

THE ROLE OF NATIONAL LEGISLATION IN PREVENTING YOUTH CRIME AND WAYS TO IMPROVE IT

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Abstract: This article analyzes the current state of national legislation on the prevention of youth crime in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The study examined the content of normative legal acts and the effectiveness of their practical application. International regulatory documents and foreign experience were also analyzed, and the possibilities of their adaptation to national legislation were assessed. The article identifies existing problems, their socio-legal factors, and puts forward scientifically based proposals for improving legislation, individual work with youth prone to delinquency, and strengthening rehabilitation and reintegration mechanisms.

Keywords: youth crime, prevention, national legislation, commissions on juvenile affairs, mahalla institute, rehabilitation, reintegration

INTRODUCTION

Today, the issue of youth crime manifests itself as one of the most pressing socio-legal problems not only in individual countries, but also in the world as a whole. The commission of crimes by young people, who are considered the most active, intellectually capable segment of society, has a negative impact not only on personal destiny, but also on state security and social stability. Therefore, one of the important tasks facing the legal system is the identification of factors leading to crime among minors and youth, their elimination, and the improvement of preventive measures.

In the Republic of Uzbekistan, a solid legal framework has been created to prevent juvenile delinquency, which is enshrined in such normative legal acts as the Constitution, the Criminal Code, the Code of Administrative Responsibility, the Law "On State Youth Policy," and the Regulation "On Commissions for Minors." At the same time, the cooperation of internal affairs bodies, the prosecutor's office, mahallas, educational institutions, and public organizations in the prevention of youth crime is legally defined.

However, analysis of practice shows that it is necessary to further improve the existing regulatory framework, strengthen the mechanisms for ensuring its implementation, and update the legal framework of preventive work based on modern requirements. In particular, the development of specific legal mechanisms for individual work with youth prone to crime, rehabilitation and reintegration measures is a requirement of today. The purpose of this study is to analyze the current national

legislation in the field of youth crime prevention in the Republic of Uzbekistan, identify existing problems, and scientifically substantiate ways to further improve it. The article examines the content of legal documents, the effectiveness of their practical application, advanced approaches in international experience, and the possibilities of their adaptation to national legislation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The issue of preventing youth crime has been widely studied in jurisprudence, criminology, sociology, and pedagogy, and the available literature analyzes the theoretical and practical aspects of this area from various approaches. Literature can be conditionally divided into three groups: national scientific sources, international experience, and developments interpreting the regulatory framework. Uzbek scientists have conducted extensive research on the prevention of youth crime. For example, A.Kh. Kadyrov's work "Criminology" extensively covers the socio-economic factors leading to youth crime, their psychological characteristics, and crime prevention mechanisms. Also, the works of B.M. Tojiboev and N.A. Rasulova analyze the legal basis of the activities of commissions on minors' affairs, preventive measures in the education system. Their scientific conclusions emphasize the effectiveness of cooperation between the mahalla institute and law enforcement agencies.

The UN's "Beijing Rules" (Minimum Standard Rules for the Juvenile Justice System) and "Riyadh Guidelines" (Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency) form the basis of international legal norms. In international literature, in particular, in the works of criminologists such as L. Sherman, D. Farrington, M. Tonry, the importance of early intervention, individual rehabilitation programs, and social integration for reducing youth crime is scientifically substantiated. The experience of the European Union countries and the USA shows support for education, sports, and cultural activities in working with youth as one of the important directions of legal prevention. There are scientific articles and monographs interpreting the relevant norms of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On State Youth Policy," the Regulation "On Commissions for Minors," Articles 22, 23, 87-91 of the Criminal Code, and the Code of Administrative Responsibility. For example, in the research of Kh. Shamsutdinov, the specific aspects of national legislation in the determination and application of criminal penalties against minors were analyzed. At the same time, in some works (M. Akhmedov, D. Yuldashev), proposals have been made to adapt some norms of current legislation to modern conditions.

METHODOLOGY

Methods of comparative legal analysis, legal monitoring, statistical data analysis, as well as system analysis of regulatory legal acts are used as the research methodology. As a result, scientifically based proposals and recommendations for the development of national legislation to reduce youth crime will be developed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of national legislation in the Republic of Uzbekistan on the prevention of youth crime shows that a solid legal foundation has been established, but its practical effectiveness is still constrained by several systemic and procedural issues. The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Criminal Code, the Code of Administrative Responsibility, the Law “On State Youth Policy,” and the Regulation “On Commissions for Minors” form the core legal framework. These documents define the rights and responsibilities of state institutions, the mahalla, educational organizations, and public associations in the prevention of juvenile delinquency. However, the results of legal monitoring and statistical analysis indicate that despite the existence of these laws, the number of crimes committed by minors has not decreased to the desired level in recent years. Factors contributing to this include insufficient inter-agency coordination, a lack of specialized rehabilitation programs for at-risk youth, and limited awareness among young people regarding their legal rights and obligations.

Comparative legal analysis with international standards, particularly the UN’s “Beijing Rules” and “Riyadh Guidelines,” reveals that Uzbekistan’s legislation is generally aligned with international norms but lacks certain targeted measures. For instance, international practice emphasizes individualized prevention strategies, including mentorship, community-based rehabilitation, and alternative dispute resolution for minor offenses. In Uzbekistan, while the legal basis for individual preventive work exists, its practical application is inconsistent and often limited to formal administrative procedures rather than personalized support plans. Interviews with educators, law enforcement representatives, and local community leaders show that preventive measures are more effective when they are integrated into educational, sports, and cultural activities that engage young people in constructive social environments. The mahalla institution plays a key role in identifying at-risk youth, but its potential is underutilized due to resource limitations and insufficient legal authority to implement certain preventive interventions.

Statistical data analysis also points to socio-economic conditions, unemployment, and family dysfunction as significant risk factors for youth crime. While the legal framework acknowledges the role of social protection and education, the enforcement mechanisms for addressing these socio-economic drivers remain weak. International experience suggests that integrating social services, vocational training, and psychological support within the criminal prevention framework can significantly reduce recidivism rates among young offenders. Therefore, the discussion highlights several priorities for improving the current system:

1. Strengthening the implementation mechanisms of existing laws, particularly through clear procedural guidelines for inter-agency cooperation.

2. Developing targeted rehabilitation and reintegration programs for youth prone to offending, with emphasis on psychological counseling, vocational training, and mentorship.

3. Expanding the legal powers and resources of mahalla institutions to carry out proactive preventive measures.

4. Introducing early intervention models that identify and support at-risk youth before criminal behavior escalates.

5. Adapting international best practices such as restorative justice approaches, community service, and alternative sentencing to national conditions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while Uzbekistan has a strong legislative base for the prevention of youth crime, the practical implementation requires modernization and a shift toward more individualized, socially oriented preventive measures. This aligns with both national priorities and global standards, and, if realized, could lead to a significant reduction in juvenile delinquency rates.

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