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## SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON POLITICAL PROCESSES

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**Abstract.** The article analyzes the socio-economic inequalities that are expressed from unequal distribution of resources, opportunities and access to social good. It is an important factor that forms the structure of society and understands its political context. Inequalities significantly affect political processes, directing public attention to key issues such as social justice and civic participation. Low level of social mobility can lead to the formation of political inequality and conflicts. Inequality can affect civic participation by determining opportunities for citizens to participate in political decisions. Growing social differences can generate dissatisfaction and apathy among citizens, limiting their participation in political processes. Economical disagreements are a key factor in the formation of political relations. Growing income gaps can lead to distrust of elites and those in power structures, which has the potential to create a favorable ground for political movements and protests. In the world of globalization, where economic and political processes are intertwined, socio-economic inequalities can affect international relations, contributing to the emergence of geopolitical and economic stressful situations. The study of this topic is necessary to understand and development of strategies aimed at reducing socio-economic inequalities. Balanced and effective political decisions can become a step towards creating a fair and stable society. Considering socio-economic inequalities, it is important to address the issue of gender equality. Highlighting the role of women in society and their opportunities in politics is an important aspect of research. Taking into account gender aspects of inequalities expands the sphere of influence, complementing the analysis of political dynamics. Also it is important to consider socio-economic inequalities through the prism of education and access to knowledge. The author considers the manifestations of these inequalities, including limited access to basic education, quality of education, possibility of obtaining higher education, the difference in opportunities for skill development and vertical mobility. A low level of education can deepen social differences, limiting the opportunities of citizens in political self-expression. Author highlights that these inequalities create social barriers and can lead to the formation of a cycle where children from less well-off families have limited opportunities to receive quality education and later face limited prospects in the professional and social spheres. So, the study of such aspects contributes to the creation of a comprehensive approach to problems of socio-economic inequalities. Accordingly, research on socio-economic inequalities and their influence on political processes are critical for understanding modern society.

**Key words:** political stability, globalization, justice, sociocultural landscape, social conflict, political elite, political strategy, sustainability, political institution.

**Introduction.** The topic of socio-economic inequalities and their impact on political processes is extremely relevant and important in modern society.

This field of research allows for a deeper understanding of power dynamics and distribution of resources and relationships between different social groups. Understanding these inequalities is critical to the development of policy strategies aimed at ensuring social justice. Uneven distribution of economic resources can affect the stability of political institutions. Socio-economic inequalities can create distrust of the authorities and contribute to social conflicts that have a direct impact on the political landscape. The discussion of socio-economic inequalities is brought to the fore issues of civic

participation. Understanding and solving these problems is stimulating citizen activity and forms an educated and active citizenry. In accordance study of socio-economic inequalities and their impact on political processes is an important stage in building a just and stable society.

**The purpose of the article** is to analyze socio-economic inequalities and their impact on political processes. To achieve a defined goal, a solution is appropriate the following **tasks**: guess the complex characteristics of socio-economic inequalities; to determine the current trends of socio-economic inequalities; establish the main directions of influence of socio-economic inequalities on political processes.

**Research methodology** involves the use of a complex of methods for a thorough analysis of the outlined issues. The initial stage is a systematic review of the relevant literature, including the analysis of scientific articles, books, studies and publications related to socio-economic inequalities and their impact on political processes. This allows to formulate theoretical framework and identify key concepts and factors that should to study An analysis of specific countries where high levels are observed was carried out socio-economic inequalities to identify specific examples of impact of these inequalities on political processes. System approach allowed to take into account the complex nature of socio-economic inequalities and their impact on political processes, including various aspects such as education, access to participation in political life, services, etc.

#### **Characteristics of socio-economic inequalities**

The biggest and most controversial problem, characteristic not only for Ukraine, but also for the whole world, there is social and economic inequality, which accompanies humanity throughout its existence. It has a negative effect on the standard of living of the population, affects the development of human potential, there is a source of social tension and instability of the state, which is negative affects the development of the national economy. At the same time, on the other hand, it is driver of socio-economic activity.

The main problem of socio-economic inequality is poverty, which, in in turn, leads to a deterioration in the health of the population, a decrease work capacity and negative impact on socio-economic development.

To date, the issue of social and economic inequality in Ukraine is becoming increasingly acute because the structure of society characterized by a low share of the middle class, significant stratification population by income and a high share of the poor population.

The biggest social problem of modern society is economic inequality, which is one of the most frequently studied forms of inequality. She is a consequence of differences in the distribution of economic assets and income between population groups or individuals.

Gradual growth of socio-economic inequality, including poverty as its manifestation in a large number of countries raises many questions about impact of globalization on national economies and international society c as a whole (Markina, Kalinichenko, Lesyuk, 2019).

In many comparative studies of the impact of institutional structure an agreed list was formed for socio-economic inequality of institutional relations, which determines the main parameters of social inequality in society and explain the revealed differences in depth and dynamics inequalities in various economically developed countries, such as in Western Europe, and also a comparison of the countries of the European Union with the United States America.

The level and dynamics of inequality before taxation are determined first of all first of all:

- 1) a centralized system of collective negotiations between business and trade unions;
- 2) trade unions, the possibilities of their formation and influence;
- 3) the minimum wage, its level and dynamics.

Inequality after taxation and transfers is significantly adjusted (Dmytrenko, Demchenko, 2017):

- the tax system, its forms and levels;
- institutions and income redistribution policy, state social guarantees.

Cultural, political and legal foundations of institutional interactions that contribute to the reproduction of socio-economic inequality. In particular, it is about:

- institutional distribution of political power, type of electoral system;
- institutional conditions for securing property rights;
- institutional conditions for compliance with labor rights and standards;
- institutional features of education.

In addition to wealth inequality, the 21st century has brought and continues lead to new forms of social inequality. Information revolution has led to digital inequality, which significantly reduces almost all significant life benefits chances of people disconnected from virtual reality, information boards and streams that allow them to enjoy many benefits of modern civilization.

We can point to a number of other forms of socio-economic inequality, which are generated or actualized by the modern world: symbolic inequality, cultural inequality, environmental inequality, generational inequality, inequality security, uneven stability, etc. Some of them are more aware, others remain less noticeable until a certain time. But they all form together complex, multidimensional field of different life chances and opportunities which polarize the destinies of groups and individuals, push them against each other, draw them into real and potential conflicts.

### **Modern trends of socio-economic inequalities**

New social inequalities cause new processes in the ideological sphere and political discourse, change basic cultural orientations and exacerbate civilizational conflicts. These processes begin to affect not only economy, but also on many other social institutions. Therefore, understand modern the world in all its complexity and contradictions, to assess its threats and dangerous trends are impossible without addressing the topic of social inequalities, without attracting the attention of international organizations, governments, politicians and experts (Social inequalities, 2018).

Social inequalities that grow, transform and acquire new ones forms and scales, incompatible with the new, more developed and demanding mass consciousness, with new opportunities in the information age to perceive the whole globalizing world online and react acutely to both the real and the imagined injustice.

Different socio-economic and material status determines economic behavior of the population and forms different value systems. social- economic and material status forms relevant attitudes about behavior of the population on the labor market and determine its affiliation to a certain type of economic culture.

Modern forms of inequality, arising as a result, are determined by different possibilities of access to socio-economic resources and power, transform the stratification model of society. Institutional prerequisites protection of individual rights declare the possibility of a person to choose an occupation, field and form of employment. At the same time, however, there are mechanisms for reproduction of inequalities perceived by society as unfair. To they can be attributed to the specificity of professional choice due to insufficient access up to a certain level of education or low quality of education; presence / absence of quality workplaces; imbalance in the field of employment – absence / lack of quality workplaces; imbalance between supply and demand in the labor market; the dependence of the socio-economic status of an individual on the status and government transfers, significant income inequality and unfairness polarization of the working population by income and material status strengthens the social mobility of low-income population groups, mainly industrial/agricultural workers, technical workers, etc self-employed.

Economic behavior on the labor market is determined not only by social professional status and type of employment, but also property stratification and income inequality. Wealthier sections of the population with financial status above average prefer work with a certain risk due to high income; groups with average and below-average financial status are focused on work with a fixed salary in combination with additional income (multiple employment); groups of workers with low incomes

have in their economic consciousness mainly attitudes towards work with a small but guaranteed salary (Dmytruk, 2011).

Political institutions are considered dominant to some extent because they affect the balance of economic institutions on which it depends efficiency of the economy, general well-being and degree of inequality.

The distribution of political power in society affects what economic institutes are created and according to which formal and informal rules they function. Usually political institutions are quite stable, no prone to rapid changes in economic relations and redistribution of power. If groups of people who are rich enough and influential compared to representatives of other communities, then it helps increasing their actual political power and allows them to impose and promote economic institutions in which these groups are interested, resulting in inequality will persist and inequality will persist and tend to growth (Dmytrenko, Demchenko, 2017).

### **Directions of influence of socio-economic inequalities on political ones processes**

The influence of socio-economic inequalities on political processes implemented in the following areas:

1. Mistrust of political institutions. A high level of social economic inequalities can generate distrust in political institutions. Citizens who feel that the system is unfair can opt out from active participation in politics. Among the reasons for the spread of absenteeism is also low political and legal culture can be singled out as a personal reason, leading to indifference and alienation from the political process.

Moreover, today's realities show that voters with a low level political education, civic competence, lack of basic skills critical thinking and adequate analysis, finding themselves in the conditions dominance of informational populism and manipulation of the public opinion in the mass media, are not able to use their opportunities as efficiently as possible.

In the conditions of dominance of informational populism and manipulation public opinion in the media, they are not able to adequately analyze the situation, what happened That is why such part of the electorate prefers during voting for populist promises, not the level of competence of the candidate, and in addition, they do not emphasize the basic qualities of the candidate, which are there important for holding an elected position (professional education, professional experience, literacy, the ability to adequately respond to modern challenges, integrity etc.), as well as on external attractiveness, the ability to manipulate the public opinion, empty promises, not supported by facts, etc.

In the field of increasing the electoral activity of citizens, it is important the aspect remains the improvement of the legal culture of the general public of voters (French Jacobite).

2. Perception of injustice. Inequality can create feelings injustice among citizens. It can become a source of social conflicts and protests, affecting the stability of political processes. There is a widespread opinion in Ukraine that the main problem is poverty. Yes of course, poverty is a huge problem. Purely theoretically, poverty can arise in a society where there is no excessive inequality (as an example of some African countries), but in any case even legitimate and socially acceptable inequality always breeds poverty. Inequality is threatened by casteism (Ukrainian society already has signs of this negative phenomenon, when caste people are in the minority – people from the lower strata of society cannot advance not only to the higher, but also to the middle classes). More. it is unjustified, unjust inequality that is the cause of total corruption in Ukraine.

Other negative consequences of inequality include general criminalization society, obstacles to economic development and macroeconomic stability, insufficient demand for domestic goods and complete distrust of "everyone to everyone", mass dissatisfaction with the authorities, inability to carry out radical reforms and the threat of social conflict, social nihilism, large-scale avoidance of payment of taxes and a high percentage of expenses for the support of the poorest part society, lack of resources in the budgets of all levels to fulfill obligations state, lack of resources in the budgets of

all levels to fulfill obligations states, lack of internal (and therefore external) investment, paternalistic expectations, etc. (Libanova, 2017).

Socio-economic inequalities in access to education are manifested in different aspects, determining the possibilities of population groups to get quality education and develop their potential. In many countries, especially in those regions, developing, children with a low level of socio-economic status may have limited access to basic education. Cost of education, remoteness of schools from some areas or limited opportunities to receive school equipment can be barriers to education.

Inequalities can also exist in the quality of education that different people receive social groups. Children from better-off families can have access to better schools, teachers and resources, which affects their overall education training compared to children from less well-off families. Higher education can be unavailable to those who cannot afford to pay the high cost study or is unable to compete for scholarships.

This can lead to the formation of social barriers to obtaining higher education.

Socio-economic inequalities can also affect opportunities vertical mobility, that is, the ability of individuals to climb the social ladder elevators Unequal access to education can be a barrier to achievement higher social status.

3. Restrictions on political participation. High socio-economic inequality may limit the opportunities of certain population groups in political participation. It leads to the emergence of exclusive political elites and less voice restriction well-off citizens.

High socio-economic inequalities can lead to the formation of exclusive political elites that represent only a limited circle of economically well-off strata. For example, in the United States In the States, elite groups can easily manipulate political processes, securing exclusive access to resources and positions of power. In totalitarian countries such as the DPRK or Saudi Arabia, the political elites can be shaped by the ideology of the regime, limiting the representation of different social groups.

People with less economic opportunities may feel that their votes do not have sufficient weight in political processes. For example, in Brazil and the Russian Federation, election systems are based on the financial capabilities of candidates or require a large amount of resources to start a political campaign, they can make it difficult for representatives of less well-off groups to participate. In totalitarians countries where there are restrictions on freedom of speech and political activity, citizens, especially women, may be deprived of the opportunity to express themselves their views and participate in politics.

A high level of socio-economic inequalities can create systemic barriers to political participation, such as limited access to information, difficult access to election sites and high barriers for participation in political associations. For example, in India or Saudi Arabia high barriers to participation in political parties may exclude certain social groups, reducing the diversity of participants in the political process. In Muslim countries, for example, Iran, Afghanistan, systemic barriers may limit the freedom of women to express their political views and participation in public life.

4. Global dimension. Socio-economic inequalities are not internal a phenomenon of only national societies. Globalization makes these matters more important, taking into account the influence of economic and political processes on world level. This is especially noticeable if there is access to the Internet.

Digital inequality manifests itself in two aspects: between countries between countries of the world and in the individual human sphere. Currently, only 15% of humanity in courses of global technological innovations. with global technological innovations, and about half are able to perceive

and assimilate them. Third humanity is completely excluded from this process. The latest technologies have a large power, but their results are distributed very unevenly. Based on of this situation, it can be predicted that if the situation is radically not will change, the rich countries will become even richer. They will also become richer educated people who have knowledge and access to modern information (Berveno).

At the same time, poor people have few chances in the conditions of rapid and the dynamic growth of digitalization of the economy to break out of the circle of poverty.

Differences that occur before birth, starting with the "lottery" after birth, depending on where the child was born, can grow from for years children from poor families may not have the opportunity to get an education and may find themselves at a disadvantage in employment."

Advanced information and communication technologies affect not only everyday life of citizens, but also on the social and political sphere, creating new ways of establishing relations between the government and society. In particular, the German researcher J. Theoharis notes, which is extremely difficult to give definition of the term "online participation" because it covers quite a wide range a range of activities that are not only fundamentally different from each other, but are also based on different levels of technological progress (Buchynska, 2022).

Typically, online participation includes such a variety of activities as sign online petitions, search for online petitions, search for a political one information on the services of local councils, political information on Facebook, using Twitter to coordinate protests, sending e-mails letters, electronic voting, publication of photos publication of photos in Instagram with images of violence.

Some activities have no offline counterparts and are only possible thanks to the availability of the Internet, as certain types of online activity can be carried out anonymously, while others are possible only with authorization – online participation possible on foreign platforms that have certain restrictions and prohibitions for political content (such as Facebook), while others rely on to your own virtual application; some activities are available for reaction and feedback, while others are open to a limited number of people (Theocharis, 2015, p. 6).

Digital inequality is the most complex and widespread in modern times conditions It is a phenomenon that is accelerating, affecting millions of people and entire countries.

This inequality is difficult to overcome without changing the coordinates of economic practice, without implementation of fundamental educational practices, without building a new one paradigms of development paradigms of human development. Such inequalities can to be overcome only if the conditions of social cohesion and conditions are created social cohesion and the existence of an inclusive institutional regime.

**Conclusions and prospects for further research.** So, it can be done the conclusion that socio-economic inequalities are a key factor that determines the political reality. Differences in the distribution of resources and opportunities and rights affect the stability of political institutions and the level of citizen participation.

Achieving a fair and equal social and political system requires systemic changes in the distribution of resources and an active fight against inequality at all levels of society. Uneven distribution of resources creates instability and distrust of political institutions, which can affect efficiency of management and legitimacy of power. The study of social economic inequalities should act as a basis for development political strategies. In general, it is wrong to emphasize the importance of research socio-economic inequalities and their influence on political processes for creation of a fairer, more stable and efficient society.

In further research, it is worth specifying the outline issues in a regional or targeted context.

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