

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN’S RIGHTS IN SCHOOLS OF UZBEKISTAN: THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL APPROACHES

Mohinabonu Asadova Akbar qizi

Pupil of “Leader School” School, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Afaxri@yahoo.de

ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
This article analyzes the theoretical and practical foundations of protecting children’s rights in schools of Uzbekistan using the IMRAD structure. The purpose of the study is to identify pedagogical and legal mechanisms for ensuring children’s rights to education, a safe learning environment, non-discrimination, freedom of expression, and psychological support. The methods include analysis of legal documents, pedagogical literature, international standards, and school-based practices. The results show that effective protection of children’s rights depends on legal culture, inclusive education, psychological safety, teacher competence, and cooperation among school, family, and society. The discussion addresses existing challenges, including traditional pedagogical approaches, insufficient psychological services, weak parental involvement, bullying, and digital safety risks. The conclusion emphasizes that protecting children’s rights is essential for improving education quality and supporting democratic social development. The recommendations proposed in the article may help strengthen legal education, safe school environments, inclusive practice, and child-centered pedagogy in general education institutions.	Children’s rights, school, education system, legal culture, inclusive education, psychological safety, pedagogical approach

Introduction

In the context of ongoing globalisation, the protection of children's rights occupies an important place in the social, legal, and educational policies of every state. Children are among the most vulnerable members of society; therefore, their freedom to develop, access to education, live in a safe environment, and grow into independent individuals must be guaranteed by the state and society. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises every child's rights to survival, development, protection, and participation at the international level (United Nations, 1989). This document serves as a fundamental international standard for countries worldwide in ensuring the best interests of children. In the Republic of Uzbekistan, the protection of children's rights is also one of the priority areas of state policy. The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Guarantees of the Rights of the Child” establishes provisions for protecting children's legitimate interests and ensuring their dignity, honour, and freedom to develop (Republic of Uzbekistan, 2008). Furthermore, the Law “On Education”

guarantees the right to education and emphasises the need to provide equal opportunities for every individual (Republic of Uzbekistan, 2020).

School education represents a crucial stage in a child's personal development. Consequently, ensuring children's rights in schools is not merely a legal matter but also a complex process with educational, psychological, and social significance. Every student should experience an environment characterised by safety, respect, equality, and support at school. UNESCO links the right to education with equality, quality education, and inclusive opportunities for all learners (UNESCO, 2026). Therefore, the protection of children's rights is directly associated with the quality of education and the extent to which the school environment reflects humanistic values.

The aim of this study is to analyse the theoretical, legal, and pedagogical foundations of child protection in Uzbek schools, identify existing challenges, and develop practical recommendations for addressing them.

Methods

The study employed theoretical and practical analytical methods. Initially, international and national legal and regulatory documents concerning the protection of children's rights were examined. In particular, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Guarantees of the Rights of the Child”, the Law “On Education”, and pedagogical approaches to school education were analysed (United Nations, 1989; Republic of Uzbekistan, 2008; Republic of Uzbekistan, 2020).

The study also employed pedagogical literature analysis, comparative analysis, the synthesis of problematic situations, and the development of practical recommendations. Pedagogical analysis was used to identify the principal dimensions of ensuring children's rights in schools. These included the right to education, the right to study in a safe environment, the right to non-discrimination, the right to access inclusive education, the right to psychological support, and the right to express one's opinions freely.

Through comparative analysis, international standards were compared with existing approaches within Uzbekistan's education system. This process indicated that the legal recognition of children's rights alone is insufficient; these rights must also be ensured in school practice through effective pedagogical mechanisms.

The principles of learner-centred education, inclusive education, collaborative pedagogy, democratic governance, and psychological safety were adopted as the principal methodological approaches. These approaches ensure that a child is regarded not merely as a recipient of education but as an independent individual possessing rights. According to humanistic approaches to education, respect, trust, support, and fairness should be central to interactions with students (Maslow, 1954; Rogers, 1969).

The study established the following criteria for assessing the protection of children's rights in school settings. The first was the legal criterion, which concerns compliance with laws and regulations relating to children's rights in schools. The second was the pedagogical criterion, which reflects the presence of equality, respect, and learner-centred approaches in the educational process. The third was the psychological criterion, which indicates the extent to which students feel safe, free, and protected at school. The fourth was the social criterion, which reflects the effectiveness of cooperation among

schools, families, and society. The fifth was the digital safety criterion, which focuses on protecting children from harmful online content, cyberbullying, and risks to personal data.

Results

The analysis indicated that a legal framework for protecting children's rights in Uzbek schools has been established. National legislation recognises children's rights to education, protection, healthy development, and non-discrimination. International documents, in turn, connect these rights with universal human values and international obligations (United Nations, 1989).

The findings indicated that the effectiveness of protecting children's rights in schools depends on several factors. First, developing students' legal awareness is essential. When children understand their rights, they are less likely to remain indifferent to situations involving injustice, discrimination, or pressure against them. Second, teachers' professional and communicative competence is one of the principal factors in ensuring children's rights in practice. Teachers need to listen to students, respect their opinions, and adopt an individualised approach to each child.

Third, inclusive education plays a particularly important role in safeguarding children's rights. According to UNESCO, inclusive education takes account of the needs of all learners and supports their learning and development together (UNESCO, 2026). This approach creates equal opportunities for children with special educational needs, socially disadvantaged students, and children from diverse backgrounds.

Fourth, a psychologically safe environment is an important condition for ensuring children's rights in practice. When violence, discrimination, psychological pressure, or indifference exists at school, children may be unable to realise their full potential. Therefore, school psychological services, preventive discussions, class teacher activities, and cooperation with parents should be organised systematically.

Fifth, protecting children's rights in digital environments is becoming an increasingly pressing issue. As access to the internet expands, problems such as cyberbullying, harmful content, and inadequate protection of personal data are becoming more prominent. Consequently, schools should organise specialised sessions on digital literacy, online conduct, and safe internet use.

Discussion

The discussion indicates that protecting children's rights cannot be limited to legislation alone. Laws establish the necessary legal framework, but their practical effectiveness depends on the pedagogical environment within schools, teachers' approaches, cooperation with parents, and students' legal awareness. If an environment based on respect, trust, and fairness is not established at school, legal guarantees may not be fully realised in practice.

Learner-centred pedagogy is particularly important in protecting children's rights. Within this approach, a child is regarded not merely as a learner but as a person with individual opinions, needs, interests, and inherent dignity. Carl Rogers's humanistic educational perspective identifies trust, freedom, and a supportive environment as important factors in children's development (Rogers, 1969). Similarly, Maslow's theory of needs interprets safety, esteem, and self-actualisation as important dimensions of personal development (Maslow, 1954). These approaches strengthen the psychological and pedagogical foundations for protecting children's rights in schools.

One problem encountered in schools is the persistence of traditional, authoritarian approaches among some teachers. In such circumstances, children may hesitate to express their opinions freely, fear making mistakes, and fail to perceive themselves as equal participants in the educational process. As a result, education may become centred primarily on control and discipline rather than on children's needs. Therefore, enhancing teachers' legal, psychological, and communicative competencies is an important priority.

Another important issue concerns the effectiveness of psychological services. School psychologists should not become active only when problems arise; they should also contribute continuously to prevention, monitoring, and counselling. If bullying, discrimination, family-related difficulties, or students' emotional distress are not identified in a timely manner, these issues may adversely affect children's right to education and healthy development. Psychological services should therefore work in close cooperation with school administrators, class teachers, and parents.

Inclusive education is also an important indicator of the extent to which children's rights are protected. UNESCO describes inclusive education as a process of creating equal opportunities for all learners, removing barriers, and supporting every child's active participation in education (UNESCO, 2026). However, practical challenges may arise from inadequately adapted school infrastructure, shortages of specialist teachers, and insufficient preparedness among some parents and teachers for inclusive education.

Safety in digital environments also requires particular attention. Contemporary students actively use the internet and social media. Although these technologies provide opportunities for learning, communication, and creative development, they also create risks associated with cyberbullying, harmful content, and personal data security. Therefore, developing digital literacy in schools, informing parents, and teaching students the principles of safe online behaviour are essential.

Overall, respect for children's rights should be integrated into every aspect of school activities. It should not be confined to a single lesson or event. The principle of respecting children's rights should be consistently reflected in legal education, class sessions, subject lessons, school psychological services, parent meetings, extracurricular activities, and digital learning environments.

Conclusion

In conclusion, protecting children's rights in Uzbek schools is an important legal, pedagogical, psychological, and social issue. National legislation and international documents provide a solid foundation for safeguarding children's rights. However, the practical realisation of these rights depends on the actual pedagogical environment in schools, teachers' approaches, the quality of psychological services, cooperation with parents, and students' legal awareness.

The findings indicate that effective protection of children's rights requires strengthening learner-centred education, expanding inclusive educational opportunities, creating psychologically safe environments, organising regular training for teachers, and providing education on digital safety.

The protection of children's rights is not only a factor in educational quality but also an important determinant of society's future development. Children who receive an education in a safe and supportive environment where their rights are respected are more likely to develop into responsible individuals who think independently and respect democratic values.

References

1. Maslow, A. H. (1954). Motivation and personality. Harper & Row.
2. Republic of Uzbekistan. (2008). Law on Guarantees of the Rights of the Child. Lex.uz.
3. Republic of Uzbekistan. (2020). Law on Education. Lex.uz.
4. Rogers, C. R. (1969). Freedom to learn. Charles E. Merrill.
5. UNESCO. (2026). What you need to know about inclusion in education. UNESCO.
6. United Nations. (1989). Convention on the Rights of the Child. United Nations.