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Children at Risk in Iranian Criminal Policy: Legal Innovations of the 2019 Law on Protection of Children and Adolescents

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the first paragraph of the Introduction, the sentence asserting that classical criminal law focused primarily on offenders and punishment oversimplifies the historical doctrinal landscape. The authors should refine this statement by distinguishing between classical legal formalism and broader penal philosophies, acknowledging that earlier systems also incorporated protective rationales, albeit indirectly.

The paragraph explaining that the 2019 law distinguishes between children and adolescents lacks direct engagement with legislative wording. The analysis would be strengthened by presenting the statutory definition and explaining how it alters previous legal classifications.

In Section III, the discussion of criminalization of neglect and endangerment should include a clearer doctrinal analysis of omission liability. The authors should explain whether liability arises from general principles of duty of care or from newly created autonomous criminal offenses.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the paragraph discussing modern victimology, the statement that children are disproportionately exposed to harm would benefit from operational clarification. The article should identify specific domains of vulnerability (family violence, exploitation, digital risks, socio-economic marginalization) to move from theoretical description toward analytical precision.

The paragraph describing preventive criminal policy characterizes children simultaneously as subjects of protection and beneficiaries of social investment. This duality deserves deeper theoretical analysis. The authors should clarify whether the justification is rights-based, utilitarian, welfare-oriented, or a hybrid normative model, and discuss possible tensions between protection and social control.

In the section referring to international child rights developments, the claim that international norms fundamentally reshaped legal thinking should be supported by more explicit doctrinal linkage. The manuscript would benefit from explaining how specific principles—such as best interests, participation, and positive state obligations—translate into concrete legal mechanisms within Iranian law.

In Section II, the discussion of maturity and criminal responsibility in Iranian legal doctrine remains largely conceptual. The authors should incorporate explicit references to statutory provisions or doctrinal formulations to demonstrate how maturity operates in practice rather than only at the theoretical level.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.