

FORMATION OF ANTI-CORRUPTION BEHAVIOR AMONG GRADUATES OF
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Abstract: *The article emphasizes the importance of the code of professional culture and service discipline of employees of internal affairs bodies in the early prevention of cases of corruption.*

Key words: *Code, corruption, justice, integrity, anti-corruption.*

Justification of the High Relevance of the Problem

Any system is advanced and strengthened by highly qualified personnel, and the internal affairs bodies are no exception. At this point, it is appropriate to look back at the recent history of the internal affairs system and recall certain issues. In his address delivered at the meeting on 9 February 2017, dedicated to the activities of the internal affairs bodies, the existing problems and shortcomings in the system, and future tasks, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev stated: "For a long time, the issue of working with personnel remained outside the attention of the leadership of the Ministry. As a result, the concept of 'honor' disappeared among the employees of the internal affairs bodies, and in most cases bribery was tolerated during the recruitment of new staff" [1, p. 315].

In such circumstances, how can the reputation of an internal affairs officer be improved among the population? If the law enforcer himself commits a crime, to whom should an ordinary person turn to express their concerns? These questions are, undoubtedly, inevitable.

It was firmly emphasized that it is necessary to take measures to fundamentally improve the system of monitoring compliance with legislation and service discipline by the ministry's personnel, particularly by enhancing the activities of special inspections responsible for personnel oversight [1, p. 335].

Similarly, our President Shavkat Mirziyoyev stated: "Special attention must be given to increasing the responsibility of the heads and teachers of educational institutions in preparing personnel worthy of serving in the internal affairs bodies" [1, p. 339].

Today, along with all other sectors in our country, large-scale efforts are being undertaken to drastically enhance the efficiency of the internal affairs bodies, to elevate the system to a completely new and modern stage, and to further strengthen the ongoing dialogue and cooperation between law enforcement officers and various segments of the population. The underlying goal of these reforms is to transform the internal affairs bodies into a truly people-oriented professional structure, in which every officer sincerely serves to maintain peace, stability, and public order in our society.

Review of analyses and sources

Since September 2016, as in all other sectors, large-scale and well-designed reforms have been carried out in the internal affairs system. In particular, significant efforts have been directed toward ensuring the rule of law in society and transforming the internal affairs bodies into a truly people-oriented system that serves the interests of the nation.

In Uzbekistan, a person, their life, freedom, dignity, and other inviolable rights are regarded as supreme values. Every individual in our country has the right to live in peace and security and must be protected from various criminal threats. Internal affairs bodies play a crucial role in ensuring these rights.

Where the rule of law prevails, there will be progress and human dignity will be upheld. As our President has emphasized: “If the main pillar on which the state relies is the law, then the most effective system that manifests its power in practice is the sphere of internal affairs” [2]. To effectively fulfill these responsible tasks and to transform the internal affairs bodies into a people-oriented structure, wide-ranging reforms have been implemented in the system in recent years.

Our officers, guided by the need to ensure our people’s right to live in peace, are fulfilling their responsible and honorable duties with determination and loyalty, working to safeguard the tranquility of our Motherland and to serve our citizens with dedication.

Most importantly, we must ensure that our citizens are satisfied with their lives and with the state, and that they see their protector in every employee of the internal affairs bodies.

During the ongoing fundamental reforms of the internal affairs system, approaches to combating crime, detecting socially dangerous acts, and preventing offenses in a timely manner have been significantly transformed.

Today, for every leader and employee in the internal affairs system, the priority in daily service activities is no longer chasing statistics or percentages, but rather the practical protection of citizens’ rights and legitimate interests.

Research in this field also shows that the successful performance of the tasks assigned to the internal affairs bodies depends primarily on the knowledge, professional training, practical and life experience of the personnel, their discipline and responsibility in carrying out assigned tasks, as well as other factors related to improving the system of personnel training [3, pp. 44–48].

For this reason, enhancing the high-level professional training of graduates of the part-time education faculty of the MIA Academy, strengthening their moral and ethical upbringing, increasing their responsibility in effectively combating crime, and improving the system of selecting and assigning personnel should be regarded as a key direction in improving the activities of the internal affairs bodies.

The implementation of measures aimed at strengthening law and order and legality in the country, the effective organization of the activities of services and units entrusted with the execution of state decisions, and the level of professional competence of personnel responsible for maintaining public order and combating crime are directly interrelated. Accordingly, achieving high efficiency in the activities of internal affairs bodies contributes to ensuring stability and security in our country, which in turn fosters the development of the national economy and enhances the well-being of the population. In a society where prosperity is ensured, the level of crime tends to be low.

In the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026, the tasks set to transform the internal affairs bodies into a people-oriented, professional structure serving as a reliable protector of the population [4] necessitated a reconsideration of issues related to personnel policy within the system.

In order to ensure the implementation of Presidential Decree No. PF-60, as well as to transform the internal affairs bodies into a people-oriented professional structure that serves as a reliable protector of the population, to ensure their close cooperation with citizens, public organizations, and the broader public based on mutual trust and solidarity, and to further strengthen the rule of law, peace, and public safety in mahallas, residential areas, and throughout the country, the “Code of Professional Culture and Service Discipline of Employees of the Internal Affairs Bodies,” approved by the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-10 dated January 20, 2023, is aimed at achieving the following key objectives [5]:

- educating employees of the internal affairs bodies, based on the principle of “For Human Dignity,” as representatives of the state who possess high moral and ethical qualities, are loyal to their duty, patriotic, and people-oriented, thereby achieving genuine public satisfaction;
- forming in employees of the internal affairs bodies a sense of honest and conscientious

performance of their official duties, a sincere awareness of their duty to the Motherland and the people, a high level of responsibility, and unconditional adherence to generally accepted moral and ethical norms in society;

– preventing at an early stage any improper conduct, abuse of authority, and manifestations of corruption that may occur within the internal affairs bodies, and avoiding the emergence of conflict situations that could negatively affect the reputation of the law enforcement system.

The Code establishes moral and ethical requirements aimed at instilling in employees of the internal affairs bodies the ideals of benevolence, humanity, humanism, honesty, courage, respect for knowledge, and patriotism, thereby serving to shape the image of morally mature, modern personnel.

With regard to part-time (extramural) graduates who are employees, I would like to emphasize our efforts to develop their knowledge, skills, and competencies in addressing systemic problems such as ensuring openness of the internal affairs bodies on a lawful basis; preventing red tape and negligence in communication with the public, especially in the consideration of citizens' applications and appeals; avoiding violations of the law in investigative and inquiry activities; as well as further enhancing employees' culture of communication and their moral, political, and legal awareness – all aimed at gaining public satisfaction.

In our training sessions, we have introduced the screening of video materials and short films illustrating cases where employees are dismissed from the internal affairs bodies for negative reasons, the majority of which involve crimes such as bribery, abuse of official authority, and exceeding official powers – acts that tarnish the honorable title of an employee of the internal affairs bodies.

The problems outlined above are among a range of issues that today require prompt and decisive solutions. In particular, combating corruption and violations of the law observed among employees of the internal affairs bodies, overcoming detachment from the public, and resolving formalism and bureaucratic practices demand the mobilization of significant willpower and effort. In such circumstances, legitimate questions arise among the population: how can the reputation of an internal affairs officer be enhanced; if law enforcement officers themselves commit crimes, to whom should an ordinary citizen turn with their grievances?

Corruption – derived from meanings such as “decay” and “bribery” – as an unlawful act undermines and discredits the achievements attained by employees of the internal affairs bodies. Corruption represents a set of destructive phenomena within the state and society; first and foremost, it manifests itself in the failure of officials to adhere to prevailing moral and ethical norms (emphasis added by the author) and in the commission of crimes in pursuit of personal interests [6, pp. 220].

In our classes, we emphasize that employees of the internal affairs bodies, unlike workers in other sectors, constitute a highly organized community of individuals intended to implement state policy. Beyond professional knowledge, skills, and abilities, the moral qualities reflected in an employee's ethics and culture of communication are of paramount importance. Through this approach, we instill the understanding that an employee of the internal affairs bodies is not merely a clerk who writes documents, issues certificates, or receives citizens on personal matters, but a representative acting on behalf of the state.

Under all circumstances, corruption leads to the erosion (degradation) of legal relations in society and corrodes the state [7, p. 165]. Accordingly, we involve leading specialists to explain to our trainees the consequences of corruption and take measures to strengthen their immunity against this vice.

It should be noted that the “Code of Professional Culture and Service Discipline of Employees of the Internal Affairs Bodies,” approved by the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-10 dated January 20, 2023, is significant not only in ensuring “iron discipline” among personnel, but also in creating a foundation for advancing reforms in the sector to a new stage and shaping the modern image of employees of the internal affairs bodies.

First of all, we would like to emphasize that in the preamble of the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-10 “On Additional Measures to Transform the Internal Affairs Bodies into a People-Oriented Professional Structure and to Further Direct Their Activities toward Close Cooperation with the Population,” taking into account the paramount importance of studying the Code, the following provisions were set forth:

1. The Minister of Internal Affairs and his deputies were personally designated as responsible for ensuring unconditional compliance with the rules and requirements of the Code, as well as for guaranteeing that relations among managers and employees at all levels are organized strictly on the basis of legislation.
2. Heads of territorial, sectoral, and branch internal affairs bodies at all levels were warned that they bear personal responsibility for conducting spiritual-educational and upbringing activities aimed at ensuring compliance with the Code among subordinate personnel, as well as for taking effective measures to regularly study and resolve employees’ family and household problems.
3. It was stipulated that every employee of the internal affairs bodies must be aware of the rules and requirements established by the Code and must strictly and unconditionally comply with them.
4. Compliance with the rules and requirements of the Code was defined as the main criterion for evaluating an employee’s service performance and service discipline.
5. Failure to comply with, or gross violation of, the rules and requirements of the Code was identified as grounds for applying disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal from service in the internal affairs bodies.
6. Beginning on September 1, 2023, it was established that the personal responsibility of employees of the crime prevention, road-patrol, and patrol-post service units would be increased by introducing continuous training of 144 hours under the “Module on Working with Citizens.”

The necessity of introducing continuous training of employees of crime prevention, road-patrol, and patrol-post service units under the “Module on Working with Citizens” is explained by the fact that these areas have been causing public dissatisfaction, and by the analysis of the qualitative composition of employees who violated service discipline: in 2021, officers accounted for 74 percent, sergeants for 11 percent, and rank-and-file personnel for 15 percent [8].

For this reason, preventive measures aimed at the early prevention of corruption – a socially harmful socio-economic phenomenon – are being implemented by the internal security units of the internal affairs bodies.

In particular, a total of 16,148 banners containing hotline numbers of the internal security units (71-231-31-74, “1102”) and calling for vigilance against bribery have been installed in administrative buildings of the internal affairs bodies and in public places.

At the same time, this Code clearly points to the necessity of preparing employees for a complex process of moral and spiritual purification, reducing their shortcomings and strengthening genuine human qualities. The main direction of the Code is the upbringing of honorable and highly responsible professionals – those who constantly interact with the public and who must possess core qualities such as continuous self-control, self-management, self-discipline, initiative, and proactive engagement, all grounded in strong moral, educational, and ethical willpower.

Special attention is also being paid to the selection of candidates for service in the internal affairs bodies of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In accordance with the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-10 dated January 20, 2023, comprehensive measures are being undertaken to establish a qualitatively new, simplified procedure for recruitment into the internal affairs bodies – aimed at filling positions by the end of 2023 with candidates possessing high moral

and ethical standards, strong professional competence, and business qualities – and to create the “E-Nomzod” electronic information system.

In recent years, a new system for selecting, developing, and promoting civil servants has been formed in Uzbekistan. Previously, recruitment depended on information recorded on the reverse side of a document commonly referred to as an “objective profile.” Rather than a candidate’s personal qualities, knowledge, and professional skills, information about the candidate’s relatives – or, in plain terms, who served as their “patron” – was considered decisive. This document did not reflect data on what tasks the candidate had accomplished, what achievements had been attained, or which skills and competencies they possessed.

Within the internal affairs bodies, systematic measures are being continuously implemented to improve personnel management, strengthen service discipline and legality among employees, foster loyalty to the Motherland and to the profession, provide training, enhance qualifications, and raise professional and combat readiness.

The adoption of important laws, decrees, and resolutions aimed at organizing service in the internal affairs bodies, introducing effective systems of management, control, and personnel work has made it possible to reduce instances of service discipline violations and offenses committed by employees within the system.

Efforts to sharply increase the effectiveness and outcomes of spiritual-educational, upbringing-preventive, and ideological work carried out with personnel are being elevated to an entirely new stage, based on the conceptual idea of “Serving the Interests of the People.”

A targeted program of measures has been developed to further enhance the effectiveness of efforts to strengthen service discipline and legality in the internal affairs bodies, ensure purposeful training and continuous professional development of employees, and educate them in the spirit of loyalty to the Motherland and to their profession.

If we consider the overall substance of the reforms implemented in the internal affairs system, it becomes clear that their main objective is to transform this system into a socially oriented professional structure that serves the Motherland and the people. Indeed, the Head of State, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, set the task as follows: “The internal affairs bodies must work in such a way that the people are satisfied with the state” [1, p. 335].

A social state is based on a highly humane and just concept in which human dignity is valued above all else and human honor is regarded as sacred. Accordingly, in New Uzbekistan, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev’s political concept – “The people should not serve state bodies; state bodies must serve the people” [9, p. 31] – has been guaranteed by law, enshrined as a constitutional principle, and embodied in the new edition of the Constitution, which upholds the principle “First the individual, then society and the state.”

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, has firmly set the requirement to transform New Uzbekistan into a country free from corruption, stating: “With any leader – whether a minister, a governor, or another official in a responsible position – who disregards laws and people, treats them rudely, and succumbs to the scourges of bureaucracy and corruption, thereby damaging the authority of the state through negative actions, we will part decisively. In their place, we will appoint knowledgeable young men and women who live with concern for the Motherland and the people” [10].

These words indicate that without fostering dedication in educating modern individuals with high moral standards – patriotic and people-oriented, honest, deeply aware of their role and participation in elevating our country among the ranks of the most developed states, possessing an active civic position as well as creative and innovative thinking – it will not be easy to take a достойное place in the global community.

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that the cultivation of moral and ethical qualities is necessary not only for the internal affairs bodies to establish legality and justice in society, but also for strengthening and valuing dignity, honesty, justice, and integrity within their own profession.

The Code of Professional Culture and Service Discipline of Employees of the Internal Affairs Bodies:

assists employees of the internal affairs bodies in effectively performing their official duties;
morally educates employees of the internal affairs bodies, fostering qualities such as determination, courage, justice, and service discipline;
serves to prevent employees of the internal affairs bodies from facing professional degradation – corruption – arising from service-related difficulties.

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