



THE ROLE OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICAL COMPETITION IN DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES IN UZBEKISTAN

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<p>Received: May 24th 2023 Accepted: June 26th 2023 Published: July 24th 2023</p>	<p>Political parties are an important institution for democratic development and civil society. Political competition arising from the activities of political parties is seen as a factor that strengthens the pluralism and legitimacy of power in the country. These theoretical issues are analyzed in a scientific article. At the same time, the legislative base for the development of democratic reforms and a multi-party system in Uzbekistan over the years of independence was studied.</p>

Keywords: Political parties, political competition, democracy, Uzbekistan, development strategy, multi-party system, societies.

Political competition is a complex system of social institutions, formal informal institutions, ethno-social and cultural traditions. Political competition is part of the social order, a product of human activity, which is not limited to electoral struggle, but pervades all political life[1]. The specificity of political competition is determined primarily by the nature of politics as a special sphere of society.

Politics is first and foremost a relationship of power. And if there is power that gives enormous rights to those who exercise it, then inevitably there is a struggle for the right to participate in the exercise of this power. This struggle can take various forms and forms, it can be implicit and open, conducted within the framework of the law and violent, it can involve small groups, and it can also involve the masses. This feature of politics allows us to speak of it as a sphere of competition and even conflicts between various social and political forces in the struggle for influence, for power.

Political competition implies "the possibility that the ruler can be constitutionally removed from his post in free elections", as well as democracy, as "an institutional device for political decision-making, in which individuals are able to influence power using rivalry as a tool. political forces in pursuit of citizens' votes.

Achieving the set goals will inevitably be accompanied by a change in the balance of power in the political arena, gaining certain advantages by some political authors and losing positions by others. Thus, the strengthening of the authority of the incumbent president will always take place against the backdrop of a weakening of the influence of the opposition, the adoption of the two bills, the one proposed and prepared by the deputies of the Parliament, and not the Government, will indicate a weakening of the positions of the latter, the victory of one candidate in the elections means the defeat of all the others, and etc[2].

The meaning and content of political competition lies in the struggle for influence on the masses, on certain social strata and groups. Achieving political goals in a democratic society depends solely on the ability of a political party, its leader to turn public opinion in their favor, to convince people of the correctness of their aspirations and actions. Only by attracting voters to our side can one achieve election to a public post, only by changing the opinions and beliefs of people can one ensure an increase in the authority of the current statesman, only by influencing deputies and public opinion can one induce them to vote for the necessary amendments to the law.

Parties expressing the interests of individual social groups and the state, politically personifying society as a whole, form a single political system as an environment through which the likelihood of political violence exerted by groups in relation to each other and to the state increases or decreases. An indicator of such political possibilities of groups is political competition, which, determining the degree of organization of society, directly affects the emergence of a single political system in the course of modernization[3].

Political competition is an important part of the election campaign. It is precisely in the conditions of rivalry between parties that a constructive common platform appears, the most worthy candidates for deputies are identified, and the deputy corps of the parliament is formed. The political opposition of the parties has always been a serious test for society and citizens for culture, knowledge, erudition, outlook, tolerance. And the stronger the political ambitions, the higher should be the responsibility of each party for its actions and deeds. Modern international electoral standards fix a certain set of rules of conduct for a candidate for deputy, regulating his relationship with

voters and other candidates. Thus, the requirements of the Bureau for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) states that "*candidates can adopt a code of conduct to ensure elections, non-use of any form of violence and indecent campaigning.*"[4]

Political competition is necessary for the development of a pluralistic democracy. As a hypothesis, one could assume that political competition gives citizens the freedom to maneuver in responding to the demands of the political system or allows them to form these demands themselves.

The political life of modern **Uzbek society** largely reflects the specifics of the attitudes of the population to political problems and state power as such that have developed over the period of reforms. In addition, the order and nature of the implementation of political processes and procedures in Uzbekistan bears the imprint of historical political and cultural features that distinguish the post-Soviet space. In particular, this concerns the specifics of the implementation of political competition in Uzbekistan and the problems arising in this area, primarily the problems of managing public opinion and the political will of the population, the abuse of political technologies, etc.

The political dimension of the reforms was manifested in the transition to a multi-party system and free competition between parties, which requires a high level of political and legal culture of both the direct participants in this process and the electorate. In practice, however, voters and politicians themselves often do not have such a culture.

The political indifference and passivity of a significant part of the population, inherited from the Soviet past, acts as a breeding ground for the development of various violations of competitive processes. At the same time, the insufficient effectiveness of the mechanisms of legal regulation of political competition contributes to impunity for abuses in this area.

Hence the need for deep social reflection on the problems and trends of political competition and the political choice of modern citizens. At present, the attention of political scientists should be focused on the problems of political competition, its dynamics, and the identification of the main socio-political determinants of negative phenomena in this area[5]. Despite the fact that political competition as a phenomenon and category refers primarily to the subject area of political science, its study must necessarily be supplemented by sociological analysis aimed at searching for social factors and patterns, studying the influence of historical, sociocultural, socio-cognitive factors on political competition.

The development of the process of political transformation of society, the nature of its course, the degree of correlation between transformations in the system of political institutions and the corresponding changes in other social subsystems, the presence and nature of legal gaps, to a large extent affect political competition and its expression in electoral behavior. This issue is of particular relevance at the present time, when there are significant changes initiated by the executive branch in the political system of the Uzbek society.

The study of political competition traditionally belongs to the competence of political science and political sociology. In Western political science, the political competition of party systems was studied by D. Butler, D. Wittman, R. Dahl, K. Deutsch, G. O'Donnell, E. Downes, K. Shorsky, J. Schlesinger and others. Thus, Downes focused on the rational nature of the participation / non-participation of voters in elections and the motivation of politicians who only seek to gain and retain power. J. Roemer in his monograph "Political Competition: Theory and Applications" applied the methods and approaches of the new political economy to political competition. Democracy is a competition between parties that supply competing interest groups for the political course.

The category of political competition in its various facets and aspects is reflected in domestic and foreign political science, sociology, and psychological literature.

Political competition and the political market in modern society are becoming important characteristics of social reality. The key mechanism of political competition is an electoral mechanism based on universal, equal and direct suffrage and secret ballot - free and fair elections of citizens' representatives to elected state and local authorities. It is political competition and its constant dynamics that ensure socio-political stability and long-term sustainability of a democratic political system, endow it with the ability to self-regulate and improve itself. The nature and dynamics of political competition are directly related and determined by how the political rights and freedoms of citizens are respected and protected, their rights in relations with the state to form state and local authorities, to control and participate in the activities of these bodies in managing state affairs.

Having proclaimed state independence, the people of Uzbekistan made a political choice, choosing a democratic path for the development of society. From that moment, the process of formation of democratic institutions (the rule of law, political parties, public organizations, self-government bodies of citizens, etc.) began in the republic. Thanks to this process, the transition from a one-party system to a multi-party system was carried out and conditions appeared for the struggle for power within the framework of the law - without upheavals, explosions and anti-constitutional actions.

The role of political parties in the formation of democracy is great, because. It is political parties that are one of the main subjects of democracy. Throughout the world, political parties retain their importance in the life of society, primarily as the main tool, a way of expressing the will of the voters. Political parties help voters navigate elections by offering a wide range of political positions and programs that they have maintained contact with the public in developing.

According to their mission, political parties must ensure the continuity of power within the framework of the law. In Uzbekistan, when implementing the tasks of building a civil democratic society, the rule of law is put at the forefront. The delimitation of powers, the exercise of public control over the executive branch, funding and activities of political parties are

clearly spelled out. During the years of independence, a normal political and legal space has been created - the Law "**On Public Associations**" (February 15, 1991), "**On Political Parties**" (December 26, 1996).[6]

The provisions of the Constitutional laws are designed to strengthen the role of political parties in state and social construction. Analyzing the legal regulation of the activities of parties in the Republic of Uzbekistan, we can say that these laws are the result of a gradual evolutionary development of the state-legal and political system of Uzbekistan, this is a step towards moving from a strong state to a strong civil society, and of course, this is a new stage in the development of a real multi-party system, increasing the activity of political parties, consistency in advancing the goal.

In order for a political party to gain its status, importance and authority, time and experience are needed. And most importantly, its activities should be based on concrete and effective ideas understandable to the people. The implementation of the new Constitutional Law will expand the possibilities of political parties in solving the most important state issues, more actively involve the population in ongoing reforms, accelerate the process of liberalization, democratization of government bodies, and increase their responsibility.

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