

## The Role of Parties in the Process of Citizens' Political Participation in Afghanistan

SayedAbdul Hamid Safwat  
*Assistant Professor*

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### ABSTRACT:

*One of the most realistic manifestations of modern political systems is the participation of citizens in the systems. The recent developments in Afghanistan over the past half-century have shown that due to the immaturity of political parties, the process of political participation has faced obstacles and disadvantages, and most parties by ethnic attitude or approaches have been temporarily engaged in the process of attracting political citizenship. The political parties also suffer from the lack of planning and lack of modern strategies and therefore, are more reactionary and ethical.*

**Keywords:** *Political parties, citizenship rights, political participation, democracy, elections.*

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### I. INTRODUCTION:

The essential roles of political parties in democratic systems are to attract political participation of citizens. The research monitors by utilizing developmental theories and institutional theories of social excitement and historical contradiction; the level of the effectiveness of the pluralist system and the role of political parties in the process of attracting citizens. The contemporary political parties in Afghanistan are heavily influenced by social disruption, with fewer features of modern political parties and are more reflective of ethnic identities resulting in ethnic disruption.

According or based on the principles of democracy, political participation without democratic competition is not democratic participation. But in totalitarian systems, the vast majority of people participate in elections, and power remains monopolized by a group or party. Attracting the people's political participation in Afghanistan has not been successful due to widespread party deficiencies, the impact of external conflicts and interventions.

### II. LITERATURE REVIEW:

While researching in libraries and resources, I couldn't find an independent book or scholarly article of similar title, but many articles and books can be found that monitor people's political participation and political parties 'role'. One of these resources is the study of ethnic politics written by **Mr. Qasim Vafayeezada**: The history of inter-ethnic relations in Afghanistan is a history of coexistence, as well as unequal opportunities and strife. According to the ideas or assumptions of modernism and development, group awakening and self-awareness, which is the outcome of a modernistic process to build and strengthen ethnic identities through the development of contacts and relationships between tribes. (**Wafayeezada**, 11: 2015).

Also able to mention the sociology of women's political participation book which focuses on the role and importance of women's political participation in the political system, theories of political participation, and psychological theories. (**Panahi**, 1386). In addition, a series of scholarly articles on Afghanistan and national council elections has addressed the issue of citizen elections and political participation (**Fazeli**, 1384: 378).

**Research Method:** This article is written in a descriptive library style.

**Definitions and Concepts:** The Party is the most important political organization in today's democracies. In the eyes of some scholars of Democracy, in the end, it is nothing more than party competition. (**Bashiriya**, 1382:382).

The parties who are the most organized, the most powerful, the most transparent, and perhaps entice the inevitable aid of political actors and forces make up the largest share of political activity. Parties are, in fact, a particular form of organization of social forces. (**Hatami Walizada**, 1391: 242). The first political parties, literally, emerged in the United States in the early nineteenth century, and in England the electoral reforms of 1833 and 1867 led to the apparent emergence of political parties on the country's political scene. However, the roots of most of the modern parties within the parliament were formed and the expansion of the right of a country's citizens to vote strengthened their parties' activities outside the parliament. (**Bashiriya**, 1382:287).

The party has a long history in terms of class, group and sect, but a political party based on ideology and program, leadership, and organization is a new phenomenon. Party means simply; Child of Democracy and The Wheels and Gear Machine of Democracy. (**Alizada and Hatami**, 1389:242).

As such, Alain Birou describes participation "as a contribution to finding something and benefiting from it, or joining and collaborating with a group". The Social Sciences Encyclopedia also regards political participation as "voluntary activities that members of a community perform, directly or indirectly, in the election of governors or in the formulation of public policies."With A Review on Political Literature development reveals that with few exceptions, development is defined by words of participation, democracy and equality. (**Panahi**, 1386:9).

Michael Rush presents this model, based on his view of all types of political participation in any kind of political system: political or executive duty, demanding political or executive position, being an active member of a political organization, being an active member of a quasi-political organization, attending public meetings, demonstrations, etc., being an inactive member of a political organization, inactive member of a quasi-political organization, participating in informal political discussions and relative interest in political affairs and voting.

Verba and Nai also provide additional classifications of political participation types that include top-down activists, political activists, local activists, cross-sectional participants, voters, and non-contributors. So, the concept of political participation can be defined as the voluntary engagement of an individual or a group with various political and social forces within a political system to influence to the Process of making decision, actions and activities of those political forces and institutions of society.

In Nelson's view the real political participation "means the flow of upward influence that constitutes the state agenda determines policies". (**Weiner and Huntington**, 2000: 138).

So, political actors are individuals and organizations that are either specifically seeking to gain political power or influence their political life and political game with regard to their position and influence. (**Alizadeh&Hatami**, 1391: 113).

**Halmond** considers political culture as a model of individual attitudes and attitudes toward politics among members of a system. **Lucien Pie**, one of the most important political development theorists, defines political culture as "a set of attitudes, beliefs and emotions that give order to the political process and determine the assumptions and rules that govern the behavior of the political system." Major researchers of sociology and political science have spoken of three types of political culture: limited political culture, subordinate political culture, and participatory political culture.

For the first time, **Halmond** and Powell applied this general classification of political culture, emphasizing the diversity of political and mixed cultures. From the viewpoint of these two, and from the combination of the three types of culture mentioned above, three types of political politics emerge:

1. Subordinate political culture.
2. Subsequent political culture- Participation.
3. Limited participatory political culture.

So political culture is a definite pattern of beliefs, values, attitudes and awareness that is internalized by citizens and their orientation and evaluation determines the political system.

Literature and Theoretical framework: The parties who are the most organized, the most powerful, the most transparent, and perhaps the most inescapable of the political actors and forces make up the largest share of political activity.

Karl Marx essentially considers political power to be economic power and holds that in every society the economic ruling class is also the political ruling class. In the Communist Party statement he explicitly states that the modern government is nothing but the executive committee of the bourgeois class. In fact, in Marx's analysis, economics is the underlying determinant of politics, which is in the social superstructure. Thus, the perspective, extent and manner of political participation determine the class and economic status of individuals.

Marger writes about the relation of class to political behavior: The relation between class and participation is one of the strongest assumptions of political sociology, which is supported by a great deal of empirical data.

The nature and basis of political culture in Afghanistan is tribal. In this country, it still rules in the capital, and tribal ethnicities in Kabul, and political behavior is heavily influenced by the ruling tribal culture. (**Ghubar** 1375.335)

Political Participation and Ethnic Politics: The fundamental characteristic of multi-ethnic societies is that politics is practiced largely without exception along the lines of ethnic divisions. Pluralistic systems in multi-ethnic societies are usually based on a consensus system in which the participation of politically important identity groups is based on a power-sharing formula. An agreed democracy system provides the basis for ethnic parties and elites to maintain power and regulate it against changes within the political structure by promoting

ethnic demands and ethnic mobilization and playing with their collective political and social success card to protect their political and social positions. (Horowitz, op. cit.p.192).

From an instrumental standpoint, elites turn to public opinion management in their competition for power, status, and material resources, and ethnicity is usually the most powerful public mobilization tool to meet the elite's specific and selfish goals that are to achieve or remain in power. (Lorson, 2014)

There are now more than thirty ethnic groups living in a land called Afghanistan. Ninety percent of the thirty ethnic groups are Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, and Uzbeks, who have made a significant contribution to the country's history. So, this fellow or gathering has witnessed the coexistence and the struggles that arise from opportunities and unequal distribution of opportunities.

Abdul Rahman Khan, who came to power at the end of the Second Afghan-British War in 1880, established the central government with widespread use of force to crush the resistance of various tribal and local tribal groups. Prior to his reign, a series of long-running civil wars between the emirs and the Khans of Afghanistan weaved through the fabric of the country for years. Amir Abdul Rahman Khan first suppressed the Pashtun uprising and then united them to suppress non-Pashtun tribes and eventually mobilized Sunnis against Shia Hazaras. The Hazaras, meanwhile, suffered more violence than any other victim, and after the massacre, their property and possessions were looted and their sons and daughters were sold as slaves in the markets. (Rubin, 2002: p 50).

During the state building, the Amir tribal genocide left deep slots in the collective memory of the Afghan people and intensified hostility, cynicism and alienation of tribe and ethnic groups in the country.

In the recent decades, Amir's successors never resorted to healing gangs and social grievances.

Briefly, Ethnic Relations in Afghanistan were a type of relationship to ethnic hegemony and resistance to hegemony, but there was always a balance between different identity groups in which each ethnic group had a defined position in the hierarchy of power and society existed until the bloody communist coup in year 1378.

The civil war ((1996-1997)) after the fall of the Soviet-backed government in Kabul was actually the beginning of a clear ethnic dream in the country. Major jihadist parties line up along ethnic lines, appearing as defenders of ethnic rights and political-identity groups. (Rashid: 2010: p 83). In addition, the nationalization of war and politics changed political and social structures and delayed state-building and nation-building for another decade to a (2001) year.

In such fully ethnicized conditions, even many religious currents, such as the Taliban, turned to explicit ethnic tendencies. Traditional and charismatic leaders, as their main shareholders of power, began their efforts to counter this young but growing force with less resilience and limited economic power. (Wafayeezadeh 1393;31).

In Afghanistan, later ethnic-military political groups also played an important role in democratic transition by agreeing on the details of the Bonn Agreement, which believed in the foundation of peace and the creation of a popular government. First, the Bonn Agreement was intended to create an interim government as the first step towards the creation of an inclusive, broad-based government that included all ethnicities, women, and minorities, and that it represented all citizens. Position of Political Parties in the Afghan Constitution: According to the scholars, the existing constitution is equal to the realities and needs of Afghan society; political pluralism, economic respect for Islamic values, acceptance of cultural diversity, segregation of powers, recognition of the Jafari **seek** alongside the Hanafi **seek** as a Formal religion, respect for the natural and human rights of citizens, the protection of individual liberties, and the rights of women and other minorities are among its highlights, and it is said to have weaknesses that should not be denied to the privileges of this document. One of the disadvantages is not paying attention to the importance and status of political parties.

**The future of the country, the current developments,** and the key role of political parties requiring the definition and better positioning of political parties in the constitution of the country, has not been addressed much. Totally, from the whole 162 articles of the constitution, only Article (35) is devoted to political parties and Article (118 and 153) implicitly refer to political parties.

In the Article Thirty-Five mentioned: "Citizens of Afghanistan have the right to create groups in accordance with the provisions of law in order to develop their economic. Citizens of Afghanistan have the right to form political parties in accordance with the provisions of the law, provided that:

- 1-The party's constitution and statute do not contradict the sacred provisions of Islam and the text and values enshrined in this constitution.
- 2- Party organization and resources should be open.
- 3- Does not have militant goals and structures.
- 4- Not be affiliated with the political party or other foreign sources. The establishment and activity of the Party based on ethnicity, position, language and religious jurisprudence is not permitted. A population and a party constituted in accordance with the provisions of the law shall not be dissolved without due process of law and a court order having jurisdiction. ”

This constitution basically expresses a few key points:

1. The constitution and the current political system of Afghanistan, based on this law, are in line with the philosophy of the party in the society and regard the formation of parties as the inalienable rights of the citizens of Afghanistan.
2. This article emphasizes that all political parties in Afghanistan must respect the pure religion of Islam and cannot go a step further than that. Parties should respect Islamic values because Afghanistan is an Islamic country.
3. The constitution opposes secret groups and parties that do not operate openly, and calls for all parties to operate transparently.
4. Political parties cannot have military committees alongside many committees, which means that political parties cannot do military work because military activity causes political parties to arbitrate and confront parties with other groups.
5. In light of the bitter experiences that many political parties in Afghanistan have had with foreigners, this article emphasizes that political parties' dependence on foreigners is forbidden and that parties should have no foreign intellectual resources. It says no foreign political party can have a branch in Afghanistan. In other words, world parties cannot operate in Afghanistan.
6. According to this article, political parties should be national in Afghanistan and avoid ethnocentric and regionalism behavior. At a glance, this constitution has validated the political parties in the country and has provided a wide range of activities for the parties. But in the Afghan constitution, there are two other articles that appear to have been restricted to the political parties of the country, contrary to the aforementioned article.

In Chapter 17th, Article 6, Section 6 states: A member of the Supreme Court (High Court) shall not serve as a member of any political party. The interpretation of this paragraph is that the political parties of the country cannot be in the supreme organs of the Supreme Court and must be members of the Supreme Court of independent individuals. The question is, if there are political parties involved in political science and law, what is the point of being a member of the Supreme Court? They may be interpreted as exploiting their powers in favor of their party.

The answer is that there is a constitutional oversight commission and parliament, when such figures abuse their position, they can be dealt with legally. In Chapter 11th, Article 153 mentioned: "Judges, prosecutors, officers of the armed forces, police and national security officials shall not be members of political parties while in office." This article also restricts political parties. Working in political parties in today's world is a right. The people mentioned in this article, in many countries of the world, while also having such duties, are also members of political parties.

When prosecutors, judges, members of the Supreme Court, armed forces and national security officials are not included in political parties, large personalities are socially excluded from the political parties, and this lowers the cost of political parties. (Khatibi, 2012: 12). Also, the existing political parties do not have the functions that have been proposed for some reason. As Max Weber defines the party: parties are populations based on formal commitments and freedoms whose aim is to gain power for their leader within the group, and to attain certain goals and with material privileges for their members (Naqibzadeh), 2005: 20).

The Causes and Obstacles of Political Party Activities in Afghanistan: First, the inadequate mentality of the community towards parties and groups, the second is the failure of the parties to function properly, which is essentially the political structure of all parties, not a systematic and defined structure. And third, and perhaps the cause of the party's inefficiency in Afghanistan, was the party leaders' dependence on outsiders. The fourteenth is an explanation of the role of political parties and groups. Afghan Political System: Articles 60 and 61, The President is elected as the most prominent government official and the President of the State by the free and fair election of the people.

In addition, he is in charge of the executive branch: "The President is at the head of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, exercising his powers in the field of administration, legalization of the constitution in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution." We read this rule as follows:

"The president is elected by a majority of more than 50% of the vote through free, public, secret and indirect voting." And there has come in Article 71: "The government consists of the ministers who are acting under the presidency of the President." In addition of holding the highest official position, the president also heads the Presidency of Executive. Also, according to law, the representative of **Wolesi Jirga**, the most powerful National Assembly, is elected through secret, general and direct elections.

Article 81 says: "The National Assembly of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, as the highest legislative body, represents the will of its people and represents the nation." and in Article 83 we read: "The members of the **Wolesi Jirga** are elected by the people through free, secret and indirect elections", and Article 82 reads: "The National Assembly consists of the two Houses: the **Wolesi Jirga** and the **Meshrano**

**Jirga**". The nation's public manifests itself in two stages: one in the election of the head of government who heads the executive body.

And another in the **Wolesi Jirga**; Thus, the presidency system is being formed in this land because, according to the articles of the constitution, the president has been elected by the people and is also the executive branch. But the point is that within the presidential system the main indicators are the separation of the three powers, with none of the three institutions being accountable to each other.

For example, parliament cannot question or impeach cabinet members; jurists have defined the presidency as follows: "The presidency is a political system in which the separation of powers is fully enshrined in the constitution and the executive branch in the president's hand, which is directly elected by the nation, is concentrated and the president and the ministers are not accountable to the legislature or parliament." However, the Afghan constitution, while accepting the presidency, is completely separate. It does not follow, but the separation of powers implies partial or cooperation.(Fazili, 1384:26).

### III. CONCLUSION

Although ethnicity has not been the only element in the political participation of citizens, the Afghan political parties have played a prominent role in citizen participation in the past 60 years through an ethnic approach.

**New opportunity:** After the year 2001, the emerging parties hastened to declare their existence. But the split is still deeply affected by ethnic and tribal rationalization in Afghanistan, despite the ban on ethnic and religious party formation, and the inclusive and extra-ethnic party has not yet formed.**Ethnic and religious shield:** It is easy to say that no party with extra-criteria or scales can be listed. Although the constitution of Afghanistan prohibits party structure based on ethnicity and religion, and all parties claim to be extra-ethnic and religious, in practice all parties are confined and imprisoned in prison.

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