

## EVALUATE THE ROLE OF SCHOOL PROVIDE FRIENDLY EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT TO THE CHILDREN IN PAKISTAN

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### ABSTRACT

*This Study evaluates the perceptions of students regarding Child Right Friendly School (CRFS) and relationship of age on perceptions. The purpose of the study was to analyze the safety of children in the school environment and opportunities provided by school administration to the students. The cross sectional survey research design was used. Questionnaire tagged (CRFS) "Child Right Friendly School" was the instrument used to prompt information from the research participants. The population of study consisted students of class V and VIII. Sample comprised of 53 of both classes of the selected elementary school of Karachi, Pakistan. Data was analyzed through statistical instrument SPSS version 16.0. The current study is descriptive by purpose and quantitative by method. The descriptive statistics include mean, standard deviation and inferential statistic included t-test revealed that class V students are more towards CRFS as compare to class VIII students. Further, results depict that there is a significant relationship between students of age and perceptions regarding CRFS. On the basis of findings, it was recommended that parents, teachers, and administration of the school should provide equal opportunities of participation to children in decision making and all other school activities. The equal participation removes the risk of fear and provide bravery and confidence among students. It would enhance the interest of students in teaching and learning process. It ultimately will improve the life skills of students such as socialization, problem solving and decision making.*

**Keywords:** CRFS, perceptions, School, protection

### INTRODUCTION

Education is the backbone for amelioration of any country and it plays important part for evolving the skills to face the emerging challenges of society and fulfill the collective needs. In addition to it, education cultivates the healthy minds to take decisions and survive their own life from their own perspective. The millions of the children goes regularly to the schools. In the schools whether they sit on well-furnished furniture or even under the shadow of trees, their main purpose is to learn, to develop and enhance their skills. In school or in a classroom too many children's presence is not always a progressive experience. Some undergo difficult conditions, like extremely hot or cold temperatures in the classroom or basic sanitation. A school is considered "Child Right Friendly" when it offers atmosphere free from worries, pure, healthy and caring for children. At Child Right Friendly Schools, child rights are valued, and all children – comprising children who are underprivileged, spiked, suffering from ADHD or from cultural and spiritual minorities are treated equally (UNICEF). Child Right Friendly School effort with all stakeholders, such as parents/guardians of students to make learning environment safe and healthy. The environment is characterized by evenhandedness, equilibrium, freedom, solidarity, non-violence and a concern for physical, mental and emotional health. These lead to the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, morals so that children can live together in a harmonious way. A child Right friendly school nurtures a school-friendly child, support youngsters for development and a school-

friendly community. Child Right Friendly Schools fetch together students and members of the civil society to develop and act on ways to improve school's environment.

The Child Right Friendly School (CRFS) represents an aspect of protection and participation in school activities that reflects from students' perceptions about school practices. These perceptions are formed through evaluating the school practices and children involvement in school management committees and in school related decision making process.

A Child Right Friendly School (CRFS) can become a powerful tool to address the issues regarding CRFS and provide children with quality education. It also helps to create such environment of fun and healthy. It also helps to provide an idea of engaging – a place where they can play, be protected from harm, express their views and actively participate in the learning process for their holistic development. Because the children of today are the adults of tomorrow; they deserve to inherit a safer, fairer and healthier world. There is no task more important than safeguarding their environment.” (World Health Day, 2003). To investigate the practices and perceptions of students about Child Right Friendly School (CRFS); cross sectional survey was conducted from one of private school of Karachi, Pakistan.

This paper represents the views and perceptions of students regarding Child Right Friendly School. In addition, it is comprised of the purpose, research question, and null hypothesis of the study.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of class 5 and class 8 students regarding CRFS. Another, aim of this study was to investigate the relationship of age on the perceptions of student's on CRFS. Whether, the students age affecting on the perceptions of students regarding child right friendly school or not.

## **RESEARCH QUESTION**

1. What is the difference in the perceptions of class 5 and 8 regarding CRFS?
2. What is the relationship between the age of students and perceptions on CRFS?

## **HYPOTHESIS**

1. There is a significant difference in the perceptions of class V and VIII regarding child right friendly school.
2. There is no difference in the perceptions of class V and VIII regarding child right friendly school.
3. There is significant relationship between the age of students and perceptions regarding CRFS.
4. There is no relationship between the age of students and perceptions regarding CRFS.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Children being the most important stake-holder of the process of education, have their rights to learn, imagine and magnify their knowledge and skills through their own individual rights and needs. In the lieu of maximizing the opportunities for the children to lean efficiently, there needs to be more child right friendly places; because child right friendly places are those where children's right and need are at the centre of planning (UNICEF, 2008). In this regard, Schools are considered to be the places where students are safe and able to live a life without any kind of hurt or violence and learn with fun and play. Wohwill and Heft (1987)

extended the use of affordances by articulating the environment child relationship in play spaces in terms of three characteristics: affordances, sensory stimulation and response feedback. Play is the right and need of all the children in the schools (Jeavons, 2008, p.108) because school grounds are the important sites for children to grow their social and cognitive skills (Malone & Tranter, 2003), as play makes the students fresh and their mind enables to work properly. In addition, play is the key site for engaging social interaction between children (McConaghy, 2008) and all children have opportunity to express their views and participate in decision making (UNICEF, 2001). Malone (2013) suggests that children are social agent and supports rights based paradigm. Such skills of social interaction help them to not only fight for their own rights but for societal needs. Quite unlikely to this, it has been observed that children's play activities are declining day by day (Dolman, Norton & Norton, 2005; Lester & Russel, 2010).

Five Dimensions of CFS as given in UNICEF Assessing CFS Manual which were applied to see whether schools of Karachi, Pakistan are Child Right Friendly or needs improvement.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The nature of research questions demands a quantitative research paradigm to address and explore the students' perceptions regarding Child Right-Friendly School. Therefore, the current research is descriptive by purpose and quantitative by method.

### **Research Design**

Cross sectional survey was used in this study. It was used to gather information at a single point in time through questionnaire on the entire population to collect data. To investigate the differences between the two classes/grade students, the cross-sectional survey method is most suitable because it helps to collect data from more participants at one point at time (Frankel and Wallens, 2006).

The research question is addressed by using the survey design because through survey method, researcher could collect all the information directly from the participants about their ideas, feelings and social background. (Fink, & Kosecoff, 1998). Therefore, researcher filled the questionnaire from samples of one of a private school in morning and afternoon shift through direct administration.

Furthermore; while conducting survey, it was found that survey allows anonymity to research participants and encouraged them to answer the questions frankly in friendly environment.

### **Sample and Sampling Procedure**

The targeted population of the study was students of a private secondary school Karachi. The research sample grade five and eight students were selected randomly. The size of the sample was consist of 24 students (n1=24, M+ F) from grade V, 29 students (n2=29, M+F) from grade VIII and overall, 53 (n3=53, M=36, 67.9% F=17, 32.1%), fall between ages of 10 to 13

A convenient sample of 53 students from a private school of Karachi selected to participate in the study. According to Bryman (2004) "A convenience sample is one that is simply available to the researcher by virtue of its accessibility" (p.100). Sample of the study were 24 students from grade five (n = 24) and 29 students were from grade eight (n = 29). The selection of research site and negotiations regarding the grade level was done in the beginning of the research time with the help of course facilitator.

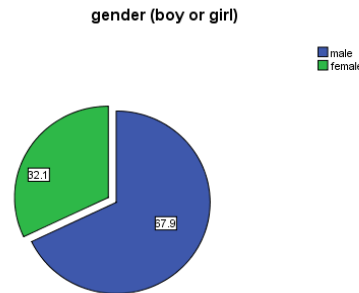


Figure 1: Sample of Study

### Instrument/ Measurement Tool

Child Right Friendly School (CRFS) questionnaire was used in this research work, which was adopted from the course leaders' personal library. Tool was comprised of two parts. Part-1 measured the protection of children in school. Part-2 measured the opportunities provided by school for school decision matters; along with CRFS questionnaire requested for general demographics information from each participant.

There were 13 items in questionnaire. It was based on 4 rating scale questionnaires and divided into two parts called protection and participation. A protection part consists of 7 items whereas participation part was consists of 6 items. Whereas, demographic information was based on 11 items such as age, living place, guardian profession.

### Reliability of Instrument

The table 1 shows the reliability statistics where the value of alpha = 0.562 which is less than 0.6. where as the value of Cronbach's should be equal or more than 0.6. Therefore, it can not be claimed that tools of this study was more reliable. The reason of less value from 0.6 might be the small sample and small level study. Cronbach's Alpha value of the tool given in the table 1.

**Table 1. The reliability statistics**

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha
Total (13 items)	0.562

### Data Analysis

After collecting data from the research context, a pattern for data analysis was developed on the Statistical Package for Social Science version 16.0 (SPSS), in which the data were entered and coded. For example, (1) was used for female and (0) was used for male. To explain the classes we coded, 1 for class-V, 2 for class VIII. Similarly, to explain student's protection and participation, for all items of questionnaire were coded, 1 for no/never, 2 for rarely, 3 for often, and 4 for always respectively. In this way, all the data were coded accordingly. For the next step, researcher cleaned the data by entering it twice in pair to avoid any error. At the same time, researcher found maximum and minimum value through descriptive statistics. This cleaning helped to look for mistakes that might have been made during the entry of data. But couldn't found any mistakes; all the maximum values were same 4.

After wards, researcher employed the Cronbach's Alpha test, to explore the reliability of tool. Furthermore, the data was summarized through descriptive statistics, in which mean and

standard deviation were explored through SPSS, which explained the characteristics of the data. In addition, researcher explored the value of skewness and the standard error through SPSS which enabled to explore the normal distribution of data. After conformation the normality, employed the independent t-test to investigate the difference in perceptions between class -V and class-VIII, as the data qualify the 3 assumptions of the said t-test.

Finally, Researcher employed the correlation test to see the relationship between effects of age and children’s perceptions through SPSS. For this, Pearson correlation co-efficient was used to explore the relationship between demographic characteristics (age) and total mean of the questionnaire.

**EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS**

**Test of Normality**

A test of normality was used through Kolmogorav sminor test, histogram test, and descriptive statistics was conducted on the interpretation skill scale across both the classes. Class V and class VIII to confirm the distribution of the interpretation score was evenly distributed. Table-1 shows the result of Kolmog sminor test for child right friendly school.

**Table 2. Descriptive result of normality test**

	Statistics	Standard error
Skewness in total result of both classes	-.475	.327

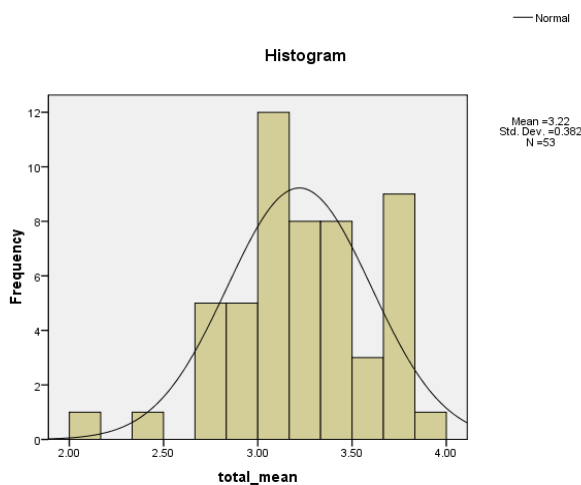
**Table 3. Tests of Normality**

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
total_mean	.080	53	.200*	.965	53	.123

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

By looking at significant value (p= .200) in the table-3, it is evident that, over all distribution on mean perceptions is normal. However the descriptive statistic and histogram shows that distribution is negatively skewed, which refers that more students favors CRFS.



**Figure 2: The descriptive statistic and histogram**

**FINDING OF THE STUDY**

Results of the descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics including t- test are provided of both classes in the table 4 and 5 respectively.

**Table 4. The descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics including t- test**

Class	Number of participants (n)	Mean	Standard deviation
V	24	3.4319	.29115
VIII	29	3.0451	.36227

**Table 5. Difference between the perceptions of class V and class VIII students**

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances						
Total_mean	Equal variances assumed	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		.534	.468	4.221	51	.001

The table 4 shows that the perceptions of class-V students about CRFS are more towards child right friendly school (M=3.4319, SD= .29115) as compare to their counter parts of class-VIII students (M= 3.0451, SD= .36227).

However, class VIII students perceptions are more dispersed than the mean (M= 3.0451, SD= .36227), which illustrates that some students have highly positive perceptions and some have highly negative.

Moreover, table 5 demonstrates that difference between the perceptions of class V and class VIII students regarding CRFS is significant with [t (51) = 4.221, p= .001]. Therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be accepted. Furthermore, table-5 assured that the variance is not significant (p= .468) of both the groups.

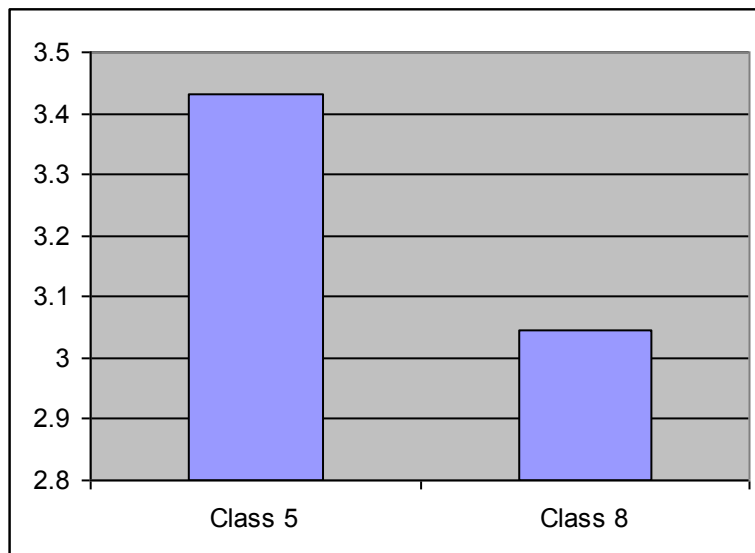


Figure 3. Correlation between student’s age and perception about CRF’S

**Table 6. Correlations**

		Correlations	
		age	total_mean
age	Pearson Correlation	1.000	-.424**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	53.000	53
total_mean	Pearson Correlation	-.424**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	53	53.000

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The data revealed from the analysis that there is significant relationship between students age and students perception ( $r = -.424$ ,  $p = .002$ ). Moreover, table-6 shows the results that age and students' perceptions are negatively correlated. It indicates that, if the student's age increases then the perceptions about child right friendly decreases. Therefore, hypothesis 2 has also rejected.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It revealed from the results that the class-V students have higher level of perceptions CRFS than class-VIII students. Therefore, result rejected null hypothesis. There might be some reasons behind the perceptions of class V students compare to students of class VIII. One of the reasons may be this that due to course work and more focused on exam oriented learning class VIII students are not given participation in school activities and school decision committees. Besides, class VIII students have to give board examination, after a year, so these activities may affect on their learning.

Secondly, children must feel that they are capable of accomplishing things. Usually, the parents and teachers do not let the children free in making decision about them. Which may incapable the decision making power of students. These hindrances occurred due to social problems and constraints in the curriculum. In this way, they are giving the message that can not make decisions for themselves.

In addition, researcher also employed the correlation test between student's age and the students' perception. It was observed that there was negative relationship between age and children's perceptions and the difference was significant. Though this study has shown the negative relationship between age and children's perception CRFS, but it can not be generalized to the whole society, or even in that schools, where research was conducted, because of its small sample.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Through the cross sectional survey, researcher collected data from two classes of a private school of Karachi. So findings cannot be generalized even within the school. Because, study was limited only of two classes. At the same time, might be some students were under pressure. Because of this reason sometimes presence of researcher, can affect the validity of the responses. Furthermore, convenience sampling is judgmental sampling, therefore, it cannot be generalized (Bryman, 2004. p.101).

## RECOMMENDATION

In the light of analysis of the study it can be assumed that the teachers and parents should provide equal opportunities to children in decision and participation in school activities, and encouragement should be given both classes simultaneously. It is also recommended that

children may be provided equal opportunities as a matter of fact to establish them as the leader of future generation.

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