



Challenges in the Implementation of CRC in High Schools: A Study of Selected Public High Schools at District Sargodha, Punjab

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to know about the challenges in the implementation of Convention on the Rights of Child in High Schools of Sargodha. The researcher tried to find the challenges and hurdles that cause difficulties in the implementation of child rights at High School level. The researcher also tried to find out the current situation of the implementation of child rights in High Schools of district Sargodha. Methodologically, the researcher used multi-stage sampling in which, first of all the researcher used a convenient sampling technique to select the 3 tehsils from district Sargodha. For choosing convenient sampling at the first stage because it is easy for the researcher to travel in those areas and the availability of transport is also easy in these areas. Then the researcher used simple random sampling to choose the respondents from the government High Schools of these 3 tehsils. For the current study sample size is taken from the Yamani formula: the sample size for the current study is 382. Primary data was collected from the respondents in who are 282 students, 50 teachers, and 50 administration staff of government High Schools. In the study, the majority of respondents were males. The researcher has compared the results from the responses to the questions. It was concluded that almost majority of the students show negative responses about the poor implementation of their rights at the High School level. They do not receive their basic rights from the school administration. On the other hand, the teachers and school administration give mostly opposite responses to the question as compared to the responses of students.

Keywords: Challenges, Implementation CRC, High Schools.

INTRODUCTION

Child rights are fundamental rights of children that ensure the safety, growth, and welfare of every child. The UNCRC, or United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, recognizes these rights. Contain various aspects such as the right to education, health, shelter, and safety from abuse and exploitation. It also includes everyone has the freedom to speak their minds, express themselves, and be heard. Participate in decisions that affect their lives. Children need special care and attention to enhance their intellectual capacities and grow up to become responsible and active member of society. Promoting and safeguarding child rights, empowering their capacities, is essential for making the future of children (Akrami et al., 2022)

The concept of "child rights" first emerged in France in the middle of the 19th century, providing children with extra protection and assisting in the advancement of "minors' rights." Laws protecting children at employment date back to 1841. French laws dating back to 1881 guarantee children's right to an education. Children's security measures, which encompass protection in the social, medical, and legal spheres, begin to be implemented in the beginning of the 20th century. Throughout Europe, this kind of security initially appears in France. Thousands of children are in a terrible situation as a result of World War II and its victims. As a result, in 1947 the UN Fund for Urgency for the Children is established; this later becomes UNICEF (Stearns, 2016).

An important agreement signed by certain nations is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). They are highly motivated by children's rights. It is true that a large number of nations have ratified it. Pakistan joined the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990. Since children cannot survive without these necessities, assessing eye focused on the fundamental needs such as food, shelter and clothes, education, and health is crucial to modern life. These are therefore seen as the main reasons why children are harmed and put in risk. Even with this convention in place, it is acknowledged that these issues continue to grow daily rather than going away. For the convention, this presents a difficulty. Furthermore, it shows that there are some lacks in the convention that's why the situation of child comes more severe progressively all over the world (Rafiq, 2018).

To ensure the better future of children in addition to gaining the necessary independent life skills, students must grasp the fundamentals of their rights. The physical surroundings, including schools, can serve as a safeguard for these autonomous life skills. A Child Friendly School is an establishment created by UNICEF with children's needs in mind. When a school offers all students a clean, safe, healthy, and secure environment, it is deemed child-friendly. This idea should guide the design of our school's classrooms, making them conducive to learning and child-centered. Due to the fact that classroom procedures give us suggestions on how to interact with students, all of the in the class belong to different backgrounds so teacher's behavior should be friendly with all the children and he should know the method to deal with the students of different natures (Fauziati, 2016).

Every kid has the right to both involvement and protection. Since the UN adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, one of the most discussed and prominent aspects of the agreement has been the involvement of children. Many initiatives have been proposed, books have been written, studies have been conducted, and spaces for children's voices have been created, both in the educational system and in the wider society. Children have participated in advocacy, social and economic analysis, campaigning, research, peer education, community development, political discourse, planning and implementation of programs and projects, and independent school participation. Over the past two decades, there have been initiatives to promote and appropriate the idea of participation as well as evaluations of methods for putting it into action. In fact, a lot of people now consider children's rights to be the same (Lansdown, 2009).

"Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and help" is a statement made official on December 10, 1948, by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The UN General Assembly adopted the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which outlines the ten fundamental rights of children. A Universal Declaration of Children's Rights is possible because of this text, even though not all nations have signed it and its tenets are merely symbolic. The UN designated 1979 as the International Year of the Child. That year, there was a significant shift in attitude when Poland proposed setting up a working group under the Human Rights Commission, which is in charge of drafting an international accord (Stearns, 2016).

Article 25(A) and Article 11(3) of the constitution guarantee the right to education. The situation of education in Pakistan has been heavily criticized because of the lack of funding for education in the nation and the unequal distribution of educational resources. Before 1947, when an All Pakistan Education Conference was held and "Universal Primary Education" was acknowledged as the official policy, there was no organization in Pakistan supporting education rights and no significant acknowledgement of the value of education by the Pakistani government. A Commission on

National Education was established in 1959 with the recommendation that students should get a required education and that quality be a key goal of Pakistan's educational system. The Pakistani Constitution was amended in 1973 to include Article 37-B, which states that "The State shall remove illiteracy and provide free and essential secondary education within the shortest possible period." Article 38-D of the Pakistani Constitution, which was also established in 1973, declares that the State must provide all citizens, regardless of sex, caste, creed, or race, with the basic necessities of life, including food, clothing, housing, education, and medical assistance, if they are permanently or temporarily unable to earn a living due to illness or unemployment. All children between the ages of five and sixteen shall get free and basic education from the State, according to Article 25-A of the Pakistani Constitution, which was enacted in 2010 (Parkes, 2013).

As a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Pakistan must establish an official system for safeguarding children. However, child and family concerns are seen as a private matter that allows for minimal state intervention, according to traditional social beliefs. Child protection in Pakistan is a provincial issue due to federalism. Province-to-province differences exist in the ratification of child protection laws. In addition to creating the 2013 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Rules, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa made the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Act public in 2010. The 2011 Sindh Child Protection Authority Act and the 2013 Sindh Child Marriage Restriction Act have been ratified by Sindh. 2004 saw the release of the Punjab Destitute and Neglected Children Act, which was updated in 2007 (Jabeen, 2016).

The study of children's rights in Pakistan has a significant impact on the country's socioeconomic advancement. As is the case with other emerging nations worldwide, Pakistan is beset by numerous social and economic issues. The inadequate financial state of the society creates an environment of poor social circumstances and discrimination of class which becomes a huge hurdle in the way of the accomplishment of a prosperous society. However, children are the most vulnerable group in society and are the ones that suffer from the worst social or economic conditions. About 35% of the population in the nation is under the age of 15, of which approximately 25 million are not enrolled in school and 12 million are involved in manual labor. Children in Pakistan face numerous obstacles while trying to gain access to (Ahmad et al, 2018).

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the challenges faced in the implementation of child rights at the High School level.
2. To find out the need and importance of awareness about child rights at the school level.
3. To find out the hindrances and hurdles in the implementation of child rights at the High School level.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rena (2008) indicated that although the majority of Asian countries have brought attention to children's issues, in recent years, Pakistan in particular, has overshadowed the practical implementation of children's rights in Asia. Few laws were imposed in support of children's rights without a need to address the problems in a useful way.

Olsson, (2020) said that while teacher educators believe that pre-service teachers should be well-versed in children's rights, they don't really lead the charge on what knowledge pre-service teachers should be receiving. It is concluded that Swedish teacher education aligns with the Values and Awareness Model, using the framework designed by educational professionals to examine human rights education.

Aspinall, (2019) explained that according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, children are entitled to take part in decision-making processes that could have an impact on their life. High school students should have the opportunity to actively participate in the institutions and procedures that establish the regulations governing their school lives, in addition

to simply learning about human rights in textbooks, in order for this right to be recognized. If experts did not get afraid when high school students' opinions conflict with the regulations as they currently stand, it would be beneficial. Engaging kids in respectful discourse is a better approach than abruptly going back to previous kinds of control in school, where it was assumed that every child should be "seen and not".

Riddell & Tisdall, (2021) stated that mostly recognized by developing nations like Pakistan, however there are still many reasons why the rights of children are allegedly being infringed, such as poverty, ignorance, and corruption in the educational system, and a lack of enforcement of the legislation. Even scarier, the numbers around these infractions are more nuanced than what is genuinely being disclosed. The use of physical punishment on children, although it is prohibited, is one type of child abuse that occurs within institutional settings.

Shah et al, (2018) examined the most common violations of children's rights in Pakistani schools, particularly in government-run institutions where principals and teachers typically take the course as a matter of course without any methodology. Principals, instructors, and students from Capital Territory Islamabad's public sector schools in both rural and urban areas were selected as the study's sample in order to assess the condition of these institutions' provision of students' fundamental rights.

Pulla et al, (2018) explained that child protection Child labor, sexual abuse, and detrimental customs are all considered forms of child abuse and abuse in Pakistan, where child protection laws prohibit and address these behaviors. Pakistan is a South Asian country on the Indian subcontinent. The author of the piece talks on the issues with child protection there. In its capacity as a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Pakistan has approved the provision of particular protection for children. As such, state protection of the children is mandatory. To provide an overview of the issues South Asian countries confront with regard to child protection, the authors examine both external and internal factors that impact child protection in Pakistan.

Sadr Uddin, (2011) emphasized how valuable and significant children are. It has also been made public how well the Pakistani government has implemented child rights. The survey revealed that in Pakistan, children's issues have received too little attention in recent years. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was not a panacea. Over the last five years, social rights, safety, and education have not received enough attention, which has prevented significant progress in improving the state of children's rights from being made.

Vising, (2019) said that youth are not able to benefit from rights education's potential in the US according to the planned approach. The piece uncovers students' ignorance of their rights. The implementation of rights in schools is criticized by teachers. Nadeem et al, (2021) identified that they believed that age-appropriate sexuality education should be taught in schools, 76.1% of parents and 64.4% of teachers in this survey gave a positive answer. Nonetheless, the majority thought that sex education was against Islamic doctrine. The responders overwhelmingly endorsed the prevention of bullying and sexual abuse. Areas pertaining to sexuality, with pregnancy termination receiving the least amount of support. One of the main obstacles to the adoption of sexuality education appeared to be the distaste of some parents.

Lansdown, (2009) noted that in Pakistan, kids with disabilities are not integrated into society and deal with a number of issues like not having access to healthcare, money, or qualified teachers who can meet their needs in the classroom. Similarly, parents view their disabled child as an expense, and the youngster may get inappropriate comments, inappropriate behavior, profanity, and disdain from both adults and children. Special education advantages, includes the National Policy for Persons with Disability (Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Women Development, Social Welfare and Special Education, 2002), have

been taken in Pakistan to provide equal possibility of education to the children with disabilities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the study employed a quantitative research approach to investigate challenges in implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in government high schools of District Sargodha. A multi-stage sampling technique was used: first, convenience sampling selected 3 tehsils from the district, followed by simple random sampling to choose 382 respondents, including students, teachers, and administrative staff. The data collection relied on structured questionnaires, with primary data gathered directly from the respondents. A pretest ensured the reliability and validity of the instrument. Data were analyzed using SPSS (version 22), applying chi-square tests to explore variable associations. Results were presented using tables, charts, and graphs, and the study addressed logistical challenges such as access, weather, transportation, and respondent availability during data collection.

Table 1: Child Rights and Awareness

Basic Rights	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	92	32.62%
No	190	67.37%
Educational Rights		
Yes	97	34.39%
No	185	65.60%
Total	282	100%
Witnessed any child abused case at school	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	165	58.51%
No	117	41.48%
Faced sexual abuse at school	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	168	59.57%
No	114	40.42%
A class teacher gives education about sexual abuse and its prevention	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	85	30.14%
No	197	69.85%
The class teacher's behavior is friendly with all the students	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	94	33.33%
No	188	66.66%
A class teacher gives education to all the students without any type of discrimination	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	113	40.07%
No	169	59.92%
Total	282	100%

The Table 1 presents the level of awareness among students regarding their basic and educational rights, their experiences with abuse, and the behavior and role of class teachers in educating and protecting them. Only 32.62% acknowledged awareness of their basic rights, while a significant 67.37% stated that they were unaware. Similarly, 34.39% were aware of their educational rights, while 65.60% reported not knowing them. These figures highlight a considerable gap in awareness about fundamental child rights among students.

Furthermore, the table reveals that 58.51% of the students had witnessed cases of child abuse at school, indicating a high prevalence of such incidents. An even more alarming statistic is that 59.57% reported having faced sexual abuse at school, which raises serious concerns regarding the safety and protection of children within the school environment.

When it comes to preventive education, only 30.14% stated that their class teacher provided education on sexual abuse and its prevention, whereas a majority of 69.85% reported otherwise. This suggests that a large proportion of students are not receiving the necessary guidance or information to protect themselves from abuse.

In terms of teacher behavior, only 33.33% of students described their class teacher as friendly, while 66.66% disagreed. This lack of a friendly atmosphere could further discourage students from reporting abuse or seeking help. Additionally, 40.07% believed that education was imparted without discrimination, whereas 59.92% felt that there was some form of discrimination in teaching. These figures indicate that the school environment may not be entirely inclusive or safe for all students.

Tables 2: Infrastructure and Facilities

Classrooms well-equipped with modern technologies like multimedia	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	70	24.82%
No	212	75.17%
The school arranges co-curricular activities for the students	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	128	45.39%
No	154	54.60%
The school provides you transport facility	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	72	25.53%
No	210	74.46%
Receive free books and a uniform by your schools administration	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	86	30.49%
No	196	69.50%
School administration provides clean drinking water to the students	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	88	31.20%
No	194	68.79%
School administration provides neat and clean washrooms to the students	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	52	18.43%
No	230	81.56%
School administration provides neat and clean classrooms to the students	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	77	27.30%
No	205	72.69%
Total	282	100%

The table 2: highlights the facilities and infrastructure provided by schools to students, based on the responses of 282 participants. The findings reflect notable inadequacies in several critical areas of the school environment.

Only 24.82% of students reported that their classrooms were equipped with modern technologies like multimedia, while a significant 75.17% said they lacked such facilities. This indicates a major technological gap, which can hinder effective and engaging learning experiences.

When asked about co-curricular activities, 45.39% confirmed that their schools arranged such activities, whereas 54.60% denied having access to them. This suggests that more than half of the students are missing out on essential opportunities for holistic development beyond academics.

Regarding transport facilities, just 25.53% of students received such support from their schools, and 74.46% did not. This lack of transportation could pose challenges for students in terms of accessibility and safety, especially in rural or underdeveloped areas.

In terms of provision of free books and uniforms, only 30.49% benefited from this support, while 69.50% did not receive such assistance. This points to economic barriers that may negatively affect students from low-income families.

When it comes to basic amenities, the data shows that only 31.20% of students had access to clean drinking water, and just 18.43% reported that their schools provided neat and clean

washrooms. A staggering 81.56% lacked clean sanitary facilities, raising serious concerns about health and hygiene. Additionally, only 27.30% of respondents indicated that their schools maintained neat and clean classrooms, while 72.69% reported the opposite. Such conditions can negatively affect students' ability to concentrate and feel comfortable in their learning environment.

In summary, the data reveals a significant shortfall in the provision of essential educational facilities, including technology, hygiene, transport, and academic support. These deficiencies emphasize the urgent need for improvements in school infrastructure and student welfare services to ensure a safe, inclusive, and supportive educational environment.

Table 3: Implementation of CRC

Know about the Convention on the Rights of Child	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	38	76%
No	12	24%
Education to the students about sexual abuse and how to prevent themselves from it	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	8	16%
No	42	84%
Students should have awareness about child rights at the High school level	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	36	72%
No	14	28%
School environment is free from bullying	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	39	78%
No	11	22%
Total	50	100%

Table 3 presents data regarding the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the promotion of child rights awareness among a sample of 50 respondents. The results highlight both positive attitudes toward awareness and gaps in practical implementation within schools.

A large majority, 76%, reported that they knew about the Convention on the Rights of the Child, indicating a fairly high level of basic awareness of international child protection principles. However, when it comes to practical education on sexual abuse and self-protection, only 16% of students confirmed receiving such instruction, whereas a significant 84% stated they had not been educated on this critical topic. This indicates a serious gap between policy awareness and implementation.

Additionally, 72% of respondents agreed that students should be made aware of child rights at the high school level, reflecting a strong belief in the importance of formal education on children's rights. Only 28% disagreed, showing relatively low opposition to the idea.

When asked whether the school environment is free from bullying, 78% of students responded affirmatively, suggesting that most students perceive their school as a safe and respectful space. However, 22% still reported experiencing bullying, which indicates that bullying remains a problem in some cases and needs ongoing attention. Overall, the data reveals a promising level of awareness about CRC, but also underscores a critical lack of implementation, especially in educating students about sexual abuse prevention. There is also a consensus on the need to incorporate child rights education into high school curricula, while maintaining efforts to create bully-free school environments.

Conclusion

It was concluded from the current study that most of the students do not know about their basic rights, and also educational rights.

They do not have awareness of their rights. Most of the students gave a response that their teacher did not tell them about their rights. Most of the students give a positive response about them having witnessed of sexual abuse. Most of the students give a response about the behavior of the teacher, with all students are equal there is a discrimination in their behavior. Many students faced corporal punishment from their teachers. The facilities which was the responsibility of the school administration, had to provide the students as mentioned in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Most of the students give negative responses about the facilities provided to them by the school administration. Like, IT lab facility, Science lab facility, computer lab, neat and clean classrooms, neat and clean washrooms, classrooms with multi-media facility, transport facility. Most of the students give negative responses that their school administration is not providing these facilities to them. Majority of the students give a response that there is no proper system of assessment for teachers and schools. On the other hand, most of the teachers have opposite responses as compared to the students. The teachers give responses about they teach their students with any type of discrimination but the students give totally opposite responses to this question. The teachers give opposite response as compared to the students about their right to express their ideas freely in the class. The responses of students with teachers and administration and it was concluded that they are mostly opposite to each other. It means that the Convention on the Right of Childs are not properly implemented in our High Schools. There is a lack of proper implementation of Convention on the Rights of the Child from the authorities of the schools.

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