



INSTITUTIONAL, ORGANIZATIONAL, AND LEGAL CHALLENGES IN THE PR ACTIVITIES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Dilrabo Saydullayeva

Assistant to a Deputy of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Independent Researcher at Uzbekistan State World Languages University

Abstract

This article comprehensively examines the institutional, organizational, and legal challenges of the public relations (PR) system in the activities of political parties, based on the experience of Uzbekistan. The study highlights the significance of PR in contemporary political communication and its role in shaping public trust. Furthermore, it analyzes the interaction of political parties with the media, the activities of press services, digital communication policies, and the legal issues observed in Uzbekistan. Based on the scientific perspectives of Erast Galumov, A.D. Krivonosov, O.G. Filatova, M.A. Shishkina, and V.V. Shatilov, the author develops analytical interpretations and provides practical examples grounded in national legislation.

Keywords

PR, political communication, political party, public relations, media relations, political image, digital PR, press service, information policy, Uzbekistan, political parties.

Introduction

Today, information serves not only as a factor of social development but also as a strategic resource influencing political processes. In particular, the Internet, social media platforms, and digital communication tools have fundamentally transformed both the content and forms of political relations within society. As a result, openness, promptness, and interactivity have become key requirements in the relationship between the state and society.

In response to contemporary demands, political parties are increasingly moving beyond the framework of traditional political campaigning and adapting to broader communication processes. Nowadays, citizens evaluate political parties not only by their policy programs or electoral promises but also by how effectively they engage with the public, respond to social issues, and participate in the information space. From this perspective, Public Relations (PR) is becoming an integral and strategically important component of political party activities.

The importance of PR is reflected not only in creating a positive political image but also in building public trust, establishing sustainable relationships with the electorate, and increasing citizens' political participation. In particular, the rapid dissemination of information through digital platforms requires political parties to maintain continuous communication, provide prompt responses, and pursue an open information policy. Consequently, the strategic



importance of PR technologies in the activities of political parties is becoming increasingly significant.

Erast Galumov, who conducted extensive research on PR theory, considers public relations as a mechanism for creating an atmosphere of mutual trust between an organization and society. According to the scholar, the primary function of PR is not the one-sided manipulation of public opinion, but rather the establishment of a stable communication environment between an organization and its audience. This perspective is particularly important for the activities of political parties, as political parties, being democratic institutions that represent the interests of society, must maintain continuous and effective communication with the public.

A.D. Krivonosov and O.G. Filatova interpret PR as a communication system that coordinates social relations. In their view, modern PR is not limited to the dissemination of information; it also requires the continuous study and analysis of public opinion and the development of communication strategies that correspond to the needs of the audience. This approach is highly significant for political parties because political communication that ignores public sentiment and social needs may lead to a decline in public trust.

It is no secret that over the past nine to ten years, Uzbekistan has implemented consistent reforms aimed at ensuring openness and transparency. In particular, considerable attention has been devoted to developing the institution of press services within state bodies and organizations, establishing open dialogue with citizens, and improving the effectiveness of information policies. These developments have significantly increased the importance of PR in the activities of political parties as well.

However, practical experience shows that a number of challenges remain in the PR activities of political parties. Among them are the insufficient development of PR services within some parties, a shortage of qualified specialists in the field, the inadequate use of social networks and digital media, the predominance of formalism in communication with the public, and certain gaps in legal mechanisms, all of which reduce the effectiveness of political communication. In particular, the increasing speed of information dissemination through social media requires political parties to respond promptly and transparently. Nevertheless, in some cases, parties' interactions with the public remain limited to official statements. This indicates that the two-way communication nature of PR has not yet been fully established.

This article analyzes the institutional, organizational, and legal challenges of PR activities within political parties based on modern theories of political communication and the experience of Uzbekistan. In addition, scientific conclusions and practical recommendations for improving the PR system in political party activities are proposed.

Theoretical Foundations of Political PR

In PR theory, public relations are generally interpreted as a process of two-way communication. According to this approach, PR is not merely about delivering information to an audience but also about obtaining feedback from the public and continuously adjusting an organization's communication policy on that basis. Therefore, the effectiveness of PR is determined not by



the volume of information disseminated but by how that information is perceived by society and what kind of response it generates.

According to the views of PR scholars, two-way communication is one of the most important principles of public relations. The central issue is not simply the organization's ability to communicate its position, but also its capacity to listen to the needs, opinions, and sentiments of its audience. From this perspective, PR should be viewed not as a system of "speaking to" the public, but rather as a system of "mutual dialogue."

The significance of this theory becomes even more evident in the activities of political parties. Political parties are institutions that represent the interests of various social groups within society. If a party fails to systematically study public opinion, its political decisions and communication strategies may become disconnected from real social needs. Therefore, continuous monitoring, sociological analysis, and feedback mechanisms occupy a central place in modern political PR.

An examination of Uzbekistan's experience reveals that communication activities within some political parties become more intensive mainly during election campaigns. This suggests that PR is often perceived not as a continuous process but rather as a temporary campaign tool. As a result, regular dialogue with the public is interrupted, and the party's participation in everyday political life decreases.

M.A. Shishkina pays particular attention to the socio-psychological dimension of PR. According to her, the most important factor in the PR process is the individual and his or her social emotions. In other words, communication is not merely an exchange of official information but also a process involving trust, acceptance, and emotional influence. From this perspective, political parties should not rely solely on official statements in their communication with the public but should employ open, interactive, and human-centered communication methods.

Such an approach enables political parties to establish long-term and trustworthy relationships with the public, accurately assess social sentiments, and adapt their political activities to real societal needs. Therefore, PR should be regarded not merely as a tool for disseminating information but as a comprehensive system of continuous dialogue and reliable communication with the public.

Institutional Problems in the PR Activities of Political Parties

One of the major challenges observed in the activities of political parties in Uzbekistan is the insufficient institutional development of PR services. Although many parties formally have PR departments, their functions are often limited to disseminating information, covering events, and preparing official statements. This significantly restricts the implementation of the broader functions assigned to PR in contemporary communication theory.

According to the views of V.V. Shatilov, a modern press service should not merely function as a technical information unit but should serve as the analytical and strategic center of an organization. Under this approach, PR services continuously study public opinion, monitor the media environment, and actively participate in shaping management decisions. However, in



practice, PR departments within some political parties remain excluded from decision-making processes. As a result, party communication policies often become detached from public sentiment and social expectations.

Due to the lack of systematic analysis of public opinion, political parties frequently respond belatedly to pressing social issues. For example, reactions to urgent public concerns are sometimes limited to formal statements or are issued only after significant delays. Such practices contradict the fundamental principles of PR, namely prompt communication and the establishment of trust-based relationships with the public.

These problems can also be evaluated from a legal perspective. The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Political Parties” stipulates that political parties must represent the interests of society and maintain open communication with citizens. However, the existence of legal norms alone does not automatically ensure the effective functioning of PR activities. On the contrary, if institutional mechanisms remain weak, legal provisions may become merely declarative in nature.

Among the institutional challenges, one of the most significant is the shortage of qualified PR specialists. In many cases, political communication responsibilities are assigned to journalists, press secretaries, or technical personnel. This hinders the development of PR as a professional strategic function. Modern political PR encompasses not only information dissemination but also public opinion analysis, media management, and communication during crisis situations. Erast Galumov defines a PR specialist not simply as an information provider but as a strategist capable of assessing public sentiment. According to him, an effective PR system should possess the ability to anticipate public trends and formulate communication policies accordingly. Therefore, political parties have a growing need for professionals trained in PR, equipped with analytical skills, and capable of effectively utilizing digital media technologies.

Another manifestation of institutional problems is the insufficient authority of PR services within party organizational structures. PR departments are often excluded from strategic decision-making processes. This creates a disconnect between communication policies and actual political decisions. Consequently, political parties may provide delayed or incomplete information to the public.

Overall, the problems within the PR systems of political parties in Uzbekistan stem largely from the insufficient recognition of PR as a strategic management tool. This situation limits the ability of parties to maintain continuous, systematic, and trust-based communication with citizens. Therefore, PR services should be developed not merely as information dissemination units but as strategic institutions capable of influencing the formulation of political decisions.

Organizational Problems and Digital Communication

Today, digital communication has become an integral component of political processes. A significant portion of the population receives information through the Internet and social media platforms. In particular, platforms such as Telegram, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube play an important role in shaping public opinion. Therefore, effective and active engagement in the digital sphere has become essential for political parties.



However, the level of utilization of digital communication opportunities remains insufficient among some political parties in Uzbekistan. In many cases, social media platforms are used primarily as channels for posting official news, event reports, and formal statements. Activities such as engaging in direct dialogue with citizens, gathering public opinions, responding to questions, and organizing discussions remain relatively uncommon.

This situation has a particularly negative impact on communication with youth audiences. Young people generally prefer prompt, open, and interactive forms of communication. They are more interested in platforms that allow them to express opinions and participate in discussions than in receiving one-way official information. If political parties limit their social media activities solely to disseminating official content, they risk losing the interest and engagement of younger audiences.

From the perspective of contemporary political communication, social media should not merely serve as channels for transmitting information. Rather, they should function as platforms for continuous dialogue, public participation, and interactive engagement. Effective digital PR requires political parties not only to inform citizens but also to listen to them, analyze their concerns, and incorporate their feedback into political decision-making processes.

Consequently, strengthening digital communication capacities, improving interaction with youth audiences, and adopting more participatory communication strategies are among the key priorities for enhancing the effectiveness of political PR in Uzbekistan.

However, it should be emphasized that considerable progress has been observed in this area in recent years. For example, the Movement of Entrepreneurs and Businessmen – the Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan (UzLiDeP) has established continuous communication with citizens by effectively utilizing modern information technologies. Through Telegram bots, the party conducts online surveys, has launched the “Open Dialogue with a Deputy” online platform, and implements interactive projects such as “Your Opinion Matters to Us.” These initiatives enable the rapid identification of public opinions and needs, the study of social problems, and the incorporation of public feedback into decision-making processes.

The publication *Theory and Practice of Public Relations: Fundamentals of Media Relations* also emphasizes that the systematic and continuous organization of media relations is one of the key factors determining PR effectiveness. In other words, modern PR is not limited to disseminating information but also requires the establishment of two-way relationships with the public.

From this perspective, the digital PR activities of some political parties do not yet fully meet contemporary requirements. Mechanisms such as analyzing public opinion, conducting online surveys, responding promptly to citizens’ inquiries, and organizing open discussions remain insufficiently developed.

As a result, one of the fundamental functions of PR—two-way communication—is not being fully realized. This, in turn, affects the level of trust and the effectiveness of communication between political parties and the public.

Media Relations and Public Trust in Political Parties



Public trust is one of the most important factors in the activities of political parties. Public confidence determines a party's reputation, influence, and standing within society. Establishing effective and constructive relations with the media plays a crucial role in building this trust.

In recent years, significant attention has been devoted in Uzbekistan to ensuring the openness and transparency of state institutions and organizations. In particular, presidential initiatives aimed at strengthening information policy, transparency, and dialogue with the public have stimulated the development of press services. As a result, information dissemination systems within public institutions are gradually transitioning to more modern forms.

At the same time, media relations within some political parties remain insufficiently active. In many cases, their information policy is limited to distributing official statements and announcements. Press conferences, briefings, and open dialogues are not organized on a regular basis. Furthermore, political parties do not always provide timely and clear responses to pressing issues that concern the public.

Such circumstances may generate public doubts regarding party activities. In modern society, citizens expect not only access to information but also openness, transparency, and meaningful dialogue. A proactive position on issues of public concern strengthens trust and enhances the credibility of political parties.

According to PR scholar V.V. Shatilov, a modern press service should not avoid critical questions. On the contrary, readiness for open dialogue is a hallmark of political culture and professional PR. Citizens perceive openness and transparency as indicators of a political party's respect for the public.

In the era of rapidly developing social media, attempts to conceal information or ignore public inquiries may lead to negative consequences. Information spreads quickly in the digital environment, and public opinion can be formed within a very short period of time. If a political party fails to provide timely explanations regarding a particular issue, speculation and negative perceptions are likely to intensify.

Therefore, political parties should not limit themselves to the dissemination of official information when working with the media. Instead, they should establish continuous and open communication with citizens. Such an approach contributes to strengthening party image, increasing public trust, and improving the overall effectiveness of PR activities.

The Importance of Legal Mechanisms in the PR Activities of Political Parties

When political communication is conducted within a legal framework, the procedures for information dissemination, accountability, and the principles of openness become clearly defined.

In Uzbekistan, the legal foundations of political communication are established by a number of normative legal acts. In particular, the Laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Mass Media," "On the Principles and Guarantees of Freedom of Information," and "On Political Parties" regulate information relations between political parties and the public. These laws serve to ensure citizens' right to access information, support the activities of mass media, and enhance the transparency of political organizations.



By establishing legal guarantees for openness and public communication, these legislative acts create favorable conditions for the development of effective PR systems within political parties and contribute to strengthening democratic governance and public accountability.

In recent years, considerable attention has been paid to the policy of openness and transparency in the country, resulting in a number of reforms in the information sphere. The level of openness in the relationships between state institutions, political organizations, and the public has increased. This has created an important legal foundation for the development of PR systems. However, the rapid development of the digital communication environment has led to a situation in which certain legal mechanisms no longer fully meet practical requirements. In particular, the speed of information dissemination through the Internet and social media is significantly higher than through traditional media channels. This has created new challenges related to information security, fake news, and attempts to influence public opinion.

Specifically, false information distributed online or political content disseminated through anonymous channels may negatively affect the image of political parties. In such cases, inaccurate or unverified information spreads rapidly among the public and can quickly generate controversy and misunderstandings. Delayed official responses or a lack of reliable information may further intensify negative perceptions.

At the same time, the absence of clearly defined boundaries between political advertising and PR activities in the digital environment creates additional challenges. In some cases, PR materials may be perceived as propaganda or covert advertising. This can raise doubts among the public regarding the objectivity and credibility of information. Therefore, ensuring transparency, clearly identifying information sources, and explicitly defining the purpose of content are of great importance in political communication.

According to PR researcher O.G. Filatova, legal culture and information responsibility are essential components of an effective PR system. Public trust is formed through accurate, objective, and reliable information. If confidence in information sources declines, the effectiveness of PR activities also decreases. Therefore, political parties should pay attention not only to providing information promptly but also to ensuring its accuracy and compliance with legal standards.

Under modern conditions, strengthening legal culture in the field of digital communication, ensuring information security, and developing effective mechanisms to combat fake news have become key priorities for political parties. These measures contribute to building trust-based relationships with the public and enhancing the overall effectiveness of PR systems.

Conclusion

In summary, PR activities have become one of the most important tools for strengthening political parties' relationships with the public, building voter trust, and reinforcing their positions within a competitive political environment. Particularly in the context of rapidly developing information technologies, political parties are required not only to rely on traditional forms of political campaigning but also to continuously study public opinion,



establish two-way communication with citizens, and organize effective communication through digital platforms.

Although the development of PR activities within political parties in Uzbekistan has acquired a certain institutional foundation, several factors continue to hinder its effectiveness. Among the most significant challenges are the insufficient integration of PR into strategic management processes, the lack of a systematic approach to information policy, and the shortage of specialists possessing professional media management and political communication skills. These issues limit political parties' ability to communicate effectively with the public and may reduce their influence in socio-political processes.

At the same time, the expansion of digital media, the growing audience of social networks, and the changing culture of information consumption impose entirely new demands on political parties. Today, it is no longer sufficient merely to disseminate information. Political parties must create an open and trustworthy communication environment, provide timely responses to public concerns, analyze social sentiments, and build a positive political image in the digital sphere. This requires the reorganization of PR activities on the basis of modern technologies, analytical approaches, and innovative communication mechanisms.

In the future, increasing the effectiveness of PR activities within political parties will require further improvement of the legal framework governing this field, the development of professional PR and media centers within political organizations, the training of qualified specialists in digital political communication, and the wider introduction of interactive methods of public engagement.

Indeed, a strong and modern PR system not only enhances the openness and public accountability of political parties but also contributes to the consolidation of democratic values, the development of political culture, and the strengthening of civil society institutions within the country.

References:

1. Галумов Э. Основы PR. — Москва, 2004.
2. Кривоносов А.Д., Филатова О.Г., Шишкина М.А. Основы теории связей с общественностью. — Санкт-Петербург, 2012.
3. Шатилов В.В. Современная пресс-служба. — Москва, 2010.
4. Шишкина М.А. Основы теории связей с общественностью. — Санкт-Петербург, 2012.
5. Теория и практика связей с общественностью: основы media relations. — Москва, 2015.
6. Почепцов Г.Г. Паблик рилейшнз для профессионалов. — Киев, 2005.
7. Ўзбекистон Республикасининг “Сиёсий партиялар тўғрисида”ги Қонуни.
8. Ўзбекистон Республикасининг “Оммавий ахборот воситалари тўғрисида”ги Қонуни.



9. Ўзбекистон Республикасининг “Ахборот эркинлиги принциплари ва кафолатлари тўғрисида”ги Қонуни.