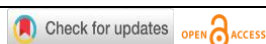


## State Protection of Children from Harmful Information

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study examines Uzbekistan's regulatory framework for information dissemination, focusing on safeguarding societal values and protecting vulnerable populations, particularly children. **Method:** A qualitative approach is employed, analyzing constitutional provisions, legislative acts, government resolutions, and categorization methods for information, alongside policy assessments and comparative reviews with international practices. **Results:** The findings reveal a structured legal framework balancing transparency with protection. Information is categorized into five types – beneficial, neutral, harmful, culturally sensitive, and misleading – each addressed through nuanced policies. Specific measures include the 2018 law mandating age-based content classification and expert accreditation to evaluate harmful content. Challenges identified include limited parental and institutional oversight and the need for technological solutions like AI-based filters. **Novelty:** This research highlights the integration of age-specific digital regulations and expert accreditation as innovative tools in mitigating harmful content, presenting a model adaptable to other jurisdictions. These findings emphasize the evolving landscape of information governance and the critical need for collaborative efforts among stakeholders to ensure a safer informational ecosystem.

## INTRODUCTION

The accelerating pace of globalization has made open and transparent access to information a critical necessity worldwide. Governments and organizations have established various legal frameworks to regulate the dissemination and use of information, ensuring its alignment with societal values and safety standards. These regulations span constitutional, civil, criminal, and administrative domains, addressing the dynamic nature of information and communication technologies.

In Uzbekistan, the right to access and share information is enshrined in the Constitution, emphasizing the need for balance between freedom and responsibility. According to national laws, individuals are granted the right to seek, receive, and disseminate information without hindrance, provided it does not harm others or infringe upon established legal standards. Restrictions on information access are permissible only to protect human rights, societal values, and national security, as outlined in the Law on the Principles and Guarantees of Information Freedom [1], [2].

Particularly relevant in today's digital age is the regulation of harmful information, especially regarding its impact on vulnerable populations like children. Legislation, such as the 2018 Law on the Protection of Children from Information Harmful to Their Health, underscores the importance of age-appropriate content and the role of experts in safeguarding young audiences [3], [4]. The law mandates clear classification systems, such as age-based ratings (0+, 7+, 12+, etc.), for media content and stipulates the

responsibilities of content creators, distributors, and parents in managing digital exposure.

To further reinforce these protections, Uzbekistan has implemented innovative measures, including the accreditation of experts specializing in identifying and mitigating harmful information. Such initiatives aim to create a safer informational environment while addressing the evolving challenges posed by technological advancements [5], [6]. This multifaceted approach ensures that information, while accessible, remains a tool for empowerment rather than harm.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach, focusing on the examination of regulatory frameworks, legal instruments, and practices related to the dissemination, classification, and protection of information in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The research integrates a review of existing laws, such as the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and specific legislative acts, including the Law on the Principles and Guarantees of Freedom of Information and the Law on the Protection of Children from Information Harmful to Their Health.

The primary methods used in this study include:

1. **Legal Analysis**
  - a. Examination of constitutional and legislative provisions to identify the rights and obligations regarding information accessibility and restrictions.
  - b. Analysis of regulations governing the dissemination of harmful information, including provisions related to age classification, confidentiality, and public access.
2. **Document Review**
  - a. Review of government resolutions, such as Cabinet Resolution No. 317 (June 8, 2022), which established accreditation services for experts in the protection of children from harmful information.
  - b. Evaluation of interactive services and the accreditation process for experts.
3. **Categorization and Classification**
  - a. Classification of information into five distinct categories based on its nature and potential impact, ranging from beneficial to harmful or fanatical content.
  - b. Application of age-specific classifications (0+, 7+, 12+, 16+, 18+) as mandated by legislation for protecting children from harmful information.
4. **Policy Assessment**
  - a. Analysis of the effectiveness of measures such as parental controls, digital filters, and educational programs aimed at mitigating the spread of harmful content.
  - b. Assessment of the role of experts, parents, and governmental bodies in implementing these measures.

## 5. Comparative Review

- a. Comparison of international best practices in regulating harmful information and protecting children in the digital age, providing contextual insights into the Uzbek framework.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Results*

The analysis of information regulation in the Republic of Uzbekistan reveals a structured approach to balancing access to information and safeguarding societal values. The legal framework, anchored in the Constitution, guarantees individuals the right to access and disseminate information while imposing limitations to protect human rights, social ethics, and national security. This dual approach highlights the delicate equilibrium between promoting transparency and mitigating potential harm from unrestricted information flow.

### 1. Classification of Information Types

Information is categorized into five types, each carrying distinct implications:

- a. **Beneficial Information:** Facilitates knowledge dissemination and supports societal progress, such as scientific or educational content.
- b. **Neutral Information:** May vary in relevance or utility depending on the audience.
- c. **Harmful Information:** Includes content promoting illegal activities, violence, or substance abuse, necessitating strict regulation.
- d. **Culturally Sensitive Information:** Pertains to subcultures or minority views, which, while not harmful, may require careful contextual handling.
- e. **Misleading Information:** Disseminated by sources promoting extremist ideologies, even if containing seemingly positive elements.

This categorization underscores the complexity of information regulation and the necessity for nuanced policies to address different contexts effectively.

### 2. Protection of Children from Harmful Content

A notable milestone in safeguarding vulnerable populations was the enactment of the 2018 law on protecting children from harmful information. The law outlines specific measures:

- a. Prohibition of harmful content distribution to children.
- b. Classification of information products with age-specific categories (e.g., 0+, 7+, 12+, 16+, 18+).
- c. Accreditation of experts to assess content and ensure compliance with age-related standards.

The inclusion of digital media and social networks in these regulations reflects the government's awareness of the challenges posed by modern information channels.

### 3. Implementation and Challenges

The implementation of these regulations faces practical challenges:

- a. **Parental and Institutional Oversight:** Effective enforcement requires active participation from both regulatory bodies and parents.
- b. **Technological Adaptation:** Integrating artificial intelligence tools for content sorting and parental control features remains a priority.
- c. **Expert Accreditation:** Through initiatives like Cabinet Resolution No. 317 (2022), mechanisms for accrediting experts in information protection have been established, enhancing the capacity to evaluate and manage harmful content.

#### 4. Evolving Information Landscape

The dynamic nature of information, especially in digital formats, demands continuous adaptation of regulatory frameworks. The emergence of artificial intelligence and social media platforms has introduced new complexities, necessitating updated legal and ethical standards for content distribution and consumption.

#### *Discussion*

Uzbekistan's approach reflects a proactive stance in aligning its information governance with global standards while addressing local cultural and ethical considerations. The emphasis on expert involvement and technological solutions demonstrates an understanding of modern information ecosystems. However, challenges such as ensuring compliance and fostering public awareness remain significant hurdles.

To strengthen this framework, collaboration among stakeholders—government agencies, educational institutions, technology providers, and civil society—is crucial. Training programs for parents and educators, coupled with advancements in AI-driven moderation tools, could significantly enhance the effectiveness of these regulations.

In conclusion, while Uzbekistan has made commendable progress in regulating information, continuous refinement of policies and practices is essential to adapt to the evolving information landscape and emerging threats.

#### CONCLUSION

**Fundamental Finding :** The study highlights fundamental findings on Uzbekistan's structured legal framework, balancing transparency and safety in information governance. The classification of information into beneficial, neutral, harmful, culturally sensitive, and misleading categories provides a nuanced basis for regulation. The protection of children through age-based content classification (e.g., 0+, 7+, 12+) and the accreditation of experts underscores the government's commitment to safeguarding vulnerable groups. **Implication :** include enhanced societal awareness of information ethics and the potential for Uzbekistan's regulatory model to serve as a blueprint for other nations navigating similar challenges. **Limitation :** persist, such as inconsistent enforcement, lack of public awareness, and the rapid evolution of digital platforms, which complicate regulatory efforts. **Future Research :** should explore the efficacy of AI-driven moderation tools, parental education programs, and the role of international

cooperation in addressing cross-border dissemination of harmful content. Continuous adaptation of policies to technological advancements remains critical, ensuring that information serves as a tool for empowerment and not harm.

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