The missing exploited and runaway children Protection Act

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**Introduction**

The subject of missing children has been an issue of great importance for the past few years. The stance of lost, kidnapped and abducted children has been a center of attention of legal affairs and regulations. The ratio of runaway children especially teens and older than teens has been a social problem for so long, although handled by teachers, social workers, and parents. Many of the lawmaking bodies and law enforcement practices such as the imposition of the waiting time period, failure to code cases in National Crime Information Centre, rigidness towards issuance of notifications and low investigation priority has been a huge question mark on the legal framework. Side by side, the response of the criminal justice system towards family abduction was great confusion in terms of the child's custody. (Fedina, et, al. 2018).

Taking into account the statistical information, it can be inferred that FBI inferred 424,066 entries which were reported for missing children and it included the complete range of child distortion such as runaways, exploited and missing. All such dilemmas and situation lead to the formulation of a policy that can cater to the aforementioned concerns. It is significant to note that these problems have paved the way for many other problems such as sexually transmitted disease, social crimes and juvenile acts which are a threat to a balanced social and political framework. (Fedina, et, al. 2016).

**Background to policy**

 Before the Missing Exploited and Runaway Children Protection Act, Missing Children Act 1982 and Missing Children's Assistance Act 1984 were aimed at recovering missing children and bringing perpetrators to the realms of justice. There are several dimensions that can address the issues related to missing, abducted and runaway children. One of the basic aspects to consider is, many of the children run away because of familial issues, taking into account that there is a lack of adherence to family laws. Abduction of children results in "rebellious" attitude in children who are more prone to destruction in society. (Hannan, et, al. 2017). Exploitation of children in form of child labor, arrogance and violence may lead to juvenile and social crimes that children opt for the fulfillment of their necessities. The framework of issues includes fearful children with horrible aims of destruction and demolition to both society and country. As a result of increased concerns associated with youth who are away from homes and are at risk of sexual and physical exploitation, the US Congress passed legislation in 1974 that established a system of care for homeless and runaway children working beside law enforcement, juvenile justice, and traditional child protection services and agencies. (Hickle, et, al. 2018).

 There are several amendments made in the Missing Exploited and Runaway Children Act. First amendment was made in 5/25/1999 in which the Missing Children's Assistance Act was made to direct the Administration of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. It referred to testing for sexually transmitted disease, eligibility of runaways and inclusion of maternity home groups. (Hickle, et, al. 2018). A limitation of extension for the victims for about 540 days was made eligible for the victims; an assurance of the runaways was also inferred taking into account that a plan should be developed for the proper referral of homeless youth. As per amendment, Secretary of health was also directed to consult with Housing and Urban Development to ensure coordination of service of homeless youth. The authorization of the FY 2008 was also meant for the administration of appropriations of the RHYA programs. (Hickle, et, al. 2018).

Under the implication of Missing Exploited and Runaway Children policy amendment, Secretary was directed to conduct a study of long term housing strategies for youth and restrictions were meant for the restriction of funds. The second amendment was made under Title II; it contained the amendments for missing children’s assistance act MCAA. It extends authorization under FY 2008, taking into account the authorization for appropriations referring to the annual grants that were meant for National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the other MCAA programs (Hounmenou, et, al. 2019).

 The history of policy can be traced back to 1981, when Adam Walsh was abducted and then he was found murdered, the Walsh’s started working for the abducted children under synchronization with Missing Children act of 1984 and then for the Missing Children's Assistance Act of 1984. The Congress amended the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 under the title Missing Children's Assistance Act that established Missing and Exploited Children's Program and it was administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency prevention (OJJDP). (Mostajabian, et, al. 2019). On October 1999, the Missing, Exploited and Runaway children prevention act was signed as an amendment of MCAA. The act paved the way for the OJJPD administrator to provide an annual grant to NCMEC (National Center For Missing and Exploited Children) in order or operate a 24 hour toll free telephone line to report information about missing children. Side by side, it aimed at operating Official National Resources Center a clearinghouse that can act as a home to missing and exploited children.

**Discussion**

The Missing Exploited and Runaway Children act aided information to local and state governments along with nonprofit organization to locate, recover and unite the missing children with their families. An amount of $23 million was also appropriated for the Missing Children's Program. (Reed, et, al. 2019). This balance was used for Internet crimes against children and the Task Force Program to formulate law enforcement agencies to investigate sexual exploitation and safe online practices by children. (Smeaton, et, al. 2018). It is significant to note that the policy has recovered a great ratio of entries. Within the last 34 years, the toll-free landline of the policy had received about 4.8 million calls, billions of phones of the missing children are calculated, and about 290,000 missing children are assisted with the help of law enforcement authorities. 359,000 victims are trained and treated under to supervision of coordinating associations. These associations include juvenile, criminal justice, healthcare, and legal affairs. The team has provided a complete code of emotional support and resources that have addressed about 68,000 families of the exploited and missing children. (Cooper, et, al. 2016). According to the information collected in 2018, there were 92 cases of the endangered runaways that were addressed, 4% family abductions were treated and 3% critically missing young adults were recovered who were aged 18 to 20 years. About 1% of the lost, missing and injured children were treated.

**Underpinning Values of policy**

NASW values reflect significant potentials of The Missing, Exploited and Runaway Children taking into account that it acts as a reconciliation of certain values that formulate the baseline of the code of ethics. (Reed, et, al. 2019). The act worked in coordination with service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, the importance of human relationships, and integrity. Service is one of the fundamentals of the policy. Taking into account the objectives of the policy, it can be inferred that the sole aim of the policy to serve those who are in need of help. The policy act as a home to abducted, runaway children, inferring that the basic necessities of children are fulfilled through the service of the policy. One of the basic depictions of service is the unity of runaway children with their parents, side by side the reformation of the abducted children is also a solid form of service. (Mostajabian, et, al. 2019).

Social Justice is one of the main aims of service. It would not be wrong to say that the unity of parents with runaway children is a great form of social justice. Another reflection of NASW values is the efforts made for the abducted children, taking into account that the policy aims at the reformation of abducted children. (Mostajabian, et, al. 2019) The stance of facilitation of the missing children in the form of health and educational necessities ensure social justice. The policy aims at the prevention of exploitation of children that reflects one of the basic aspects of social justice. It is significant to note that the overall objective of The Missing, Exploited and Runaway Children Protection Act is to do social justice because all the issues such as child abuse abduction, exploitation, and juvenile act are a root to the lack of social justice. (Hounmenou, et, al. 2019).

The education and training of a child is a tribute to the worth of an individual taking into account that the policy aims at the reformation of the children by adhering to basic laws of societal reforms. Under the implication of act, several child rehabilitation centers are brought into practice that aims at the exploitation and reformation of children by teaching them the hampering that can cause to them if they will continue their practice. (Panlilio, et, al. 2019). It is significant to note that the educational, societal and financial aid that is given to children is actually the product of the individual worth. Under the policy, children are taught their worth by education, offering counseling services and acting as a barrier to the threats that are caused by exposure to unjust environment and exploitation.

Dignity and worth, one of the basic and underlying principles of NASW infers that the actual description of The Missing, Exploited and Runaway Children Protection Act is the provision of worth of an individual. An example of this stance can be found in the services that are given to children such as, analysis of their actions in terms of safe practices. (Cooper, et, al. 2016). The ban on unsafe practices and the misuse of internet inculcated the core framework of self-worth and dignity. The services and organization that are working in coordination with the services aim at inculcating worth in children and youth by making them aware of their action in the light of better and counseling services. Reforms against the exploitation of children and approaches to trace abducted children are one of the frameworks that ensure that the policy aims as the development of humanistic values such as self-dignity. (Smeaton, et, al. 2018).

It would not be wrong to say that the policy aims at the importance of the human relationship that is why efforts are made for the runaway and abducted children. It is evident that the major financial spectrum deals with the analysis of the actions of children by adhering to the core principle of dignity and self-worth. The recognition and services of runaway children infer that dignity the main subject of the policy. Integrity is another basic characteristics and evaluation code of analysis of the policy. It affirms that the policy aims at the integrity of youth and parents by reforming their practices in favor of society and their parents.

It is important to note that major portion of the Missing Exploited and Runaway Children policy adheres to analysis of the facts and figures that are associated with the rehabilitation of children by making them unit with their families or provoking social justice by referring the familial relationships. (Fedina, et, al. 2018). Thus, the act is more like a handbook to the evaluation and practical implication of the code of NASW. It would not be wrong to say that the policy is a practical implication of NASW values. The attributes like dignity, relationships, service, social justice and dignity and worth of an individual are the prime contributors to the policy. Taking into account the exegetical analysis of the characteristics of policy, it can be affirmed that the policy is a complete code of the values of NASW. (Fedina, et, al. 2016). All the instructions and actions under the implementation of policy are guided and centered on the framework that is applicable to all human beings. One of the significant justifications of NASW values can be found by analyzing that the practical implication of the policy is not doing any harm to any of the population. However, there is a complete code of assistance for all the victims leaving behind the social, moral and ethical differences. (Hannan, et, al. 2017).

**Unintended Consequences**

There are several techniques that can be brought into practice in order to know the effectiveness of the Missing Exploited and Runaway Children policy. One of the techniques is comparative analysis; it refers to the analysis of records regarding the abducted, homeless and runway channel and analysis of the experience of children in terms of their perspective towards life. (Hickle, et, al. 2018). It also includes the evaluation of the statistics and current action of population that has been served under the policy. The effectiveness of policy can also be analyzed in terms of social equality. It refers to the treatment that has been given to the people who are served under the policy. There is no discrimination or gap in the facts and figures of the policy under the stance of particular heredity. It is evident that the policy contributes to better quality of life because the teens who ran away from their families and children who are abducted and rebellious are reformed under the supervision of the trainers that try their best to impart positive social characteristics. It is also significant that the policy act as a guide to population which has recently involved in social crimes and action that can act as a threat to a normal social framework. (Hutchings, et, al. 2019).

**Recommendations and Alternatives**

 Perfection is more like an illusion; it would not be wrong to say that The Missing, Exploited and Runaway Children Protection Act also have some limitation. One of the basic limitations is the barriers in the identification of the population that is accustomed to an act. One of the basic issues is the lack of funding. It refers to the analysis of the fact that the policy is serving a limited framework of the population because there is limited funding from the federal sources. The continuum care programs direct and instruct the homeless service providers to coordinate and work in synchronization with the homeless and runaway youth provides. (Hutchings, et, al. 2019). There are many other challenges that the policy is facing such as, meeting the specific needs of the population who is under consideration. It refers to the differentiation between the victims and the population recovered such as meeting the needs of gays, lesbians, transgendered and bisexuals. Addressing the needs of the youth who is sex trafficked is also a challenge that the policy is facing.

The administration and monitoring of the juvenile system and the analysis of foster care is also discovered as one of the limitations in the implication of the act. It is necessary to note all the victims cannot be treated with the same amount of resource. Moreover, there is a great difference in the justification of the needs of the victim. Lack of funding can promote a runway to be resistant to all the counseling and training granted to child or youth. It is also important to bring into consideration that the issue of finance can also create a gap in the provision of services that are meant for the victims. All these characteristics and consequences refer to the flaws of policy. (Mostajabian, et, al. 2019). As there is always a space for improvement, it is necessary to consider that the policy can be modified by adhering to two main perspectives. One of the ideas is the provision of adequate funding and financial aid that can act as a tool to meet the set objectives of the policy.

 It is necessary to highlight that there should be a difference in the facts and figures that are associated with the "expansion of necessities with respect to groups." It refers to the implication of training and other trainees that can allow the age groups to be treated in accordance with their subjective needs. The implication of the two spectra can lead to a modification in the policy by considering that area as a heed to direct assistance for the victims and the subject groups. (Panlilio, et, al. 2019). There are several other policies that are preferable such as, “The Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention." The framework of the initiatives address may include other spectrums that are associated with the training and technical assistance of the population, addressing dissemination and planning of victims who are recovering and rehabilitation of the exploited and missing children. The policy also highlights the division of assistance in terms of the victims, i.e., there are certain and significant training avenues for the abducted children, runaways and homeless children. (Hounmenou, et, al. 2019). There is no harm in the implementation of “The Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention” policy taking into account that it has similar aims as that of The Missing, Exploited and Runaway Children Protection Act, however the major thing to note is, the Office of Juvenile and Delinquency Prevention address issue at a different level, with prime focus on the other organizations that are working in synchronization with the subject policy. All the coordinating association is giving their complete to address the issue by adhering to facts and figures that are assumed to be unaddressed by The Missing, Exploited and Runaway Children Protection Act. (Hickle, et, al. 2018).

**Conclusion**

The missing exploited and runaway children Protection Act is a code of conduct that aims at the fulfillment of the needs of the children who are exploited abducted or runaway. There are several viewpoints that address the feasibility of the act, taking into account there is a great progression in the recorded details regarding the children. (Smeaton, et, al. 2018). One of the significant ideas is, the policy is more like a framework that contributes to the moral, social and ethical training of children. Positive and negative aspects go side by side; there are certain gaps in the policy as well. One of the significant gaps is access to findings that can cater to the needs of large victims. (Hickle, et, al. 2018). It has been analyzed that there are many complexes in the achievement and maintenance of the financial stance that can act as a baseline for policy. As the policy is a tool to address to the facts and figures of a variety of children who are facing different issues so, there is a dire need to address issues that include facilitating children who are sexually exploited, taking into account that there although the policy is acting in a highly suitable way, still there is a need to address the issues in order to make it a tool of universal conduct. (Smeaton, et, al. 2018).

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