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PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE WORLD: GLOBAL CHALLENGES, SYSTEMIC SHORTCOMINGS, AND A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This article provides a critical analysis of the protection of children's rights on a global scale. It focuses on key issues such as poverty, child labor, armed conflicts, education system challenges, violence, and digital risks. The effectiveness of international organizations and state policies is also evaluated. The article emphasizes the need for a comprehensive and systemic approach to fully ensure children's rights worldwide.

KEYWORDS: *children's rights, poverty, child labor, education, violence, human rights, global issues, digital safety, social protection*

АННОТАЦИЯ: В данной статье проводится критический анализ защиты прав детей в мировом масштабе. Основное внимание уделяется таким проблемам, как бедность, детский труд, вооружённые конфликты, проблемы системы образования, насилие и цифровые риски. Также оценивается эффективность международных организаций и государственной политики. В статье обосновывается необходимость комплексного и системного подхода для полноценного обеспечения прав детей.

ANNOTATSIYA : Ushbu maqolada dunyo miqyosida bolalar huquqlarini himoya qilish masalasi tanqidiy tahlil qilinadi. Asosiy e’tibor qashshoqlik, bolalar mehnati, qurolli mojarolar, ta’lim tizimidagi muammolar, zo‘ravonlik va raqamli xavflar kabi omillarga qaratilgan. Shuningdek, xalqaro tashkilotlar va davlat siyosatining samaradorligi baholanadi. Maqolada bolalar huquqlarini to‘liq ta’minlash uchun kompleks va tizimli yondashuv zarurligi asoslab beriladi.

Ключевые слова: права детей, бедность, детский труд, образование, насилие, права человека, глобальные проблемы, цифровая безопасность, социальная защита

Kalit so‘zlar: bolalar huquqlari, qashshoqlik, bolalar mehnati, ta’lim, zo‘ravonlik, inson huquqlari, global muammolar, raqamli xavfsizlik, ijtimoiy himoya

The protection of children's rights is one of the most pressing global issues of the 21st century. Every child has the fundamental right to live, develop, receive education, access healthcare, and be protected from violence and exploitation. These rights are not only moral obligations but are also закрепед in international legal frameworks. However, despite the existence of such frameworks, the reality in many parts of the world reveals widespread violations of children's rights. This situation highlights the inadequacy of current systems, policies, and international cooperation in effectively addressing these challenges. One of the most important international legal instruments in this area is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Although it has been ratified by the vast majority of countries, its implementation remains inconsistent. From a critical perspective, the convention often appears declarative rather than enforceable, as there are limited mechanisms to impose strict sanctions on states that fail to comply. As a result, many governments formally accept their obligations but fall short in practice. Poverty remains one of the primary drivers of violations of children's rights. Millions of children around the world live in conditions of extreme deprivation, lacking access to adequate nutrition, healthcare, and education. In many developing countries, children are forced into labor to support their families, sacrificing their education and future opportunities. Critically speaking, international efforts to combat poverty often focus on short-term relief rather than addressing the structural and political roots of the problem. Child labor continues to be a widespread issue, particularly in regions of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Many children work in hazardous conditions, which not only endangers their health but also deprives them of their right to education. Although laws prohibiting child labor exist in many countries, enforcement mechanisms are often weak or ineffective. This gap between legislation and practice underscores systemic governance failures. Armed conflicts represent one of the most severe threats to children's rights. Children living in war zones are deprived of safety, education, and basic services. In extreme cases, they are recruited as child soldiers, exposing them to violence and long-term psychological trauma. From a critical standpoint, the

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international community's response to such crises is often delayed or insufficiently decisive, raising questions about global accountability and political will. Violence against children is another pervasive issue that transcends geographical and cultural boundaries. Domestic abuse, bullying in schools, sexual exploitation, and human trafficking pose serious threats to children's well-being. Unfortunately, many of these cases remain hidden due to social stigma, fear, and lack of reporting mechanisms. Critically, child protection systems in many countries are reactive rather than preventive, addressing harm only after it has occurred instead of implementing effective early intervention strategies. Education plays a crucial role in ensuring children's rights, yet access to quality education remains unequal. In many parts of the world, schools are under-resourced, teachers are insufficiently trained, and infrastructure is inadequate. Girls, in particular, face barriers to education in certain societies due to cultural and economic factors. From a critical perspective, education reforms are often politicized and lack long-term strategic planning, limiting their effectiveness. The rapid development of digital technologies has introduced new dimensions to the issue of children's rights. While the internet provides access to information and learning opportunities, it also exposes children to risks such as cyberbullying, harmful content, and data privacy violations. Many governments are still struggling to establish effective legal and regulatory frameworks to address these emerging challenges. This gap highlights the need for updated and adaptive policies in the digital age. Migration is another factor that significantly affects children's rights. Due to wars, economic hardship, or environmental disasters, many families are forced to relocate, often across borders. Migrant children are particularly vulnerable, frequently lacking access to education, healthcare, and legal protection. In some cases, they become victims of exploitation or trafficking. Critically, global systems for protecting migrant children remain fragmented and insufficient. Children with disabilities are among the most marginalized groups worldwide. They often face discrimination and are denied equal access to education, healthcare, and social participation. Although inclusive policies exist in many countries, their implementation is often superficial. A critical analysis reveals that these policies frequently lack the necessary resources and commitment to bring about real change. Non-governmental organizations play a significant role in advocating for children's rights and providing essential services. They help raise awareness, implement programs, and hold governments accountable. However, their capacity is often limited by funding constraints and political restrictions. Greater collaboration between governments and civil society is essential to improve outcomes. In conclusion, while the global framework for protecting children's rights is well-established, its effectiveness remains limited. The challenges are complex and interconnected, including poverty, conflict, weak education systems, violence, and digital risks. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach involving governments, international organizations, and civil society. Most importantly, there must be a fundamental shift in how societies perceive children. They should not be viewed merely as vulnerable individuals in need of protection, but as full members of society with equal rights and voices. Only through such a transformation can the true realization of children's rights be achieved. If adequate attention is not given to children's rights today, the consequences will extend far into the future, creating deeper social and economic problems. Therefore, protecting children's rights is not only a moral and legal obligation but also a strategic necessity for building a just and sustainable world.

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