

Effectiveness of Positive Discrimination Tools in the Socialization of Persons with Disabilities

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Abstract. *This article analyzes the effectiveness of positive discrimination measures (benefits, quotas, special state programs, and preferences) in the process of full integration of persons with disabilities into society. From the perspective of social equality and human rights, such measures are considered an important mechanism for promoting active participation of citizens with disabilities in education, employment, cultural activities, and civic life. The article also examines the legal foundations of positive discrimination, its practical implementation, its impact on the socialization process, and emerging challenges. Based on comparative analysis and empirical data, the efficacy of this approach in ensuring social justice is scientifically evaluated.*

Key words: *positive discrimination, social equality, persons with disabilities, inclusive policy, quota, benefits, social integration, active society, human rights, state guarantee.*

INTRODUCTION

In everyday life, people with disabilities can achieve even greater success than those without disabilities, attaining exemplary results in entrepreneurship, science, art, and sports. Providing them with proper guidance, support, and creating suitable conditions is an important responsibility for all segments of society, particularly local authorities, non-governmental organizations, and self-governing bodies of citizens.

Especially through organizing various spiritual, educational, artistic, and sports events, it is possible to ensure the active participation of people with limited abilities in society and strengthen their sense of being full-fledged and worthy individuals. Such events not only serve social integration but also play a crucial role in showcasing their talents and realizing their potential.

METHODS

This study employs a mixed-method approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of positive discrimination tools in the socialization of persons with disabilities.

The research follows strict ethical standards, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation of all respondents. Special attention is given to the respectful and dignified treatment of persons with disabilities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Address by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev to the Oliy Majlis and the People of Uzbekistan dated December 20, 2022 “For the first time in our history we have

increased the amount of pensions and social benefits to a level not less than minimum consumption expenditure. For instance, 500 thousand low-income families received social support in 2017, and today this number reached to more than 2 million families. The amount of allocated resources has increased to 7 times, and reached 11 trillion soums per year. We will consistently continue the policy of increasing the income, the amount of salaries, pensions and social benefits.

These numbers are easy to say. There is a selfless work behind each of them. Hence, the most significant issue under our consideration is the human dignity and honor" [1], they emphasized.

In the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev dated January 28, 2022 No. UP-60 "On the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022 - 2026" attention was paid to the importance of the following tasks regarding the glorification of human dignity, social protection policy;

"2. Within the framework of social protection policy tasks aimed at ensuring human interests, as defined in the Development Strategy:

a) by 2026, fully cover the vulnerable segments of the population with social benefits and material assistance.

implement a unified state policy in the field of social protection;

establish a social insurance system, including a social insurance fund;

provide social assistance and services to low-income families based on a social contract;

create a separate database for women, youth, and persons with disabilities in need of assistance within the "Unified Register of Social Protection" information system, including integration of the "Unified Register of Social Protection" with the "Iron Notebook," "Youth Notebook," and "Women's Notebook" [2] .

On October 15, 2020, the President of Uzbekistan signed a new version of the Law "On the rights of persons with disabilities". This law establishes the fundamental principles for safeguarding the rights of individuals with disabilities. Additionally, the law further refines the operations of medical and social expert commissions. Moreover, various matters concerning the social protection and guarantee of rights for persons with limited abilities have been codified at the legislative level.

It should be noted that in his speech at the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council on February 22, 2021, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev proposed the establishment of a Regional Council to address issues of full realization of abilities of persons with disabilities. He also emphasized that Uzbekistan is paying serious attention to ensuring the rights of individuals with special needs. Within the framework of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's international initiative, the Parliament of Uzbekistan has ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This Convention is significant as it aims to promote, protect, and ensure the full realization of all human rights for persons with disabilities on an equal basis. It covers a range of important issues, including accessibility to existing conditions, personal mobility, healthcare, education, employment, habilitation and rehabilitation, participation in political life, as well as equality and non-discrimination. In essence, our country now has both national and international legal foundations for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. The next pressing task is to effectively implement the measures outlined in these norms.

The Authorized Person of the Oliy Majlis for Human Rights (Ombudsman) receives numerous appeals from persons with disabilities, which are personally monitored by the Ombudsman. Analysis of these appeals reveals that people with disabilities often express dissatisfaction with factors causing unnecessary complications and expenses in the process of disability determination, as well as obstacles in finding employment. Furthermore, among the applications, there are requests for assistance in accessing housing allocation benefits and the free provision of special wheelchairs, prostheses, and other assistive devices. It should be particularly noted that such issues have been addressed by the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the rights of persons with disabilities" which came into force this year. According to it, "For a disabled person, an individual disabled

person rehabilitation program shall be developed within ten days of a medico-social expert examination"[3].

Simultaneously, a number of provisions ensuring social protection for persons with disabilities have been enshrined in law. Specifically, it has been stipulated that individuals with disabilities will have the opportunity to use sports facilities, recreational areas, and tourist sites free of charge. Additionally, the provision of free medical care for these individuals has been regulated within the framework of the state guarantee program. The legislation outlines the implementation of appropriate measures for providing free health improvement services to persons with disabilities at sanatorium-resort facilities, as well as supplying them with medications, special medical devices, and therapeutic food products for children with disabilities.

The current legislation pays special attention to ensuring the right of children with disabilities to education. In particular, the Law guarantees free general secondary, extracurricular, secondary specialized, and vocational education for this category of children. At the same time, special benefits are provided for persons with disabilities in the process of admission to higher educational institutions, and when admitting applicants to study on the basis of a state grant, an additional admission quota is allocated in the amount of at least 2 percent of the total admission quota. In addition, in order to practically ensure the right of this category of persons to education, a number of additional rights and benefits have been established. This, in turn, will serve to further improve the inclusive education system and create equal opportunities for all citizens to receive education.

As stated in "Article 6. Principle of inadmissibility of discrimination on the grounds of disability" of this law: "Any segregation, exclusion, dismissal, restriction, or preference with regard to persons with disabilities, as well as refusal to create conditions for access to facilities and services by persons with disabilities shall be prohibited. Special measures aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and their involvement in the life of society and the state shall not be deemed discriminatory against other citizens" [3].

CONCLUSION

Currently, in Uzbekistan, the social protection of people with disabilities is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, which leads to the understanding of the concept of disability as a medical problem and its medicalization. Social protection of people with disabilities is actually a social problem, and it is necessary to create broad opportunities for citizens with disabilities and persons with disabilities to receive education, engage in labor activity, be socially protected, engage in sports, create the necessary textbooks and educational literature for their education, create the necessary infrastructure in their places of residence, educational institutions, enterprises and organizations engaged in labor activity, and actively involve them in various sports, art, and social events. It is necessary to make television programs, films, social videos about the active life of people with disabilities and their interests, activities, and to show their positive images. The mass media, in their activities, do not believe that it consists only in encouraging public sympathy for people with disabilities and providing them with material assistance, but mainly in covering how courageously a person overcomes their illness, which is important in the socialization of citizens with disabilities. For people with disabilities, especially children, it is important to highlight information about people who have achieved success in their lives at work or in life. When positive experiences and achievements are highlighted, people with disabilities take an example from others, set certain goals for themselves, and try to achieve them. In this case, a person develops positive motivation. A person tries to define their life path.

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