in this regard.

3. The influence of emotions and stereotypes: Conditions of instability can increase emotional tensions and create a breeding ground for stereotypes and cognitive biases. This can make it difficult to formulate criteria objectively and lead to emotional decision-making.

4. Instability of information: Conditions of instability can lead to insufficient or incomplete information about a situation. This can make it difficult to analyse and evaluate different alternative solutions.

5. Polarization of society: Instability can increase the level of political polarization, which can lead to conflicting criteria and decision-making.

Taking these aspects into account in the process of forming criteria for policy decision alternatives will help ensure more objective, efficient and stable management in the process of governance in an uncertain environment.

The process of forming criteria for selecting policy decision alternatives under conditions of uncertainty is carried out through the implementation of successive stages. The first step is to analyse the current political situation, identify the factors that lead to instability and define the main problems to be solved. The next step is to set goals and objectives to be achieved as a result of the decision. These goals should be clearly stated and take into account the interests of different stakeholders. The next step is to identify alternatives. It is necessary to develop various possible alternative courses of action that can be used to resolve the situation. This may include considering different strategies, policies or options. The next important step is to identify criteria, defining the main criteria that will be used to evaluate and compare the alternatives. These criteria should be specific, measurable and reflect important aspects of the situation. The alternatives assessment stage involves applying defined criteria to evaluate each alternative. This may involve collecting data, analysing and comparing different options. The next step is to select the best alternative that best meets the defined objectives and criteria. The choice must be justified and supported by evidence. An important step is to evaluate the chosen alternative and its impact on the situation. If necessary, adjustments to the strategy or criteria should be made based on the results. The final step is communication and decision-making. Ensure effective communication between decision-makers and make the final selection of an alternative. These steps can be adapted to the specific situation and needs of the researcher or political leaders. It is important to take into account the time factor when implementing the stage, because some public problems require urgent response, and in this case, the best alternative solution is one that can be implemented in the shortest possible time.

In order to meet the requirements of the decision-making process, it is important to develop adaptive criteria that take into account the variability in situations.The main requirements for criteria include the following:

- development of adaptive criteria. It is necessary to develop criteria that take into account the variability and instability in the choice of alternative policy solutions. These criteria should be adaptive and flexible to respond to changes in the situation;
- risk management. The formation of criteria should take into account the potential risks and dangers associated with each decision alternative. This will help reduce possible negative consequences in the event of unfavourable developments;
- ensuring sustainable development. The criteria should facilitate decision-making that promotes sustainable development and ensures a balanced satisfaction of society's needs in the long term;
- public involvement. When formulating the criteria, it is important to take into account the opinion and interests of the public to ensure the legitimacy and support of the decisions made;
- development of decision-making methods. Study of decision-making processes in unstable conditions and development of new methods and approaches for their effective use in political and scientific spheres;
- resource efficiency. The criteria should take into account limited resources, such as financial, human and material, and ensure that these resources are used effectively to achieve the goals set;
- political legitimacy. The criteria should take into account the need to preserve and maintain the legitimacy of political decisions. This is important to ensure public trust in the authorities and to avoid possible conflicts.

– realization of social justice. Criteria should take into account social aspects and the impact of decisions on different social groups. This helps to ensure justice and equality in society;

– stabilization of the political environment. The criteria should help to stabilize the political environment and prevent further instability. This is important to ensure the peaceful and stable functioning of society;

– stimulating innovation and development. Criteria can help to stimulate innovation and develop new directions in the political sphere, which will help to adapt to changes in society and the global arena.

These aspects are important for further study and development of methods of forming criteria for choosing alternatives in political decision-making in conditions of instability.

Conclusions. The study found that different scientific approaches, such as quantitative, qualitative and combined, have their advantages and limitations in determining the effectiveness of strategies. The combined approach, which combines qualitative and quantitative analysis, may be the most objective and complete in studying the problems. It is highlighted that specific methods, such as innovative, strategic, scenario, heuristic and social analysis, are important to complement the main approaches and clarify the choice of strategies.

These aspects are important for the further development of methods of forming criteria in the selection of alternatives to goals in the political sphere. Understanding and taking into account the differences between different approaches allows for better implementation of strategies and improved quality of governance in unpredictable conditions.

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