



IMPROVING THE "MAHALLABAY" SYSTEM IN CRIME PREVENTION TAKING INTO ACCOUNT REGIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

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Abstract: This article explores the enhancement of the "Mahallabay" system in crime prevention, based on the specific criminological characteristics of various territories. The author proposes a methodology for organizing preventive measures not through standardized templates, but rather through the development of a "criminological passport" for each neighborhood (*mahalla*). The study outlines mechanisms for creating local prevention models tailored to specific socio-economic determinants.

Keywords: Crime prevention, mahallabay system, regional programs, social rehabilitation, criminological passport, local determination.

Introduction

Today, the "Mahallabay" system has been institutionally established as the fundamental basis of the crime prevention strategy in the Republic of Uzbekistan. This system entails the transformation of the crime prevention process from the centralized activities of state bodies directly to the lowest level of society—the *mahalla* level. However, a systematic analysis of current preventive practices reveals that, in most cases, the set of measures is organized based on "universal templates" that do not sufficiently account for the specific criminological landscape, socio-economic dynamics, and local demographic characteristics of a territory. Such an extensive approach diminishes the effectiveness of preventive work, leading to a purposeless expenditure of resources and the persistence of criminal activity in specific local hotspots.

From a scientific perspective, the territorial determination of crime is a complex and multifaceted process in which the criminogenic factors of an industrialized urban *mahalla* and a remote agricultural *mahalla* possess fundamentally different social logics. Specifically, while crime in urbanized industrial *mahallas* is primarily shaped by high population mobility, the anonymization of social control, and the influence of the technogenic environment; in agricultural areas, economic deprivation, low employment rates, and conservative conflicts in domestic and family relations emerge as the dominant determinants. Consequently, the effectiveness of the "Mahallabay" system is directly linked to the adaptation of preventive measures to these regional differences, namely the implementation of the principle of "differential prevention."

In this context, the most critical scientific condition for improving the system is the creation of an individual "Criminological Passport" for each *mahalla*. This concept allows prevention subjects to accurately "diagnose" the social health of a territory. For instance, in *mahallas* with high unemployment rates, the primary focus should not be on administrative punitive measures, but rather on reducing criminal tendencies through socio-economic rehabilitation—namely, ensuring employment and supporting small businesses. Conversely, in

urban *mahallas* with a high proportion of youth and strong cyber-activity, it is advisable to carry out preventive work through cultural and educational mechanisms such as installing intelligent video surveillance systems, teaching digital hygiene, and organizing meaningful leisure activities for young people.

Furthermore, it is essential to consider victimological determination when improving the "Mahallabay" system. It is necessary to develop specific local prevention models for particular social strata in each *mahalla* (previously convicted individuals, families in conflict, or returning external migrants). In this regard, the potential of social institutions—the "Mahalla Seven," public councils, and non-governmental organizations—should be directed toward the "criminogenic pain points" of the territory. In short, abandoning template-based approaches and adopting the scientific management of the "Mahallabay" system based on regional determinants is the only optimal solution for ensuring high efficiency in the early prevention of crime.

In researching the scientific foundations of organizing crime prevention at the *mahalla* level, primary attention must be paid to the modern strategic directions of state administration. As the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, noted: *"The main task in the fight against crime is not punishment, but early prevention of crime; for this, it is necessary to improve the social environment within each mahalla and resolve people's problems in a timely manner."* This conceptual idea forms the core of the "Mahallabay" system, requiring preventive work to move away from templates and focus on the human factor and regional characteristics.

Literature Review

Analysis of literature shows that the problem of territorial determination of crime has been studied in classical criminology since the era of the "geographic school" (A. Quetelet, A. Guerry). They proved the dependence of crime distribution on the economic and social landscape. Representatives of the modern Uzbek school of criminology, in particular, the scientific works of M.Kh. Rustambayev, I. Ismoilov, and G.A. Akhmedov, emphasize the specific role of local factors in studying regional crime. However, under the conditions of digital transformation and the globalization of social relations, the determinants of the "Mahallabay" system require a new scientific interpretation. For instance, modern researchers, relying on "Social Control Theory" (T. Hirschi) and "Opportunity Theory" (R. Clarke), advocate for the necessity of enhancing the infrastructural and institutional potential of the mahalla in curbing crime.

Scientific sources evaluate the effectiveness of the "Mahallabay" system largely by the presence of a "Criminological Passport" for the territory. In this regard, foreign experience, particularly the "Community Policing" approach used in the USA and the UK, is analyzed as a model close to the mahalla system. The core idea of this model is to establish partnership ties between law enforcement agencies and local residents, where the specific problems of each street or block are solved individually. In the context of Uzbekistan, this system is gaining a broader socio-economic scope through the activities of the "Mahalla Seven."

Furthermore, moving away from template-based prevention methods is a scientifically grounded necessity. While water resources or land disputes may be the determinants of crime in agricultural mahallas, internal migration and population density create social tension in industrial urban mahallas. Therefore, scientific research must focus on a mechanism that harmonizes employment, social rehabilitation, and victimological prevention within the "Mahallabay" framework. In summary, literature analysis indicates that through the scientific



systematization of the "Mahallabay" working method and its adaptation to regional determinants, high results can be achieved in the early prevention of crime.

The principle of territorial differentiation holds primary importance in developing a crime suppression strategy. Prevention mechanisms should be systematized based on specific local models derived from the socio-economic and agro-climatic characteristics of the area. This approach allows for the optimal allocation of resources toward "criminogenic hot spots" and increases the effectiveness of preventive impact.

1. High Unemployment Mahallas (Socio-Economic Model)

The scientific basis of this local model relies on the theory of the "economic determination" of crime. In mahallas with high unemployment and low real income, crime dynamics manifest primarily as "subsistence crimes" such as theft, fraud, and robbery. In such environments, criminal behavior is often the result of "social anomie" (theory of E. Durkheim and R. Merton), arising from the mismatch between an individual's social needs and available opportunities.

Therefore, the primary strategy in these mahallas must transform from traditional administrative-police control to economic rehabilitation. The central activities of the "Mahalla Seven" (Mahalla Chairperson, Assistant to the Khokim, Youth Leader, etc.) are implemented through the following mechanisms:

Infrastructural Employment: Targeting the labor potential of unemployed individuals, particularly the formerly convicted or those on preventive registers, toward projects to improve local infrastructure (public works, construction, landscaping).

Vocational Reintegration: Establishing training systems for high-demand trades directly within the mahalla or nearby vocational centers to restore an individual's social status.

Economic Patronage: Assigning individuals prone to crime or in need of social protection to small businesses and entrepreneurs in exchange for incentives (based on the "master-apprentice" tradition).

2. Youth-Dense and Urbanized Mahallas (Socio-Cultural Model)

In urbanized mahallas where the demographic structure is dominated by youth, the determination of crime has complex characteristics. The main factors of criminal activity here are the "anonymization of social control" and the transformation of deviant behavior within youth subcultures. High-rise buildings and high population mobility weaken neighborhood oversight, creating an environment for "anonymous crime." Consequently, hooliganism, cybercrime, and digital fraud constitute the primary criminological profile of this cluster.

Prevention must be built on two strategic directions: institutional-technological and socio-educational integration:

Technological Control and the "Digital Mahalla": To counter social anonymity, the mahalla infrastructure should be integrated with the "Smart City" concept. This requires not only expanding video surveillance but also implementing AI algorithms to detect suspicious behavior and emergency communication systems ("SOS" buttons). This provides preventive impact through Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

Building Social Capital: Organizing meaningful leisure time for youth is the most effective non-technological tool. Establishing IT academies, coworking centers, and modern sports complexes directs youth energy into constructive channels.



Cultural-Educational Rehabilitation: Targeted training on digital hygiene and cybersecurity can protect youth not only from committing crimes but also from becoming victims (victimological protection).

3. Conflict-Prone Families and Troubled Social Environments (Victimological Model)

In mahallas with a high concentration of harassment and violence, the determination of crime is defined by the chronic nature of interpersonal conflicts and social degradation. Effectiveness here relies on victimological prevention—working specifically with potential victims and neutralizing conflict sources early.

Complex Psychological Rehabilitation: Systematic therapeutic work should be conducted not just with the aggressor, but with all family members, to break the "destructive behavior model" often passed through generations.

Individual Action Maps: Developing "social diagnostic" maps for each conflict-prone family. This shifts prevention from "general propaganda" to "targeted solutions."

Legal Victimology and Protection Orders: Enhancing awareness of legal protection mechanisms. The protection order must become a tool of social restraint strictly monitored by the mahalla community.

Conceptual Proposals

Implementing a Multi-Factor Model of Indicative Assessment: Moving beyond simple crime statistics to include indicators like unemployment rates, divorce coefficients, and migration levels to identify "criminogenic potential" before a crime occurs.

Targeted Resource Allocation based on "Criminological Passports": Abandoning equal distribution in favor of "targeted investment" based on the specific type of determination (e.g., more credits for economic models, more digital patrol for urban models).

Establishing Local Social Rehabilitation and Adaptation Centers: Creating district-level centers integrated with the mahalla to provide a "single chain" of housing, employment, and psychological support for formerly incarcerated individuals.

Conclusion

Improving the "Mahallabay" system means transitioning from "general treatment" (extensive control) to high-tech "diagnosis-based treatment" (intensive and targeted prevention). Personalizing prevention based on regional characteristics, demographic dynamics, and economic specialization ensures:

Resource Optimization: Directing state resources to identified "hot spots."

Social Stability: Eliminating the roots of social conflicts.

Systemic Security: Creating the ability to scientifically forecast crime.

In regions with a complex industrial-agricultural structure like the Navoi region, individualizing crime prevention within the mahallabay system is the most promising and scientifically grounded model for ensuring sustainable development and social security..

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