

YOUTH OF UZBEKISTAN IN POLITICAL PROCESSES

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ABSTRACT

This article provides a detailed study of the participation of young people from the Republic of Uzbekistan in modern political processes. Special attention is given to analyzing the key trends and factors that determine the political activity of young citizens, as well as the forms of their involvement in the country's social and political life. The paper examines the level of political awareness and culture among young people, and the influence of state youth policy, educational institutions, and civil society organizations in shaping an active civic stance.

Furthermore, the article highlights the existing problems, barriers, and prospects for further expanding youth participation in political decision-making. The author emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive approach to developing the political consciousness of the younger generation, which considers not only formal institutions but also informal channels of socialization such as family, media, social networks, and youth associations. It is noted that the formation of a stable political identity among youth is closely linked to their level of trust in the authorities, the degree of openness of the political system, and the availability of real mechanisms for participation. In the context of the modernization of Uzbek society, the need to improve educational programs aimed at developing legal literacy, civic responsibility, and critical thinking among young people becomes more urgent.

Introduction

Youth have always been a key participant in socio-political processes, and their activity often serves as an indicator of changes within society. In Uzbekistan, where youth constitute a significant portion of the population, studying their political participation is a timely and relevant task. Amidst the reforms and modernization initiatives launched by the

government, the role of youth as active participants in the country's social and political life is growing.

In recent years, the state has implemented programs aimed at boosting youth political engagement. This is driven by the necessity of fostering a new generation of leaders and strengthening democratic institutions. These programs include both

educational initiatives designed to improve legal and political literacy, as well as mechanisms for direct youth involvement in governance. These mechanisms include the ****Youth Parliament****, Public Councils, and participation in the activities of political parties and non-governmental organizations.

Special attention is given to creating conditions for the self-realization of young citizens, including through digital platforms where they can express their opinions, propose initiatives, and participate in public dialogue.

The increase in youth political activity is also reflected in their greater participation in elections, public hearings, and civic campaigns, which indicates the formation of a conscious and responsible civic stance. Uzbekistan's education system plays a crucial role in shaping the civic and political culture of young people, facilitating their integration into decision-making processes and active involvement in the country's socio-political life.

It is also necessary to strengthen collaboration between educational institutions and government bodies, civil society, and international organizations. Joint projects and initiatives can not only increase the level of political awareness among youth but also provide them with real tools to influence social processes. It is important to understand that the development of youth political

activity is not a one-time event but the result of a comprehensive and consistent influence of various factors, ranging from family upbringing and the educational environment to the media landscape and state policy.

Analysis of the Literature on the Subject.

The issue of youth participation in the political processes of Uzbekistan has been studied by both local and international authors. President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in his speeches and works, particularly the book "We will build a free, democratic and prosperous state of Uzbekistan together," emphasizes the importance of youth political activity as a key component of the ongoing reforms.

Uzbekistan's scholarly community has extensively explored this topic. Legal scholar A.H. Saidov has focused on state youth policy, the development of a legal state, and youth involvement in governance. Kh. Mirzaakhmedov studies youth movements and the political culture of the younger generation, including their forms of participation in state affairs. D. Yunusova, N. Soliyeva, and Sh. Tojiev are among the researchers who have examined the formation of youth political consciousness, their participation in elections, and the development of legal and political culture.

Further contributions come from H. Jurayev, N. Khakimov, and K. Abdurakhmonov, who analyze the political socialization of youth within the context of Uzbekistan's socio-political system transformation and the impact of institutional reforms. R.N. Abdullayev examines the role of social capital in youth political socialization, while F.H. Musayeva studies youth and their civic activism in Uzbekistan. M.K. Jurayev investigates youth movements and their role in the country's social policy.

In addition to Uzbek researchers, a number of international experts on Central Asia have also analyzed the participation of Uzbek youth in politics. These include Marlene Laruelle, Edward Schatz, and Erica Marat, who place the topic within the broader context of youth policy and authoritarian modernization in post-Soviet countries. N.B. Omarova focuses on civic activism and youth participation in the political processes of Central Asian countries. Reports from international organizations like the UNDP, OSCE, and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation also contain studies on the involvement of youth in Uzbekistan's socio-political life.

This article aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the extent of youth involvement in Uzbekistan's political processes and the diversity of their forms of participation. A particular focus is placed on identifying factors that have both a positive

and a restrictive influence on the political activity of the younger generation, with an emphasis on the social, economic, and cultural conditions that determine the level of political inclusion.

Materials and Methods

Theoretical approaches to studying youth political activity include analyzing political culture, social capital, and political socialization processes. Political activity is defined as the extent to which individuals participate in political processes, including both formal (e.g., voting, party membership) and informal (e.g., flash mobs, online activism) forms.

Political culture shapes citizens' core attitudes and beliefs about political processes. In Uzbekistan, youth political culture is marked by a gradual shift from traditional passivity to an active civic stance. Political socialization encompasses the formation of political attitudes and values under the influence of family, educational institutions, and media. In the Uzbek context, both formal institutions (schools, universities) and informal channels (social networks, public organizations) play a significant role. Social capital, which includes youth involvement in social networks and movements, helps boost political activity. In Uzbekistan, there's a growing trend of engaging youth in public

initiatives and social projects, which forms a basis for future political participation.

Research Methodology

This study utilized both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. The empirical basis was a sociological survey conducted among students at the Nizami National Pedagogical University. Additionally, interviews were held with experts in political science and sociology. The collected data was analyzed using various statistical and political science approaches, including content analysis, situational analysis, and factor analysis. Methods of description, surveys, mathematical processing, and information synthesis were also used to ensure the reliability and comprehensiveness of the analysis.

Results and Discussion

In Uzbekistan, youth (ages 14 to 30) constitute a significant portion of the population, which highlights their important role in initiating and developing modern social and political processes. According to official statistics, young people make up about 60% of the total population. While the majority of the youth population is concentrated in urban areas, a notable portion lives in rural regions, leading to differences in educational opportunities and access to information and digital resources.

In recent years, there has been a growing trend in the number of young people pursuing higher education. This is linked to the expansion of university networks and the introduction of educational programs aimed at preparing politically active and socially responsible citizens. Furthermore, youth interest in entrepreneurship and startups is increasing, creating a new social group of active and ambitious citizens ready to participate in socio-political processes. In the digital age, young people are increasingly using online platforms to express their political views and engage in public initiatives.

The Role of Institutions and Participation. The education system in Uzbekistan plays a crucial role in shaping the civic and political culture of young people. The new version of the "Law on Education," adopted in 2020, has led to the implementation of programs in educational institutions aimed at improving legal literacy, critical thinking, and forming an active civic stance. Initiatives such as youth forums and debates are also on the rise, helping to develop public speaking skills and political awareness.

Beyond educational institutions, public organizations and youth movements have a significant impact. Structures like the Youth Union, the Youth Parliament, and various volunteer movements organize events and

campaigns to involve young people in socio-political life. These organizations provide youth with a platform to express their ideas and proposals while also fostering leadership qualities and self-governance skills. As President Shavkat Mirziyoyev stated in his inaugural address, the government is committed to "unwaveringly and resolutely continuing the state youth policy" and raising it to an even higher level to ensure that youth are independent, intelligent, and confident in their future.

Political Participation and Survey Results.

Elections are one of the most common and formalized forms of political participation. In Uzbekistan, youth are becoming more active in electoral processes. Educational campaigns focused on improving legal literacy and election awareness, along with student communities and youth organizations, play a key role.

Regarding participation in political parties, youth in Uzbekistan show moderate interest. While some young activists join parties to promote their ideas, the problem of underrepresentation of youth in party leadership and government bodies remains. Addressing these barriers requires a comprehensive approach, including educational initiatives and creating motivational programs.

A sociological study was conducted among 512 students aged 19 to 23 at the Nizami National Pedagogical University to gauge their level of political consciousness. The results showed that 53.0% of students expressed interest in politics, while only 6.0% were completely uninterested. When asked about practical political activity, 86.0% of respondents reported involvement in parties, public movements, or youth organizations. A particularly high level of engagement was noted in electoral activity, with 94.0% of students showing an interest in participating in elections. These findings indicate a relatively high level of civic maturity among Uzbekistan's student youth and a steady trend of growing interest in issues related to their future and the country's destiny.

Analysis of Youth Political Socialization in Uzbekistan

At this stage, it is crucial to analyze the processes of youth political socialization in Uzbekistan. The experience of the country's recent years of independence has shown that it is difficult for young people to effectively defend their interests and solve issues related to social protection, employment, and leisure without their own structures and associations. There is a growing awareness of the importance of creating diverse youth organizations capable of representing their

interests and ensuring their active participation in socio-political life. On June 30, 2017, the Youth Union was established in Uzbekistan, with the main goal of raising a physically strong, spiritually developed, and intellectually prepared young generation. The Youth Parliament also actively operates, playing a significant role in developing the political and legal literacy of youth, promoting their active participation in legislative activities, and increasing the level of political involvement.

Conclusion

Youth political activity is not only an indicator of a mature society but also a foundation for its dynamic development. In Uzbekistan, despite existing challenges, there is a positive trend in youth involvement in socio-political life. In recent years, young people have become more actively involved in electoral processes, participated in public initiatives, and engaged in open political discussions, which indicates a positive dynamic in the development of the country's democratic institutions.

For further progress, it is necessary to expand and deepen the implementation of state programs aimed at increasing political awareness and the active participation of the younger generation in society. The use of digital platforms and social networks, which

are becoming an important means of political socialization, is gaining particular importance. These technologies can play a key role in shaping political culture and civic activism among youth.

Future scientific research should focus on studying specific changes in youth political behavior, analyzing the effectiveness of current educational and awareness initiatives, and identifying factors that limit their full participation. Special attention should be given to the activities of youth organizations and initiative groups, which can become an important link in involving young people in making socially and politically significant decisions.

Furthermore, an important task is to develop mechanisms for feedback between youth and state authorities. This will not only allow the opinions of young citizens to be taken into account in the formation of state policy but also increase the level of trust in political institutions. In this context, it is especially relevant to create platforms for regular dialogue within ministries and departments. It is also necessary to intensify efforts to develop critical thinking skills among youth, the ability to participate in reasoned public debates, and evaluate political processes. Educational institutions, media, and non-governmental organizations implementing educational and awareness projects can play an important role in this

process. Special attention should be paid to involving rural youth and youth from socially vulnerable segments of the population. To achieve this, it is necessary to ensure equal access to information, educational programs, and political platforms, regardless of their place of residence.

Thus, the sustainable development of youth political activity requires a comprehensive approach that combines institutional, educational, digital, and social tools. Only in this case will the younger generation be able to not only adapt to current transformations but also become their active creators, capable of influencing the country's future in the spirit of democratic values and civic responsibility.

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