

## **Teachers' awareness about Child Rights Provision, Protection and Participation: Gender Perspective**

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### **Abstract**

*The main purpose of this article was to explore the awareness level of teachers towards child rights in secondary schools based on gender in order to layout ways of improvement for child rights at School. This paper investigated the problems with reference to national perspective and was delimited to only teachers working in secondary schools of Punjab, Pakistan. Using cross sectional and quantitative method design, a survey was distributed to 1350 teachers (9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> class). Simple random sampling method was used to select the sample. The response rate of teachers was 95% (1277). The data were analyzed by applying descriptive and inferential statistics. The results of t-test applied on teachers', scale who sensitized statistically different perceptions (KAP- Knowledge, Attitude and Practice), in terms of provision, protection and participation (3Ps) about child rights (UNCRC) in secondary schools of Punjab. The male and female subjects had shown different perception in terms of provision, protection and participation of child rights.*

**Keywords:** Child Rights, Experts, teachers, Provision, protection, Participation, Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, Secondary School

### **Introduction**

Human rights are the special form of inalienable ethical claims, which are associated with all persons equally by virtue of their creation, regardless of any race, position, or group and these are the minimum conditions for human dignity and respect for human life. The human rights empower all humans for equal rights, regardless of any nationality, ethnicity, language, race, gender, citizenship or abilities. The principles of justice and equality are the foundations of these rights, irrespective of social order, faith, colour and geographical boundaries (Donnelly, 2013; Shestack, 2017).

Awareness about injustice and self-esteem are the natural tendencies of human beings and these traits awareness can be refined through civic education and participatory approach (Dover, 2013). Sensitivity level about different social values in adulthood can be improved by engaging humans in their childhood rather than in adulthood (Plieninger, Dijks, Oteros-Rozas, & Bieling, 2013).

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The child rights are actually the human rights (UNCRC). The school is another place where children rights are required to be provided and protected after home, therefore after parents, teachers must focus on child rights and they should try to ensure all the requirements related with child rights at school. In order to defend and taking care of the children rights, there is dire need to explore an understanding of teacher's knowledge, attitude and practice about child rights at secondary schools. The practical implementation of policies regarding child rights in school is the major issue which is needed to take immediate attention of all stakeholders specially, teachers. To measure sensitivity level about knowledge, attitude and practice of teachers working with young children at schools is a serious policy discourse.

#### *Who is Child?*

Any human being under age of 18 years, provided any state law applicable fall in the category of Child. Legally a child is considered as minor being younger than the age of majority (Okyere & Imoh, 2014).

#### *Child Rights Provision, Protection and Participation Scenarios*

Protection of human rights means to ensure that people are enjoying the entitlements of decent human living. Provision of human rights facilitative environment is the core function of any state and also protect human rights as basic civic principle. States should make laws to ensure equal opportunities of human rights, which will not only provide the structural, legal platform for the citizens but also will pave a path of human rights supportive culture. It is the state function to maintain, preserve and protect the life of people through human rights violators. However, it is observed that many GOs and NGOs are taking part in the protection of people's human rights. In any society, every human being has an obligation to respect the others rights, which calls for protection and sanctions for violations (Bajpai, 2018).

Child rights and adult rights seems different terms but these are human rights and sides of one coin. Being vulnerable part of society, children have specific rights which help children to maximize their full potential. In society, children must not be considered as helpless, deserve for charity or property family. A child is part of family and community having specific rights and responsibilities at developmental stage. Children should enjoy the minimum standard of life (basic human rights principles) rather than privileges (CRC, 2006).

Every child irrespective of gender and age is unique in character and has equal importance in terms of human dignity and respect. Moreover, children must be given opportunity to share in all matters and decisions. Children must be listened and have respect the opinion of child serious manner (CRIN, 2007).

### *Child Protection*

Child protection means to protect the children from violent behavior, mistreatment, cruelty and neglect. There are several terms like abusive and ill-treatment with the children or vehemence are rotating in the society and all are used to refer physical, sexual, spiritual and emotional abuse. The basic aim of child protection to provide a shelter and safe guard from all above mentioned forms to the victim segment of the society and to develop human dignity in all settings despite any race, society, department, under private or government authority in the result of carelessness or consciously. CRC had already been chalked out various means to make sure the child protection from all the above mentioned forms of abuse, violence and neglect especially in the Article 19 (Richardson, Lead, & Wilson, 2017).

The Convention was enforced in 1990 under Human Rights Chapter IV, in accordance with article 49(1) (UNCRC). There are 140 signatories' States while 197 gave ratification, acceptance, accession and/or succession of Convention (UNCRC). In research literature, rights in UNCRC are categories into three main parts, known as the '3 P's': provision of basic needs (e.g. food, services relating to education, health, leisure etc.), protection (against harmful acts or practices, social or emotional abuse) and like adults, children participation in communities (Munro, 2015; Dillen, 2006; Alderson, 2000; Osler & Starkey, 1998; Qvortrup, 1996).

Teachers' role cannot be ignored as teacher is the second important stakeholder after parents who inspire the child in promoting value system and sense of Child rights in students. In Pakistan, the frequency of child abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence has increased a lot as compared in past in Pakistan (Memon, 2007). This research aims to assess the awareness level of teachers about child rights.

### *Objectives of the Study*

The objectives of study are as under:

1. To find out the awareness level of teacher's knowledge about child rights.
2. To identify the level of teacher's attitude towards child rights.
3. To determine the extent of teacher's practice in child rights.

### *Research Questions*

The study was carried out to respond the under mentioned research questions:

1. Is there any significant difference between male and female teachers, regarding provision, protection, participation and overall knowledge about child rights?
2. Is there any significant difference between male and female teachers, regarding provision, protection, participation and overall attitude towards child rights?
3. Is there any significant difference between male and female teachers, regarding provision, protection, participation and overall practice in child rights?

## **Research Design and Method**

This research was a cross sectional survey and the study identified and described the extent of knowledge, behavior, and attitudes of school's teachers towards Child rights. The populations of the study included all public school teachers of Punjab who were teaching classes 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> classes.

Multi-stage sampling technique was applied. The following procedure was adopted to select the sample for the study.

Table 1  
*Selection of Sample by High Schools*

Division	Districts	Tehsils'	High Schools	Proportion %	Selected Schools
Bahawalpur	3	15	648	10	26
D.G. Khan	4	15	484	7	20
Faisalabad	4	18	878	13	36
Gujranwala	6	21	1173	18	48
Lahore	4	17	727	11	29
Multan	4	14	606	9	25
Rawalpindi	4	22	1007	15	41
Sahiwal	3	7	464	7	19
Sargodha	4	18	668	10	27
Total	36	147	6655	100	270

Table 2  
*Selection of Sample by Teachers*

Division	Districts	Tehsils'	Teachers	Proportion %	Selected Teachers
Bahawalpur	3	15	4094	9	123
D.G. Khan	4	15	3290	7	98
Faisalabad	4	18	5812	13	174
Gujranwala	6	21	7811	17	234
Lahore	4	17	5849	13	175
Multan	4	14	4222	9	126
Rawalpindi	4	22	5856	13	175
Sahiwal	3	7	3392	8	102
Sargodha	4	18	4769	11	143
Total	36	147	45095	100	1350

For the purpose of data collection one questionnaire for teachers was developed by researchers and five point Likert scale was used to collect data from respondents. The instrument was named as 3PST. It comprised of 118 items consisting three (03)

main constructs based on “3Ps” namely Provision, Protection and Participation (3Ps) because different researches have classified the rights outlined in the CRC as the "3 Ps": (UNCRC) which are as under. This scheme provides framework for the instruments of the study.

Table 3  
*Framework of study*

Provision	Protection	Participation
Satisfactory living Standard	Protection from abuse	Participate in communities
Health care	Protection from neglect	Have programs and services for themselves
Education	Exploitation and discrimination	Involvement in libraries and community programs
Services	Safe places for children to play	Youth voice activities
Play and recreation	Constructive child rearing behavior	Involving children as decision-makers
A balanced diet	Acknowledgment of the evolving capacities of children	
A warm bed to sleep in	-	-
Access to schooling	-	-

Further each construct was divided into three objectives i.e. Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice respectively. Five-point Likert Scale was used to measure the responses of teachers. The reliability coefficient Cronbach’s alpha values of all variables were good and above 0.70, which shows 0.919 for overall knowledge, 0.819 for overall attitude, and 0.948 overall practice in child rights, is considered good sign of internal consistency reliability that is used in the questionnaire for teachers (3PST)) in this study. The validation of instruments includes the content and face validity. After validation of research instruments from subject matter experts including UMT Lahore, the final questionnaire (SPST) was actually launched.

### *Instrument*

The instrument was developed by the researcher in local context, after review of related literature. The standardized tool was found in Western and European context.

### **Results**

After completion of data cleaning process, the quantitative data were analyzed with the help of SPSS software. The *t* test was calculated for inferential analysis. The results are presented in tabular form:

Table 4

*Independent sample t test by gender of teachers on knowledge and its factors about child rights*

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	't'	df	'p'
Knowledge Provision	Male	637	26.43	3.81	.480	1275	.631
	Female	640	26.53	3.36			
Knowledge Protection	Male	637	22.08	2.92	.138	1275	.890
	Female	640	22.10	3.04			
Knowledge Participation	Male	637	16.74	2.46	1.840	1275	.066
	Female	640	16.48	2.58			
Overall Knowledge	Male	637	65.24	8.12	.310	1275	.757
	Female	640	65.10	8.05			

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Above Table 4 shows that the  $t$  value (.310) was not significant at  $p < 0.05$  for the overall knowledge subscale, hence the female teachers' ( $M = 65.10$ ,  $SD = 8.05$ ) perceived knowledge about child rights equally as compared to male teachers' ( $M = 65.24$ ,  $SD = 8.112$ ). The analysis regarding the knowledge factors reflect that  $t$  value for 'knowledge provision' (.480), knowledge protection (.138) and 'knowledge participation' (1.840) was not significant at  $p < 0.05$ . So, both male and female teachers had almost equal level of knowledge provision, protection and participation about child rights. In other words, both male and female teachers seemed equally aware of child rights.

Table 5

*The t-test by gender of teachers on attitude and its factors towards child rights*

	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	't'	df	'p'
Attitude Provision	Male	637	28.54	5.30	.635	1275	.526
	Female	640	28.36	4.87			
Attitude Protection	Male	637	25.87	5.94	1.903	1275	.057
	Female	640	25.23	5.97			
Attitude Participation	Male	637	17.61	3.01	1.593	1275	.111
	Female	640	17.35	2.91			
Overall Attitude	Male	637	72.02	11.53	1.709	1275	.088
	Female	640	70.94	11.01			

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Table 5 above shows that the  $t$  value (1.709) was not significant at  $p < 0.05$  for the overall attitude subscale, hence the female teachers' ( $M = 70.94$ ,  $SD = 11.01$ ) perceived almost equally attitude towards child rights comparable to male teachers' ( $M = 72.02$ ,  $SD = 11.53$ ). The analysis regarding the attitude factors reveal that  $t$  value concerning 'attitude provision' (.635), attitude protection (1.903) and 'attitude participation' (1.593) was not significant at  $p < 0.05$ . So, both male and female teachers had almost equal level of attitude provision, protection and participation towards child rights.

Table 6  
*The  $t$  test by gender of teachers on practice and its factors in child rights*

	Gender	$N$	Mean	$S.D$	$t'$	$df$	' $p$ '
Practice Provision	Male	637	95.36	18.97	3.904	1275	.000***
	Female	640	99.37	17.74			
Practice Protection	Male	637	104.18	20.58	3.378	1275	.001**
	Female	640	107.80	17.55			
Practice Participation	Male	637	50.93	14.08	2.197	1275	.028*
	Female	640	52.63	13.68			
Overall Practice	Male	637	250.47	48.35	3.660	1275	.000***
	Female	640	259.80	42.62			

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Above Table 6 shows that the  $t$  value (3.660) was significant at  $p < 0.05$  for the overall practice subscale, hence the female teachers' ( $M = 259.80$ ,  $SD = 42.62$ ) were better in practice in child rights as compared to male teachers' ( $M = 250.47$ ,  $SD = 48.35$ ). The analysis regarding the practice factors reveal that  $t$  value of 'practice provision' (3.904), practice protection (3.378) and 'practice participation' (2.197) were significant at  $p < 0.05$ . Therefore, it is concluded that female teachers were more sensitive in practice provision, protection, participation and overall practices in child rights as compared to male teachers'.

## **Discussion**

The purpose of the study was to explore the teacher's awareness about child rights knowledge, attitude and practice in terms provision, protection and participation. The major objectives of current study were to identify the provision protection and participation regarding child rights as perceived by teachers of Punjab at high schools on the basis of their gender.

The female teachers' perceived equal overall knowledge about child rights as compared to male teachers'. Both male and female teachers had almost equal level of

knowledge provision, protection and participation about child rights. The female teachers' perceived almost equally overall attitude towards child rights as compared to male teachers. Both male and female teachers had almost equal level of attitude provision, protection and participation towards child rights. The female teachers' perceived more practice in child rights as compared to male teachers'. The female teachers were more sensitive in practice provision, protection, participation and overall practices in child rights as compared to male teachers'. The results of this study were in line with thy findings of study conducted by Fatima (2011), Sunita (2010) and Kemp and Vanclay (2013).

### **Conclusion**

As per objectives, the respondents had perceived high level of knowledge, attitude and practices regarding child rights. Further, it was concluded that the female teachers' perceived more practice in child rights as compared to male teachers'. The female teachers were more sensitive in practice provision, protection, participation and overall practices in child rights as compared to male teachers', whereas both male and female are equally aware about Child rights in terms of knowledge and attitude.

### **Recommendations**

Prioritizing child protection and development should be a national responsibility. All stakeholder's government, school administration, line departments should play their active role to make our children the real future of a country. Each child is counted for nation building should be the tag line of child protection and development. Children should be given 'Say' in decision making about the future and how they are imparted education and life skills.

1. Male Teachers may be provided counselling and guidance from Child rights experts to take care the child rights.
2. Parents teachers' meetings me be arranged to avoid and reduce the neglect of child rights.
3. Male teachers may be trained in the field of child rights along with related activities.
4. Seminars, workshop and symposium may be held to aware all stakeholders about child rights provision, protection and participation especially male teachers.



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