

CHILDREN RAISED IN DISADVANTAGED FAMILIES

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Group 5-2-23

Annotation. *This study examines the issues related to the protection of the rights of children raised in disadvantaged families. It analyzes the main risk factors, including violence, pedagogical neglect, socio-economic difficulties, and psychological trauma. Particular attention is given to the legal mechanisms for protecting children's rights in the Republic of Uzbekistan, including national legislation and international standards. The paper emphasizes the need to shift from punitive measures to family support, the development of preventive approaches, and the creation of effective conditions for the reintegration of children into society and their families. It also highlights the role of state institutions, educational organizations, and international agencies in ensuring children's well-being.*

Keywords: *children's rights, state, law of the Republic of Uzbekistan, president, legal mechanisms, education.*

At present, the issue of protecting the rights of children raised in disadvantaged families is highly relevant. It includes problems such as violence, pedagogical neglect, unmet basic needs, and psychological trauma. The main difficulties are associated with the late identification of family distress, insufficient prevention, the formal approach of guardianship authorities, and the need to shift the focus from removing children to supporting biological families. Since ancient times, humanity has understood that life begins in childhood. A child comes into the world helpless and defenseless, and their life completely depends on adults. Many philosophers and thinkers have raised the issue of child protection in their works. For example, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry wrote: "You become responsible, forever, for what you have tamed."

With the advent of the 21st century, this problem has become particularly acute worldwide. The socio-economic situation of the modern world primarily affects children. Understanding that children are the most valuable asset of any society, educators face a crucial challenge: how to protect children's rights while preserving the nation's gene pool. For our country, the issue of child protection is especially relevant. Every year, the number of neglected and homeless adolescents is increasing. According to approximate estimates, there are more than 700,000 orphans, 2 million illiterate adolescents, and over 6 million minors living in socially unfavorable conditions in our country. Behind these numbers lie the broken destinies of millions of young people. We see them at railway stations, in underpasses, and in disadvantaged families.

There are many cases where parents, themselves leading destructive lifestyles, abuse their children, resulting in injuries, disabilities, and even the death of minors. As a result of such actions, children become alienated from normal life. Hope for the future is replaced by spiritual and moral emptiness. If timely measures are not taken, this emptiness is inevitably filled with destructive interests, leading the immature personality away from normal social life.

Main part

Currently, specialists aim to develop methods and ways to integrate children from disadvantaged families into a system of полноценные child-adult relationships, neutralize negative emotional experiences, and help families overcome difficulties.

Therefore, the synthesis of various approaches and ideas can help find optimal solutions to both practical and theoretical problems of raising minors from disadvantaged families in general and educational institutions.

An important aspect of this work is not punishing parents by depriving them of parental rights and removing children from their families, but rather searching for resources and creating opportunities to support families, normalize and harmonize relationships within them, and preserve the family for the child. Work with families at the present stage has become more complex and requires new forms, methods, and family-oriented approaches. On January 6, 2022, in Tashkent, the Committee on Youth, Culture, and Sports of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, with the support of UNICEF, held a round table dedicated to the protection of vulnerable children. The event was organized in close cooperation with the Commissioner of the Oliy Majlis for Children's Rights and the Ministry for Mahalla and Family Support.

The purpose of the round table was to summarize achievements and lessons learned in preventing the placement of adolescents in specialized educational institutions and ensuring their proper reintegration into families and communities.

Participants emphasized that deprivation of liberty should be used only as a last resort, for the shortest possible period, and limited to exceptional cases in accordance with international standards. Assessments show that most children in specialized educational institutions come from families in difficult life situations. The main problems of these families are often related to financial difficulties, alcohol and psychoactive substance abuse, unemployment, and serious mental illnesses among family members.

Participants also discussed the difficulties of reintegrating children from closed institutions. After returning, many adolescents continue to face the same unresolved social problems that led to their placement in such institutions. They may not be accepted back by parents, family members, schools, or communities. Therefore, it is extremely important to improve reintegration services, especially family support services.

Legal framework

Today, there is a global consensus that all children have rights that must be protected. This is confirmed by the near-universal ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of

the Child, which Uzbekistan ratified in June 1994. The Convention establishes that fundamental human rights apply to children and provide additional protections.

The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Guarantees of the Rights of the Child” No. 139 (January 7, 2008) reflects the main provisions of the Convention, although not in full, and is a key legal document ensuring children's rights in Uzbekistan. Other provisions are incorporated into national legislation, including the Family Code, Criminal Code, and Criminal Procedure Code.

The Family Code (1998) includes provisions on the child’s right to express opinions, prohibition of harm to physical and mental health, and supplements the law on children's rights. It also grants children the right to independently seek protection of their rights from guardianship authorities, and from the age of 14, to apply to the court.

The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan guarantees rights and freedoms to all citizens, including children. These include the right to state protection, equality before the law, and free secondary education.

The adoption of the new Constitution in 2023 strengthened the legal framework by recognizing international treaties as part of the national legal system. This allows courts to refer to the Convention and its protocols in cases involving children.

The Law “On Appeals of Individuals and Legal Entities” (No. 445, September 11, 2017) grants minors the right to appeal to state authorities regardless of age.

The Law “On Guardianship and Trusteeship” (No. 364, January 2, 2014) ensures protection and prioritizes family-based care for children.

However, the justice system in Uzbekistan still requires reforms to ensure that children can participate in legal proceedings safely and with dignity, taking into account their age, development, and specific needs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be noted that these are only some of the directions for fulfilling Uzbekistan’s international obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Overall, the efforts and measures currently undertaken in Uzbekistan cover almost the entire spectrum of children's interests and aim to ensure their well-being and protection.

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