



"Formation of Legal Awareness and Legal Culture in Youth: A Priority Direction of the Education System"

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Annotation

This article focuses on the necessity of conducting specific scientific research on elevating the legal awareness, legal culture, and public oversight to a new level, especially in terms of effectively utilizing these tools in the fight against corruption. It emphasizes the need to prioritize this issue within the framework of the state's policy.

Keywords: legal awareness, legal culture, public oversight, legal literacy, legal education of youth, legal immunity, ethics and morals, concept, rule of law, legal values, society, culture, human rights and freedoms.

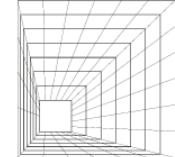
In recent years, a new phase of reforms has begun in the national legal system of our country, focusing on the scope and essence of these changes. A key requirement of this new era has been the fundamental shift in the attitude towards ensuring human rights and freedoms, as well as protecting individuals' legitimate interests, which has become the central idea of the reforms in the system.

The strategic goal of Uzbekistan has been defined as joining the ranks of fully developed, free, prosperous, and rule-of-law-oriented modern democratic states. Today, to achieve this noble goal, comprehensive reforms are being implemented across all sectors of the country. The effective implementation of these reforms will contribute to ensuring Uzbekistan's position among the developed democratic legal states.

Some people, when discussing legal awareness, legal culture, and legal literacy, only understand it in terms of knowledge of laws or awareness of them. In reality, this is a much broader concept that defines the development of the state and society, as mentioned above.

It is important to note that the role and position of legal culture in the process of forming a free civil society is unparalleled. In a democracy where the rule of law prevails, legal culture becomes the fundamental basis that defines the quality and essence of the relationships within society. Law and legal culture are interrelated concepts. When every citizen respects the law and acknowledges the supremacy of law and legislation, order will be established in the state, and society will progress. Promoting legal awareness and legal culture in society is one of the most important conditions for ensuring the rule of law and strengthening legality. Today, based on the accumulated experience in shaping and enhancing legal culture among the population, simple and effective mechanisms have been developed, which, in turn, play a crucial role in the formation of legal culture. Looking at the history of humanity, it can be observed that the promotion of law and legal culture has gone through distinctive evolutionary stages. At this point, it is appropriate to first define the concept of legal culture.

Legal awareness is a form of social consciousness that consists of ideas, feelings, and perceptions regarding the law, legislation, law enforcement, and other legal phenomena. The level of legal awareness reflects citizens' knowledge of their rights, awareness of laws, willingness to comply with and implement them, obedience to the law, and respect for law and



justice.¹ Legal awareness serves as an important foundation in the formation of legal culture. The development and formation of citizens' legal awareness influences their understanding of constitutional and legal principles and norms, legal relations, as well as constitutional responsibility. Legal awareness plays a regulatory role in the process of implementing law and resolving legal relations. Additionally, the regulatory role of legal awareness manifests in the conscious execution of legal norms. The higher the level of legal culture and legal awareness within society, social groups, and individuals, the stronger the rule of law and legal order in the country.

Legal culture refers to the process by which every citizen, first and foremost, engages in legal relations within society with legal awareness, legal knowledge, and literacy. Furthermore, citizens' respect for the Constitution and various laws, along with their approach to rights, freedoms, and obligations, is also considered a certain level of legal culture. From a scientific perspective, in order to develop legal culture among citizens, it is essential to first shape their legal awareness. Specifically, in the process of enhancing legal culture, it is important to note that work in the field of legal education and upbringing has not been systematically and coherently conducted. For many years, this issue has been treated mainly as the responsibility of law enforcement agencies and certain state bodies, while the involvement of family, community, and civil society institutions has not been sufficiently ensured. Consequently, the lack of proper attention to the public oversight institution has also contributed to this situation. There has been an inadequate comprehensive approach to building legal immunity in response to the factors that negatively affect the legal education of youth, as well as fostering respect for laws and ethical norms, loyalty to national values, and intolerance toward violations.

Given this, it is not an exaggeration to say that the most effective method for enhancing legal culture among the population, particularly among the youth, in our country today is through continuous legal advocacy. However, it is unfortunate that the former Soviet system and the policies implemented under this regime had such a profound negative impact on the formation of legal awareness, let alone legal culture, among citizens, and the repercussions of this are still evident today. For example, in the 19th and 20th centuries, when citizens saw law enforcement officers, such as the "mirshab," "pristav," or other law enforcement personnel, not only ordinary citizens but also public officials of the time often tried to avoid them or distance themselves from them. When discussing the legal culture of youth, it is important to first consider their understanding and correct interpretation of their rights, freedoms, and obligations. Secondly, it is essential to consider how they apply this knowledge in their practical activities.

Legal literacy is not just about having knowledge of specific legal norms or branches of law, but also about being aware of various legal aspects and understanding the legal foundations of the state's and society's activities. Thus, legal literacy, along with possessing legal knowledge, forms the foundation of legal culture and has a significant impact on the behavior of individuals within society. As mentioned earlier, legal literacy is not just about knowing the law, but also about correctly understanding it and fulfilling the political, economic, and cultural tasks that the law serves as a means to implement. Today, one of the requirements of the times is to instill a deep respect for the law among the youth. Approaching the law with respect and demonstrating this respect in practice is a clear manifestation of a high level of legal culture. Respect for the law is one of the key characteristics of an individual's legal culture. It involves recognizing the social value of law, the necessity and usefulness of complying with its provisions, the feeling of satisfaction with the law, acknowledging the fairness of its demands, and adopting an active and creative approach to fulfilling legal obligations and duties. Particularly important is the sense of social and legal responsibility and duty before one's

¹ Ўзбекистон миллий энциклопедияси Ҳ ҳарфи. Тошкент Давлат илмий нашриёти 2006 й.250-бет



family. These feelings primarily develop within the family where a person is raised and later become the foundation for feelings of responsibility and accountability to society and the state. To date, special attention has been given to the formation of legal culture within the education system of our country. The issue of legal advocacy is considered one of the priority areas in all spheres of societal life. It can be said that the measures taken in recent years have not been in vain. According to the acknowledgment of the older generation and our mentors, the legal knowledge and legal culture of today's citizens have significantly improved compared to the period of the former Soviet regime.

Resolving these systemic issues in a consistent manner, further improving the effectiveness of work aimed at enhancing the legal awareness and legal culture of the population, and implementing modern methods to increase citizens' legal knowledge in line with social and political changes, as well as creating a strong legal immunity to protect the population—especially the youth—from harmful information, were the objectives outlined in the Decree No. PF-5618 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, issued on January 9, 2019, on the "Radical Improvement of the System for Enhancing Legal Awareness and Legal Culture in Society."² Two very important documents were approved as annexes to this Decree. The first one is the "Concept for Enhancing Legal Culture in Society."³ The Concept consists of four parts: the first part includes "General Provisions"; the second part is dedicated to the "Main Goals and Tasks of the Concept"; the third part, titled "Main Directions of the Concept," includes five chapters; and finally, the fourth part focuses on the "Expected Outcomes of the Concept's Adoption."

It is important to note that each part and each chapter of the Concept is meticulously developed, based on scientific and practical research, as well as national and international experience.

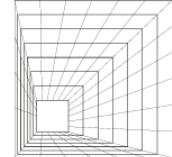
The second important document approved by the Presidential Decree is the "Roadmap for the Effective Implementation of the Concept for Enhancing Legal Culture in Society in 2019,"⁴ which outlines 88 essential measures, structured in 88 key provisions, necessary to ensure the fulfillment of the priority tasks outlined in the Concept. These measures are designed to address the most urgent and critical steps required for the successful implementation of the Concept. Today, enhancing the overall culture of society, including legal culture, is emerging as a crucial factor in the establishment of a rule-of-law state and the formation of a just civil society. Therefore, the scientific and theoretical study of the unparalleled role and significance of enhancing legal culture and building a strong civil society has become one of the pressing issues in our social and humanitarian sciences.

The first condition and necessity for legal thinking is the freedom of the individual, and another condition is the existence of a distinctive democratic environment. Today, such an environment is being established in our country, where all human rights and freedoms are ensured, and the relations between the state and society are developing on a legal basis. Indeed, we have set as our primary goal the establishment of a great future, the achievement of progress, further liberalizing the political and economic life of the country, strengthening the state and societal structures, enhancing the spirituality of society in all aspects, training qualified personnel,

² Ўзбекистон Республикаси Президентининг "Жамиятда ҳуқуқий онг ва ҳийуқий маданиятни юксалтириш тизимини тубдан такомиллаштириш тўғрисида"ги Фармони. //Ўзбекистон Республикаси қонун хужжатлари миллий базаси LEX.UZ расмий сайти. ПФ-5618. 9-январь 2019 йил.

³ Ўзбекистон Республикаси Президентининг "Жамиятда ҳуқуқий онг ва ҳийуқий маданиятни юксалтириш тизимини тубдан такомиллаштириш тўғрисида"ги Фармонига 1-илова. //Ўзбекистон Республикаси қонун хужжатлари миллий базаси LEX.UZ расмий сайти. ПФ-5618. 9-январь 2019 йил.

⁴ Ўзбекистон Республикаси Президентининг "Жамиятда ҳуқуқий онг ва ҳийуқий маданиятни юксалтириш тизимини тубдан такомиллаштириш тўғрисида"ги Фармонига 2-илова. //Ўзбекистон Республикаси қонун хужжатлари миллий базаси Lex.uz расмий сайти. ПФ-5618. 9-январь 2019 йил.



consistently and sustainably improving the living standards of the people, implementing structural changes in the economy, and ensuring stability, peace, interethnic harmony, territorial integrity, and inviolability of our borders.

As the President of our country, Sh.M. Mirziyoyev, emphasized in his Address to the Oliy Majlis, "My intention is for our youth to be competitive in high-demand professions worldwide, and if necessary, to be one step ahead of others." To achieve this goal, we will elevate vocational education, particularly technical schools, to a new level of quality. Starting from 2026, we will fully renovate at least 100 technical schools each year, equipping them with modern technology and aligning them with high-demand professions. The number of technical schools implementing advanced educational programs, similar to those of Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, China, and Korea, will be increased to 100.⁵

In conclusion, enhancing citizens' legal awareness and legal culture serves as a crucial factor in Uzbekistan's strategic goal of joining the ranks of fully developed, free, prosperous, rule-of-law-based, modern democratic states.

⁵ Ўзбекистон Республикаси Президенти Шавкат Мирзиёевнинг Олий Мажлисга Мурожаатномаси // <https://president.uz/oz/lists/view/8834> 2025 йил 26 dekabr