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"Implementation is the Key to Success"

Perspectives of Early Childhood Educators on
Children's Rights in Karachi, Pakistan

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Science and Technology

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Pakistan

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Acknowledgement

Writing this research has had a big impact on me. I would like to reflect on the people who have supported and helped me throughout this period.

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Finally, I would like to acknowledge my friends who have showed their continuous support throughout this time.

List of Acronyms

- CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child
- ECE – Early Childhood Education
- ECEC – Early Childhood Education and Care
- ECEPS – Early Childhood Education Policy Sindh
- EWAG – European Weak of Actions for Girls
- NCCWD – National Commission for Child Welfare and Development
- SCPA – Sindh Child Protection Authority
- SDG – Sustainable Development Goal
- UN – United Nations
- WeT - Wassela-e-Taleem

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Abstract

Children have the same basic human rights as adults, as well as additional rights that cares to their needs. Children are neither the property of the parents nor the needy recipient of charity. They are human beings who have their own set of rights. The child rights convention acknowledges both children's basic human dignity and the importance of their wellbeing and growth. Children have the rights to live, develop, be safe and have a say in how their lives are formed and therefore adults should provide the nurturing environment and encouragement that children need as they progress towards becoming independent.

Early childhood is a critical period for realizing children's rights, as during this period young children experience rapid period of growth and change. Young children's earliest years are the foundation for their physical and mental health as well as social and emotional security in collaboration with cultural and personal identity. Young children are best understood as social actors whose survival, well-being and development are dependent on and built around close relationships with their parents, members of the extended family, peers, caregivers, and early childhood professional.

This master thesis aims to gain a glimpse of early childhood educators' perspectives on children's rights in Karachi, Pakistan on children's rights. The implementation of the UNCRC in Pakistan and the state of children's rights in Pakistan is described as well as the measures that are being taken to promote children's children rights. Furthermore, the various challenges that educators face when implementing, promoting, and protecting children's rights have also been described.

Individual interviews were conducted with early childhood educators from Karachi, Pakistan and their views towards early childhood, children's rights, the UNCRC and the challenges faced when implementing and protecting children rights were discussed. Furthermore, early childhood educators' opinions on the UNCRC, the state of children's rights in Pakistan and the implementation of the UNCRC and children's rights in daily teaching and learning is discussed in this master thesis.

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Chapter I

1.0. Introduction

This chapter overviews the aim of this project, the research objectives, and questions. This chapter also provides an outline of all the other chapters in this thesis. The topic of this study is the awareness and knowledge of children's rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) amongst the early childhood educators of Karachi, Pakistan. Every human being has rights that are considered essential. Over the course of the years, children's rights in early childhood education have provided a new view of how children are viewed and treated. Recognizing and realizing children's rights provides them with an opportunity to have a better quality of life, education, healthy development, and fulfill of their potential.

According to Burr & Montgomery (2003), human rights are rights inherited by all individuals irrespective of their sex, nationality, place of residence, ethnic group, race, religion, etc. Human beings are born free and hence are equal in dignity and rights. Children's rights are the subset of basic human rights that all children have access to globally. The UNCRC incorporates the full range of human rights, civil, cultural, economic, political, and social, it craters as an international framework for the protection and promotion of the human rights and fundamental freedom of all persons under the age of 18 (Coppock & Gillett-Swan, 2016). Furthermore, it recognizes that all children have the right to develop physically, mentally, and socially to their fullest potential, to express their opinions freely and to be able to participate in decisions affecting their future. The convention on the rights of the child also provides a vision of children as individuals and members of a family and society and hence it provides children with rights and responsibilities that are appropriate to their age as well as the stage of their development (Alderson, 2008).

Children are individuals on their own, they are neither the belongings of their families nor of the government. They are individuals in the making and hence this provides them with an equal status as any other adult as members of the society. Burr and Montgomery (2003) emphasized that children require special provision in international and national treaties to protect their interests because they are less mature, more vulnerable, and dependent. Children also lack knowledge and experiences; they are less articulated and influential and hence lack power.

1.1. The United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Children's rights came into consideration after the first world war in 1918, with acceptance of the Declaration of Geneva in 1924 (Jimeno, 2020). The recognition of children's rights took place after the United Nations gave official recognition to the human rights of children by adopting the Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959 (Cohen, 1989). The UNCRC was established in 1989, which explains that children are also human beings with their own rights and that children and young people have the same general human rights as adults and specified rights for children with special needs. It also establishes that children are not anyone's property and should not be considered as objects. They are human beings and have their own rights. According to the

Committee on the Rights of the child (2009), The UNCRC applies to children from birth to 18 years or age. It consists of 54 articles that range through 3 main categories: provision, protection, and participation.

There are Articles that fall under the category of provision rights focus on children being provided with health care (Article 24), education (Article 28) and an appropriate standard of living, family life and other services (Article 27). The articles on children rights to protection focuses on safeguarding children from discrimination (Article 2), abuse, exploitation, violence, injustice, and conflict (Article 19). Participation rights consist of the articles that focus on children's civil and political rights to a name and identity (Article 7 & 8), children should be consulted on the matters that affect them (Article 12), to have access to information (Article 17), to express their views (Article 13) and be able to take part in decision making (Article 12).

The UNCRC elaborates on who are children, all their rights and the responsibilities of governments. All the rights in the UNCRC are connected and all are equally important, and they cannot and should not be taken away from children. Furthermore, it provides the rights for children to be considered as the family and community with different rights and responsibilities which is appropriate to their age and development. Countries throughout the world have ratified the UNCRC, however, there is a lot of work to be done to bring awareness at ground zero level.

1.2. Early Childhood Education

Early childhood is a time of great opportunity. For young children, it is a time when they will learn to walk and talk and build the foundations for future development. According to UNICEF (2017), early childhood is a period for young children to receive the health care, positive early learning experiences, and nurturing parenting that will support their healthy development and school readiness. Maria Montessori spoke of early childhood education as a key component in the betterment of society (Lillard, 2013). If designed properly, early childhood education can provide quality programs that will ensure that children from disadvantaged backgrounds enter school ready for kindergarten (Burger, 2010).

Early childhood is a very crucial stage in the development of young children as the emotional, social, and physical development has a direct effect on their overall development and on the adults they will become. Babies begin to learn about the world around them from a very early age, including during the prenatal, perinatal and postnatal period. Children's early experiences define the bonds they form with their parents and their first learning experiences deeply affect their future physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development, therefore optimizing the early years of children's lives is the best investment that can be made as a society in ensuring their future success (Winston & Chicot, 2016).

According to Woodhead (2006), early childhood policies and practices are shaped by competing images and discourses of the young child. These consist of 4 main perspectives:

- A developmental perspective emphasizes regularities in young children's physical and psychosocial growth during early childhood, as well as their dependencies and vulnerabilities during this formative phase of their lives.

- A political and economic perspective is informed by developmental principles, translated into social and educational interventions, and underpinned by economic models of human capital.
- A social and cultural perspective draws attention to respects in which early childhood is a constructed status and to the diversities of ways it is understood and practiced, for, with and by young children, with implications for how goals, models and standards are defined, and by whom.
- A human rights perspective reframes conventional approaches to theory, research policy and practice in ways that fully respect young children's dignity, their entitlements, and their capacities to contribute to their own development and to the development of services.

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) relates to the early development learning of young children, it consists of the activities and experiences through play and other mediums that affect the development of the children in their early years. Children do not only grow in size, but they develop, evolve, and form the world of the complex understandings of the people, objects, and challenges in their environment.

1.3. Children's Rights and Early Childhood

Definitions of early childhood vary in different countries according to the organization of preschool and elementary school systems, but early childhood education is defined here as any center, school, or home-based program catering for the education and care of children up to the age of eight. It is impossible to separate care and education for young children, since caring relationships are an essential influence on children's learning, so early childhood education includes childcare centers, nursery schools and classes, kindergartens, parent co-operative programs, language immersion centers, head-start classes, Montessori or Steiner programs, family daycare schemes, and beginning school classrooms.

Implementing children's rights for infants and young children is particularly important since during these early years, children are most vulnerable to rights violations, and they are most able to benefit from their rights being catered (Smith & Taylor, 2017). The United Nations Committee on the rights of the child 2005 highlights the importance of children's rights in early childhood and recommends that governments should shift their focus from viewing early childhood as a time for children to be socializing but rather recognize and respect children as social actors. During the first years of life, the trajectory of a child's future begins to be set. This includes not only whether the child will survive, but also the child's learning ability, willingness to trust people, self-esteem, and risk of disease later in life. (Smith & Taylor, 2017)

Children's rights in early childhood education have provided a new way of how young children are viewed and treated as. Rights are prerogative that every human being has, they are considered as an important aspect of their development (UNCRC, 1989). Realizing of children's rights provides them with ample opportunities at a better quality of life, healthy development, and fulfillment of their potential. According to Tobin (2011), children's rights allow children to be seen as active subjects in their life rather than as passive objects of socialization or properties of their parents. Recognizing and implementing children's rights to young children is very important because during these early years when children are vulnerable of their rights being violated however, this is

the same time when children can benefit the most if their rights are being catered (Smith & Taylor, 2017).

The right to an education is one of the most fundamental of all rights, because it promotes the achievement of children's full potential. Early Childhood Education is a large part of growing up and it is one of the first out of home experiences for young children. Hence, it is highly influential. Article 29(a) of the UNCRC states that education of the child should be directed towards the development of their personality, talents, and physical abilities in order for them to reach their full potential (Article 6). Furthermore Article 31 of the UNCRC states that children have a right to leisure, play and culture, this enhances their development.

According to the UNCRC General Comments Committee of 2005, young children are understood best as social actors whose survival, well-being and development are dependent on and built around their close relationships, most often these relationships are with parents, members of the extended family and peers, as well as caregivers and early childhood practitioners and educators.

1.4. Research Aims, Objectives and Questions

Early Childhood Educators play a critical role in a child's life at a very early stage. Early childhood educators are, in a way, the building blocks of children's learning. Early childhood educators as well as the family of the child help to lay the foundation for education and discovery, for the rest of a child's life. In addition, early childhood educators' awareness and knowledge about the children rights and early childhood policies enables them to create an environment which allows the child to be developed appropriately.

The aim of this paper is to explore about the awareness and knowledge of Early Childhood Educators in Karachi, Pakistan.

The research objectives are:

- a. To gain insight into the perspective of early childhood educators in Karachi, Pakistan about children's rights
- b. To investigate importance of children's rights at the early childhood level.
- c. To find out the ways in which the UNCRC is being implemented at early childhood level in Karachi, Pakistan
- d. To investigate the challenges faced by the Early Childhood Educators when implementing children's rights.

The research questions:

1. What are the perspectives of early childhood educators on children's rights in Karachi, Pakistan?
2. What importance do children's rights play in early childhood education?
3. How can the article of the UNCRC be implemented into early childhood education and development at the government level and at the school level?
4. What are some of the challenges that are faced by the early childhood educators when implementing children's rights?

The first and second research questions aim to gain an insight on the perspectives of early childhood educators on the rights of the child and the UNCRC, it also overviews the teachers' perspective on the importance the of UNCRC in protecting children rights. These questions also aim to find out whether teachers use the UNCRC consciously or subconsciously.

The third question aims to explore the way the articles of the UNCRC can be implemented into daily teaching and learning. This question also aims to explore the various government policies and school documents that aim to protect children rights. Moreover, it explores the recommendations that have been made by the UNCRC general committees and how the national policy documents adopt those recommendations. Furthermore, it investigates if there are any other programs that have been developed by the Government of Pakistan due to the recommendations made by the UNCRC and how the UNCRC is being implemented if at all in an early childhood setting.

The last question aims to explore the different challenges that teachers face in their everyday teaching and learning when implementing children rights consciously and subconsciously. The different types of political, social, religious, and cultural challenges an early childhood educator's face and how they tackle these challenges in order to have a smooth running of their classroom while implementing and protecting children's rights.

1.5. Thesis Overview

This thesis will consist of 7 chapters. The first chapter will be the introduction chapter which will give the general overview about the topic. This chapter will look into children's rights, the UNCRC and early childhood development and education. The research aims, objectives and the questions will also be included in this chapter. Chapter 2 is the background chapter which will provide information on the chosen city and country i.e., Karachi, Pakistan. It will also look at children's rights in Pakistan, early childhood education in Pakistan as well as the different national laws and policies that the Government of Pakistan has developed. Moreover, this chapter will further explore what components of the UNCRC have been implemented in the national policy documents. This chapter will also see if there are any other documents that have been given importance to other than the UNCRC. Furthermore, this chapter will overview what some of the cultural and religious aspects are that have been taken into consideration when designing policies for children's rights.

Chapter 3 will be the theoretical chapter for this thesis, and will provide a wide understanding of children's rights and children being as active global citizens via different theories. This chapter will also provide an overview of the fundamental perspectives in childhood studies. Chapter 4 of this thesis will be based on the research methodology, sampling procedure that was used to gain the participants and the research methods that was used to gather the data. This chapter will also focus on the ethical guidelines that were considered during this project as well as some of the ethical and practical challenges that were faced during the data collection process.

The next 2 chapters, chapter 5 and chapter 6 will focus on the analysis of the collected data and researcher's reflexivity on the whole master thesis. This chapter will also provide the answers to the research questions. These chapters will also be linked to Chapter 3, which is the theoretical chapter of this thesis and will discuss the analysis based on the various theories that have been chosen for this topic. The last Chapter of

the master thesis will be the discussion and the conclusion chapter where suggestions and recommendations will be provided in order to make children's rights more recognizable in Pakistan.

Chapter II

2.0. Background

According to Burr & Montgomery (2003), human rights are rights inherited by all individuals irrespective of their sex, nationality, place of residence, ethnic group, race, religion, etc. Human beings are born free and hence are equal in dignity and rights. Children's rights are the subset of basic human rights that all children have access to globally. The United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child -1989 (UNCRC) recognizes that all children have the right to develop physically, mentally, and socially to their fullest potential, to express their opinions freely and to be able to participate in decisions affecting their future. Furthermore, the UNCRC also provides a vision of children as individuals and members of a family and society and hence it provides children with rights and responsibilities that are appropriate to their age as well as the stage of their development.

Children are individuals on their own, they are neither the belongings of their families or of the government. They are individuals in the making and hence this provides them with an equal status as any other adult as the members of the society (UNICEF).

According to UNICEF, children's rights came into consideration after the first world war in 1918, with acceptance of the Declaration of Geneva in 1924. The recognition of children's rights took place when the United Nations adopted the declaration of the rights of the child in 1959. The UNCRC was established in 1989, which explains that children and young people have the same general human rights as adults and specified rights for children with special needs. It also establishes that children are not anyone's property and should not be considered as objects. They are human beings and have their own rights. The UNCRC applies to children from birth to 18 years of age.

It provides the rights for children to be considered as the family and community with different rights and responsibilities which is appropriate to their age and development. Countries throughout the world have ratified the UNCRC, however, there is a lot of work to be done to bring awareness at ground zero level.

Burr and Montgomery (2003) emphasized that children require special provision in international and national treaties to protect their interests because they are less mature, more vulnerable, and dependent. Children also lack knowledge and experiences; they are less articulated and influential and hence lack power.

2.1. The United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The UNCRC consists of 54 articles which fall under the overall principle of the best interest of the of the child and the 3 p's, which are provision, participation, and protection. Articles that fall under the category of provision rights focus on children being provided with health care, education and an appropriate standard of living, family life and other services. The articles on the children's rights protection focus on safeguarding children from discrimination, abuse, exploitation, violence, injustice, and conflict. Participation rights consist of the articles that focus on children's civil and political rights to a name and identity, children should be consulted on the matters that affect them, to

have access to information, to express their views and be able to take part in decision making.

According to Smith and Taylor (2017), the United Nations Committee on the rights of the child 2005 highlights the importance of children's rights in early childhood and recommends that governments should shift their focus from viewing early childhood as a time for children to be socializing but rather recognize and respect children as social actors. During the first years of life, the trajectory of a child's future begins to be set. This includes not only whether the child will survive, but also the child's learning ability, willingness to trust people, self-esteem, and risk of disease later in life.

2.2. Early Childhood Education

Early childhood is a very crucial stage in the development of young children as the emotional, social, and physical development has a direct effect on their overall development and on the adults they will become. Babies begin to learn about the world around them from a very early age, including during the prenatal, perinatal and postnatal period. Children's early experiences define the bonds they form with their parents and their first learning experiences deeply affect their future physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development, therefore optimizing the early years of children's lives is the best investment that can be made as a society in ensuring their future success (Winter, 2010).

Early childhood is a time of great opportunity. For young children, it is a time when they will learn to walk and talk and build the foundations for future development. According to UNICEF (2017), early childhood is a period for young children to receive the health care, positive early learning experiences, and nurturing parenting that will support their healthy development and school readiness. Maria Montessori spoke of early childhood education as a key component in the betterment of society (Lillard, 2013). If designed properly, early childhood education can provide quality programs that will ensure that children from disadvantaged backgrounds enter school ready for kindergarten (Burger, 2010).

According to Woodhead (2006), early childhood policies and practices are shaped by competing images and discourses of the young child. These consist of 4 main perspectives:

- A developmental perspective emphasizes regularities in young children's physical and psychosocial growth during early childhood, as well as their dependencies and vulnerabilities during this formative phase of their lives.
- A political and economic perspective is informed by developmental principles, translated into social and educational interventions, and underpinned by economic models of human capital.
- A social and cultural perspective draws attention to respects in which early childhood is a constructed status and to the diversities of ways it is understood and practiced, for, with and by young children, with implications for how goals, models and standards are defined, and by whom.
- A human rights perspective reframes conventional approaches to theory, research policy and practice in ways that fully respect young children's dignity, their entitlements, and their capacities to contribute to their own development and to the development of services.

Early childhood education relates to the early learning of young children, it consists of the activities and experiences that affect the development of the children in their early years. Children do not only grow in size, but they develop, evolve, and understand the complex nature of the people, objects and challenges in their environment.

2.3. Children's Rights and Early Childhood

Definitions of early childhood vary in different countries according to the organization of preschool and elementary school systems, but early childhood education is defined here as any center, school, or home-based program catering for the education and care of children up to the age of eight (Manas, 2020). It is impossible to separate care and education for young children, since caring relationships are an essential influence on children's learning, so early childhood education includes childcare centers, nursery schools and classes, kindergartens, parent co-operative programs, language immersion centers, head-start classes, Montessori or Steiner programs, family daycare schemes, and beginning school classrooms. Implementing children's rights for infants and young children is particularly important since during these early years, children are most vulnerable to rights violations, and they are most able to benefit from their rights being catered (Smith & Taylor, 2017).

Children's rights in early childhood education have provided a new way of how young children are viewed and treated. Rights are prerogative that every human being has, they are considered as an important aspect of their development (UNCRC, 1989). Realizing of children's rights provides them with ample opportunities at a better quality of life, healthy development, and fulfillment of their potential. According to Tobin 2011, children's rights enable the view of the power relations between children and adults and the state, it allows children to be seen as active subjects in their life rather than as passive objects of socialization or properties of their parents. Recognizing and implement children's rights to young children is very important because during these early years when children are vulnerable to their rights being violated however, this is the same time when children can benefit the most if their rights are being catered (Smith & Taylor, 2017).

The right to an education is one of the most fundamental of all rights, because it promotes the achievement of children's full potential. Early Childhood Education is a large part of growing up and it is one of the first out of home experiences for young children. Hence, it is highly influential. Article 29(a) of the UNCRC states that education of the child should be directed towards the development of their personality, talents, and physical abilities in order for them to reach their full potential.

According to the UNCRC General Comments Committee of 2005, young children are understood best as social actors whose survival, well-being and development are dependent on and built around their close relationships, most often these relationships are with parents, members of the extended family and peers, as well as caregivers and early childhood professionals.

Early Childhood Educators play a critical role in a child's life at a very early stage. Early childhood educators are, in a way, the building blocks of a child's learning. They help lay the foundation for education and discovery, for the rest of a child's life.

2.4. Early childhood in Pakistan

The research focuses awareness of children's rights amongst early childhood educators in Pakistan. Pakistan came into existence in 1947, when the country became an independent nation from the colonial rule of the British on the Indian subcontinent from 1757 to 1947. According to Chaudry 2009, the British rulers created effective rail and road system in the country in order to transport their products from one place to another, however no attempts were made to educate the local people. There were a few good quality schools in the big cities of British India where the British army officers were deployed. However, in other parts of the country, the education system was less effective and dominantly Islamic oriented in nature in Muslim majority areas and hence the access to secular and modern education was out of reach of the common people of the Muslim majority of the country (Whitehead, 2005).

The entire education system has been one of the most neglected areas of development, even after the creation of Pakistan. There are no concrete or visible measures being taken to transform the education system, particularly the early childhood education system of the country, despite Pakistan being a signatory of the key international treaties such as Education for All, the Millennium Development Goals, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Early childhood development contributes towards the effective school entry, better performance, and the ultimate goal of visible success in later years of life (Morgan, 2011). Research has shown that early childhood is the most significant developmental period in an individual's life. despite of this, early childhood in the Pakistani public schools is not yet a developed or understood and almost a non-existent concept (Malik et al, 2010). According to Khan 2018, the Pakistan Ministry of Education in 2009, acknowledged that Early Childhood Education is not formally recognized by the public education sector in the country. The education system of Pakistan is divided into three sections.

1. The national education system,
 - a. Public schools
 - b. Non-elite private schools
2. The elite private Cambridge system,
3. The deeni madaris or religious schools.

2.4.1. The National Education System

The national education system of Pakistan consists of 2 groups of schools: the public schools and the non-elite private schools. These two groups of schools are often used by the middle and the lower-class families for their children, the medium of instruction is the national language of Pakistan i.e., Urdu and the schools that come under this category follow the national curriculum of Pakistan, the schools run by the government has a very limited understanding of early childhood education and often referred to as "katchi class" which technically means "not matured or "not enrolled" (Shakil, 2002).

The public schools are run by the government of Pakistan and are the largest providers of free education. Early childhood education under this sector is very limited and according to the Ministry of Education in 2009, it is not matured yet and neither it is fully recognized (Khan, 2018).

According to the International Crisis Group (2014), the quality of teaching and learning in the public schools is not promising since outdated textbooks are being used, the teachers go through a standard program, the classrooms are overcrowded, there is a lack of resources, the budget allocated to the public schools are being misused due to corruption and there is no constant monitoring of these schools and its conditions (Khan, 2018). The public schools are confined to an outdated syllabus and are unable to perform in the increasingly competitive job market, the assessment of students is summative assessment and are conducted annually which leads to rote learning and lack problem solving, critical thinking skills or conceptual understanding. The rote learning method is the preferred choice of teaching as it produces high scores as these scores determine the quality of the education (International Crisis Group, 2014). Student's learning is measured through their memorization skills and the fluency level in speaking, writing, and reading in all subjects. According to Rich- Orloff et al (2017), students are given grades and scores in order to plot their progress. Furthermore, the teacher to student ratio in the public schools is 1:35/40, which is considered as an unfavorable ratio. There are around 4.5 million children aged between three to six years who are enrolled into pre-primary or the early childhood section of the public schools with no separate rooms and no designated and qualified teachers (Khattak, 2016). There are no age restrictions and hence children aged from three years to five years are allowed to attend the pre-primary education (Coleman, 2010).

The non-elite private schools are run by individuals, groups, religious organizations, political parties, and registered societies and often have various organized programs such as kindergarten, nursery, infant education, pre-school education and Early childhood Education (Akhtar et al, 2011). It is also one of the largest providers of pre-primary of early childhood education in Pakistan and it is considered as an integral part of the private school system, since it provides compulsory early childhood education to children aged between three and six years (Coleman, 2010). According to UNESCO (2006), the private sector of education in Pakistan also offers care and educational programs for children who are under three years old.

The establishment of these schools is known as the profit-making business in Pakistan which has grown enormously over the last few decades. The main reason for this group of schools is to fill in the gap created by the public sector of education which has weakened the quality of education being provided. According to Coleman (2010), these set of schools serve the middle and the lower-middle class families and claim to offer quality English language education. However, majority of these schools have a shortage of teachers and over 50% of the teachers lack professional qualifications and are classified as untrained teachers (Lynd, 2007). An estimated number of 4.2 million children are enrolled in the non-elite private schools with an average number of 2785 of teachers in the early childhood sector (Khan, 2018).

Although, majority of the non-elite private schools are better equipped with resources and use up to date curriculum and textbooks, however, they also conducted grade-based examinations (Malik et al, 2010). Private schools in Pakistan only concentrate on the educational needs of the children and disregard the holistic needs. The teacher to student ratio in the private sector of education in Pakistan is 1 teacher to 30-35 students (Khan, 2018).

2.4.2. The Cambridge School System

The Cambridge school system commonly known as the elite private schools cater for the elite and the high socio-economic families in Pakistan. The elite schools were started during the British rule to produce human resources for the running of state institutions (Khan, 2018). In the present times, the elite schools of Pakistan such as Lahore American School, the Karachi and Lahore Grammar School, Beacon House, the City Schools, etc. are though few in number but provide organized pre-primary/early childhood education for the children of well to do families (Coleman, 2010).

These schools follow the international curriculum such as the Cambridge education system and the International Baccalaureate curriculum, and charge a high school fee, provide good quality of early childhood education facilities including learning resources and well-equipped classrooms. According to the International Crises Group (2014), the medium of instruction in the elite private schools is English and they follow a different curriculum and have a free structure which is unaffordable by majority of the population of Pakistan. The student to teacher ratio in elite schools is 1:10-12 which is considered a favorable ratio. Moreover, children who attend these schools are being prepared for the best paid job opportunities in the bureaucratic world as well as for the armed forces. The teachers are better educated, professionally qualified as well as better paid compared to the teacher of the public sector education system.

2.4.3. The Deeni Madaris Schools

The deeni madaris schools or more commonly known as the religious schools do not provide early childhood educations the way the national education system or the private sector provides Early Childhood Education. According to Coleman (2010), the deeni madaris schools provide free religious education, accommodation and food to the students aged between 10 and 28 years. However, some of the deeni madaris schools have nursery or the pre-primary class in which they teach the Islamic and Quranic teachings. The deeni madaris schools are the second largest education providers in Pakistan and are often used by families who live in poverty (Anjum, 2017). There are 32,300 deeni madaris schools in Pakistani an approximate number of 2.3 million children and 79,300 teachers are part of them. The deeni madaris in Pakistan follow the Dars-i-Nizami curriculum as a foundation for their syllabus, the core component of this curriculum is to teach the religious education through rote memorization which lack critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This education system runs simultaneously to modern and secular education. According to Coleman (2010) and the International Crisis Group (2014), the deeni madaris follow a traditional Islamic curriculum bases on the teaching of the five different interpretations of the *Islamic fiqa* (school of thought).

The deeni madaris do not follow or provide early childhood education but follow the traditional theology teachings through rote memorization which enables them to transfer what has been written in the holy text. According to Akhtar et al (2011), corporal punishment is a part of these schools as it allows to keep the children compliant and submissive. The assessment of students learning is done via a paper/pencil test and require verbal reproduction of the learnt knowledge for the students to be awarded scores and grades.

2.5. NGOs and ECE in Pakistan

Since there is a lack of interest and commitment in the education system from the government, the education sector reforms have allowed several NGOs in Pakistan to contribute towards the launch of early childhood programs, particularly in rural areas and the most marginalized and hard to reach areas. National and international NGOs and civil society organizations have been operating early childhood programs across Pakistan. According to Shakil (2002), almost all of these programs are small in scale and limited in their intervention to the defined locations. Donor agencies and NGOs such as the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), the World Bank, the Global Partnership for Education, the European Union, UNESCO, UNICEF, save the Children, etc. are making a significant contribution to further achieve the goals and fulfill the needs of the Education for All. According to Khan (2018), the AKDN is the most significant contributor of early childhood education in all over Pakistan. It is not only providing ECE to children, but it is also providing ECE based curriculum development, learning resource management, infrastructure development, teacher training and community development initiatives in addition to operating good quality schools and child-focused health education programs across Pakistan. Plan International is another NGO that has been providing limited sources to public schools in the Punjab province. Recently Right to Play organization has started working with schools in the rural areas of Sindh, creating a safe and joyful environment through play for young children. The Rupani Foundation is another NGO that has been operating well-equipped ECE centers in northern Pakistan for neglected poor families focusing on children from birth to three years and their parents.

Though most of these NGOs are practicing the Western philosophies and research based approaches to child education and development, such as constructivism and child-centered education and children's holistic development, their effort to promote early childhood education in Pakistan is a drop in the ocean considering the growing population of Early Childhood Education aged children, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2021), currently there are 30 million children reported to be in the zero to eight years old age bracket.

2.6. Children's Rights in Pakistan

Children's rights in Pakistan are one of the most crucial issues in today's time. The country ranks on 151st position in the global Child Rights index of 181 countries, this is due to poor performance and transpires that policy makers and the state machinery in Pakistan have utterly ignored welfare and the rights of children. Children make 48% of the total population in Pakistan, making it one of the countries with the largest population of children in the world. Out of this only 21% of children live in urban areas whose fundamental needs are being fulfilled. The rest of 80 million children in Pakistan are suffering to fulfill their needs and are deprived of their basic human rights like right to survival, education, health, and protection which are not only enriched in the UNCRC that not only Pakistan has ratified in 1990 but are also part of Pakistan's constitution (Shujaat, 2015). There is an estimation of 7 million children in Pakistan who do not receive primary school education, 60% of this population are girls. According to Khan (2018), Pakistan is decreasing its budget allocation of education by 2.6% of GDP over the last decade. Among this, Pakistan also ranks at 113 out 120 countries on the Education Development Index. Child labor is another issue which Pakistan is currently

suffering from, ILO estimates that there are more than 12 million children who are in the child labor industry.

Pakistan ratified the UNCRC on 12th November 1990, making a reservation on translating its terms following the principles of Islamic laws and values. This was considered as a significant achievement concerning children's rights. However, 7 years later, in 1997, Pakistan withdrew its reservation. Again in 2009 the committee on the rights of the child welcomed Pakistan's pledge to increase allocation of resources to children. However, the committee expressed its concerns over the low budget allotments for children which undermined Pakistan's initial prospects.

2.6.1. Addressing Children's Needs in Pakistan

Pakistan is lagging in their progress for safeguarding child rights through UNCRC, children remain as one of the most vulnerable groups of the country in every aspect. According to Child Rights Movement (CRM, 2015) even though there are forceful government claims to the contrary and to some positive initiative, the condition of children's rights in Pakistan has not improved since the last 25 years since its ratification in 1990.

In Pakistan, a child's health is endangered from a young age. Approximately one out of six children die before he or she reaches the age of 5 years. These deaths are often caused by malnutrition, lack of access to clean water, etc. Around 11,000 Pakistani children are suffering from diarrhea and illness related to water, sanitization, and hygiene. Malnutrition is another cause of early deaths of children in Pakistan. 30% of the children are underweight, more than 50% suffer from stunted growth and around 9% suffer from emaciation. Access to good quality health care is a challenge in the rural areas, where families are unable to afford the basic healthcare which therefore deteriorates the living conditions. Child labor is considered as a significant factor to children's health. Approximately 11 million children in Pakistan perform domestic tasks and work in the agriculture industry, many children work in the textile industry, hence it is common for these children to suffer from respiratory and vision problems and sometimes have deformations in their spinal columns (Ozturk, 2019).

The state of Pakistan education system has improved over the past decade; however, it is still not up to the mark. 23 million children do not attend schools, only 71% of children attend primary school in Pakistan. The budget allocated to education from the national budget by the government is only 1.8% which is insufficient considering the needs of the children in Pakistan. The Public-school system has enormous challenges such as economic constraints, unequipped rooms, dangerous infrastructure, lack of toilets, and learning equipment.

According to Ozturk (2019), teachers are underqualified or lack qualification and it is a common occurrence for children to leave school without knowing how to read and write. This is the case with 50% of the school going population of children in Pakistan.

A lot of children in Pakistan are considered as invisible children who are not recognized by the law of Pakistan since the birth of these children are not recorded. 70% of deliveries are not officially reported to the authorities. Birth registration is a fundamental right as it enables a child with a name, parentage, nationality, and age. It also allows the child to have a proof of identity, a sign of existence in the society providing them

protection from the government and against trafficking and forced labor. The Employment of Children Act 1991 was the first pro-child law passed by Pakistan. Despite this law, child labor has not been eliminated, hence millions of children are found engaged in hazardous occupations including auto workshops, brick kilns, scavenging, carpet weaving and begging. A variety of other laws have also been passed since 1991 by the national and the provincial assemblies but their efficiency to address the problems faced by children on the ground level is questionable (Aziz, 2019).

According to Aziz (2019), a study conducted by UNICEF have found 108 child related laws in Pakistan, however, a large number of these laws do not comply with the international standard or do not confirm the criteria set by the UNCRC. Out of 108 laws, only 24% fully comply with the CRC, 41% partially comply, 16% weakly comply and 19% of the laws contradict the principles of the UNCRC. Large numbers of these laws are not implemented as the implementation is left to the discretion of the government. One of the reasons why child related laws are not enforced and implemented is due to the non-availability of funds, time, and resources to follow up with the executives to monitor the implementation of the laws passed by the government.

The national commission on the rights of the Child Act was passed in October 2017 and published in the Gazette of Pakistan for immediate enforcement. The clause 22 of this act obligates the government to make and publish rules in consultation with the Commission, within six months of the enforcement of the act. However, over two years have passed the government has neither constituted the commission and nor approved the rules for its functioning, neither has a single penny been allocated in the annual budget for this commission. This shows the attitude the government has towards children's rights.

2.7. Programs initiated by the Government of Pakistan for Children's Rights

One of the government policies is the National Commission for Child Welfare and Development (NCCWD). This policy was established in 1979 by the government through a resolution and was effective from 1980. The NCCWD is now working under the ambit of Ministry of Human rights and it is responsible for coordinating, monitoring, facilitating, and implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and other national and international obligations. The vision of the NCCWD is to create a child friendly society that places the children at the center of development, recognizes their individuality, respects their values and voices, observes their best interest in every sphere of life and protects them from violence, abuse, and exploitation.

The objectives of the NCCWD are to assess the impact of the constitutional, legal and administrative provisions having bearing on welfare and development of children and suggest measures to provide full opportunities for their complete growth. The NCCWD also suggests amendments and additions to the Constitution and national laws, where feasible so as to bring them into harmony with the UNCRC. Furthermore, it formulates a National Policy for Child Welfare and Development in Pakistan as well as formulates legislations to deter child abuse in all its forms, including physical violence, child mutilation, exposure to drugs, child labor and protection to children who are handicapped (mentally or physically) or otherwise in need of social protection and other services.

The current and the past government has launched programs to address the problems faced by malnourished poor children, however, these were eventually closed by lack of financial and administrative support. The budgetary allocations for such programs did not meet the challenges and the requirements on the ground level and hence the scope of this program was limited and eventually came to an end. Most of these programs such as Tawana Pakistan which was a school nutrition program which was launched in 2002 to address the poor nutritional status and school enrollment of primary school aged girls was closed in 2005 due to similar reason of low to zero budget allocation.

Similarly, Wassela-e-Taleem (WeT) was a program offering incentives for enrollment and retention in schools of about 500,000 new children annually, whereas an estimate number of 11.24 million children aged between 5 and 9 years were out of school in 2017. This means that only 4% of the total out of school children in the country were covered by this program due to financial constraints. Currently, there are no programs of nutritional supplements for vulnerable children being implemented by either the federal or the provisional governments. The budgets for education and health care are significantly insufficient as compared with the gigantic numbers of people in need, especially those who are malnourished, poor and out of school children.

Though the current government of Pakistan has announced Ehsaas program which includes a health and nutrition initiative addressing stunting in children, the progress has not been visible so far and these initiatives are still in the planning stages. Moreover, there are no indications that the coverage of WeT i.e., the conditional cash transfers to parents against enrollment of their children in schools will be scaled up. Therefore, keeping all these things in mind, it has been predicted that very little to no improvement is expected in the near future in the national indicators of health and education of the children in Pakistan (Aziz, 2019).

According to Aziz (2019), a movement in the support of children has been triggered in the parliament in the late 2018, where a group of legislators have pledged to revitalize the struggle for the rights of children at the august forum of the parliament, hence, the National Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs created a Special Committee on Child Rights-CRC, and the constitution was formally notified by the National Assembly Secretariat. The special committee is assigned to the task to monitor the implementation of children's rights related laws in Pakistan, review the progress of the rights envisaged in the CRC which has been ratified by Pakistan, identify the gaps, and recommend remedial actions including new legislations and increases budget and finance allocation for children. Since the development of the committee in late 2018, the committee has organized a set of meetings with members of provincial assemblies, legal experts, and representatives of civil society organizations to acknowledge them about children's rights (Aziz, 2019).

2.8. Chapter Summary

This chapter looks at how the education system evolved in Pakistan after its independence in 1947. It also views the schooling system of Pakistan and the condition of early childhood education in the country. Furthermore, this chapter also explores how Pakistan's educational system equates with the UNCRC and its position in handling of children's rights in Pakistan. Additionally, this chapter also discusses the initiatives taken by the Pakistani government in order protect children's rights.

Chapter III

3.0. Methodology

This project focuses on the perspectives of early childhood educators of children's rights in Karachi, Pakistan. The project aims to investigate their perspectives, views, and opinions of children's rights, the importance of children's rights at the early childhood stage, implementation of children's rights and the UNCRC in their daily teaching and learning, and the challenges that early childhood educators face when implementing and protecting children's rights.

The right to an education is one of the most fundamental of all rights, because it promotes the achievement of children's full potential. Early Childhood Education is a large part of growing up and it is one of the first out of home experiences for young children. Hence, it is highly influential. Article 29(a) of the UNCRC states that education of the child should be directed towards the development of their personality, talents, and physical abilities in order for them to reach their full potential.

This master thesis aims to find information the various perspectives that early childhood educators have of children's rights as well as the importance of children's rights. Furthermore, the researcher aims to gain an insight on the way children's rights and the UNCRC are being implemented in daily teaching and learning and the various government policies and school policies that early childhood educators of Karachi, Pakistan taken into consideration when implementing and promoting children's rights. Lastly this thesis also aims to get an overview of the various challenges that early childhood educators face when implementing children's rights.

3.1. Research in Childhood Studies

For many decades, children have been perceived in various ways by a researcher and this perception often affects the way children are childhood are looked upon and understood in a society. According to Punch (2003), the critical issue is the view towards children according to their competency. It is therefore the researcher's responsibility to view children as competent and mature (Alderson, 1995). However, recent research findings within the sociology of children argues that children are viewed as objects of research rather than as subjects of research (Greene and Hogan, 2012). Furthermore, the CRC emphasizes that children should be viewed as competent, Article 36 of the CRC "no harm" principle should be strictly followed, as it is also mentioned in the CRC that children should be treated the same way as adults.

According to Punch (2002), the choice of the methods should be strictly reflected by the researcher as reflection is the key perspective for the development of research (Kjorholt, 2012) and further assists the research to proceed with the chosen method more creatively. According to Alderson (2008), CRC is also a framework for the researchers that justifies research with children in a respectful and flexible way. Children have a right to be properly researched and this has also been presented by the CRC (Ennew and Plateu, 2004). Hence, researchers should choose specific methods where children are able to express their thoughts, experiences, opinions, and feelings freely and easily (Beazley, Bessel, Ennew and Watson, 2009).

3.2. Research Design

Qualitative Research Method is used to get a better understanding through first-hand experience of the implications and practices of a specific social phenomenon through the subjective perspective (Palmer and Bolderston, 2020). It aims to understand how the participants derive meanings from their surroundings, and how their meanings influence their behaviour. According to Seale (1999), qualitative research involves asking participants about their experiences of things that happen in their lives. It enables researchers to obtain insights into what it feels like to be another person and to understand the world as other experiences it (Austin & Sutton, 2014). The key principles of qualitative data while conducting research are participation and interaction. According to Lincoln (1995), whether the research is conducted with children or adults, the participation and interaction of the research participants during data collection, formulation of research questions, sampling is relevant as it also is considered beneficial for collecting reliable and valid information (Coad and Evans, 2007).

There are several variations of qualitative research methods, such as – observation, diaries, interviews, mapping etc. Knowing advantages and disadvantages of the chosen methods (Punch, 2002), being able to choose the right and the best research role is important in qualitative methods. Critical reflection on suggested assumptions and the right choice of methods (Davis, 1998) should be considered strictly. Consideration of emphasized key points can assist the researcher to have smooth data collection period. This can also evade the ethical challenges.

3.3. Sample and Participants

Sampling is the process of selecting a group from the population to participate in the study. The sample size of this project consisted of 10 interviews with early childhood educators from Karachi, Pakistan. The participants were administered to the instrument i.e., interview about their perspective of children's rights in early childhood education and the UNCRC to collect data. The recruitment of the participants was based on cluster sampling and snowball sampling. Cluster sampling allowed the researcher to divide the population into smaller groups or clusters. Once the population was divided into clusters, random groups were selected through random or systematic random sampling technique to narrow down the population for data collection.

Cluster are usually naturally occurring groups such as schools, cities, or households, they are often more homogenous than the population as whole. Therefore, using the cluster sampling method was used to divide the participants into groups depending on their geographical location of teaching. However, it was difficult to find all the participants via cluster sample and hence snowball sampling was used. Snowball sampling is a method where the currently enrolled research participants help to recruit the future participants for the study.

3.4. Interview

According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2014), interviews are a daily part of our lives since interviews can be interpreted as daily conversations. Interviews enables to explore the viewpoint of a topic and allows the researcher to have a clear structure and purpose.

An interview guide enables the researcher to assist and guide the topic that is being studied. Furthermore, the interview guide allows the research to write down simple and brief questions for the participants to be able to understand the question and have an easy follow of conversation (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2014). The interview guide enables the researcher to create open-ended questions and allows a space for a conversation to take place between the participant and the researcher.

In order to avoid misinterpretation, the researcher must make sure that the question is understood clearly by the subject and should clarify the question, if it is misunderstood or misinterpreted (Waterman et al, 2001). Punch (2002) emphasizes that questions should be formulated in an appropriate language. The researcher should avoid general and close ended question and should formulate the wh-questions in order to explore the area of study better. Close-ended questions reduce the scale of the research as well as narrow down the possibility of comprehensive data collection. According to Fargas-Malet and McSherry (2010), researchers should also avoid asking too many questions. Since this research is conducted in Karachi, Pakistan, the questions were translated into Urdu, the local language of the country in order for the participants to be able to understand the question and respond accordingly.

Individual interviews were conducted with the early childhood educators in Pakistan to investigate and examine the awareness and the knowledge that teachers have about children's rights and the UNCRC. This enabled the researcher to gain insight about the perspectives that early childhood educators have of the UNCRC and whether it can be adapted to their cultural value and local knowledge, furthermore it also provided insights into the opinions as well as the awareness and knowledge that early childhood educators have of the local policy documents issued by the Government of Pakistan. The individual interviews provided a fruitful dialogue between the research and the various participants about their perspectives, and idea. Due to the global pandemic, the interviews will be conducted online, and the participants answers will be recorded. The identity of the participant is anonymized.

Interview as a research method is appealing and considered as an easy method, there are several challenges related to this research method. In research, it is very important for the researcher to be able to follow the non-verbal cues and prompts during the research to be able to identify the comforts and discomforts a participant is going through when talking about a certain topic (Cameron, 2005), since these interviews were conducted via Zoom due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, it was very challenging to read the body language of the participant. According to Fargas-Malet and McSherry (2010), the interviewing process can also seem time-consuming and boring for some participants and hence the research should organize other activities or take breaks, however due to the interviews being conducted online, this option was limited. It is very important to have a debriefing session with the participant once the interview is over, as the debrief allows the researcher to reflect on some of the key points of the conversation (Clark, 2005). Debriefing also enables the participants to feel comfortable if they are overwhelmed or if the topic is sensitive (Wallace et al, 2003).

3.5. Data collection procedure

Overall qualitative research design was used for this study by conducting individual interviews. Data collected from these interviews was tape recorded first, then transcribed and interpreted in order to obtain the results for this study. In order to organise the individual interviews, a meeting was organised by the researcher. The participants were explained about the research and were asked if they would like to participate in the research, the selected teachers were then approached by the researcher about the interview. Once the teachers agreed to participate in the interview, a time was decided which was convenient for both the teachers and the researcher. The interviews were conducted online, and the interviews were recorded with the consent of the teachers. The interview protocol was followed, and the participants of the study were informed about all the ethical considerations such as the confidentiality of the interview, the participants were also explained that they could withdraw from the study at any time. A total of 10 individual interviews were conducted and transcribed. The data collected was analyzed into 2 chapters followed by a discussion chapter. Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision-making (Bihani & Patil, 2014). The data of this thesis was analyzed using content analysis technique, where the data was categorized using the research objectives and questions.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

Underlying ethical guidelines and codes are ethics principles and frameworks that are based on centuries of philosophical debate about duty, harm-benefit, and rights (Alderson & Morrow, 2011). Ethical engagement with participants, whether children or not, is a matter of social justice. Participants should have a say in how research unfolds and how they are represented (Collier, 2019). It is important to consider ethical guidelines for a study as it provides the outset of the research project and enables to accommodate resource planning, budgeting, and funding. According to Bhandari (2021), the goal of human based research is too often include understanding the real-life phenomena, studying the effective treatments, investigating behaviors, and improving lives in other ways.

Research ethics matter of scientific integrity, human rights and dignity and collaboration between science and society. These principles enable researcher to make sure that participation is voluntary, informed, and safe for the research subjects (Bhandari, 2021). It is essential that the researcher balances the research aims with using ethical research methods and procedures. Furthermore, it is of utmost importance to always prevent permanent or temporary harm to participants, whether it was inadvertent or not. Bhandari (2021) suggests that if research ethics are defied, it lowers the credibility of the data collected on whether the methods can be morally questionable.

In order for this research to be conducted an application to the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) was submitted with the research proposal and which highlighted the research aims, design and the ethical guidelines to be taken into consideration before starting the data collection procedure. The NSD thoroughly checks that all the protocols are followed and provides with their decision whether the application is

approved or denied. Once the NSD approval was received, the data collection process of this study was started. The Ethical guidelines that were taken into consideration for this research are voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and potential for harm.

3.6.1. Voluntary Participation

Voluntary participation allows the research subjects to be able to choose to participate in the study without any pressure or coercion. All participants in this study were allowed to withdraw or leave the study at any given point without having any feelings of obligation to continue. At the beginning of the interview, the participants were told that they are free to withdraw the study at any given time.

According to Bhandari (2021), it is essential to make it clear to the participants that there are no negative consequences or repercussions of their refusal. This is because, the research participant is taking time out from their schedule and making oneself available for the research process, therefore the researcher should respect and accept their decision without trying to change their mind.

3.6.2. Informed Consent

Informed consent refers to the situation which all participants receive and understand all the information they require in order to decide whether they want to participate in the study or not. Informed consent often includes information about the study's benefits, risks, funding and institutional approval.

Informed consent of the participant is one of the main ethical considerations of this study. This was obtained through an agreement between the participant and the research confirming that the participant has been informed about the research process and understands the whole process. This also enables the participant to be able to withdraw from the research at any given point in the research process (Bhandari, 2021).

For this research, an information letter and a consent form were sent to the participants, the information letter contained all the information regarding the study, such as; the research aims, objectives, the purpose of the research, the benefits of participating in the research, the institute responsible for the study and the guidelines on how their data will be used and protected and the contact details of the supervisor as well as the institute. In the information letter, the participants were also provided guidance on how their data would be kept confidential and that they are free to withdraw from the study at any point.

The participants were asked to read the information letter and ask any questions that they had, once the participants had agreed to participate, they were then required to sign the informed consent form and send it back to the researcher. Since this study also included individuals who had limited English proficiency, they were explained about the study in their first language, i.e., Urdu.

3.6.3. Anonymity

Anonymity of the participants means that the research cannot link any individual participant to their data. The research can ensure the participants that anonymity will be carried out throughout the data analysis process by not collecting personally identifying information; such as; names, phone numbers, physical characteristics, photos and videos (Bhandari, 2021).

Often researchers use a technique called data pseudonymization where the participants identifying information is pseudonymous or fake. This prevents the data collected from being linked with the participants.

3.6.4. Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an ethical consideration which allows the research to know who the participants are but also enables them to remove all the identifying information from the report (Bhandari, 2021). Confidentiality is one of the most important ethical guidelines to be taken into consideration. Since the participants are putting themselves in a vulnerable position by sharing their views, perspectives and opinions, the research must ensure that the data obtained is confidential and will not be shared or made available to anyone other than the researcher and team. Given that, the interviews will be conducted via online platforms due to the current global pandemic, the researcher would build a rapport with participant in order for them to be feel comfortable to share their opinions and views. Once the data is obtained, the researcher needs to ensure that the data is private and is used anonymously since the participants have a right to privacy, therefore the researcher must ensure that their personal data is protected.

3.6.5. Protecting Participants from Potential Harm

Protecting the participants from harm is also another ethical guideline that was taken into consideration, the researcher is responsible for protecting the research participants from any harm, physical or emotional harm that the participants can expose themselves to during the part-take of the research.

As a researcher, one has to consider all the potential causes of harm to the participants, for example: psychological harm, social harm, physical harm, and legal harm. It is essential to consider every possible source of harm that can occur to the participants by participating in the study.

3.7. Chapter Summary

This chapter explained about the research method and design chosen for collecting the data for this study. The instrument used in the study is briefly explained as well as the data collection process. It also explains the different ethical guidelines that were taken into consideration for this study.

Chapter IV

4.0. Theory Chapter

The aim of this chapter is to present various reflections and theories that are closely related to the topic of the study as well as links it to the analysis. The theory chapter will focus on the social constructionist perspectives in order to see how childhood is socially constructed and how it differs through space and time. Since this study is based on children's rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the main arguments of this master's project are based on the implementation of the CRC and how various factors such as the knowledge of CRC and time and space affect the implementation of the CRC.

4.1. Social studies of Children and Childhood

The social studies of children and childhood emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s in Europe. This came into existence from a critique against the developmental psychology and socialization theories that dominated the field and relied on developmental psychology by Piaget (Prout & James, 2015). According to Woodhead (2013), Piaget and Erikson were the leading scholars of developmental psychology, which has a wide impact on the socialization theory (Jenks, 2005).

Piaget uses chronological stages to describe the cognitive development. He believes that children take an active role in the learning process and make observations to learn about the world around them. The stages start from sensorimotor stage which begins at birth and lasts up to 2 years, followed by the second stage which is pre-operational stage from 2 years to 7 years, the third stage is concrete operational stage from the ages of 7 up to 12 and the final stage is formal operational stage from 12 years onwards (Cherry, 2021).

Piaget has been criticized for his work. According to Woodhead (2009), the developmental stages used by Piaget describe children in terms of what they need to do in order to complete one stage and move on to the next. Piaget's development stages are generalized views on children, however in today's modernized society, it is important to acknowledge the variations and complexities of childhood. Piaget's work is criticized by Vygotsky viewing the child as a social actor who is involved in social relations and various activities (Woodhead, 2009).

Whereas Erikson's developmental theory was based on the way social interactions and relationships played a role in the development and growth of human beings. Erikson's theory consisted of 8 stages and each stage had an ongoing conflict, important events and the outcome of the stage (Cherry 2021).

Table 1: A Summary of the Eight Stages presented by Erikson

Age	Conflict	Important Events	Outcome
Infancy (birth to 18 months)	Trust vs Mistrust	Feeding	Hope
Early Childhood (2 years to 3 years)	Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt	Toilet Training	Will
Preschool (3 to 5 years)	Initiative vs Guilt	Exploration	Purpose
School Age (6 to 11 years)	Industry vs Inferiority	School	Confidence
Adolescences	Identity vs Role Confusion	Social Relationships	Fidelity
Young Adulthood (19 to 40 years)	Intimacy vs Isolation	Relationships	Love
Middle Adulthood (40 to 65 years)	Generation vs Segregation	Work and Parenthood	Care
Maturity (65 to death)	Ego Integrity vs Despair	Reflection on life	Wisdom

Furthermore, Erikson's theory builds on the preceding stages and paves the way ahead for the following period of development. Erikson views the conflicts either as a developing a psychological quality or failing to develop the quality (Cherry, 2021). Erikson believed that if human beings successfully dealt with the conflict in each stage, they emerged from the stage with psychological strengths that will help and serve them for the rest of their lives, however, if they failed to effectively deal with the conflicts than they may not develop the essential skills needed for a strong sense of self. According to Cherry (2021), Erikson believed that a sense of competence motivates the behavior and actions, and each stage of Erikson's theory is concerned with becoming competent in an area of life.

Erikson's work has been criticized for focusing heavily on stages and assuming that the completion of one stage is prerequisite for the next stages of development. His theory also focuses on the social expectations that are found in certain cultures but not in all. Another criticism for Erikson's psychological theory is that the mechanism of resolving the conflicts and moving from one stage to the next is not well described or developed. Hence, the theory fails to detail the type of experiences necessary at each stage in order to successfully resolve the conflicts and move to the next stage (Cherry, 2021).

The social studies of childhood criticized developmental psychology and socialization theory as being future oriented as it indicated that children are viewed as tomorrow's

adults rather than looking at them as today's children. The main concept in social studies of children is that children and childhood are a socially constructed phenomena (Jenks, 1996), which focuses on the current lives of children, and children as beings rather than as human becomings. The idea of children and childhood being socially constructed explains that children and childhood are a social phenomenon and is connected to and embedded in societal structures and cultures that vary with time and place and therefore the process of growing up is cultural rather than natural. There have been comparative historical and cross-cultural analysis that have shown diverse childhoods rather than a universal view of childhood (James & Prout, 2015).

The work of Phillippe Aries on the history of childhood has impacted the understanding of childhood in various historical periods. According to Aries, childhood didn't exist in the European medieval society, and this therefore challenges the notion of universal childhoods (James & Prout, 2015).

Social Studies of children and childhood came in the early 1980s which represents a paradigm shift based on the critique of development psychology due to which childhood is now being viewed as a social construction. According to Woodhead & Faulkner (2000), sociologists view children as competent social agents and active participants of their own lives. Childhood has been treated as a stage of structured becoming and never as a course of action or social practice where children are viewed as tabula rasa or clean slates where foundations are being laid. (Jenks, 1982).

Children were traditionally viewed as natural, dependent and in the process of becoming future adults. However, the new paradigm views children and childhood as constructed historically, socially and culturally. Children are looked as active participants in the reproduction of their culture, everyday life and society.

4.1.1. Constructivist Perspective

The constructionist perspective of childhood views childhood as a social construct rather than a natural phenomenon, this is because the constructionists believe that social categories are constructed and that there are ways through which the knowledge structures are built. According to Montgomery (2003), there are ways in which childhood and adulthood are viewed and perceived in a given society and it differs through time and space. The constructionists also reject the notion that childhood is universal. They emphasize that childhood differs from culture to culture and society to society. The social constructionist perspectives focus on the diversity of children and childhood, they look at different childhood whether good or bad and the way childhood is culturally constructed in a society.

According to Montgomery (2003), social constructionists emphasize the way different categories are constructed, the way knowledge is built and the way childhood and adulthood are seen and understood in any given society. In order for sociologists to claim that children and childhood are socially constructed underlines the ideas, meanings and understanding of children and childhood are created by people and they are not natural but cultural. Social constructionism probes on the idea that knowledge develops as a result of social interaction and use of language, it is therefore shared rather than an individual experience. The new paradigm understands childhood as a social construction and provides an interpretive framework for contextualizing the early years of an individual's life.

According to Prout & James (2015), childhood is neither a natural nor a universal feature of an individual's life. It is a specific structure that is contributed to by different cultures. The sociology of children and childhood emphasizes on the present lives of children and views them in the here and now and views them as social actors with agency and voice.

Humans have socially constructed childhood through social and cultural processes, and the constructionist perspective views childhood through a diverse lens as it understands the concept that childhood is constantly changing with time and space. According to Nelson (2009), cultural context plays an important role when constructing childhood, since the construction of childhood is ongoing and is often affected by the production and reproduction of cultures by the society members. In the late 1950s, there was a saying; "*children should be seen and not heard*", this concept varies in different social and cultural context in the world. In some of the global south, this view is still very prominent. In today's world, this idea is considered as old fashioned, as children are both seen and heard and are considered as active members in a society (Montgomery, 2003). For instance, Malala Yosufzai, a Pakistani activist for female education, is the youngest Nobel Prize laureate at the age of 17. She is known for human rights advocacy for education of women and children in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. She started speaking about education since age 8 and stood up against the extremists who had banned girls from attending schools in Swat Valley, Pakistan. She was a peer educator in the Open Mind's youth program, who worked in schools to help children engage in constructive discussion on social issues through journalism, public debates, and dialogues.

4.1.2. Childhood in Time and Place

The constructionist perspective uses discourse to perceive childhood. Discourse is an independent concept that is held together by a particular ideology or a worldview. The constructionist perspectives often use discourses to describe the different ways in which the knowledge about children and childhood are created. Discourses in childhood reflect the way in which particular cultures interpret the biological immaturity of children and how it places children in relation to other age groups, and often the discourses about childhood come from religion, philosophy, law, and medicine. Each of this category has ways in understanding children and childhood (Montgomery, 2003). Since the constructionist perspective views childhood as a social construct thus the ideas about childhood depend on the culture into which a child is born, and culture varies across places and time.

Every culture does things differently. The way children are parented contributes towards the development of particular values, strengths, and behaviors. Different cultures place importance on different values and these are handed down through the generations. For instance, the concept of respect may mean different things in different cultures. According to Barone (2015), the way children are treated also depends on cultural factors such as subsistence type, economic activity, family & economic structure, and the residential patterns. In some societies, infants are protected and insulated by their parents for long periods of time, while in others, independence and resilience are expected from a young age and children are rarely excluded from adult activities; rather they are readily integrated into the domestic economy.

According to Abebe & Bessell (2011), childhood is often lost when children take upon adult responsibilities. It is often that children who work, come under the category of those children who have lost their childhood. In some South Asian and African cultures, it is natural for young girls to engage in domestic work as domestic is often viewed as a natural or intrinsic to being a woman. Similarly, in the Tongan society, children grow up in a horticulture society where they "begin to practice tasks before they are expected to be capable of doing them. Toddlers try to sweep leaves, cut grass with a machete, or peel vegetables and are usually allowed to handle the tools required for such tasks" (Lee, 1996, p.160). It is considered as a part of growing up and often adds value to a child's life. Punch (2001) pointed out that in rural Bolivia, 5-year-old children were expected to take work responsibilities in their homes. According to Akhtar & Razzak (2005), in the context of Pakistan children who are engaged in domestic work are not considered as child laborers by the society or the government but rather as a normal feature of the society even when they are employed in an individual capacity in different households.

However, there is a concept of the idealized childhood which consists of work free childhood, the perspective of a work free childhood is that children should be in an environment that is safe. These environments include home and school where the child has no responsibility and where they can play and learn (Abebe & Bessell, 2011).

According to Montgomery (2003), Phillipe Aries had claimed that the ideas about childhood changed over the course of time. Aries (1962) concluded that childhood did not exist in the pre-industrial society. Children were "*little adults*" who took part in the same work and play activities as adults, and children were often seen as economic assets as opposed to a symbol of love. He further entailed that childhood being a human condition emerged towards the end of the 15th century. Before the 15th century, children were considered as young adults and there was no difference between childhood and adulthood. Furthermore, the concept of childhood gained more recognition during the 17th century when Aries experienced the emotions towards childhood in a child centered family and made Aries conclude that childhood is a different stage and state from adulthood and that there was no concept of childhood during the medieval times. (Prout & James, 2015).

The idea about childhood has changed over time, for instance in the 1950s, children were working on their parents' farms, such as picking vegetables and selling in the market. Children were often put into harsh working conditions and often did jobs that were meant for the adults. In today's world a child working is considered as child labor. The western model of childhood looks at leisure activities and school as the desired activities and places in which a child can and should be engaged in and therefore considers the third world countries as childhood deviant when the globalized models of childhood are examined, since they are based on the Western ideas (Boyden, 2003).

4.2. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

Children and young people have the same basic human rights as adults. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) explores the different rights that must be provided to children in order for them to develop to their full potential. The CRC offers children with an opportunity as an individual member of the society, community and family with rights who have responsibilities that are appropriate for their age and developmental stage.

Some of the United Nation's Sustainable Developmental Goals are also focused on the development and improving the lifestyles and living conditions of children. The CRC consists of 54 articles and all the articles interdepend on each other, and according to Smith (2016), there are four overarching principles which guide the implementation of various rights, these are:

- non-discrimination (Article 2),
- the best interest of the child (Article 3),
- rights to life and survival (Article 6),
- the rights to be heard (Article 12).

There are substantive articles which are often divided into 3Ps; right to Provision, Protection and Participation (Bardy, 2000). The provisional rights include the right to an adequate standard of living, health care, educational, legal, and social services. The protection rights include right to protection from discrimination, abuse and neglect, safety in the justice system. The participation rights include the right to freedom of expression, the right to information and participation in public (Bardy, 2000). The UN convention places the interests of the child as a priority for parents and hence the convention strongly recognizes and supports the parents and families and their cultural role and responsibilities for protecting and caring for children and helping them acquire values and standards (Article 5, 9 and 18). Furthermore, the convention compels state parties to provide parents with the capacity to fulfil their children's rights.

The convention has recognized the fundamental human dignity of all children and the urgency of ensuring their well-being and development Well-being is another way to frame the fulfillment of children's material and psychological needs. However, rights are stronger than needs or well-being. An approach based on children rights is grounded in obligation and accountability, working with children, and not just for them, respecting children's human dignity and agency. It is more universal, holistic, respectful, and sustainable.

The convention on the rights of the child includes the full scope of human rights applicable to children as a first point of reference. The convention is the only treaty specifically designed for children to ensure that their rights will be met as independent citizens, it exists to the provision, protection, participation of every child regardless of their gender, wealth, ethnicity, religion, location, or any other factor. The UNCRC is used as a base and a framework of references for policy makers, NGOs, child researchers as well as governments and state parties (James & James, 2008).

The 54 articles in the CRC focus on different aspects, for instance Article 3 of the UNCRC focuses on the best interest of the child. According to Erbay (2013), the CRC also demands that state parties should take the principle of "best interest of the child" as the main focus in the decision-making process and should ask children about their opinions when framing new policies. According to the Committee on the rights of the Child (2013), Article 3 is one of the essential principles of the convention and this principle is also observed in other articles of the UNCRC and urges the state parties to take the responsibilities of the best interest of the child in all dimensions of the society such as private and public. Furthermore, children should be provided with basic needs by the state parties, and they should ensure children's participation and protection. Children's participation and providing them with a voice is one of the foundations of the CRC and further provides them with the authority of making personal choices (Lundy, 2007). The CRC further aims to prevent children from harmful practices.

Every child whether a boy or a girl irrespective of age is unique and is important as a person with a right for their human dignity to be respected. The child has a right to have a say in all decisions and matters that concern him or her, to be listened to and for his or her opinion to be taken seriously (CIRN, 2002). This will enhance their understanding of their rights and build mutual respect between children and adults. The participation of children also enables to protect them more effectively from abuse and exploitation. When an adult understands children's experiences, they are able to create a better mechanism and provide the child with an opportunity to act as active agents in their own protection. This further helps to build recognition of children as independent right bearers with a sense of identity and a positive implication for their self-esteem (CRIN, 2002).

Children's rights are defined in a wide spectrum of economic, civil political and social rights and these rights have been labeled as the right to protection and the right to empowerment. According to Libel (2012), rights to protection emerged from the idea that new-born children require protection and that children are not equivalent to objects. Childhood is a phase in which human beings are vulnerable as they have not developed physically nor mentally, and the child requires particular attention and protection. In order for the child to be protected, all the decisions regarding the child have to be taken in the best interest of the child to ensure that their immediate and future well-being. Therefore, all the decisions and acts must imperatively assure children with rights. Children's protection must be ensured by all the stake holders in the child's life; the parents and the community which surround the child and the state (committee on the rights of the Children, 2013).

4.2.1. Children as citizens

Sociology of children and childhood has made significant contributions towards understanding children's lives through identifying the concept that childhood is socially constructed. Children as citizens is a concept that is views as children being provided with a status related to national membership or political voting rights, although children as right holders according to the UNCRC, although, the extent to this conveys citizenship upon children is debatable. The concept of children as citizens is closely related to the concept of children being competent, which is presented as a paradigm shift from earlier concepts where children were viewed as vulnerable and in need of care (Kjorholt, 2008). These new discourses provide children and young people with opportunities to be listened to, to influence decision-making process in different context, and to be participants in social, political and cultural life. Often discourses constructing children as subjects who have participation rights are misunderstood due to lack of conceptual clarity and ambiguity related to ideas of both participation and the child subject (Kjorholt, 2008).

According to Larkins (2013), citizenship is a legal and social status and a set of judicial, political, economic and cultural practices. Citizenship determines how the economic and cultural capital are redistributed and recognized within society (Isin and Turner, 2007). The concept of citizenship comprises of relationships between rights, duties, participation, and identity. However, Lister (2007a) argues that comprehensive definition of citizenship must consider the ways children live, and their rights in the society.

The UNCRC has been described as revolutionary when compared to earlier declarations on children's rights, which did not recognize the child's autonomy and views (Verhellen, 1997). The emphasis of participation rights in the UNCRC has been used by researchers as well as by child rights advocates as a frame of references and a tool for treating children as fellow members of the society or as co-citizens (James and James, 2008). However, it has also been argued that children's rights to participation in the UNCRC are limited since they deny children political rights such as the right to vote and thus fail to recognize children as full citizens.

According to Marshall (1964) in James and James (2008), the traditional citizenship theories state that children are not seen as citizens in the formal political sense of the term and excluded from the term citizenship because they do not have political rights, such as the right to vote, however they do have certain civic and social rights. Providing children with citizenship rights raises fundamental questions such as: What does it mean to be a citizen? And what does it mean to be a child? These are associated with notions of citizenship, childhood, and social and democratic participation (James and James, 2008). However, in the recent years' researchers have clarified the meaning of citizenship and as a consequence promoting further discussion of children as subjects with rights attached to citizenship are gradually receiving more emphasis. This is crucial since providing children rights as citizens challenges the traditional theories of citizenship based in liberal notions of democratic participation and the idea of the rational autonomous individual.

As a consequence, the new perspectives on children and citizenships are beginning to emerge. For instance, Jans (2004), argue that children-sized citizenship is a dynamic and continuous learning process which demands both participation and involvement. As a part of this, citizenship provides an identity to children which places children in a position as contributing social actors in the society, representing a positive approach to the concept of children as citizens (James and James, 2008).

Providing children rights as citizens is seen as unproblematic however, the critics of children's social participation warn that by providing children with citizenship rights, one is burdening children by putting too much responsibility on them and exposing them to inadequate care and protection. De winter (1997) argues that adults have overall responsibility of creating an environment that ensures children have a good quality of life and for developing appropriate context for children's participation. Other researchers have argued that citizenship is a tool that can be used to incorporate children in the social structure of the society, to strengthen their influence and agency in the society, and to educate them as future adults' citizens (James and James, 2008).

Children's participation does not only benefit them directly, but it also has long term significance for their community, their nation, and the world because it encourages the development of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that are fundamental in a sustaining democracy (Smith et al, 2003). Thus, encouraging children to express their opinions and feelings about their lives and events in their world and to participate actively in the world signals a respect for children as human beings (James and James, 2008).

4.2.2. Early childhood and Children's Rights

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) recognizes that every child has the right to go to school and learn as mentioned in Article 28 of the UNCRC; the right to education. This right therefore begins at early childhood since the UN committee defines early childhood as a period from birth to 8 years of age.

The principle of best interest of the child is an overall guiding principle that is used for interpretation and implementation of children's rights since there is no definite or universal standard. The best interest of the child principle is varied worldwide due to different norms and values. Often the implementation of this principle is connected with the right to be heard, which depends on the socio-cultural context. According to Alston (1994), the right to be heard or the voice of the child is supported in the Western society or the global north, however, in some global south societies it is regarded as contradicting to the social values, responsibilities and interdependence connecting the best interest of the child to the local traditions and customs of the family and community.

The UNCRC committee on the General Discussion Day in 2006 had an objective was to relate the UNCRC to early childhood. Since children are seen as competent social actors from a young age and also have the right to express and their views to be taken seriously as mentioned in Article 12 of the UNCRC. The committee discussed the implementation of the following objectives:

- Strengthening and understanding of the human rights to all young children and to draw state parties' attention to their obligations towards young children;
- To comment on the specific features of early childhood and the impact of realization on their rights;
- To encourage the recognition of young children as social actors from the beginning of life, with particular interests, capacities and vulnerabilities and of requirements for protection, guidance and support in the exercise of their rights.

According to Kjørholt (2019), the following points were also underlined into the document:

- Young children actively make sense of their physical, cultural and social environments, learn progressively from their activities as well as from their interactions with their peers and adults around them;
- Young children's early years are the building blocks of their physical and mental health, emotional security, their cultural and physical identity and their developing competencies.

According to Freeman (1983), Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRC focuses on children's right to be heard and children's right to participation. These articles have been described as ground-breaking as compared to the earlier child rights declarations that viewed children as autonomous and competent right holders, capable of expressing their views and opinions in matters that concern their lives. Hence, a lot of countries have implemented these rights (Kjørholt, 2019).

Furthermore, children's right to express their views is connected to family and community life. According to the UN committee on the Rights of the Child (2005), the

concept of children's agency in early childhood is developed through relationships with a small number of people such as parents, caregivers, extended family members, peers, and educators. According to Kjørholt (2019), children in the early childhood period, often uses art and play as a method to express their views and opinions.

According to Casares, Collins, Tisdall & Grover (2016), children and young people's participation is necessary for effective and respectful protection, as required by the UNCRC. Children and young people's participation can have a significant impact upon processes and their results. Children and young people should be seen as survivors and active participants in creating solutions, not just as victims and problems. As the special issue's articles describe, the benefits of children and young people's participation have been widely documented, both for the children and young people involved and the decisions made.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (hereinafter UN Committee) explains that child participation is an ongoing process, which include information-sharing and dialogue between children and adults based on mutual respect, and in which children can learn how their views and those of adults are considered and shape the outcome of such processes.

Besides responding to the children's and young people's preferred level of involvement, scholars and advocates generally agree that the participation of children and young people should also be adequate, inclusive and meaningful within a continuum of engagement. Adequacy refers to the appropriateness of participation taking into consideration the children's and young people's cognitive and emotional development and maturity, the children's and young people's best interests as well as the child's or young person's subjective perspective in addition to objective factors. Childhood as a dynamic concept, and children's and young people's capacities as evolving, are at the core of the CRC and they need to be considered when assessing the appropriateness of care and the means of participation (Casares et al, 2016).

Early childhood has gained a lot of attention in the last decade in the low- and middle-income countries. According to the UN committee on the right of the child (2006), early childhood was looked as a period where children would socialize in order to move from the concept of immature human being to mature adults, however with the implementation of the CRC, requires children of all ages and even at the early childhood age to be respected as persons in their own rights. However, the Committee is also concerned about the implementation of children rights at early childhood level not being a priority for state parties, as not significant attention is being given to the laws, policies and programs about young children being right holders hence not providing children with the understanding of their rights in the early childhood phase (Kjørholt 2019).

4.2.3. Implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child during the early years

While older children can express themselves more clearly and articulate their rights and make their voices heard, a young child (under 8 years) may not be able to do so in the same way. Thus, this adds to the burden of responsibility for state parties as duty bearers in realization of the rights of young children. On the other hand, although the CRC provides a framework for the realization of rights for children younger than 8 years of age, it was the UNCRC's observation that young children were often overlooked in

state parties reporting it to the committee. One implication of this was that state parties may overlook their obligation towards young children, seeing them as passive objects of care, rather than as active social participants and right bearers (Bardy, 2000).

In 2004, the UNCRC dedicated a day to discuss this issue and produced a document called the "General Comments 7, Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood". The general comment 7 is a comprehensive document that explains how the convention on the rights of the child should be interpreted when it comes to younger children.

Comment 7 is one of the most important comments of the General Comment 7 of the CRC because:

- Early years as an intense period of brain development, some parts of the brain that are highly plastic at birth may only be so during the early years and for a short window of time.
- Early experience and quality of environment around children have significant and determining roles in their brain development.
- The convention on the rights of the child is a rights-based approach to early childhood development. Securing rights articulated in the CRC is an effective way to improve the quality of early experiences. The general comment 7 provides a road map of how to implement the CRC during these crucially important years.

According to Bardy (2000), the general comment 7 aims to show government the information on young children which they must have legally provide to the UNCRC, while affirming that young children's rights should be monitored and reported within a wide scope as outlined in the CRC.

The right to provision includes a number of substantive rights of the CRC, including the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to adequate healthcare, free education, and legal and social services. According to UNCRC every child has a right to go to school and learn, and this right begins at the early childhood stage. According to UNICEF (2016), quality Education is also one of the Sustainable Developmental Goals and hence it is being called upon on governments to ensure that all children have access to quality Early childhood Education (Kjørholt, 2019).

Although Article 28 of the CRC, does not list preschool education as the obligation of the state, the general comment 7 clarifies that the committee intercepts the right to education in early childhood begins at birth and is closely linked to young children. Quality early years program have shown to have a positive association with developmental outcomes and are therefore governed under the right of the child to education (Bardy, 2000).

The UNCRC needs to be implemented and practiced, there are different ways that a country can implement and practice the UNCRC. For instance, according to the UN Committee, children and young people's participation should have some impact on decision-making. This can take different forms, Casares et al (2016), suggest that since participation is not static, but rather it is a process that may change over time. By framing participation as a continuum of arrangements that may contribute to children and young people's empowerment and positive development, scholars and practitioners have come to see this right as including child/youth-driven participation as well as child/youth-adult collaborations. Several typologies of participation have been developed, each with its own strengths and shortcomings.

Deciding when and how different types and levels of involvement (for example, sharing information, making suggestions, voicing a preference, negotiating options with adults or making final decisions) constitute genuine participation requires attention to the best interests of the child or young person and the particular context where the child or young person lives, particularly children and young people's status and social structures as they are embedded in the larger specific societal framework. Whereas sometimes the lack of adult involvement can hinder children's and young people's development and access to resources, overprotection of children and young people can result in their exclusion from processes that affect them at the expense of the children and young people themselves and substantial loss for the communities where they live. At the same time, attention needs to be paid so that adult-driven participation does not result in manipulation, decoration or tokenism (Casares, et al, 2016). Children and young people's participation in child protection procedures can result in better decisions that incorporate children and young people's input. Relatedly, exclusion of children and young people can increase fears and anxiety, and reduce children and young people's willingness to share their experiences in the future.

According to Casares et al (2016), there are several other child protection articles in CRC; those dealing with family separation (Article 9), family reunification across borders (Art. 10), illicit transfer of children (Article 11), right to privacy, honour and reputation (Article 16), alternative care (Article 20), adoption (Article 21), harmful practices (Article 24), sexual abuse and exploitation (Article 34), abduction, sale or trafficking of children (Article 35), other forms of exploitation (Article 36), etc. Respect for the child's or young person's views and providing an opportunity for expression of those views in any protection measures as well as in the planning, implementation and monitoring of child protection systems is crucial across all settings.

In fact, the UN Committee has urged State parties to include in domestic legislation the requirement to elicit children and young people's views, and give them due weight in decision-making in judicial proceedings and other procedures with direct impact on children and young people's lives. Using a rights-based approach, most notably promoting children and young people's participation and agency, is considered a core child protection competency essential to develop child protection programming. The result of an interagency capacity building initiative to develop a commonly agreed set of competencies that would apply to emergency settings, the Child Protection in Emergencies (CPIE) competency framework outlines skills, behaviours and attitudes expected from child protection workers across child protection programmes and contexts, particularly those needed to communicate effectively with children and young people across ages, levels of ability and cultural backgrounds, and to advocate for children and young people's participation at local and national levels (Casares, et al, 2016).

Rights are realised in particular social contexts. The CRC attempts to balance the rights of the individual child or young person and groups of children and young people, with those of their families and the state, for example, by highlighting the supportive role of families and circumstances in which the state is expected to intervene on behalf of children where protection concerns arise.

Participation being relational and situated, contextual factors need to be carefully considered as they determine whether and how children and young people's participation takes place. Thus, advocating for critically considering the different environments where

participation takes place, including children and young people's families and communities, as well as national and international legal and socio-economic norms/contexts. The socio-cultural conceptions of childhood and child-adult communication vary across cultural settings and influence actual children and young people's participation. In many societies around the world, children have no right to express their opinions and are rather expected to readily obey parents/elders, who are considered to know best.

Several principles exist to guide decision-making, such as the best interests of the child or young person and harmonious family and community relations. Even determining what constitutes the child's or young person's best interest raises questions as to whose perspective should prevail/who should determine it and how to balance the child's or young person's best interest with parents' beliefs and what may be culturally perceived as parental rights. However, it must be remembered that parents are not in opposition to children's rights. In fact, the CRC recognises both children and young people's rights to protection and their place within family and society. It affirms the role of parents and the state in the life of children and young people throughout the instrument.

A child or young person is 'not only an object of protection but also as a subject, a person who is in the process of growing up also has the right to decide' about his/her/their welfare and well-being. Consequently, states parties are required to take all appropriate measures – legislative, administrative, social and educational – to protect children and young people from all forms of abuse and neglect (Articles 19, 32–37) and to support their right to participate in decision-making that significantly affects their lives, to be heard and to facilitate their developing independence (Article 12).

4.3. The Rights of the Child in Pakistani Context

This thesis focuses on Early Childhood Educators' perspectives of children's rights and their implementation in the context of Karachi, Pakistan. The CRC is considered as a comprehensive document which encompasses all the fundamental rights of children. By signing this convention, Pakistan committed to take legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures to protect and fulfill the rights of all children born or living in the country. The rights enshrined in the convention cover health, nutrition, education, physical and mental development, freedom of expression, right to play, leisure and rest, as well as protection against economic exploitation (child labor), discrimination, violence, and all forms of abuse.

According to Aziz (2019), it is a matter of grave concern that Pakistan has been placed at the low position of 154th out of 182 countries in the global ranking on child rights lower than Iran, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Nepal. This global index is predominantly based on indicators relating to health, education, and protection of children in these countries.

According to Aziz (2019), UN's observation of the fifth periodic report of Pakistan on the implementation of the CR revealed dissatisfaction of the international community on our slow progress. The concluding observation of UN committee on the CRC exposed numerous delinquencies on Pakistan's part, ranging from the inability of the state to legislate in favor of children, barriers of enforcement of child laws and weak coordination among stakeholders. The UN committee has also referred to the poor financing of

interventions related to child welfare by the government as well as negligence and corruption of the local level government officials to check child labor and child abuse.

A number of ground realities support the critical observations of the UN committee on Pakistan's failure to legislate and implement laws relating to child rights. Since the 1990s, after signing the CRC, Pakistan has not been able to establish a national commission on child rights (Aziz, 2019).

4.4. Focus of Early childhood Education in Pakistan

Teachers / Early Childhood Educators occupy dominant role, which positions them as the imparters and sources of knowledge. Children are considered as dependent and the receivers of knowledge, rather than being considered as potential, curious and powerful learners with unlimited capabilities. However, this approach to teaching and learning does not privilege the holistic development and well-being of children. In contrast, many developed countries use research-based contemporary approaches to children's education and development, giving children a more central role in their learning to ensure that every child has the opportunity to develop to his/her full potential. This kind of approach reminds teachers to view all children not as needy or deficient individuals. The early childhood age is a critical stage for children's holistic development, which includes social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development. According to Murtaza (2011) many countries are investing in the early years of children's education. World organizations and forums have emphasized the provision of equal opportunities for young children for their growth and development. The current emphasis of an Early Childhood Education (ECE) seems to be more on the holistic development of children by using a multidisciplinary approach in order to meet the children's needs in the areas of health, nutrition, care, and education.

In Pakistan, early childhood education is gaining momentum as compared to a decade ago when early childhood education was considered a luxury in a country where provision of primary education for the population of all school ages was still a dream.

Successful personal, social, and moral development is critical for every young child in all aspects of their lives and provides them with the best opportunities for success in all areas of learning (Mcilroy, 2022). The development of good cognitive skills, emotional well-being and social competence in early childhood forms a strong foundation of success in adulthood (The Science of Early Childhood Development, 2007).

Development is a change that results from a movement towards a goal. In psychological sense, it refers to certain changes that occur human beings between conception and death. Development is a process which brings qualitative change in a person, including changes in physical, cognitive, and social aspects. Physical development includes the refinement of motor behavior and physiological aspect changes. Cardwell and Flanagan (2005), state that the cognitive development is one of those terms in psychology that covers a wide range of behaviors, such as development of memory, intelligence, problem solving and so on. It is therefore generally used to refer to the change in a person's cognitive structures which occurs during a person's life span.

The Early Childhood Education or more commonly known as Kindergarten in Pakistan rely on the developmental psychology and has a lot of influence from Piaget and Erikson. The National ECE Curriculum of Pakistan focuses on academic skills which include

improved cognitive development i.e. thinking and reasoning skills, improved social, emotional and language development. Furthermore, the national curriculum for ECE Pakistan focuses on the 3rd stage of Erikson Theory of Autonomy vs Shame and promotes that autonomy and self-discipline are very important for learning.

Article 31 of the UNCRC emphasizes children's right to leisure, play and culture, furthermore, educational experts generally agree on the influence of play on different aspects of development. Piaget's work shows that play has a vital role in the early cognitive development of a child. Erikson emphasized the importance of play in emotional development. Vygotsky's work highlights the role of play in social development. Therefore, a variety of play activities can be helpful in all-round development. However, due to the differences in culture, environment, and background, it is important to ensure variety and innovation in the play activities to meet the demands of each and every child. Play fosters the cognitive, creative, emotional, and social development of young children (Shakir et al, n.d).

Desirable outcomes for a pre-school child largely depend upon the play activity, its planning and specifically organized environment to carry out these activities. Play is voluntary, intrinsically motivated and a pleasurable activity. Rate of participation in the play activity is higher than simple reading and writing. Various types of play can be included in the curriculum which are free play, guided play, play with objects, play with motion, dramatic play and games. A teacher's role in play activities is most important. Therefore, he should be given freedom to find his own ways of implementing the curriculum, based on the individual needs of the children and the social context of the setting. Successful attainment of curricular objectives requires an organized environment which thus includes physical, both internal and external, environment of the school. Effective implementation of curriculum also requires a high level of internal motivation of the child. In order to maintain such a high motivational level, special consideration should be given to social issues, children's conflicts, time management, utilization of play materials and the teacher's involvement.

4.5. Chapter Summary

This chapter discusses the various theories used to look at the way the sociology of children and childhood emerged, and childhood has differed over time and space. Furthermore, this chapter also viewed the UNCRC and how children's rights are implemented in early childhood education. In addition, this his chapter also focuses on the context of early childhood education in Pakistan.

Chapter V

5.0. Analysis Chapter I

This chapter outlines and presents the analysis of the data that was collected through 10 individual interviews. This enables to further explore the study by discussing different perspectives of early childhood educators of Karachi, Pakistan on children's rights, the implementation of children's rights in their everyday teaching and learning as well as their understanding of the UNCRC. This chapter will also provide an insight the challenges that the early childhood educators face when implementing children's rights in Karachi, Pakistan.

These interviews provided the research with an insight about the perspective's early childhood educators children's rights, the way they implement children's rights into their curriculum and daily teaching and learning as well as their understanding of the UNCRC and the challenges the early childhood educators feel when implementing children's rights.

5.1. Perspectives on Early Childhood Education and Children's Rights

Early childhood education (ECE) is generally regarded as being concerned with the physical care and education of young children from birth to eight years of age. According to Ahmad (2011), most countries in Asia ECE is regarded as a fairly recent development. Although ECE has existed since the creation of kindergartens in the 1800s, the last decade has seen a remarkable amount of attention devoted to the subject of early education for young children. ECE offers benefits to the child's cognitive development and better social and emotional adaptation. Neurological studies have found that children's brain development has particularly high potential around the age of three, when an appropriate stimulating learning environment – which could just as well as a play activity – can increase the physical size of the brain itself. In economic terms, there are long terms positive effects of ECE on employment, labor force participation and earnings (Government of Pakistan, 2008).

The participants of this study described early childhood as a period that starts from birth till the age of 8 years old. Majority of the research participants felt that early childhood education is one of the most important phases of the child's life, this is the period when the child develops holistically. Early childhood is a very crucial stage in the development of young children as the cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development has a direct effect on their overall development and on the adults that they will become.

"Early Childhood is a time-period that begins from birth and even before, since the child is in the mother's womb. The importance is so much that everything that happens to the child and whatever is going on in the child's surrounding, it affects the child's development, and it also influences the child's lifelong process. Early childhood span is till 8 years and hence it is a time-period where the human being develops the most and rapid, it is very important for the child's overall life journey." (Participant No.2 Elizabeth)

The ECE programs also provide an opportunity, during the preschool years to contrast early health and nutrition problems that may impede learning and affect memory, reasoning, and achievement (Asian Development Bank, 2000).

Majority of the participants of this research felt that young children begin to learn about the world around them from a very early age, including during the prenatal, perinatal, and postnatal period. Children's early experiences define the bonds they form with their parents and their first learning experiences deeply affect their future physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development.

The importance of early childhood education, according to participant no. 6 of this research suggest that:

"Early Childhood is very important. It is a basic necessity for every child, and it helps to improve social skills, it helps a child later on life and if a child has missed this part of his life, than it is very difficult for them to cope up. I feel this part is like a bridge that connects to the life later on, it helps children adjust to school and as they grow older, it definitely has an impact." (Participant No. 6, Tina)

In the view of the World Health Organization (1999), parenting, education, skills development and support from parents and families, adequate nutrition, and improved health conditions and health education are essential for improving children's life chances. Today, there is a growing awareness that the first years of a child's life are crucial to his/her development, and there is substantial proof of the importance of quality education from a young age.

5.1.1. Role of parents and society in early childhood development

Parent's role is considered as one of the most important and impactful roles when it comes to a child's development. The role of the society in child development is the impact of the environment in which the child is growing up and that also plays a significant role. It primarily refers to the school system where the teachers influence the children quite a lot, however, teachers are only part of a comprehensive system that affects the psychological and physical development of the child.

Participants in this research observed that parents feel that early childhood education provides an environment as a safeguard for their child's health and safety as well as a quality environment in which their child is happy, makes friends, has interesting and positive experiences, and learns about a wide variety of things.

"Whatever experiences we are able to give to them is what they learn and that is what early childhood education becomes. As a society, parents, neighbors, grandparents, schooling system all of the adult's responsibility becomes to facilitate the child." (Participant no. 2, Elizabeth)

Family plays one of the most important roles in a child's development. Parents are the greatest role models, who affect the child's values and opinions, the development of the child's personality and the acquisition of good habits expressed, and whether the child will be growing up happy and successful. Another important role belongs to siblings and grandparents. Even distant relatives can affect the child a lot, because children often see them as role models too. Adults often emphasize how a fulfilled childhood and growing up surrounded by relatives helped them become successful people.

Majority of the research participants agreed that, although parents are the most important people in a child's life, they are not the only ones that affect their development. Having many quality experiences is conducive to the development of many skills and the acquisition of self-confidence. Children who are active at school and in extracurricular activities have a positive outlook on life, which in turn facilitates their progress. However, according to participant number 6 of this study, it's not just the parents who play an important role in the child's life but the society as a whole.

"The child spends most of his early days at home with the caregivers hence it becomes the caregiver's responsibility to provide basic skills to the child, but when the child goes to school, it's the school's responsibility becomes some certain things." (Participant No, 2, Elizabeth)

The best possible use should be made of all the possibilities that the society provides in order for the child to spend time in wholesome ways, socializing with other children, learning about their own abilities and about the world around them.

5.1.2. Importance of early childhood education

It is crucial that the child should attend quality educational institution from the beginning. Extensive research has confirmed the connection between quality childhood education and later successful education at college, which also directly affects the decision that will be made regarding professional and private life.

Research participants agreed that early childhood educations help children to work and develop various skills for example social and emotional skills, language skills, etc. through various activities. Participant No. 3 of this research feels that early childhood education enables the children to build a trust in the education rather than taking it as a burden. It allows them to be under trained professionals who cater to the child's individual needs.

"Early childhood education is very important especially when it is providing a good secure environment and the child is around professional adults, then yes early childhood education is very important." (Participant no 4, Melisa).

Kindergarten/Pre-school/Early childhood education enables the child to encounter external influences at an early age. Early childhood centers are the first place where the child spends a considerable amount of time away from their parents, where the teachers, up to a point, take over the child's upbringing from the parents. This period is very important for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, as they learn to socialize, as well as reach some important developmental milestones.

In the modern society, the roles have been assigned so that each child has the right to a happy childhood and a good life. It is clear that the central role in this period of life, besides the family belongs to the school, where the child is able to progress and be ready for the many challenges that are brought upon them while growing up.

"The ECD centers are more of day care and then once the child is 3 years old the academics starts. Fortunately, the institute I have been teaching at caters for the child the way it should be done. They accommodate to all the developmental domains as it is very essential to cater to both their physical and mental growth before moving to academics." (Participant no. 7, Maria)

According to UNESCO, early childhood education is more than the preparation for primary school. It aims at the holistic development of a child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs in order to build a broad foundation for lifelong learning and well-being. It has the possibility to nurture caring, capable and responsible future citizens.

5.1.3. Educators Perspective on Children's Rights

Children's rights play an important role in early childhood education, because they promote social justice and empowerment for children, highlight the impact of early childhood experiences and questions the traditional assumptions about the competency and agency of young children (Smith, 2017). General Comment No 7: Implementing children's rights in early childhood (GC7; United Nation, 2006) provided initial directions to understand the diverse ways by which the rights of young children can be understood. The GC7 encourages early childhood institutions, policy makers and staff to promote and implement children's rights.

Some articles in the Convention have particular significance for early childhood education. General Comment 7 (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2005) specifically addressed the rights of young children. For example, Article 29 states that education, including early childhood education, should be directed to 'the development of the child's personality, talents, mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential' (CRIN, 2002). These articles of the Convention, along with Article 12 which entitles a child to respect for his or her views, combine as a powerful argument to governments for high-quality early childhood education service provision.

Most of the participants of this study felt that children have, and these rights are very important, but they are not being fulfilled in the society they live in, participant 9 of this research study felt that;

"Children have just as many rights as any other human being in the society. The society I come from thinks that a child is a small human being and what rights will this person have and hence they feel that the child will be given their right once they grow older."

In order to adopt children's rights, focus on early childhood means that young children are recognized as active citizens who participate and contribute to society rather than as passive objects of adults' actions and concern (Smith, 2017). In Pakistan, children are about 48% of the total population. Very few children are privileged to have children's rights, especially the right to education, it is only for those who can afford it (Khosro, n.d).

Most of the research participants in this study agreed that children's rights are important, and every child has the right to the basic needs, however, they also agreed that most of the children rights are not met in Pakistan due various factors. Participant 3 and 9 mentioned the following:

"Children also have rights. One of these rights is education, but because of the society we live in, the lack of awareness about these rights put children in situations where they are sent to work at a young age rather than being educated." (Mona)

"There is a notion of early childhood about children being given a choice that helps their development, but we provide them this option of choice because it supports their

development, but we never think that it's the child's right to be given choice. Hence even when we are doing something good for the child, we often feel that this would impact their development and that's why we should do it." (Tina)

Children's education in Pakistan is in a dismal state. Inadequacies of education system, in terms of weak infrastructure, poor quality teaching, lack of qualified teachers, teacher absenteeism, corporal punishment, emotional abuse, verbal abuse, strict conditions and lack of learning materials pushes children out of school.

Research participants also felt that children's rights depend on the social strata. This is because Pakistan has no system in place where the children can get their rights met. Since there are no general hospitals and schools, there is no system through which one can know whether children are attending schools or not, however, as compared to other nations, they have systems in place that will have data about the number of children attending the schools, whether the parents are involved or not. Participant number 1 of this research feels;

"We have schools in place, but we don't check whether children living in the surrounding areas are going to schools or not. So those rights are not being met right there. Other than that, the facilities are there, we don't lack the facilities, but we do lack the system and there are loopholes in the system. We are missing links in the system." (Harper)

Education is a basic right and also a basic need for the child and somehow parents have this awareness and are able to follow. Every individual has rights, however, for early years, the child is at an age where he or she is helpless and is unable to communicate the way communication is done and often this struggle to communicate leads to paying less attention to the rights of the child. Hence parents impose their ideologies on the child.

5.2. Implementing Children's Rights and the UNCRC into the Curriculum

According to Smith (2018), the adoption of the United Nations of the UNCRC took place in November 1989, following a 10-year period of discussion and debate, which marked a new vision of children and childhood, and changed discourse and cultures across the world to give more prominence to children's issues (Cantwell, 2011).

The 54 articles of the UNCRC ranges from provision, protection, and participation. The provision articles refer to the right of children to receive appropriate health care, social security, physical care, education, family life, recreation and play and culture. Protection articles provide children the right to be safe from discrimination, abuse, exploitation, substance abuse, violence, injustice, and conflict. Participation rights refer to children's political rights, to name and identity, to be consulted on matters that affect them, to have access to information, to be able to express opinions and to take part in decisions (Smith, 2017).

Implementing children's right in the teaching curriculum makes a positive difference to both children and the teachers. Regardless of its level, it is important to keep in mind that the primary purpose of children's rights education is to teach children their rights under the UNCRC and to use pedagogic and disciplinary practices that are consistent with the convention (Covell, Howe & McNeil, 2010).

In order for children's rights to be implemented into the curriculum or into the daily teaching and learning of children, teachers should be aware about children's rights. Teachers must come up with strategies and activities that can be integrated into the daily teaching and learning which can help to implement the UNCRC as well as enable children to learn about their basic rights. Participants in this study voiced their opinion that it is very important for teachers to be aware about the UNCRC and children's rights as it enables the educator to know whether the child's needs are met both mentally and emotionally. An example given by participant of this research is:

"If the child's mental health is affected due to the parents or the care-giver, that affects my role as an educator, it affects the child's participation in the classroom as well as the child's peers" (Harper).

Some participants also felt that even when teachers are not aware of the UNCRC or children's rights consciously, subconsciously as a person it is engrained in them that there are certain rights and responsibilities that children have; but people/adults choose to ignore and neglect them. Participant 8 of this study felt that teacher's awareness about children's rights certainly makes a difference in the way they teach and the way child's needs are met;

"As an educator if I know what the child's needs, rights and capabilities are and the capacity of the child and what is the child's learning style than the educators can mold their teaching to cater to the individual needs of the child. However, for untrained teachers, they treat all the children the same way." (Gisselle).

Teacher's perspectives and awareness about children's rights would allow them to prepare their lesson plans accordingly. For example, teachers have set objects they want to achieve at the end of each lesson, therefore, being aware of children's rights can enable them to incorporate them in their daily teaching and learning as well as curriculum development.

5.2.1. Implementing children's rights and the UNCRC at the classroom level

According to Covell, Howe & McNeil (2010), there are different ways through which children's rights can be implemented at the classroom level for instance; incorporating children's rights through rights-respecting practices, creating, and posting charter of classroom rights and corresponding responsibilities at the start of the school term with the input of the students, referring to the charter throughout the school term when there are behavioral problems or infringements of a child's right. Participants of this research agreed that children's rights can be introduced in grade 1 and grade 2 to bring awareness at the basic capacity and provided examples which can put children's rights education into effect through:

- Teaching children their basic rights through stories and activities
- Integrating children's rights into all teaching materials and curricula
- Ensuring that children are able to participate meaningfully in all aspects of classroom functioning
- Using rights-consistent democratic teaching practices such as role-play, small group learning and project-based learning
- Informing parents of the children's rights initiative and the rationale

- Using a self-assessment tool for evaluating progress in classroom implementation

Participant 6 of this research felt that:

"We are bringing awareness through storytelling; we think aloud and share experiences. We bring in different stories at the kindergarten level. However, it will take time to build on, but it can be formally introduced at the grade 1 and grade 2 level in order for it to show results later." (April).

Other participants of this research felt that children's rights can be introduced at the basic capacity to children at the early childhood level, since children require a lot of stimulating and hands-on-activities for them to be able to understand a concept, similarly rights can also be introduced to them at their level through various activities.

"At the early childhood level, 3-4 rights can be introduced, they should know what is allowed and not allowed especially when it comes to abuse since children are very vulnerable at this age and can easily be taken advantage of." (Participant 7, Maria).

A few participants of this study felt that teachers are not aware about children's rights or the UNCRC since children's rights is not a topic of discussion, and it is brought down to you as a person and how self-aware one is as a teacher.

"I think teachers should consciously make an effort to keep children's rights in mind when planning their teaching curriculum or developing their lesson plans. It should be a conscious effort by the teachers to include children's rights in their curriculum planning and development." (Participant 10, Zara).

5.2.2. Implementing Children's rights and the UNCRC at the school level

Children's rights can be implemented at the school level (Covell et al, 2010), for instance, teachers and the principal can develop a strategic plan for implementation over time. The school can provide teachers and staff training about the UNCRC, rights-consistent teaching and discipline practices and about the implementation in classrooms. Children's rights can be incorporated into the school mission statement and the policies, the school can ensure and expand the opportunities for child participation in the school and can ensure the comprehensive use of the charter of rights and responsibilities in the classroom as well as outside the classroom. Involving parents of children's rights can also be another initiative taken by the school (Covell et al, 2010).

Participants felt that schools should provide the teacher with training and guidance on how to include and implement children's right and the UNCRC in their curriculum planning as well as their daily teaching and learning activities. Participants felt that schools can provide them with workshop on children's rights, and the UNCRC which will help them to learn about the UNCRC in detail.

"Since, we don't have awareness about children's rights, at the same time a lot of people are hesitant since they do not have the means and they don't know how to go about it. I think there are some guidance in the institutions, if the teachers who get taught that, but there are schools who are providing this awareness." (participant 5, Ellen).

Participants also voiced how during the COVID 19 pandemic, some schools had a special program that can help children to voice their feelings and help them to be able to tackle the social and emotional challenges they have faced during the pandemic.

"Because due to the pandemic the social emotional development of the child was affected as they were stuck in the house and were away from the outside world, the social emotional learning and at ECD level we are doing it through stories and trying to make them understand about positive feeling. It was there before as well but right now it is more focused in the lessons plans and daily teaching." (Participant 5, Ellen).

On the other hand, there were participants who felt that the schools are not doing anything in order for them to be able to further educate themselves on children's rights or the UNCRC.

"There are no courses or workshops, or training provided to the teachers by the school that I work, for children's rights or the UNCRC, I think this because the school administration and the management itself is not aware about children's rights and the UNCRC." (Participant 3, Mona).

This research participant agreed that the school provides a document at the start of the school year that highlights the academic domains that a child should achieve at the end of each term but does not provide any document or guidelines about the children's rights or the UNCRC.

5.3. Challenges of implementing children's rights and the UNCRC

The rights movement has been successful in focusing on how children can be effectively and ethically involved (Tisdall 2015). However, very young children, children living in contexts in which children and their families are marginalized, are not well positioned to enact their rights. The knowledge and position of adults are particularly relevant in affording young children's rights to participation. The process for how children's rights might be enacted, and therefore experienced, is directly associated with the outcome of how far decisions is acted on (Alderson 2008). Pedagogical approaches do not always attend to children's views and opportunities for participation, especially in the case of young children (Lansdown et al. 2014). Challenges in this area relate to constraints to do with organizational systems (Correia et al. 2019) and long-held debates regarding the developing capabilities of young children (Lansdown 2005).

There is an underlying assumption that children, in order to have rights recognized, must have some kind of responsibility associated with their allocation of such rights (Lundy and O'Lynn 2019). While young children are not always considered to be holders of rights and, therefore, often relieved of expectations of responsibilities, the rights of children "are not" contingent on obligations or responsibilities.

A few participants of this study verbalized their concerns about that there are very many early childhood and Montessori and day care centers in Karachi, these schools are mostly set up as businesses for people and some of them do not have trained teachers and hence are not aware about children's rights or the UNCRC.

"There are schools in every street in Karachi, and no school policy or document is being given to teachers, even in the elite schools, it is very rare. There is a very less percent of teachers who know about this. Even if they know about it, they have never really

researched about it. I feel there is only 30% of the teaching population who is aware about the UNCRC.” (Participant 8, Gisselle).

Some participants also felt that many of the teachers are unqualified and untrained and hence they are not aware about children’s rights and the UNCRC and the ways to implement them. According to Khan (2018), none of the public universities in Pakistan offer degrees, graduate courses, teacher training programmes and world-class research in education for ECE teachers. The existing facilities, including human and material resources in public and private schools, are not sufficient or competent enough to run effective ECE programmes. Most importantly, an ECE framework is yet to be created which will guide the development, implementation, and evaluation of ECE services across the country. A budget is needed to launch the provision of proper ECE services and to transform the existing traditional *katchi* classes into improved early years classes in all public schools in Pakistan (UNESCO, 2006).

“Teaching as a profession taken very seriously in our country. It is a thing where if you do not get any other job than you go into teaching. It is treated as a substitute profession. And it is the attitude that teaching is not an actual profession. They don’t take it in the sense that teachers are not responsible for building a child’s future” (Participant 5, Ellen).

As young children’s lives become intertwined with adult lives, for example, through digital technologies and media, opportunities for exerting agency and experiencing responsibility are often promoted (Theobald, 2019).

5.4. Chapter Summary

This chapter analyses and presents the data for the research questions that focus on the early childhood educators’ perspectives on early childhood education and care and the way in which children’s rights and the UNCRC can be implemented into the daily teaching and learning as well as curriculum planning. Furthermore, the analysis chapter also looks at the difficulties that educators face when implementing the UNCRC into the classroom.

Chapter VI

6.0. Analysis Chapter II

This chapter presents and analyses the data for the research questions number 3 and 4 which focus on the ways through which the children's rights and the UNCRC are being implemented in daily teaching and learning. It also focuses on the government policies and the schools' policies that talk about children's rights in early childhood education in Karachi, Pakistan. Furthermore, this chapter also looks deeper into the social, political and cultural challenges that an early childhood educator faces when implementing and protecting children's rights in their classrooms in the context of Karachi, Pakistan.

6.1. Government Policy Framework on Early Childhood Education and Children's Rights in Pakistan

Pakistan has various policy documents that covers both early childhood education and children's rights. One of the policy documents is the National Commission for Child Welfare and Development (NCCWD), which is a government policy document applicable to the whole of Pakistan irrespective of the province and city. The second policy document is the Early Childhood Education Policy Sindh (ECEPS), which is applicable to the early childhood education in Sindh; a province of Pakistan in which Karachi is situated.

The NCCWD aims to create a child friendly society that places the children at the center of development, recognizes their individuality, respects, and values their voices, observes their best interest in every sphere of life and protects them from violence, abuse, and exploitation. Whereas, the ECEPS aims to provide quality early childhood education for all children living in Sindh through early childhood teachers/caregivers/practitioners who are trained, qualified, willing, and able to understand the needs of all children with no exception, in a safe, caring, and appropriate environment.

One of the participants shared her experience and knowledge about the awareness of the government policy document and mentioned:

"I am aware about the national policy, the Sindh provincial ECE policy, which was designed in 2014 and revised and then launched in 2016. That policy highlights the children's rights and even if we look at the Sindh provincial ECE curriculum 2017 it also talks about children's rights." (Participant no. 10, Zara).

This shows that some participants are aware about the policy documents that is applicable to their own province, however these participants are those who are qualified and trained teachers in the field of early childhood education.

As mentioned in the theory chapter of this dissertation, it is important for the countries to have their own policies and legislation in order to encompass the UNCRC in their policies based on the needs of their countries as the UNCRC serves a framework for the policy makers, NGOS, child researchers as well as the state parties and the governments for their own policy documents.

According to Masood (2021), there is a mismatch between the policy plans, the implementation of early childhood education and the target age in Pakistan. The policy in Pakistan covers the entire early childhood age group, which is from zero to eight years, but the implementation programs target children from 4 to 8 years, moreover, these policy documents do not reach the targeted audience.

80% of the participants of this study were not familiar with any of the government policy documents, some of them have not been through any formal education or training to become a teacher and are not aware about the various government policies. One of the participants who was aware about the government policy about child abuse did not know about the government policy on early childhood education, and mentioned that:

"I am aware of 2 policy documents, they are being advocated in the public forum, both of these policy documents talk about child abuse. The government is now trying to spread awareness about violence against violence and child abuse". (Participant no. 4, Melisa).

This shows that there is a lack of awareness about the government policy document. Furthermore, Article 25A of the Pakistani Constitution neglects early years learning and concentrates on providing free and compulsory education to all children aged between 5 years and 16 years. In the 18th constitutional amendment in 2010 Sindh government under Act 2013 has extended this age group to include children aged 3-5 years to provide free preschool education. Unfortunately, it also missed out 0 -3 years which can be done through homeschooling and suggest that mothers need to be educated to take care of the social, moral, emotional, physical, and social development of their children.

6.2. School Policy Documents on Early Childhood Education and Children's Rights

School policy documents are important because they help a school to establish rules and procedures and create a standard of quality learning and safety, as well as expectations and accountability. Without these, schools would lack the structure and function necessary to provide the educational needs of students.

Participants of this research felt that children's rights should be implemented into the school policies, this will enable the educators to also know about the various children's rights as well as ways on how to tackle various situations on children's rights. However, there are not many schools who are including children's rights into their school policies. An example of this is from participant no.1 from this study who explained:

"I was provided with a handbook from the school, that only talks about the teacher's code of conduct and the milestones that the teacher and children should have achieved at the end of each term, there is no mention about children's rights" (participant no. 1, Harper).

Majority of participants felt that even though they do not have the school policies that specifically talk about children's rights they do have a system in place where they are protecting children's rights and the child's well-being. However, participants who have worked with NGOs felt that their NGOs provide them with documents that talk about children's rights,

"There are schools in every street in Karachi, and no school policy or document is being given to teachers, even in the elite schools, it is very rare. However, the international NGOs that I have worked with provided me with documents on children rights, but there is no follow up for these". (Participant no.3, Mona).

According to Masood (2021), a few elite schools in Pakistan are implementing children's rights into their school policy and making their teachers aware about the various rights that children, but this is just a drop in the ocean, there is a much larger need for immediate action to improve the Early Childhood and children's rights policy and programs.

6.3. Is Pakistan at par with the UNCRC?

The UNCRC provides a universal standard on the rights of the children all over the world, and Pakistan being a signatory is under obligation to develop a child protection system to ensure optimum child development and protection. However, even 30 years later since Pakistan signed the convention which required legislation to make the CRC implement, it still has no comprehensive enabling law with regards to the CRC and as a result the convention is unable to be applied directly in the courts and even 30 years down the lane, the state of the children in Pakistan has been described as terrible (Mehnaz, 2019). When asked the research participants about whether the UNCRC should be customized to meet the needs of the children of Pakistan, they were mixed reviews.

20% of the participants in this research felt that the government of Pakistan should use UNCRC as guide in order to help the country become at par with children's rights. One of the participant's mentioned:

"We have this one document from the United Nations, and it is for all the countries, if Pakistan has accepted it and signed it than it should be used and it should not just be there just for the sake of it". (Participant no. 8, Gisselle).

30% of the participants agreed that we need to follow it as a generalized document and let it be a guide for our policies but at the same time the UNCRC also needs to be customized because there are some parts of the UNCRC that do not apply to all the nations, and governments and countries should only use those aspects that directly applies to them. Participant no. 10 had the following comment to make:

"If we really want to bring change, then all the articles in the UNCRC should be implemented as it is, but if you are a real goal setter and you believe that, some parts of the document is not applicable to certain parts of Pakistan than you have the chance and the means to adapt it into your context and contextualize it to your needs." (Participant no. 10, Zara).

50% of the participants felt that the UNCRC is a very generalized document and should not be implemented the way it is, since Pakistan is not at par with the rights mentioned in the UNCRC and we should have a customized version in order to be able to achieve the standards that the UNCRC has set;

"I think, for a beginning, for a start, there should be a simplified document that is achievable, if it is going to be simpler or if it is a revised document according to the needs of the country and the children. It is not like we can't achieve the big goals, we can, but we lack the effort." (Participant no. 6, Tina).

Pakistan has made significant strides to prioritize children's issues. However, a lot more needs to be done. Poverty and social norms are impediments that continue to hold the children back and hence they must be overcome through collective and accelerated efforts to ensure that all children get equal and all rights everywhere in Pakistan (UNICEF, Pakistan, 2019)

6.4. Challenges educators face when protecting Children's Rights

Pakistan has over 80 million children and is suffering to fulfill their needs. Children in Pakistan are vulnerable to several development challenges impacting their safeguarding including quality of education, prevention of sexual exploitation of children, child trafficking, child marriage and child labor.

There are other challenges consisting of cultural, socio-economic status, political and religious that an early childhood educator faces when implementing children's rights into their daily teaching and learning.

6.4.1. Cultural Challenges

Gender inequality is a global phenomenon, also deeply rooted in many Asian societies resulting in discrimination of women and girls. In Pakistan, gender roles are constructed of a combination of traditional roots and social values. An example of one such cultural challenge was mentioned by Melisa (Participant no. 4) and Gisselle (participant no. 8) who said:

"We face challenges from the parents that expect that because their child has a certain gender, he or she is only supposed to do certain things example; if the child is a boy than he should have the liberty to play with different materials in the classroom, whereas if the child is a girl than she should play with the dolls or kitchen sets. These parents are not expose of provide their child with various opportunities." (Melisa, Participant no. 4).

"Parents still have reservations on what girls can do and what they cannot do and these things bother the children coz gender differences are brought in. Even though I teach in a co-ed school, I often have parents ask me if the school is secular or not, we have a lot of parents come in and ask if the girls would be taught separately than the boys." (Gisselle, Participant no. 8)

More than 50% of the women in Pakistan lack basic education and approximately 30% do earn some income but most women in Pakistan are confined to do housework for the extended family and are excluded from the main decision making. (Ali, et al, 2011).

6.4.2. Socio-Economic Challenges

Yearly income for the majority of Pakistani citizens has been and still is very low compared to many countries. The GNI, gross national income, per capita in Pakistan in 2017 was US\$ 1600, and the gross domestic product per capita annual growth rate during 2001-2018 was 5.4%. Although this percentage has increased through the years,

it is still low and can cause problems for the future generations. As for the expenditure of the government, in 2018, the government only allocated 3% of its budget to health services and another 3% for education.

One of the participants of this research highlighted the socio-economic challenges that they face when they want to implement and protect children's rights:

"We live with our parents when we are a single mother where most of the expenses such as rent, and bills are being taken care of and even then, I would not be able to survive on the salary of the teacher. Also, the school fees of the elite schools are so high that a middle class or a lower-class person would not be able to afford the fees." (Participant no 1. Harper)

24% of the population in Pakistan is living below the poverty line, poverty is one of the main issues that people in Pakistan suffer from, which leads to many problems that may be a significant risk to the population, especially children. According to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2016), there has been insufficient assistance to families with children living in poverty, hence the committee has recommended the state parties to strengthen its efforts to provide financial assistance to families living in poverty.

Participant No.3 said about the socio-economic status of children and how that affects the type of education they receive:

"The socio-economic status makes a very big difference. Children who come from a high socio-economic background or status are given more attention by the teachers and children who come from a lower socio-economic background, the teacher behavior however she wants, a lot of these children are being neglected by the teachers. Teachers are giving more attention to children who come from a high socio-economic background." (Participant no.3, Mona).

There are schools in Pakistan which provide scholarships for children who come from a low socio-economic status, it is difficult to make the children believe that they all have the same rights, despite them coming from different backgrounds.

"Children have this ideology that I am the child who has everything, I am rich and there are classmates who do not have these privileges. We have children who come from under privileged backgrounds and is sponsored by someone than there are children who speak up and they know how to promote themselves and demotivate and point fingers on other children who come from a less privileged backgrounds." (Participant no. Ellen).

The concern of Committee on the Rights of the Child (2016) is that the poverty levels in the country are extremely high, particularly among children and that the state party's effort to help families in need through various programs such as Benazir Income Support Program, Child support Program and ZAKAT Program remains insufficient and do not extend to those who are at the very bottom of the poverty line. The committee has suggested the state parties strengthen its efforts to provide sufficient and adequate assistance to families with children living in poverty, particularly for those that are in marginalized and disadvantaged situations. Altogether, considering the socio-economic status of individuals and inadequate support the government is providing for the development of the children both mentally and physically, the children are born into a system with risks of its own.

6.4.3. Political challenges

As mentioned in the Theory Chapter of this dissertation, that the UNCRC compels the governments, and the state parties to provide children with the basic needs as well as ensures that children's protection and participation needs are met.

Participants of this research had little but interesting input on the political challenges they face when they implement or protect children's rights. Participant no 3 said about the political challenges:

"I feel the government and the political parties are not doing anything. they don't care that we need education in our country, but they do not do anything, they don't care. They are not aware about what is going on in the classes. the government schools are being treated as stables." (Mona, Participant no. 3).

According to Ahmad et al (2018), child education is also in a horrible stage, lack of quality education, adequacy of qualified staff, strict punishment is responsible for the dropout of children. For the good use of NCCWD, the National Commission on Child Welfare and Development was handed over to the ministry of law. Due to weak policies and non-implementation of children's rights, NCCWD is now under the ministry the Human Rights but has still not produced any effective mechanism for child protection (Dawn, 2017). Participant no.2 mentioned the following;

"Our political parties ignore the fact that children exist. I don't see any response being done for education, there is hardly any benefit or good reform that benefit the child" (Participant no. 2, Elizabeth)

It is admitted that the majority of the Pakistani governments have failed to give priority to the Child's rights. No doubt the socio-economic condition of the country often forces poor families to make their children work. The movement for the child's right in Pakistan is a modern phenomenon. However, here legislation on child rights has remained a slow process (Ahmad et al, 2018). Participant no. 9 commented the following;

"It is the responsibility of the government to ensure that rights of young children who come from poor families are met, but it is not happening in our countries. The government is not bothered about the children who are marginalized, the children who are roaming and begging on the streets whose parents are unable to provide for them." (Participant no.9 April).

Child rights are recognized and promoted step by step by the Pakistani governments. National Plan of Action for child protection was prepared for the elimination of various issues regarding children such as "child labor, child mortality, child sexual abuse, physical punishment, domestic slavery and trafficking". However, its implementation is a pending process. Similarly, another bill is also pending which was drafted in 2006 for the rehabilitation of abused children (Ali, 2009).

6.4.4. Religious Challenges

Pakistan's society is mostly professing Islam as a religion and pursues its injunctions in their daily lives. It is the right of every individual living in the country to be protected from all sorts of things which can affect him/her and for that reason strict legal and

administrative measures should be taken. Islam as a religion, in addition, grants apparent guidelines in types of legitimate rights, which finds a place in the country's constitution as well (Ahmad, 2018). The Committee on the Rights of the Child (2016) is extremely concerned about the limited freedom of religion as well as the sectarian violence targeting children of religious minorities such as Shia Muslims, Hindus, Christians.

Majority of the participants did not face any religious challenges, however, the report to Pakistan by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2016), highlights that the committee is concerned about the widespread discrimination against children belonging to religious and ethnic minorities and urges the state parties to have awareness raising programs and prevent discrimination against the children who come from the minority religious and ethnic backgrounds. Furthermore, the committee suggest to religious and communities' leaders to support efforts to eradicate traditional practices and attitudes which discriminate against children belonging to religious or other minority groups.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child (2016), is concerned about the reports of teaching of religious intolerance in schools thereby forcing the non-Muslim students to complete Islamic studies, one of the participants voiced her opinion about these religious challenges;

"Pakistan is an Islamic country, so yes there are a few challenges like you cannot play music during specific times of the day and specific months of the year. Even the religious education, since Islamiyat is taught in every school, and if schools have children from different backgrounds than they should accommodate these diverse groups of children with their religious studies when the Muslim children are doing their religious studies and they should not be forced to take this particular course" (Participant no. 8, Giselle).

Another participant mentioned how sometimes, children's religious beliefs hinder daily teaching and learning as well as hinders their peer's education and their rights; and example of this is:

"There are rigid religious communities where acceptance is not easy. I have come across lobbies where there are people who are against young children's education and specially girls' education, they denied the fact that it is the girls right to get early years education" (Participant no. 10, Zara).

In regards to this, the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2016) urges the state parties to protect the freedom of religion of all children, including Shia Muslims, Hindus and Christians and provide the ability for children to choose their religion or to not profess any religion altogether. Furthermore, the committee has urged the state parties to promote teaching of tolerance, non-discrimination, and human rights.

Children's right to participation, protection and issues of prejudice and discrimination based on gender, disability, class, caste, religion should be best addressed through the educational system. Revising the school curriculum and introducing life skills based education be initiated at schools, teachers should be trained and policies and systems should be set up in schools that ensure a more participatory, respectful, protective and tolerant school environment.

6.4.5. Other Challenges

Children in Pakistan are considered as one of the most vulnerable groups facing grave difficulties due to their socio-economic status. Disabled children are amongst the most overlooked section of the society (Akram & Ahmad, 2020). Access to inclusive quality education is one of the basic rights of every child including the disabled children. Different forms of disability such as physical, audio, visual, speech may contribute to dropping out of school.

Majority of the participants felt that children need to learn to treat everyone the same and they should not be differentiating between each other. In order to teach them this, the schools have special programs;

"There is a social emotional learning program that has been recently introduced we use that to teach children how to have gratitude of what they have, and children who are too shy we provide them with stories of confidence. We are doing this through stories and activities and also through physical activities we are trying to teach them to be grateful. We also have these donation programs where we teach children on how to help the under privileged children." (Participant no 6. Tina).

Few elite schools in Pakistan also offer integrated education for children who suffer from disabilities and participants felt that there are times that some children feel privileged and this can often be seen in their behavior towards their peers. Participant no. 5 of this study voiced:

"Recently we are accommodating children of special needs as well, so now it is a big thing coz when they see special needs children, they are able to learn, when we just teach them through stories, they are unable to relate to them, so now children are trying to settle around them trying to learn from them, help the special needs children and also become friends with them." (Participant no.5 Ellen).

Besides disability, factors such as the poverty, social stigma, lack of awareness and inadequate health care add to their plight. In order to achieve the SDG 4, Pakistan's Education system must take innovative approaches that fit the specific needs of disabled children, the government must implement policies to ensure that all children living with disabilities attend school, learn and complete their schooling.

6.5. Chapter Summary

This chapter analyses the data for the research questions on the various government policies of Pakistan and the school policies that emphasize, implement and protect children's rights. The chapter dives deeper into the various challenges that early childhood educators face when implementing and protecting children's rights and the ways in which they try to tackle these challenges.

Chapter VII

7.0. Discussion

This chapter further analyzed the interviews and explored the perspectives of early childhood educators on children's rights in Karachi, Pakistan. The aim of this research was to investigate what the perspectives that early childhood educators have of children's rights are, how important children's rights are, how important is the UNCRC and whether it should be implemented or not. Furthermore, this research also finds out the different challenges that early childhood educators face when implementing the UNCRC and protecting children's rights.

The findings of this study have been consistent with what has been found by other researchers and practitioners in the country. This chapter will further analyze the state of children's rights in Pakistan and the way participation and provision rights are being presented to the children in Pakistan and how it is connected to the theories in childhood studies. The chapter also explores the way Pakistan is promoting children's rights as well as the recommendations that can help Pakistan to improve the implementation and protection of children's rights.

7.1. The State of Children's Rights in Pakistan

Children's rights are the most important segment of human rights. Keeping in mind the importance of children's rights, there is a need for the development of such criterion and system for the children's protection at a global level, which can ensure that their rights are fully secured. The World Summit for Children just as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child have had the option to get started some base models for children's education, wellbeing, endurance and least security necessary for children against disregard, misuse and maltreatment at home, workplace or in war (Munir, 1993). In order to fulfill the national and global course of action, for example, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is challenging and imperative that every nation should build up an efficient mechanism that can secure the protection of children's rights. By implementing policies and frameworks that warrant that children's rights are ensured, children are being viewed as active citizens who play an important role in the reproduction of their culture, everyday life and the society (Prout & James, 2015)

A deliberate technique to deal with a child's protection needs the coordination, consideration of the administrations and different fragments of the public, that is, families, the academicians, the private sector, youngsters, caregivers, and the NGOs. It requires a strategy at national level, with directed approach, supervision, trained officials, multidisciplinary and multi-sectoral collaboration, child amicable legislation, sound legal structure, far-reaching referral framework including care, welfare, recognizable proof of child casualties of brutality as well as awareness in public (Ahmad et al, 2018). The findings of this study reflect that there is lack of awareness of children's right amongst the common people of Pakistan and this lack of awareness leads to the failed implementation of children's rights. Safeguarding children's rights and implementing them brings in the concept of children as citizens where children are contributing towards the society as social actors (James & James, 2008).

In the present scenario, and to secure the future of the nation, the majority of the developed countries laid emphasis on child rights' promotion and protection. The rights of a child can be defined as "rights that concern the fortification of every child and to create an environment in which every child can develop inner capabilities". In point of fact, child rights included their rights to associate with their parents, provision of basic needs i.e. physical protection, food, education and health etc (Ahmad et al, 2018).

Pakistan's progress to safeguard child rights has raised quiet a number of eyebrows, since children remain one of the most vulnerable groups of the population in every aspect. Despite forceful government claims to the contrary, and some positive initiatives taken by the state, children's rights have not been improved notably in the last 30 years since the ratification of the UNCRC (CRM, 2015). Participants of this study felt that even though Pakistan has ratified the UNCRC and is legally committed to implement children's rights very less work is being done. Even though there are policies and frameworks that have been designed, the implementation process lacks the commitment from the government.

Though the country has submitted five periodic reports, the last of which was submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2014. The Concluding Observation and Remarks (CO&R) of the committee consistently reflect the government's lack of commitment towards protecting and promoting children's rights in any meaningful and sustainable manner. Findings from this study also suggest that the government of Pakistan needs to take some serious actions in order to make sure that the policies and legislations that are in place are being implemented and there should be constant monitoring of these implementations since the state parties are also responsible in ensuring that children's rights are being implemented and protected (UNCRC, 1989).

According to Aziz (2019), a recent study by UNICEF engaged experts that have reviewed 108 child related laws of Pakistan with respect to their legal effectiveness. Experts found out that a considerable percentage of these laws do not comply with international standards or do not conform to the criteria set by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Out of these, laws, only 24 % are fully compliant to CRC, 41 % are partly compliant, and 16 % laws are weakly compliant whereas 19% laws are in contradiction to the principles of CRC. Research participants felt that when it comes to the enforcement, considerable numbers of laws are not implemented. After passage by the parliament, implementation of these laws is left to the discretion of government machinery which is not very ambitious for their enforcement in letter and spirit. One of the reasons frequently attributed for non-enforcement of child related laws is non-availability of funds. One of the lacunas in the parliamentary system is that the political parties neither have time nor resources to follow up with the 'executive' to monitor implementation of the laws passed by them. An efficient mechanism for oversight of the implementation of laws by the parliament has not been created to date.

According to CRM (2015), a weak political will to improve children's rights is demonstrated by the absence of a holistic approach, a feeble effort to improve conditions, awareness raising, capacity building, attitudinal change and in particular the government's failure to establish bodies with a statutory status to work for the implementation of the CO&R, delays in relation to legislation and poor budgetary allocation for children. The implementation of ratified conventions such as the CRC is considered a sign of development and democracy (Alston, 1994). The government's efforts on the progress of implementation of children's rights started to be more comprehensive after the establishment of the institution. Participants of this study

shared the same opinion that the government needs to put more efforts into the implementation of children's rights in Pakistan, that there should be more awareness programs about children's rights for the society and that the awareness of children's rights should not be limited only to parents, caregivers and teachers, but the society should also know about the various rights of children.

Four main principles of the CRC are followed strictly for the progress of implementation. Articles of CRC and National Law aims to ensure the fulfilment of children's rights policy. Provision of children's rights (Archard, 1993) is the responsibility of the government. However, the cooperation of children and governors is the sign of progressive democracy model towards children's opinions.

The international organization Kids Rights Foundation has placed Pakistan at the 163rd in education, 127th in protection, 121st in child rights environment and 151st position in the overall global Child Rights Index of 181 countries. The world community observed the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) but many child rights activists in Pakistan are wondering what to celebrate. The reasons for this bewilderment are conspicuous and well known, as the state of Pakistan has failed to mitigate miseries of millions of vulnerable children in the country. Indicators of health, education, welfare, and protection of children living in Pakistan are very depressing.

7.2. Right to Provision

Children's rights to provision are the rights to services, skills, and resources, which are necessary for a child's survival and development to his/her fullest. The rights that come under the provision are: adequate standard of living (Article 27), Education (Article 28), Health care (Article 24), and the right to play (Article 31), etc.

Several social indicators give a measure of the progress achieved by the Islamic Republic of Pakistan regarding Children's Rights since its independence in 1947. Access to health services, education, and life expectancy has improved as the infant mortality rate and illiteracy has declined. Despite everything, the full realization of Children's Rights is still going to demand enormous time and effort.

In Pakistan, there are many such laws being implemented from time to time to facilitate a life to the children which they deserve. There are laws regarding child education but unfortunately these laws have not been fully implemented. Article 25-A of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973 talks about the right to education and further explains that "*the state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children from the age of five till the age of sixteen*". This clearly states that it is the responsibility of the government to support free education for every child from the ages of 5-16 years. Education is a birth right for all children. Education was devolved to the provincial mandate, and it became the responsibility of the Parliament and Provincial assemblies to legislate for the provision of compulsory education in respective jurisdictions. There are some laws passed from different legislative forums:

- Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2012
- Sindh Right to Free and Compulsory education Act, 2013
- The Baluchistan Compulsory Education Act, 2014
- The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Free Compulsory Primary and Secondary Education Act, 2017

According to UNICEF Pakistan has an estimated 22.8 million children aged 3-16 are out of school, which are the most outnumbered children of any county in the world (Zaidi, n.d.). The findings of this study reflect that even though children have a right to free education in conjunction with the Pakistani constitution, there are still children who do not attend school and are living under poverty and doing odd jobs to sustain themselves and their families.

It creates a crisis in the country as we have seen that the more children are out of schools, the more the chances are for them to become drug addicts, part of illegal businesses and future criminals. There are number of cases when children become victims of sexual abuse, too. Furthermore, the attendance rate for education is higher among boys than girls. Despite having all the earlier mentioned legislations, the education situation is very alarming for Pakistan. The difficulties of public education are numerous: economic constraints, dilapidated or even dangerous buildings, lack of toilets, chairs, tables, recurring humanitarian crises etc. Moreover, teachers are very underqualified, and it is not unusual for children to leave school without knowing how to read or write. Participants of this study shared similar thoughts about the public education system of Pakistan not being at par and having many difficulties such as high student to teacher ratio, untrained teachers, lack of space to have a classroom. Findings of this study also suggest that educators felt that no formal training is required to become a teacher in Pakistan, and this should not be the case; any individual who wants to become a teacher at any level should go through the proper teacher training and have appropriate qualifications in order to not only be aware about classroom management skills but the UNCRC and children's rights. Since educators lack the awareness of children's rights, the UNCRC and various government policies and framework are in a dilemma on how to implement children rights and how to not only educate themselves but also educate the children about their rights.

7.3. Right to Participation

A great emphasis has been placed on children's rights in general, participation is the right of every child as indicated in the CRC. Participation rights are the rights that provide children with the means by which they can engage in those process of change that will bring about the realization of their rights and prepare them to take an active part in society. The participation rights include:

- The right to express their views and to be heard in legal proceedings (Article 12),
- Freedom of expression and the right to information (Article 13).

Viewing children as competent is important specially in terms of their participation (Archard, 1993). Often children's right to have a voice is dismissed because of the context they live in. Children's lives in different contexts in the world are affected today by various factors such as political, social, and economic changes.

How children's participation rights are implemented differs from country to country. Many educators in this study agreed that the context in which they live, children's voices and their right to participation is not encouraged very much. Children's opinions are not being asked, however, in some school's educators include children's right to participate in their classrooms, by encouraging and promoting student-led learning where the student takes charge of their learning.

A strong point that came out during the interviews of the participants was that the society is not aware of children being right holders and often because of this lack of awareness, children's voices are ignored, and children are placed in the marginalized groups due to their age as they are not taken seriously, and their voices are not being heard. However, viewing children as right-holders and today's children rather than as tomorrow's adults mitigates the power imbalance. In many countries, Pakistan being one of them, children's views are being underestimated. However, findings of this study suggested that adults are willing to learn from children, this indeed is a positive impact on children's participation rights. Furthermore, the concept of age in children's participation and as right holders is deemed outdated (Farson, 1974). Children should be viewed as social actors (Alanen, 2012).

7.4. Right to Protection

Children in Pakistan are vulnerable to many forms of violence (physical, psychological, sexual) and exploitation, including economic exploitation and child trafficking (UNICEF, Pakistan). Even after ratifying the UNCRC in 1990, there is no public coordinated child protection case management and referral system that has been established which can be associated with international standards.

The right to protection ensures that children are protected from acts of abuse, mainly abuse by adults or institutions, that threaten their dignity, their survival or their development; for example:

- Protection from abuse and neglect (Article 19)
- The regulation of child labor (Article 32)
- Protection and care in the best interest of the child (Article 3)

According to UNICEF Pakistan, about 3.3 million children are trapped in child labor, being deprived of their childhood, health and education and condemning them to a life of poverty and want. It was estimated that only 34% of children under the age of 5 years are registered at birth (UNICEF, Pakistan). Birth registration is a fundamental right of all children as legal proof of a child's existence and identity. Having an accurate record of child births can help prevent child labor, child marriages and protect children from being treated as adults in the justice system.

According to the Ministry of Human Rights, Pakistan, Article 25(1) of the Pakistani Constitution states that "all citizens are equal before law and entitled to equal protection of law". Article 37(a) of the Convention states that "no child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment". Pakistani laws do not afford a sufficient protection against torture and other ill-treatment. This legislative lack is among the main causes of many cases of torture reported in Pakistan. Children are common victims of these violations (Ministry of Human Rights, Pakistan). Many of the educators stated that they were aware of the abuse policy that is in place by the government in order to protect children's from being abused or exploited and knew what measures to take if such a scenario arises.

According to Liebel (2012), the whole concept of protection rights came in order to protect new-born children since children are vulnerable human beings who require special care and utmost attention and protection and hence all decisions regarding children would be made in the best interest of the child to ensure their wellbeing.

7.5. Promoting Children's Rights

Pakistan is legally committed to implement the UNCRC since it has been ratified by the government in 1990. It is important to promote children's rights in order to achieve the implementation. Children are used to being viewed as the property by adults (Archard, 1993). According to Save the Children (2022), through effective advocacy, lobbying and campaigning in collaboration with Children's Rights Movement (CRM) and children, save the children supported government to enact and amend several child related laws including The National Commission on the Rights of the Child Act 2017 and others. Furthermore, Child participation is an integral part of children's rights and therefore apart from children's participation in nationwide events. Save the Children also supported children to participate and raise their voices for their rights in international forums including the UN Day of General Discussion in Geneva and The European Week of Action for Girls (EWAG) in Brussels.

One of the major concerns for Pakistan in term of children's right is the budgetary allocation for children. In 2020, Save the Children conducted taxation study and child rights focused analysis of the federal and provincial budgets. Based on the analysis, key advocacy was developed which encompasses the working approach of evidence-based advocacy, this serves as a vital reference document to advocate for increased budgetary allocation. Advocacy on budget allocation to implement new and existing laws has led to year-on-year increased budget allocations for child welfare. In Sindh, the government allocated the largest chunk of budget, 27% for the education sector for the years of 2017-2018. Similarly, the Sindh government also allocated PKR 200 million for Sindh Child Protection Authority (SCPA) in 2017/18 and 2018/19. This was the first ever allocation since the establishment of SCPA and another funding of PKR 5 million was allocated in the 2019/20 budget to make the SCPA operational (Save the Children, 2022).

UNICEF Pakistan, has a child protection program in collaboration with the government of Pakistan to strengthen the realization of the right of the child to protection from all forms of violence and exploitation, by addressing gaps in the enabling environment as a priority, including the fundamental absence of child protection case management and referral mechanism in the country (UNICEF, Pakistan).

In 2016, with UNICEF advocacy and technical assistance, a Child Protection Bill, in full compliance with minimum UNCRC standards and the 2009 and 2016 Recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, was enacted in Baluchistan. UNICEF is also supporting other provincial governments on legislative reforms, wherever applicable, in support of establishing a public child protection case management and referral system by 2022.

7.6. Reflections

Reflection is the concept of interpreting one's own interpretations, looking at one's own perspectives from other perspectives and turning a self-critical eye onto one's own authority as an interpreter and author (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2000). Some of the reflections in this research are that limited research has been done on early childhood educators' perspective on children's rights in Karachi, Pakistan and hence it was difficult to gather ample data on early childhood and children's rights in Karachi, Pakistan.

Another reflection for this research is that it is based only in Karachi and therefore cannot be generalised to other parts of Pakistan as different results might be obtained from different parts. Additionally, due to the pandemic, the interviews were conducted online via zoom and hence the data only relies thoroughly on the conversation between the researcher and the participant, so the researcher misses out on the non-verbal cues and signals from the participant, since most of the participants opted to have an audio rather than a video conversation.

One more reflection of this research was only based on early childhood educators' perspective and does not obtain the perspective of others such as parents and caregivers. Furthermore, since the research is solely based on the educators' perspectives and does not consider the perspectives of government officials or policy makers who design and formulate the policies on children rights and hence the data obtained is only from educators' perspectives on why there is a gap between the formulation and implementation of the policies. Moreover, the findings of this research suggest that educators were not aware about the UNCRC, and the researcher did not get the opportunity to include the school administrator or the government officials to converse on the various ways in which educators can be made more aware about the UNCRC and children's rights.

The last limitation of this research is the sample size; since the sample size is very small, it cannot be generalised to the population as a bigger sample may provide different results. This research also lacks triangulation, the use of different methods for research participants in order to see whether the same conclusion has been obtained. Due to the global pandemic, this research was conducted online and the researcher was unable to observe how children's rights are being implemented in early childhood at the ground level in Karachi, Pakistan.

7.7. Recommendations

Some of the recommendations that can help Pakistan to improve children's rights at the early childhood level are more investment in children rights movement in order to achieve the SDGs and ensure that all children have access to quality basic services, including protection services and the necessary resources. Additionally, there should be a coordinated policy for children's rights in Pakistan which should also guarantee to monitor that the existing laws are being implemented.

Children's rights in early childhood education are very important since children are at a very vulnerable age and education and awareness should be provided to the society of Pakistan. Educating the marginalized communities about the importance of birth registration should be implemented since it provides a legal proof of one's existence. It is equally important to educate the communities about the consequences that children would face if they were not registered in the system.

Since Pakistan is ranked fifth in the category of the world's most populous country, with 208 million people overall, and per year the growth rate is estimated around 2.4%, which means that if the population will keep rising at this pace, there will be more unfavorable effects on the economy of the country which will further affect sectors like education, health, environment, standards of living of not only children but of every citizen.

Moreover, teacher training for early childhood education as well as for primary and secondary education should be made compulsory in order to train potential teachers about children's rights, their implementation as well as their protection. There should be a link between the private and the public sector and the *deeni madaris* education system so that the children receive quality education in all three systems.

According to the Kids Rights Foundation, Pakistan is at 151st position out of 181 countries in the global children rights index (Aziz, 2019), hence, the government of Pakistan and the policy makers should take some serious action toward the wellbeing of the children of Pakistan and that the four pillars of the UNCRC (survival and development, non-discrimination, child participation and the right to be heard; and the best interest of the child) should be implemented and that the society be aware about children's rights.

Lastly, it is the responsibility of the state parties and the government to guarantee that the rights of children are protected and that all children are being treated equally, fairly and that children have access to basic necessities like food, education, and shelter. The government of Pakistan should provide sufficient resources as well as allocate funds to improve the development of all children. There should be more awareness raising campaigns and training on child protection with the children, parents, educators, and their caregivers.

7.8. Conclusion

Children in the world have special rights and they need their rights to be protected in all respects without any prejudice in any way. This is necessary to ensure their well-being, successful development, and their rights. Not only parents, but all governments and state institutions have duty to create a child friendly environment and to promote children's rights in order to ensure our future.

This research focuses on the perspectives of early childhood educators on children's rights in Karachi, Pakistan. The findings of this research have shown that educators feel they lack the awareness about the UNCRC and the way to implement children's rights and the UNCRC into their daily teaching and learning. Furthermore, the findings of this research suggest that educators feel that children's rights are very crucial, and an important topic and every member of the society should be aware about them. It is not only the educators or the parents' responsibility to be aware about children's rights, but it is also the responsibility of every individual in the society. Educators also felt that government should take serious notice on the issues of child protection, and it should focus on the implementation of the rights of the children and the nation's action plan as their main concern. The government should allocate budget and resources for the better future of children.

Findings of this research also indicated the various cultural, socio-economic, political, and religious challenges that educators face when implementing children rights and the different ways they tackle these challenges. One of the main reasons of these challenges were the lack of awareness of children's rights in the Pakistani society - the parents, caregivers, educators, and people in general.

7.9. Chapter Summary

This chapter describes the overall study, the research questions that the study focuses on, and the discussion of the analysis. This chapter provides an overview on what an early childhood educators perspective is on children's rights in Karachi, Pakistan, and what more can be done in order to improve their awareness and highlight different challenges that early childhood educators come across while implementing children's rights.

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Appendix I

Early Childhood Educators Perspectives on Children's Rights in Karachi, Pakistan

Interview Guide

1. What are the educators' perspectives on early childhood education?
2. What are the educators' perspectives on early childhood care and development?
3. What are the educators perspective on children's rights?
4. What value and usefulness do your perspectives play in your teaching by focusing on children's rights?
5. Does the teacher's perspective on children's rights play an important role when teaching?
6. How do you implement children's rights in your curriculum and daily teaching and learning?
7. In your opinion, how does the UNCRC protect children's rights?
 - a. Are you aware about the UNCRC?
 - b. In your opinion, how does the UNCRC make an impact on protecting children's rights?
8. What is the educator's opinion about the government and school policies?
 - a. What are the different government policies that implement, promote, or protect children's rights?
 - b. Do the educators school policy implement, protect, and promote children's right?
 - c. Do you take the government or school policies into consideration for your curriculum planning and daily teaching and learning?
9. What are some of the challenges that are faced by the early childhood educators in regard to the UNCRC and children's rights?
 - a. Cultural challenges (gender and race)
 - b. Socioeconomic challenges (class and status)
 - c. Political challenges
 - d. Religious challenges

Appendix II

NSD NORSK SENTER FOR FORSKNINGSDATA

Assessment

Reference number

154352

Project title

Perspectives of early childhood educators on children's rights in Karachi, Pakistan

Data controller (institution responsible for the project)

Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet / Fakultet for samfunns- og utdanningsvitenskap (SU) / Institutt for pedagogikk og livslang læring

Project period

30.08.2021 - 31.05.2022

Contact information, student

Shafaq Shafin, shafaqs@stud.ntnu.no, tlf: +4741389590

Date Assessed

10.09.2021

Comment Type

Standard

Our assessment is that the processing of personal data in this project will comply with data protection legislation, so long as it is carried out in accordance with what is documented in the Notification Form and attachments, dated 10.09.2021. Everything is in place for the processing to begin.

TYPE OF DATA AND DURATION

The project will be processing general categories of personal data 31.05.2022.

LEGAL BASIS

The project will gain consent from data subjects to process their personal data. We find that consent will meet the necessary requirements under art. 4 (11) and 7, in that it will be a freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous statement or action, which will be documented and can be withdrawn.

The legal basis for processing general categories of personal data is therefore consent given by the data subject, cf. the General Data Protection Regulation art. 6.1 a).

PRINCIPLES RELATING TO PROCESSING PERSONAL DATA

NSD finds that the planned processing of personal data will be in accordance with the principles under the General Data Protection Regulation regarding:

- lawfulness, fairness and transparency (art. 5.1 a), in that data subjects will receive sufficient information about the processing and will give their consent
- purpose limitation (art. 5.1 b), in that personal data will be collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes, and will not be processed for new, incompatible purposes
- data minimisation (art. 5.1 c), in that only personal data which are adequate, relevant and necessary for the purpose of the project will be processed
- storage limitation (art. 5.1 e), in that personal data will not be stored for longer than is necessary to fulfil the project's purpose

THE RIGHTS OF DATA SUBJECTS

NSD finds that the information that will be given to data subjects about the processing of their personal data will meet the legal requirements for form and content, cf. art. 12.1 and art. 13.

Data subjects will have the following rights in this project: access (art. 15), rectification (art. 16), erasure (art. 17), restriction of processing (art. 18) and data portability (art. 20). These rights apply so long as the data subject can be identified in the collected data.

We remind you that if a data subject contacts you about their rights, the data controller has a duty to reply within a month. FOLLOW YOUR INSTITUTION'S GUIDELINES

NSD presupposes that the project will meet the requirements of accuracy (art. 5.1 d), integrity and confidentiality (art. 5.1 f) and security (art. 32) when processing personal data.

To ensure that these requirements are met you must follow your institution's internal guidelines and/or consult with your institution (i.e. the institution responsible for the project).

NOTIFY CHANGES

If you intend to make changes to the processing of personal data in this project it may be necessary to notify NSD. This is done by updating the information registered in the Notification Form. On our website we explain which changes must be notified. Wait until you receive an answer from us before you carry out the changes.

FOLLOW-UP OF THE PROJECT

NSD will follow up the progress of the project at the planned end date in order to determine whether the processing of personal data has been concluded.

Good luck with the project!

Appendix III

Information Letter for Participants

Are you interested in taking part in the research project?

Awareness and Knowledge of children rights and The UNCRC among early childhood educators in Karachi, Pakistan

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to find out the perspectives of early childhood educators on children's rights in Karachi, Pakistan. In this letter we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

Early childhood educators play an important role in the lives of children and hence their awareness and knowledge about the children rights and early childhood policies enables them to deeply impact a child's life. The aim of this paper is to explore about the awareness and knowledge of Early Childhood Educators in Karachi, Pakistan.

The objectives of this research project is to gain insight into the perspectives of early childhood educators in Karachi, Pakistan about children's rights as per the UNCRC, as well as to gather further information about the awareness of the early childhood educators on the policies that have been developed by the government of Pakistan. Also to investigate various challenges faced by the Early Childhood Educators when exercising children's rights while implementing the policies.

This research project is a Master Thesis Project conducted.

Who is responsible for the research project?

Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) NTNU is the institution responsible for the project.

Why are you being asked to participate?

The selection of the participants will be based on cluster sampling, which allows the researcher to divide the population into smaller groups or clusters. Once the population has been divided into clusters, groups will be selected through random or systematic random sampling technique to narrow down the population for data collection.

What does participation involve for you?

Individual interviews will be conducted with the early childhood educators in Pakistan to investigate and examine the awareness and the knowledge that teachers have about children's rights and the UNCRC. This will also enable to get insight about the perspectives that early childhood educators have of the UNCRC and whether it can be adapted to their cultural values and local knowledge. Furthermore, it will also provide insights into the opinions as well as the awareness and knowledge that early childhood educators have of the local policy documents issued by the Government of Pakistan.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in this project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act) in Norway.

- The person in charge for the personal data is Shafaq Shafin, a Masters Student at NTNU.
- The names of the participants will be anonymised. The list of names and contact details will be stored separately from the collected data. The focus groups interviews will be recorded using a recorder and the data will be immediately erased once the study is completed.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end by May 2022. Once the project has concluded, the data that was collected during the study will be deleted.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and

- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with NTNU - Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet (Norwegian University of Science and Technology), NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) NTNU via
 - Supervisor: Anne Trinne Kjørholt - +4791897607
 - Student at NTNU: Shafaq Shafin - +4741389590 & +254781117155
- Our Data Protection Officer: Thomas Helgesen
- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: (personvertjenester@nsd.no) or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,
Project Leader
(Anne Trinne Kjørholt)

Student (Shafaq Shafin)

Appendix IV Consent form

My name is Shafaq Shafin, and I am a student at NTNU Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet (Norwegian University of Science and Technology).

I am doing master's thesis project for BARN 3900- Master's Thesis. My supervisor is Anne Trine Kjørholt, in case you need to check the legitimacy of the project or have questions about the project. She can be reached at +47 73596241, +4791897607or anne.trine.kjorholt@ntnu.no

Your answers to my questions will be kept confidential. I will anonymize your names, so your identity will be protected.

You do not have to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable with, and you are free to withdraw from the research at any point.

I have received and understood information about the project Awareness and Knowledge of children rights and The UNCRC among early childhood educators in Karachi, Pakistan and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

to participate in *(a zoon interview)*

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. May 2022

(Signed by participant, date)