

Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE), Does the Organization Serve its Mission in Real and Practical Terms? Young People's Views and Experiences

Abstract

Purpose: the study aimed to explore children's views and experiences raised and living in the U.K. regarding the effectiveness of CRAE in safeguarding children from various forms of child abuse.

Methodology: the study adopted the qualitative research approach following the subjectivism philosophy. The research study was anchored on a sample size of twelve. Data were collected using structured interviews.

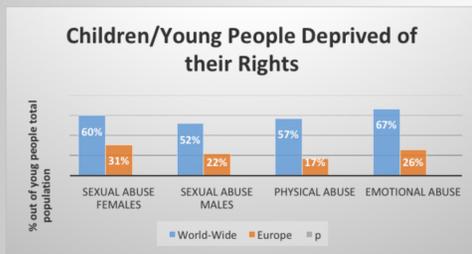
Findings: it was revealed that children in the U.K. are going through multiple exploitations; however, CRAE is doing its best to minimize various forms of child abuse. **Value/Originality:** the consideration of children's views and experiences expand knowledge boundaries.

Introduction

Child abuse in the United Kingdom (U.K) has been witnessed throughout history (Aynsley-Green, 2017). Olsen and Stronel (2007) maintain that the continuous rise of child abuse cases in the U.K. does not mean or imply that the government and all other organizations that advocate for child safeguarding are not doing their best. Finkelhor (2015) notes that while various organizations are now in action and voice condemning child abuse, many children in the U.K. are still exposed to multiple abuse cases in daily transactions of life. At home, at school and abroad. The problem is not about the government or its agencies but society. Through the consideration of children's views and experiences, this study explored the effectiveness of Children's Rights for England (CRAE) in safeguarding children in the U.K. from various forms of abuse. In this study, the word "child abuse" was understood as mistreatment of a child by anyone (parent, guardian, teacher, college, stranger, etc.), causing emotional or physical harm to the victim (Hall, 2019).

Background of Study

The Crime Survey for England and Wales reported that three in five adults aged eighteen to seventy-four years experienced at least two forms of child abuse, whether physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or witnessing domestic violence before reaching sixteen (Aynsley-2017). Olsen and Stronel (2007) submit that the rise of child abuse cases in the U.K. is attributed to the ineffectiveness of the organizations that claim to advocate for child protection. On the contrary, Finkelhor (2015) notes that the corrupt society is a point source of all the cases of child abuse witnessed in the U.K.



Source: Frinkelhor (2015).

Problem Statement

Children deserve to live a life free of harm (Hall, 2019). In several societies in the U.K., however, child abuse is gradually becoming the order of the day. While Finkelhor (2015) submits that society is at blame for all the cases of child abuse in U. K, Olsen and Stronel (2007) maintain that the cases of child abuse (minor or major) in the U.K. are attributed to the ineffectiveness of organizations that claim to advocate for child protection. The lack of consensus between these findings intrigues the researcher to make a personal investigation and find out what exactly escalates cases of child abuse in the U.K. By considering children's views and experiences, the study explored the effectiveness of CRAE in advocating against child abuse in the U.K.

Research objective

The study aimed to achieve the following research objective:
To explore children's views and experience regarding the effectiveness of the Children's Rights Alliance for England in safeguarding exposed children.

Research Question

The study aimed to answer the following research question:
What are children's views and experiences regarding the effectiveness of the Children's Rights Alliance for England in safeguarding exposed children?

Methodology

The study adopted a specific methodology in attempting to understand and solve the identified research problem. Creswell (2014) defines a research methodology as an overall framework or blueprint wherein a particular study should be conducted to understand and solve a specific research problem. It entails the adopted research approach, research instruments, and data collection methods, analysis and presentation.

Qualitative Research Approach

In particular, the study was anchored on a qualitative research approach guided by the subjectivism philosophy. Gray (2017) and Schwandt (2011) agree that there are three types of research approaches; mixed methods research approach, quantitative research approach, and qualitative research approach. The three mainly differ in scope and aim. The nature of the research problem and (2) the nature of the research question informed the decision to adopt a qualitative research approach in this study. The adopted research approach also squares perfectly with the research aim, exploring children's views and experience regarding the subject under investigation. Bryman (2004) also supports the decision made by noting that a qualitative research approach is the most appropriate approach to exploring research participants' views, opinions, beliefs and perceptions.

Target Population and Sampling

The target population for this study was the children raised and currently living in Middlesbrough (North Yorkshire). Wood (2000) defines a target population as an entire group of individuals or elements the researcher aims to study. A sample can be drawn from a target population to make the studying process manageable. According to Bryman (2004) a sample is small unit or number drawn from the target population to represent the target population. The sample size of this study was twelve. In particular, six boys and six girls (both genders), they were all below the age of sixteen. The sample size was drawn from the target population using the purposive sampling method. The point of data saturation determined the sample size of the study.

Method(s) of data collection

Interviews

The researcher adopted structured interviews to deeply look into children's views and opinions regarding the effectiveness of CRAE in advocating against child abuse in the U.K. As Bryman (2004) argue, interviews allow the respondents to share in-depth data. Thorpe and Holt (2008) define an interview as a conversation between the interviewer and interviewee designed to gather in-depth information about the interviewee's opinions, beliefs, perceptions and experiences regarding a particular situation or

phenomena. Because of the COVID-19 restrictions (not possible to meet participants in person), the researcher interviewed the participants using the Skype platform

Extract: Sample of the Interview Questions

- 1.! Do you think Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE) effectively protects children from violating their right?
- 2.! Could you please explain how Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE) goes against the violation of children rights?
- 3.! What's your experience with the Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE) regarding its advocacy for child safeguarding?
- 4.! Is Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE) a well-known organization?

Data Analysis

Gray (2017) defines data analysis as inspecting and transforming data to make meaningful conclusions based on the analyzed data. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data collected from the interviews. The researcher followed all the six steps of thematic analysis in data analysis. Bryman (2004) defines thematic analysis as a technique applied in qualitative research to search and establish patterns of meaning across all data sets.

Application of Research Ethics

Informed Consent: each research participant should be well informed about the research's purpose before engaging in the research process (Creswell, 2014). Before the interviews, the researcher shared a letter of consent with each research participant informing them about the research's purpose and why and how should they be engaged.

Confidentiality and anonymity: participants' identities should not be shared with third parties (Wood, 2010). The researcher anonymized participants' names in presenting research findings to ensure confidentiality. Thus, P1 was used to represent participant 1.

No harm caused: the researcher ensured participants were not exposed to any form of harm (physical or psychological) during the interviews. In the consent letter, participants were informed to feel free withdraw their participation whenever they feel uncomfortable.

Findings/Results

Presantation of Findings

Sample Participants' Narrations and The Emergent Themes
The Theme of Advocating
I 2. "it is indeed advocating for us against all forms of abuse." I 7. " yeah, the organization take several actions advocating for our rights." I 12. "it's doing a good job through advocating against the violation of children's rights."
The Theme of Protection
I 3. "indeed we are protected, from both physical and psychological abuse." I 4. " regarding violence and abuse of children, the organization has been protecting us since long back." I 5. "Many thanks to the organization; we are protected!"
The Theme of Being Best
I 4. "it is the best organization ever." I 5. "I rate it to be the number one; it is the best." I 6. "How can it not be the best when it is doing us a good job? It is the best."

Conclusions

Summary of Findings

That the findings revealed that CRAE in the U.K. protects children from so various forms (physical and psychological abuse) of abuse confirms that child abuse is still a reality in the U.K. Based on the research findings, the organization (CRAE) have been protecting children in the U.K. from many cases of abuse since long back. This shows the commitment and determination of the organization to stand against child abuse. Further to that, the findings showed that CRAE strongly advocates against child abuse in two distinct ways. Through voice (adverts and seminars) and deeds (reporting and bring to book perpetrators of child abuse). The findings also showed that CRAE is one of the best organizations that stands against child abuse in the U.K. In a nutshell, the findings revealed CRAE is an effective organization; it serves its mission in real and practical terms.

Summary of Study

The study explored children's views and opinions regarding the effectiveness of CRAE in serving its mission of existence. It has been noted that in literature, there are two conflicting arguments regarding the explored subject. On the one hand, it has been established that the increase in cases of child abuse in the U.K. is because of the ineffectiveness of the government legislative policies and organizations that claim to stand for child protection. On the hand, it has been submitted that society is responsible for all child abuse cases in the U.K. The study found out that organizations that stand against child abuse, CRAE, in particular, are effective. They are serving their mission of existing. It protects children from various forms of abuse, advocating (in voice and deed) against child abuse. Instead of seeing these organizations as ineffective and therefore responsible for the increase of child abuse cases, these organizations, particularly CRAE, are fighting to eliminate child abuse in the U.K.

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