



"IMPROVING MECHANISMS FOR ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE PUBLIC CONTROL OVER THE ACTIVITIES OF STATE AGENCIES".

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ABSTRACT

In the post-Soviet era, Uzbekistan has embarked on a journey towards democratization and reforming its governance structure. Despite the progress made in recent years, the mechanisms for public control over state agencies remain underdeveloped. Public control is vital for ensuring that government actions are transparent, accountable, and reflective of citizens' needs. This thesis aims to explore the current state of public control in Uzbekistan, identify existing challenges, and propose comprehensive strategies for improvement that align with international best practices

Introduction. In the post-Soviet era, Uzbekistan has embarked on a journey towards democratization and reforming its governance structure. Despite the progress made in recent years, the mechanisms for public control over state agencies remain underdeveloped. Public control is vital for ensuring that government actions are transparent, accountable, and reflective of citizens' needs. This thesis aims to explore the current state of public control in Uzbekistan, identify existing challenges, and propose comprehensive strategies for improvement that align with international best practices.

Literature Review. Public control refers to the processes through which citizens can influence government actions and hold state agencies accountable. It encompasses mechanisms such as transparency, participation, and oversight, which are essential for fostering trust in government institutions.

Numerous studies have highlighted the significance of public control in enhancing governance quality. For instance, the World Bank emphasizes that effective public oversight can reduce corruption and improve service delivery. In comparative contexts, countries like Georgia and Estonia have successfully established frameworks that empower citizens to engage with their governments, demonstrating that public control can lead to more responsive and accountable governance.

Methodology. This research employs a mixed-methods approach to gather comprehensive data on public control mechanisms in Uzbekistan. The methodology includes:

- **Qualitative Methods:** Conducting in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including government officials, civil society representatives, and citizens, to gain insights into perceptions and experiences related to public control.

- **Quantitative Methods:** Distributing surveys to a diverse demographic to assess public awareness and attitudes towards state agencies and existing oversight mechanisms.

- **Document Analysis:** Reviewing relevant legal frameworks, policy documents, and reports from oversight institutions to analyze the current state of public control.

The combination of these methods will provide a holistic understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of public control in Uzbekistan.

Current State of Public Control in Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan's legal framework includes various laws aimed at promoting transparency and accountability, such as the Law on Access to Information and the Law on Anti-Corruption. However, the effectiveness of these laws is often compromised by inadequate implementation and public awareness.

Institutions responsible for oversight, such as the National Anti-Corruption Agency and the Ombudsman, face significant challenges, including limited resources and authority. Moreover, public surveys indicate a widespread perception of distrust towards state agencies, with many citizens unaware of their rights to access information or participate in governance processes. This disconnect highlights the urgent need for reforms that can empower citizens and strengthen oversight functions.

Challenges to Effective Public Control. Several key challenges hinder effective public control in Uzbekistan:

- **Lack of Transparency:** Many state agencies operate with limited transparency, making it difficult for citizens to access crucial information about government actions and decision-making processes. The culture of secrecy surrounding public administration fosters mistrust and skepticism among the populace.

- **Limited Civic Engagement:** The mechanisms for citizen participation in governance are often weak. Citizens frequently feel excluded from decision-making processes, resulting in a lack of engagement and interest in public affairs. This disengagement can perpetuate a cycle of apathy and disillusionment with government institutions.

- **Weak Institutional Capacity:** Oversight bodies often lack the necessary resources, training, and authority to effectively perform their duties. Without sufficient capacity, these institutions struggle to enforce compliance and hold state agencies accountable for their actions.

- **Cultural Barriers:** Traditional attitudes towards governance and authority can also impede public control. In a society where authoritarian practices have been prevalent, citizens may be hesitant to challenge state agencies or assert their rights.

Proposed Mechanisms for Improvement. To enhance public control in Uzbekistan, the following mechanisms are recommended:

- **Enhancing Transparency:**

- **Mandatory Disclosure Laws:** Implementing robust laws that require state agencies to proactively disclose information on their activities, decisions, and budgets.

- **Online Platforms:** Developing user-friendly digital platforms that provide public access to information, allowing citizens to monitor government actions and expenditures.

- **Strengthening Civic Engagement:**

◦ **Public Consultations:** Establishing regular public forums and consultations where citizens can voice their concerns, suggest policies, and engage with government representatives.

◦ **Community Advisory Councils:** Creating local councils that include citizen representatives to advise state agencies on community needs and priorities.

• **Capacity Building:**

◦ **Training Programs:** Providing training for government officials and oversight bodies on transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement practices.

◦ **Resource Allocation:** Ensuring that oversight institutions receive adequate funding and resources to fulfill their mandates effectively.

• **Use of Technology:**

◦ **Digital Tools for Reporting:** Implementing mobile applications and online portals that enable citizens to report issues, provide feedback, and track the resolution of their complaints.

◦ **Social Media Engagement:** Utilizing social media platforms to engage with the public, solicit feedback, and disseminate information about government initiatives.

Case Studies. Examining successful examples from other countries can provide valuable insights for Uzbekistan. For instance, Georgia has implemented a range of public control mechanisms that prioritize transparency and citizen participation. The establishment of Citizen Advisory Councils has proven effective in fostering dialogue between citizens and government officials. Similarly, Estonia's e-governance system has revolutionized public access to information and services, significantly enhancing citizen engagement and oversight.

Uzbekistan can draw on these examples by adapting strategies that align with its unique socio-political context, ensuring that reforms are culturally relevant and practically feasible.

Conclusion. This thesis underscores the critical need for improving public control mechanisms in Uzbekistan to promote greater accountability and transparency in state agencies. By implementing the proposed strategies, Uzbekistan can enhance democratic governance and foster public trust in government institutions. Effective public control is not only a matter of legal frameworks but also requires a cultural shift towards valuing transparency, participation, and accountability. Future research should focus on evaluating the impact of these mechanisms on citizen engagement and overall governance quality, as well as exploring innovative practices from other contexts that may be applicable in Uzbekistan.

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