

POLITICAL PARTIES & EMERGENCE OF PARTY POLITICS



Key words –

political parties – vaega faaupufai

party politics – polotiki faavaega

partisan (view) – manatu faavaega

democratic system – faiga faatemokarasi

autocratic (system) – faiga pulepuletutu

ideology (ies) – mau faapati

ideological goals – sini faavae e iloa ai

policy – faiga faavae (faapati)

1. Definition

1. A political party is an organization that coordinates candidates to compete in a particular country's elections. It is common for the members of a party to hold similar ideas about politics, and parties may promote specific ideological or policy goals.

So basically Political parties are entities that organize competitions for political offices. The members of a political party contest elections under a shared label. In a narrow definition, a political party can be thought of as just the group of candidates who run for office under a party label. In a broader definition, political parties are the entire apparatus that supports the election of a group of candidates, including voters and volunteers who identify with a particular political party, the official party organizations that support the election of that party's candidates, and legislators in the government who are affiliated with the party.

Political parties have become a major part of the politics of almost every country, as modern party organizations developed and spread around the world over the last few centuries. Although some countries have no political parties, this is extremely rare. Most countries have several parties while others only have one.

Motivation for political parties

Many political parties are motivated by ideological goals. It is common for democratic elections to feature competitions between liberal, conservative, and socialist parties; other common ideologies of very large political parties include communism, populism, nationalism, and Islamism.

The power of propaganda

Political parties in different countries will often adopt similar colours and symbols to identify themselves with a particular ideology. However, many political parties have no ideological affiliation, and may instead be primarily engaged in patronage, clientelism, or the advancement of a specific political entrepreneur

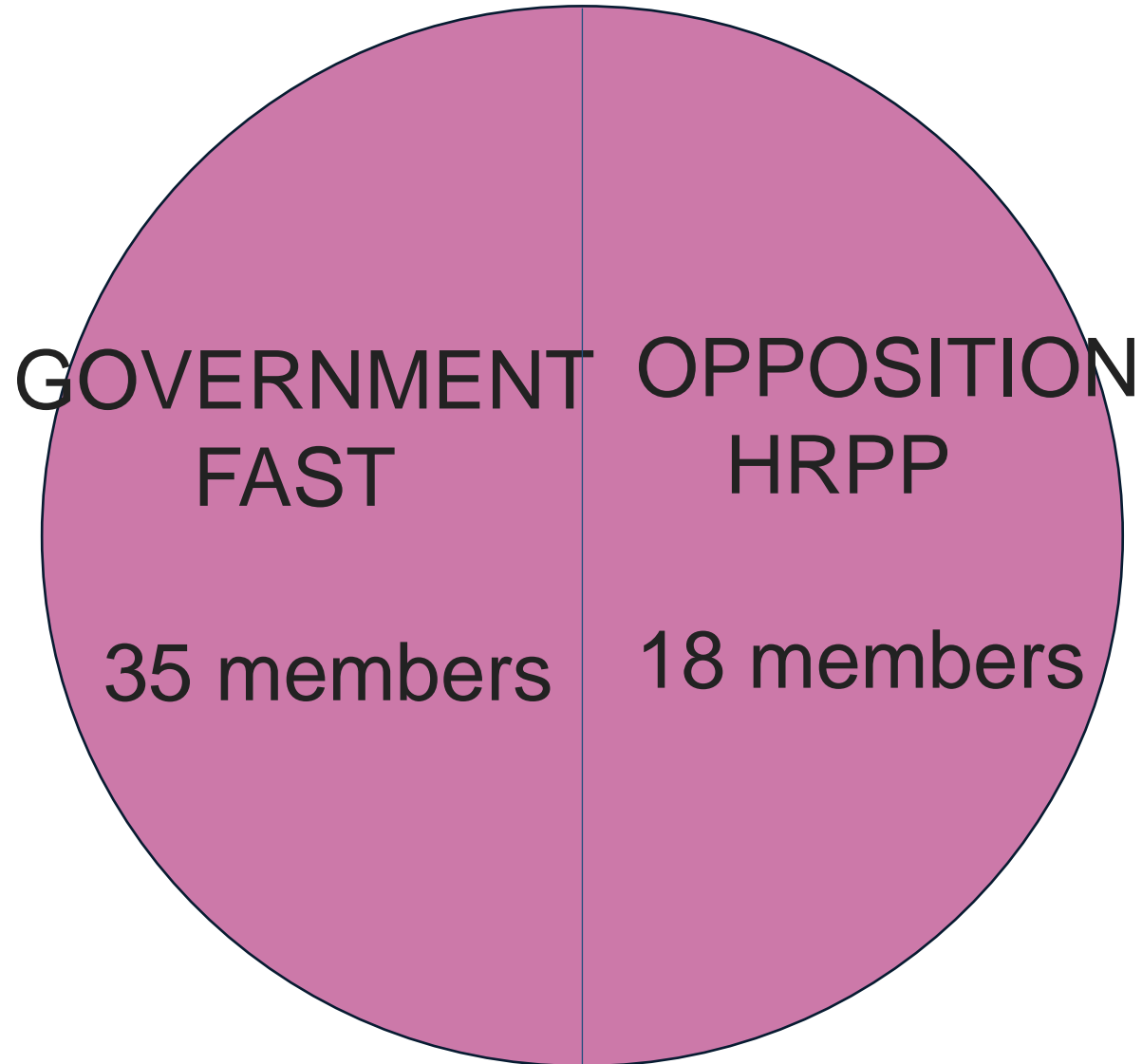
Emergence of party politics in Samoa

Establishment of political parties not in the Constitution

But it didn't stop some from forming parties, eg a faipule named Brown formed the first Labour party in the early sixties.

From the sixties to the present, a total of 24 parties have been formed, many have been defunct, 8 are still around, including the big two - FAST & HRPP

In the Parliament





- ① SPEAKER
- ② CLERK
- ③ DEPUTY CLERK
- ④ PARLIAMENT TABLE
- ⑤ PRIME MINISTER
- ⑥ DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
- ⑦ DEPUTY SPEAKER

- ⑧ CABINET MINISTERS
- ⑨ ASSOCIATE MINISTERS
- ⑩ OPPOSITION
- ⑪ PUBLIC GALLERY
- ⑫ SERGEANT AT ARMS
- ⑬ SALELESI

HRPP



Chief instigator of the system of 'party politics' traced to their defeat in the 1979 general elections.

Won in 1982, 1985, 1988, and more others until 2021 when FAST formed a new government.

Rationale for HRPP's durability

1. Strong leadership
 - decisive, innovative, visionary
2. Popular policy - democratization of elections for eg
3. Development policy - vision to decentralize
4. Policy to strengthen local government in villages
5. Reformed the economy through modernization
6. Good politicking

7. Support for women leadership

Difficult question?

How can we explain the defeat of the HRPP in the 2021 elections, given its consolidation of power in Samoa – HRPP hegemony?

By contrast, how should we explain the FAST's elevation to power, from only 3 members to 35 we have now?

Elite Power System

Collectively, Political parties are part of the elite power system or structure. This is due to the fact of their makeup and ideology.

So its interests are mainly political and elite oriented. The main beneficiaries are members of the party and their friends.

Warning!!

Watch the language, political discourse, the narrative,
the propaganda on social media

Is there a future for party politics in Samoa?

Yes. We can no longer avoid nor deny the fact that political parties can play a positive role in the politics of our country. So there is a future for Political Parties. BUT there are challenges ahead esp. with the power of the money that has changed our politics, and the moderating influence of genuine Va fealoa'i on behalf of some stakeholders of power eg the poor, the powerless.

A political party can hold a lot of power and if used properly for the common good then that's okay as Foucault argued; otherwise, that is the problem and the challenge.