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A Comparative Study on Professionalization of Political Practice Globally: A Systematic Review of Published Data

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ABSTRACT

This study systematically reviews the evidence of professionalization of political practice globally. Comprehensive searches of four electronic databases were performed associating relevant studies from 1970 to 2015. This study reviewed the political professionalization incidence worldwide, attributes and characteristics, strategies, techniques and indicators, challenges and gaps in political professionalization practice. A total of 48 studies from 28 countries were included in the review.

The incidence of political professionalization varies across the world. The United States and Germany primarily focus on professionalization of political practice. Evidence for professionalization of political practices in Africa and Asia were not found. Education, politics and technical training, skills, core values and role of the politicians were identified as motivational factors for politicians four decades ago. The CAMPROF index and party-centered theory of professionalized campaigning were highlighted as strategies, techniques and structures. Lack of formal qualifications, independent body of knowledge, and code of ethics, required professional competency, expertise, professional association, and professional standards for politicians as components in professional structure of practice recognized as challenges.

Keywords: Political professionalization, political practice, professionalization campaign, professional attributes.

JEL Classification: O57, I28, N01

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INTRODUCTION

Fundamentally, professionalization is based on knowledge, skills (Eliassen, 1978, Saalfeld, 1997) and values (Brint, 1985, Culic, 2006). Sociological studies of professions have traditionally attempted to differentiate professions from non-professions (Klegon 1978). A diverse range of characteristics of professions centrally encompassed knowledge and expertise differentiating them from other occupations (Sake, 2012). Max Weber's work has culminated in the professionalization of politics with the rationalization in 20th century and introduced professionalization as a nonpartisan phenomenon. The process of rationalization tends to be expressed within through professionalization. In the field of politics it was terminates in the professionalization of decision-making (Simirenko, 1974). He created the concept of professional politician and differences between politics as a vocation and politics as a vocation (Kjell, A *et al.*, 1978, Freidson (1986) recognized that typically professionals had a stronger formal knowledge and higher educational base than other occupations. These include high level of knowledge and expertise or related items as special features beside other characteristics such as codes of ethics, altruism, rationality and educational credentials.

In political practice, scholars stated the necessity of professionalization internationally as well as nationally. Kjell, A *et al.*, (1978) stated that an idealized professionalization reveals that the development of targeted sense of good and prudent practices. In professionalization of political practice, substantial reservations might be appropriate about the closeness between professionalization and performances (Golembiewski 1983). There is substantial evidence that the professionalization of politics is a curious and conjures up conflicting images as an infrequently paradoxical notion (Hollander 1974). A current study on professionalization argues that "profession autonomy, power and success virtually require dependence on the state(Botelho, 1990). Professionalization in a variety of work contexts has a strong normative appeal (Corbett, 2013). Contemporary scholars argue that the political professionalization is an essential component in the current political scenario although a complex and debatable phenomena in the context of politics and the establishment of professionalized political culture.

The concept of professionalization of political practice is being introduced in the west. A few studies indicate that the professionalization of states legislatures, the years of the professionalization movements since the 1960 (Malhotra, 2006) and number of professionalization measures have been developed (squire, 1997) in the USA and in Europe. Professionalization of the legislature was the main theme in the west since the 1970s. As Eliassen (1978) states that the professionalization interpreted as an aspect of the expanding workload of legislators and it can be manipulate of changes in the legislative role. Examining the concept of professionalization and emphasizing the important difference between professionalized legislatures and professionalizing legislatures, Squire (1997), states the requirement for professionalization of legislature and in all sorts of legislatures in west redirect towards the adoption of professional behavior on the part of legislators. Professionalization of parliamentary rules caused significant changes in parliamentarians' behavior frequently (Saalfeld, 1997). Establishment of a professionalized political culture is an essential component in the current political scenario. There is worldwide aspiration of professionalization that is associated with enhanced performance. Aspects of professionalization over the last four decades

focus the movement of professionalization, legislature, including parliamentary role, political recruitment, politicians and the political parties as well as campaign professionalization, which are concerned with knowledge, skills, values, norms, rights and code of ethics.

In the processes of political recruitment, the political status in Danish may in fact be a substitute for social and educational status and the party system (Eliassen 1978). The possible implications of professionalization of parliamentarians' 'role-sets and reduction of disturbances in role-sets influences parliamentary behavior. Saalfeld (1997) exemplified, the specific professional skills and resources, for example communication skills, knowledge for workings with relevant organizations, access to political networks, familiarity with relevant political issues are require to acquired by the politicians. A study on the social characteristics and personal biographies of the members of the Romanian parliament (Culic, 2006), elaborates in the process of democratic transition and consolidation, the structure of social values, attitudes, and interests of the political elite are being considered as important factors for professionalization. Notably, Jones (2008) in his study stated the need for entry qualification, skills, techniques, code of ethics for professional practice highlighting the lacking areas for instance formal qualifications, independent body of knowledge, formal code of ethics or system of selfregulation and, autonomous, and hedged around by the demands of party and electorate as it is still not considered for politicians. In Belgium, Tom et al (2013) local councilors emphasized that the education, skills, age, gender and ethnicity as important factors to be considered for professionalization in the recruitment and career. Corbett (2013) noted in the Solomon Island, the dilemma due to absence of necessary monetary and/or institutional preconditions which presents to champions of formalistic measures of professionalism. In addition to, he argued for the need to revisit a collective view of professional ethics by emphasizing the role of selfregulating professional ethics as a potential solution to such problem. The "professionals," who have skilled in political consulting, polling and media production, the "professionalization in campaigning" is constituted by the intervention of them (Mancini 1999). The political campaign requires professionalizing of campaigning methods through introducing methods, structures, strategies, techniques and indicators. Specific knowledge is required on modern campaigning, marketing, communication and consultation and use of modern technology rather than traditional methods.

Previous studies have attempted to focus on the country specific analysis of political professionalization and bring issues related to the application and practice. Considerable studies were between 1970 and 2000 highlighted on the political professionalization aspect of the legislative, role of parliament and members of parliament. Recent studies have demonstrated the professionalization of political campaign, communication and professionals in the context of practice politics. Another important source of information is country specific data that allows the estimation of the incidence of political professionalization at country and regional levels.

Brante's (1988) includes a category for a political profession for individuals who have a special form of "tacit" knowledge along with expertise in political technology which transcend departments and party lines as typology of professions. Research has shown that professionals can influence the organizations within which they operate (Hall 1968). While initial control of a person's administrative behavior typically derives from the individual's values and norms of behavior, professional socialization can be a strong influence; and the greater the consensus

regarding professional norms, the more difficult it will be to control professionals (Meier and O'Toole, 2006). The obstacles and limitations of professionalization have attempted to determine in few studies. Professional politicians are still frequently viewed a century later with suspicion and contempt by citizens furthermore the media and even about other politicians. Besides politicians are variously described as isolated from the interests and concerns of the people they represent.

Professionalization of political practice is a priority for political sociologists to investigate the political practice models across the world in order to help in reducing political malpractices and introducing professional political practice methods globally. The key challenges are on how to establish, expand and implement professionalization of political practice globally, as well as to standardize the election campaign practices. Through social media several criticism arising on current political practice, it is becoming to change perspectives among the citizens across the world. These criticisms reflex the lack of professionalism in political practice in many regions. This work is aiming to figure out the, how could professionalized in political practice apply in current scenario and intend to provide new insight to the political practice system. This systematic review investigates the professionalization of political practice worldwide. The studies included have been identified as comparative research and/or country cases. On this basis the literature is classified into four categories: (a) Political professionalization: country overview (b) political professionalization: attributes and characteristics, (c) professionalization of political practices: strategies; techniques and indicators, (d) political professionalization: trends, gaps and challenges. This review aims to assess the historical development of professionalization of political practice and summarize the country cases across the globe.

METHODS

Search strategy and selection criteria

This systematic review examines the evidence of professionalization of politics worldwide. Relevant publications in English electronically searched in databases of SAGE, Taylor & Francis, JSTOR and Wiley online library from 1970 to 2015. The following keywords were used to collect relevant citations: "Politics as a profession" OR "professionalization of political practice" OR "professionalization of political campaign" in titles or abstracts. The database searches resulted in482 initial references. In the second step, 124 duplicated articles were deleted from the search. After eliminating 257 abstracts from the sample 101full test articles were identified. In the following steps, standards for inclusion were set and the relevance of the articles was independently assessed by screening full articles. Out of 101, forty-eight articles were considered relevant to the scope of the study. The mainstream of articles were scrutinized for the published studies from, USA, EU countries, the Soviet Union and Australia. The result of this systematic review is presented the characteristics of each article in a research protocol.

Data extraction and analysis

Data extraction has been done subsequently reading all the articles and considering the application of inclusion criteria. Extracted data included information on professionalization

political practice in world, attributes and characteristics of political professionalization, strategies, structures techniques and indicators in political campaigns and challenges, and trends in the professionalization of politics. Studies, which reported results in political education and gender in politics, were excluded. Studies that reported results in seminars, conferences, or practice models were excluded as well as letters to the editor.

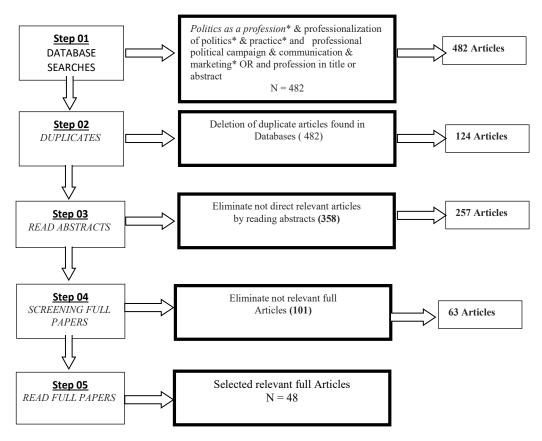


Figure 1. Flow diagram for the literature search results

The purpose of this systematic review was to examine the evidence of the professionalization of political practice around the in globe. This review also provides an overview of professionalization of political practice area and highlights the main attributes of professionalization of political practice among scholars. This systematic review identified 482 records, from which 101 eligibly published articles that described 48 studies from 28 countries met the inclusion criteria with studies ranging from 1970 to 2015 according to the criteria (figure 1).

Country overview

The data shows that the United States, Germany, Finland and Soviet Union (Russia) whose foremost concerns are on professionalization of political practice, more so than other countries. Professionalization of political practice in the USA mainly converses on professionalization

of the legislature, leadership, bureaucracy, politicians, congressional staff, political campaign, communication. European Union including Finland, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Swedish, and Austria are the hub of professionalization of political practices in Europe. German studies focus on professionalization of parliamentary role and career highlighting the required qualifications before entering parliament in terms of 'availability' of potential politicians' for a political career with certain professional skills (Saafeld,1997) and the studies give attention to professionalization of political campaigning as well. In 1970s Soviet Union explicate the inter and intra professional tension management due to professionalization of politics (Simirenko, 1974) and Hollander (1974) exemplified the limitations and obstacles to 'professionalization' of politics. Recently, the Russian political system paid attention to the role of the political consultants and communication and similar discussion have been held in Scandinavian countries. Latin America including Argentina, Chile and Uruguay focused on the nature of election campaign, however, Brazil (1990), studied the role of the state in shaping professionalization. With small populations in Solomon Island (Corbett et al., 2013) and Pacific Island (Corbett, 2013) including all the other pacific countries were also reported incidence of professionalization as commonly split three sub regions but the evidence of professionalization of political practices in Africa and Asia were not found. The research methods of those studies were mainly based on country cases, interviews and survey, empirical, longitudinal, descriptive and comparative analysis. The majority of studies were recognized as country cases.

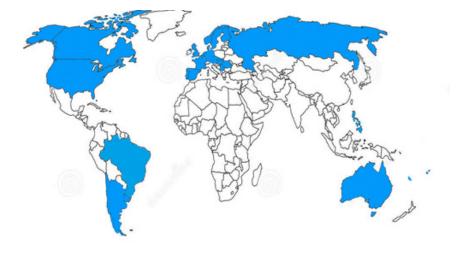


Figure 2: Evidences of the professionalization of political practice: country list

Background

The studies provide a possible explanation on the professionalization of political practices, including the professionalization movements from 1960 to 1990 (Squire, 1997) and a descriptive portrait of the politics of professionals since 1960 (Brint, 1985) and professionalization of the state legislature (Malhotra, 2006) in the USA. As Simrenko (1974), states in the Soviet Union tension exists in the context of the political professionalization. A similar argument has been

made in a study in Australia highlighting professional politicians and the fact that their moral panic is significant. In comparison, the concept of moral panic is used to analyze the concerns expressed about 'professional politicians. Jones (2008) indicates as outbreaks of populist moral panic due to public and media anxiety and its hostility to the 'professional politicians'. The trend towards legislature professionalization of careers in Canada (Moncief, 1994) had significant impact on compensation variables, higher turnover rates and development of careers identified as electoral advantages. The analyses of longitudinal data were focused on the impact of politician professionalization to change the social, political and economic system in Romania (Culic 2006). Romania was a one-party system that changed to a multiparty system. The homogenization of the legislating body in Romenia has affected the form and quality of legislative activity. As the proportion of member of parliaments with a background in economy and legal studies the political elite become professionalized. The process of professionalization is seen in the overall increase in the number of former leaders of local administration and members of government that have entered the parliament after completed full degree courses in economics, international relations, and political science as trends in politics in Romenia. It is correlates with changes in many dimensions of social and economic life in the country, and constitutes both the causes and results of several institutional adjustments.

Few studies have intended to analyze the impact of professionalization on political behavior, motivation and career in political practice. Use of party-centered theory and CAMPROF index during the election and campaign structures, strategies of political parties has been compared. A survey on USA congressional campaigns identified the application of sociological models of professionalism in to the occupation of political campaign consultation (Grossmann, 2009). European countries offer their perceptions on professional election campaigning/ differences in understanding, professionalism among party campaign practitioners as macro (country) and mezzo (party) factors (Tenscher et.al 2015).

Attributes and Characteristics

The attributes and characteristics identified in the professionalization of politics. When compared with all the reported evidence, only a few studies have been able to highlight the influence of personal characteristics and attitudes on professional political behavior (Cohen, 1980). Recent political recruitment signifies achieved status including social, political and educational factors rather than ascribed status (Kjell, A *et al.*, 1978). The study also argued the similarities and dissimilarities of political recruitments. The Soviet Union and the USA studies elaborated technical education, political and technical training, skills (Simirenko, 1974) and core values and the role of the politicians (Brint, 1985) as motivational factors adapted four decades ago. Apart from that knowledge, professional skill and professional norms (Saalfeld,1997), political language, ethics, ethical code and rights, standards of enforcement, expertise, autonomic commitment (Barbara *et al.*,1997) skills, techniques and qualifications for professional practice (Jones,2008) have been discussed as the key components of the attributes identified in different countries.

In 2013 Corbett et al focused on age, education and occupation as the key attributes of the members of parliament. Tom Verhelst et al (2013), found the age, gender, education, ethnicity,

citizen, motivation and skills as attributes of political professionalization in the recruitment and career. Studies during the period of 1990s characterized the racial, sexual and occupational diversity in legislature professionalization (Squire, 1992). Recent studies, consider the career experiences, motivation, decision making and political leadership (Borchert *et al.*, 2011) as attributes and characteristics.

Strategies, Techniques and Indicators

The review results shows that the strategies, techniques and indicators that are being used for political campaign, communication and consultation. CAMPROF index (Gibson et al 2009, Rayner 2014) and party-centered theory (Tenscher et.al, 2012, Tenscher et al., 2014) of professionalized campaigning have been highlighted as strategies, techniques and structures mainly used in European countries. Advertisement (Blumler et al 1999) displayed posers, media, pictures, slogan (Holtz-Bacha, 2002) were used as political communication strategies and/or techniques. The use of new technology as a strategy and/techniques to employ in professionalized political communication were focused by the members of parliament in UK. Traditional and interpersonal electioneering techniques were used during the 1999 election in Latin America (Espíndola 2002). Few studies (Negrine. R et al., 2002, Hutcheson 2007, Grossmann 2009, Karlsen 2010) have found that modern campaign techniques and technologies, new strategies were used for political consultation. Professionalized campaign, number of consultant and consultation types (Stephen et al., 1997) were identified as consultation variables.

Challenges, Gaps and Trends

The key challenges were, indication of lack of formal qualifications, independent body of knowledge, formal code of ethics (Jones, 2008), lack of required professional competency, expertise, professional association, training requirement for political actors, professionalized political class and professional standards for politicians (Corbett, 2013) as components in professional structure of the practice. In addition, studies mention that the power and authority(Hollander, 1974), dynamic types of legislatures (Kjell, A et al., 1978), quantitative and qualitative levels of political participation (Cohen, 1980), dimensions of the professionalization process, homogenization of the legislating body(Culic, 2006), electoral competition, careerism, policy making (Richman, 2010), limited utility of professionalism based on model institutions and unrelated political recruitments as challenges of professionalization (Tom et al., 2013). Only one study (Simirenko, 1974) demonstrated the tension which arises out of the process of professionalization and manages tension as a challenge. The review outcome demonstrates the challenges and trends in professionalization of political campaign. Adaptation of the concept of professionalization into the political leadership was recognized as a main challenge (Espindola, 2002). Free media within the corporate system, de-professionalization in political campaign (Tencher, 2013), personalization, candidates centered political system (Vliegenthart, 2012), were recognized as trends. Lack of allegiance to ethical principles, structural barriers, unfamiliarity and media attention were challenged for campaign consultation (Grossmann 2009). Management of political campaign, applying campaign techniques with the consultation from experts, organizational structures, role of outside professionals, adoption

of marketing techniques, changing patterns of electoral behavior, planning, competitive pressures, anti-elite popularize, specialization of task and management campaign were also identified(Stromback,2009).

DISCUSSION

In developed countries, the professionalization of political practices is associated with positive attitude. However, challenges and barriers were found at its various stages of organizing, initiation and implementation. Although there is evidence of the professionalization of political practices in developing countries especially in Asia and Africa, regions are not sufficient to widely examine the purpose.

Studies have noted different aspects of the historical development of political professionalization practice. Professionalization of the legislature, and political career were identified in the early studies more than two decades ago and where as political campaign was recognized as a recent phenomenon. An advantage of professionalized political practice can be positively contributing to improve and rationalize of political practice. For instance, to address gaps in the political practice in many countries the concept of professionalization could be seen as a necessity in Asia and Africa, where there is less evidence in professionalization of political practice and issues related to the current practice scenario.

Professionalization (Kjell, A et al., 1978) epitomized as a general and complex phenomenon which is visible in most modern legislatures. The requirements of professionalized politics (Simirenko, 1974) illustrated as the autonomy of all other professions imperative. The long-term changes influenced in the composition of legislative elites within the process of professionalization and the workload of legislators and legislative role. Social and education are important background variables for political professional are based on political qualifications. In terms of professionalization the legislative elite have both advantages and drawbacks (Kjell, A et al., 1978).

The literature on professionalization of politics (Tom *et al.*, 2013) contributes to politics, professionalization in recruitment and career and shape political elite. According to Eliassen and Kjell, A *et al.*, (1978), professionalization recruitment contains multiple dimensions. 'Education' and 'profession' represent as intellectual professionalization. The professionalization of parliamentary roles has caused significant changes in parliamentarians' behavior. Specific professional skills and resources require acquiring for the politicians. In a political career or as professional associations, political parties serve as the major gatekeepers. Corbett (2013) states that inventive and institutionalized as two dominant measures of professionalization are in pacific island in the nature of political practice. Incentive-based measures are based on the assumption of by being a politician only some people are willing to lose money (Corbett.2013).

Scholars have sought to assess changes to parliamentary or legislative service and as opposed to analysis of professionalization trends which can broadly be classified by institutionalist. Against incentive and institutionalist measures, professionalization is largely unapparent in the Pacific Islands.

Scholars found that the self-regulation, professional ethics and the nature of political

practice, experiences of politicians, motivation and institutionalism were all measures of professionalization. The politicians lack the required professional competency, expertise, credibility to adequately fulfill their roles and maintain public trusts are recognized as assumptions.

A survey on politician-centered studies from around the world reflects the academics who have become politicians (Corbett, 2015). The bio-data on MPs, interviews, election results, education levels and occupational backgrounds were indicated as key attributes of members of parliament (Corbett *et al.*, 2013). Some studies showed that the political life is dominated by 'professional politicians' (Jones, 2008). Politicians and their relationships, characteristics of professionalism and the concept of moral panic explain 'professional politicians'.

A current study (Strombäck, 2007) emphasizes different features in different contexts and states that the professionalized campaigning as broad and multifaceted phenomenon. Professionalized political campaigning is characterized by varying intensity. The recent studies in United States and Britain provide major evidences about professionalization of political campaigning; however, the less evidence with regard to countries with party-centered systems seen in UK and also US is party-center system and multiple parties.

Moreover, it is noticeable that the lack of systematic and comparative research on political campaigns professionalization. Judging from the literature, the American scholars than Europeans demonstrated the greater importance of the concept of professionalized political campaigning. Campaigns in the United States are more advanced than in other countries, and because it is hence more or less taken for granted that political campaigns in the United States have become professionalized. In terms of an 'Americanisation', scholars emphasized that the reason and necessity for professionalization of political campaigning. Centralization and specialization, personalization, and entertainization (Holtz-Bacha, 2002) showed as the dominant features of political campaigns. Explicitly, professionalization renowned as the central characteristic of modern election campaigns.

CAMPROF designed a new multidimensional index to measure and compare parties' which use of professionalized campaign techniques during the elections. The current effects of campaign modernization, the opportunities and challenges involved in wider application those compel by the party-level dynamics. An ideological outlook, internal structure, electoral success and party-specific factors that linked to the campaign professionalization process and parties based on the size which signifies that the levels of differences across the professionalized campaigning. In particular, development of standardized empirical indicators to measure the dependent variable in question professionalized campaigning is significantly underdeveloped at the party and candidate level in worldwide. Taken as a whole, the campaign was hierarchically structured, with the party organization which maintaining the control over much of the decision-making (Gibson, and Römmele 2009).

In relation to party-specific factors on vote seeking, high level of resources, hierarchical party structure, right-wing ideology, heavy electoral defeat, and change of party leader and loss of incumbency (Gibson and Römmele, 2006) current literature on professionalization campaign introduced the party-centered theory. In 2001, Gibson and Römmele suggested a professional Campaign Index which involving ten items: (1) use of telemarketing; (2) use of direct mail; (3) use of outside public relations/media consultants; (4) use of computerized databases; (5)

use of opinion polling; (6) conducting opposition research; (7) presence of an internal internet communication system; (8) email sign-up or subscription list for regular news updates; (9) outside campaign headquarters; and (10) continuous campaigning. As explanatory base the party-centered theory proposed a modified and expanded index of campaign professionalism which consists of two sub-indices: campaign structures and campaign strategies (Tenscher *et al.*,, 2012). Holtz-Bacha, (2002), explained that with the influence of professionals from outside the political system more and more campaigns are being organized by experts from media, PR and advertising agencies on the other hand rational campaign strategy and disappearance of issues were recognized as factors of de-politicization.

Communication management vigorously attempts to define the issues of campaign and personalization. In the political communication arena, both political and communication skills are required. Scholars have argued that the professionalization of political communication expands the capacity of political elites to manipulate the democratic system. The essential tasks of professionals are assisting to build and sustain the self image as political leader. The current democratic deficit is possible to enlarge through professional political communication.

In all modern democracies, the contemporary concepts of political marketing and the professionalization of political campaigning are equally applicable. Political marketing has identified as new dominant campaign paradigm. However, the theoretical relationship between political marketing and the professionalization of political campaigning is still uncertain. Furthermore, the distinction between political marketing, market orientation, and marketing techniques are often imprecise. The literature about the professionalization of political campaigning and political marketing has grown considerably during the last decade.

CONCLUSION

Issues of current political practices around the globe are on the rise. Numerous scholars have sought to bring in disparities and issues related to the practice of politics and construe the sources. However, lessons learned from other programs are vital for implementing and establishing professionalized political practices to encourage the concept of professionalization of politics in to the less practiced regions. The concept of professionalization is still somewhat underdeveloped.

This study found strong evidence that the discourse on professionalization of politics has risen in both democratic and socialist political arenas. Development of the political professional in USA differed radically from the pattern in the European countries and the Soviet Union. Soviet Union in it historical aspect is a particular feature, such as political professionalization and campaigning versus propaganda were highlighted.

This review ended with (a) a restatement of one of the starting points, namely the concept of professionalization of political practice; (b) an awareness of the need and opportunities for vivid directions in research; and (c) a question about what impact changes in the political professionalization practice expansion will have on conceptions of professionalized political culture. These findings elucidate the need for researchers to design and develop new studies, encourage research scholars and educators to reflect on their practices, underline the need to

explore current trends and challenges in implementing political professionalization, and to offer new ideas for future work.

More observational research is necessary to determine barriers and enablers to implement professionalized political practices at national and international levels. These should accompany the published studies that are more focused on political legislatures, communication, campaigns and marketing. It is also essential to research on the difficulties and challenges to introduce and practice professional conduct. Key boundaries are that subsequently shaped the field of political professionalization and practice. The situation calls for imaginative tracking research on both professionalization of political content and practice. Next, attention should be given to professionals who need to work in this field as professional political practitioners and do further evaluation on as to how qualifications, skills and values are being used to perform their roles and responsibilities as professional politicians. Researchers must consider the professional competencies, and the necessity for implementing educational/ training programs on political professional practice and attention should also be given to professionalize political, educational programmes including undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

When the practitioners themselves set out to manipulate charismatic symbols and create a social order compatible with professionalized decision-making the development of professionalized politics becomes possible. In this background, successful professional practice in politics is being recognized as a necessity for many aspects of effectiveness of the political setting to share professional practice methods and strategies. Political professionalization needs to establish professional competencies, knowledge, skills and values base of practice. Some critics see political professionalization not as a process of guaranteeing and improving services.

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