



BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.19333684>

Djumanova Elina Rustamovna

University "Tashkent International University"

e-mail: e6831850@gmail.com

Scientific Supervisor: R.M.Turimbetov

Annotation: *This article is devoted to the importance of bullying and cyberbullying among adolescents as a socio-psychological phenomenon, their causes, forms, and consequences for teenagers. Modern data based on international research and national legislation are presented and analyzed. The article examines issues of legal regulation in the Republic of Uzbekistan, related to the absence of a special law and the limitations of existing legal norms. Proposals are put forward for modernizing legislation to enhance the legal protection of minors.*

Key words: *bullying, cyberbullying, consequences, adolescents, legal protection, Republic of Uzbekistan, psychological violence, administrative liability, criminal liability, honor and dignity of the individual.*

Bullying represents repeated negative actions carried out by an individual or a group of adolescents aimed at causing harm to another individual, while a clear imbalance of power is observed between the participants in the interaction. The harm may be emotional, social, or physical. Bullying among adolescents may take various forms: physical violence, verbal abuse, spreading of rumors, social exclusion, or systematic psychological pressure.

One of the main documents to which the Republic of Uzbekistan has acceded is the United Nations Convention «On the Rights of the Child». The Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan

adopted Resolution № 757-XII on accession to this Convention, which was ratified on December 9, 1992. The Convention was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1989, and entered into force on September 2, 1990. The Convention consists of a Preamble and 54 articles, 42 of which establish specific rights of the child and obligations of states to ensure them. The Convention on the Rights of the Child has global significance, and countries that have ratified this international treaty assume responsibility for the full protection of the rights and interests of minors. According to its provisions, each State Party must incorporate into its domestic legislation



the principles of non-discrimination, prevention of all forms of physical and psychological violence, respect for the honor and dignity of the child, and ensure their effective implementation in practice. For this purpose, states are obliged to adopt appropriate laws, administrative procedures, and other measures, including the establishment of sanctions for violations of children's rights. [1]

The Republic of Uzbekistan, having ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, has undertaken to comply with its provisions, improve national systems for the protection of minors, and submit reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the implementation of international obligations, particularly in the field of prevention and combating violence, including bullying. [2]

Particular importance is attached to the following provisions of the Convention:

- the principle of non-discrimination (Article 2);
- the right to privacy (Article 16);
- protection from violence (Article 19);
- the right to be heard (Article 12).

Following the ratification of international instruments in the field of child rights protection, the Republic of Uzbekistan began to gradually improve its national legislation in this area. At present, there is no separate normative legal act in the country that directly regulates issues of psychological

violence. However, the protection of minors from psychological pressure, humiliation of honor and dignity, as well as various forms of violence, including in the digital environment, is ensured by the provisions of existing legal acts.

The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated April 30, 2023; [3]

The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Guarantees of the Rights of the Child” dated January 7, 2008; [4]

The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Education” dated September 23, 2020; [5]

The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Personal Data” dated July 2, 2019; [6]

The Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Administrative Responsibility dated September 22, 1994; [7]

The Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated September 22, 1994. [8]

The basis of legal regulation is the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan (new edition — April 30, 2023). It establishes that human dignity is inviolable, and that everyone has the right to protection of honor and dignity, as well as to privacy and the confidentiality of correspondence and other communications. In addition, the Constitution explicitly emphasizes that children are under the protection of the state. These provisions mean that any forms of humiliation, psychological pressure, or interference in a child's private life, including on the Internet, are



contrary to the fundamental law of the country.

The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan № LRU-139 “On Guarantees of the Rights of the Child”, adopted on January 7, 2008, serves as a specialized legal act establishing and protecting children’s rights. It guarantees minors protection from all forms of physical and psychological violence, as well as cruel or degrading treatment. The law obliges state authorities and educational institutions to create a safe environment for the life, upbringing, and education of children. Thus, psychological bullying, regular insults, and pressure from peers are regarded as psychological violence and a direct violation of the rights of the child established by this law.

It should also be noted that the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan № LRU-637 “On Education”, adopted on September 23, 2020, is one of the key documents regulating the educational sphere. It, in particular, emphasizes the right of every student to respectful treatment and protection from physical or moral violence, and also imposes on educational institutions the obligation to create a safe educational environment. In the context of combating school bullying, this law directly obliges school administrations to take preventive measures to prevent conflicts, effectively respond to cases of bullying, and ensure comprehensive protection of the child who has become a victim.

At the initiative of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Decree № PD-256 “On Approval of the Strategy for the Protection of Children from All Forms of Violence for 2026–2030” was developed (dated December 24, 2005). The main goal of this document is to create a system for preventing violence against minors and ensuring their safety. The Strategy provides for the development of mechanisms of social support for children, the introduction of digital tools for identifying cases of violence, as well as improving the qualifications of specialists in the field of education. In the context of the development of the digital environment, the provisions of this Strategy create a basis for counteracting such forms of psychological pressure as bullying and cyberbullying, both in educational institutions and on the Internet. [9]

At present, active work is being carried out to clarify and improve legislative norms. The goal is to ensure clearer definitions of concepts and measures of responsibility in this area. The President has instructed the Cabinet of Ministers and relevant authorities to effectively implement state policy on the protection of children from psychological and informational violence

According to the results of the international Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022, the problem of an unsafe school environment remains significant. Approximately one out of seven students reports that they do not feel safe at school. This is associated



with verbal abuse, physical pressure, and other forms of bullying.

Research data indicate the prevalence of various forms of bullying. In Uzbekistan, the situation is as follows: 15% of schoolchildren reported that they do not feel safe on their way to school (for comparison, in OECD countries this figure is 8%). Another 14% of students do not feel safe in the classroom (OECD average — 7%), and 20% — in other areas of the school, such as corridors, canteens, or restrooms (OECD — 10%).

As for bullying, about 15% of girls and 19% of boys reported that they become victims at least several times a month. At the same time, in OECD countries this figure is higher on average: 20% among girls and 21% among boys. In general, compared to 2018, the level of bullying decreased in 2022. For example, whereas previously 11% of students faced the spreading of unpleasant rumors about themselves, now it is about 7%. [10]

Additional UNICEF studies show that various forms of violence against children remain widespread. According to the analytical report of the organization, about 62% of children aged 1 to 14 have experienced violent methods of upbringing, including psychological pressure. This indicates the need for comprehensive measures to protect children. [11]

In different countries, approaches to combating bullying in schools are developing in different ways, but there is a general trend: a combination of prevention, education, and digital control.

In Germany, the emphasis is placed on fostering a culture of respect, media literacy, and the operation of hotlines, while students sign anti-bullying charters. In the United States, all schools are required to have complaint response policies, federal resources are in place, and technologies and monitoring systems help identify threats in chats and social networks. In South Korea, strict measures are предусмотрены for violations — from disciplinary sanctions to expulsion from school — and anonymous mobile applications are used for reporting bullying; special attention is paid to online threats, which are increasing among adolescents. The general conclusion is that modern anti-bullying strategies combine educational, legal, and digital tools, with the digital environment becoming a key area of prevention.

It should be noted that the problem of bullying among adolescents in recent years has increasingly attracted attention and requires further action from the state and society. Despite the presence in the Republic of Uzbekistan of a number of normative legal acts aimed at protecting the rights and interests of children, at present there is no separate law that would directly regulate issues of counteracting bullying and cyberbullying. In this regard, it seems advisable to consider the possibility of developing a special normative legal act aimed at preventing such phenomena in the educational environment. Such a document could define the concept of bullying, determine its main forms, and



establish liability for such actions. In addition, it may provide for the obligations of educational institutions to create a safe environment for students and establish procedures for responding to cases of bullying among adolescents.

Also, an important role is played by the development of legal and digital literacy of schoolchildren, possibly through the organization of trainings and seminars involving psychologists, teachers, lawyers, and information security specialists. Such activities help adolescents to understand the dangers associated with the online environment and acquire skills to recognize and prevent cases of online violence. Particular attention should also be paid to the safety of adolescents in the digital environment. The active use of social networks increases the risk of encountering cyberbullying, which may manifest itself in the form of insults, dissemination of humiliating information, or pressure on the Internet. The creation

and dissemination of accessible informational resources such as guidelines, brochures, video materials, and online courses will help schoolchildren understand their rights on the Internet and learn how to protect themselves from cyberbullying. Educational institutions should conduct awareness campaigns and thematic events such as class hours, discussions, and interactive sessions in order to foster a culture of polite and responsible behavior in the online environment.

Thus, a comprehensive approach, including the improvement of legislation, the development of preventive measures, and the enhancement of legal and digital literacy among adolescents, as well as the formation of a culture of safe behavior and communication in the online space, will contribute to the creation of a safer educational environment and ensure effective protection of the rights of the child in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

REFERENCES:

1. «Convention on the Rights of the Child». https://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl_conv/conventions/childcon.shtml
2. Committee on the Rights of the Child. https://digitallibrary.un.org/nanna/record/570474/files/CRC_C_104_Add.6-RU.pdf?withWatermark=0&withMetadata=0®isterDownload=1&version=1
3. Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan. <https://lex.uz/docs/6445147>
4. Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan «On Guarantees of the Rights of the Child». <https://lex.uz/docs/1297318>
5. Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan «On Education». <https://lex.uz/uz/docs/5013009>



6. Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan «On Personal Data». <https://lex.uz/docs/4396428>
7. Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Administrative Responsibility. <https://lex.uz/docs/97661>
8. Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan. <https://lex.uz/docs/111457>
9. Strategy for the Protection of Children from All Forms of Violence for 2026–2030. https://president.uz/ru/lists/view/8831?utm_source
10. PISA 2022. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/pisa-2022-results-volume-i-and-ii-country-notes_ed6fbcc5-en/uzbekistan_2bb94bf1-en.html
11. Additional UNICEF Studies. https://www.unicef.org/uzbekistan/en/media/6691/file/Situation_Analysis_of_Children_and_Adolescents_in_Uzbekistan_en_.pdf