



RIGHT TO PLAY: Preventing violence among and against children in schools in Hyderabad, Pakistan



EVIDENCE BRIEF

SEPTEMBER 2018



BACKGROUND

Gender equality is fundamental to whether and how economies and societies thrive. Although there are many other countries that are highly gender-unequal, Pakistan ranks very poorly on the Global Gender Gap Index at 143 out of 144.¹ Violence against women and girls (VAWG) and other kinds of violence are socially normalised in Pakistan.

Right To Play Pakistan (RTP) worked with Aga Khan University to implement and evaluate a play-based transformative programme in schools in Hyderabad, Sindh Province. Violent behaviours among children are common, evidenced by our baseline research which reported that 85% of girls and 94% of boys had experienced peer violence (both perpetration and victimisation) within four weeks from the time of the interview.²

I never had courage to talk to my father. I have shed off all fears now. Now I can sit with my father and talk to him comfortably about school and my friends. He values my opinion now, and we have grown much closer as a result.

A 13-year-old girl who participated in the intervention

The school-based Right To Play programme used the power of sport and play to empower boys and girls to reduce peer violence, improve mental health, and change social norms in support of gender equality and non-violence.



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THE RIGHT TO PLAY INTERVENTION

Boys and girls were engaged in structured and interactive play-based learning activities, which provided them with opportunities to understand different perspectives and social norms. Activities were geared to developing essential life skills such as confidence, communication, empathy, coping with negative emotions, resilience, cooperation, leadership, critical thinking and conflict resolution that help to combat conflict, intolerance, gender discrimination and peer violence.

I did not know girls can play too! I thought it was just for us boys. Now participating in RTP games I have slowly understood that [girls can play too]. Now I play the same games with my sisters back home so that they get a chance to play as well.

A 14-year-old boy who participated in the programme

Before the Right to Play intervention, girls were usually submissive and remained silent, now they dare to ask questions, it means [that the] programme improved their critical thinking.

A teacher from a partner school

Activities are integrated into the school schedule through a 35- to 40-minute session twice a week, implemented by coaches over a two-year period.

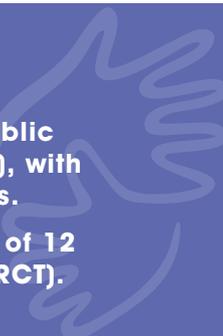
Each session has three steps of discussion: reflect on the activity, connect the activity to daily life and, apply the learning. Right to Play also provided leadership training for 120 children selected as junior leaders.

In addition, the children participated in community-based thematic play days, tournaments and summer camps. These increase the visibility, in particular, of girls' engagement in sport and play.

PROGRAMME REACH

Right To Play reached 8,000 children in 40 public schools (20 intervention and 20 control schools), with an equal number of boys' and girls' schools.

1,752 children in grade 6 with an average age of 12 participated in the Randomized Control Trial (RCT).



FINDINGS FROM THE RIGHT TO PLAY INTERVENTION

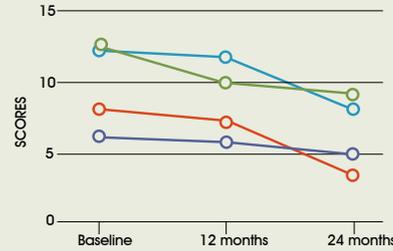
○ Boys' intervention
 ○ Boys' control
 ○ Girls' intervention
 ○ Girls' control

1. Peer violence

There were significant reductions in *peer violence perpetration* and *victimisation* reported by boys and girls, and significant differences between the intervention and the control arm.

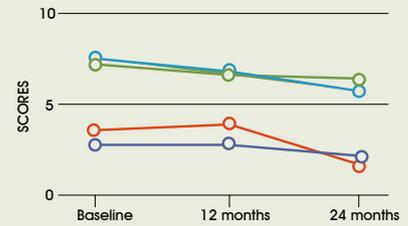
Peer victimisation scores* (low = good) decreased by 33% in boys and 59% in girls.

Prevalence dropped from 92% to 84% among boys and from 78% to 50% among girls.



Peer perpetration scores* (low = good) decreased by 25% in boys and 56% in girls.

Prevalence dropped from 78% to 73% among boys and from 56% to 37% among girls.

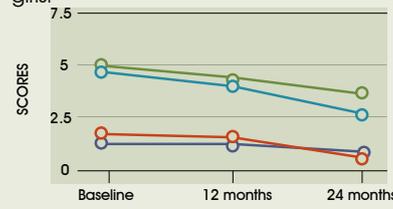


2. Corporal punishment

We found significant reductions between the intervention and control arm in *corporal punishment at school* and in *corporal punishment at home* reported by boys and girls.

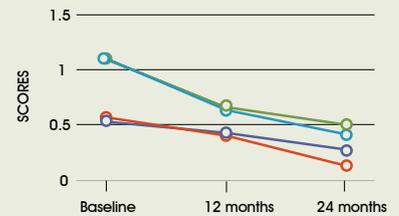
Corporal punishment at school scores* (low = good) decreased by 45% in boys and 66% in girls.

Prevalence dropped from 92% to 68% among boys and from 67% to 36% among girls.



Physical punishment at home scores* (low = good) decreased by 62% in boys and by 77% in girls.

Prevalence dropped from 62% to 28% among boy and from 38% to 11% among girls.



* To measure the intervention outcomes, scales of items that measure peer victimisation and perpetration, corporal punishment, and gender attitudes were developed. The scores presented in the graphs were derived as a sum of these items. A higher score indicates more violence perpetration, more violence experienced or stronger gender inequitable attitudes.

3. Witnessing domestic violence

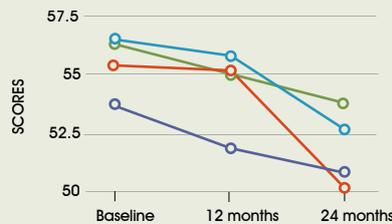
We found a significant reduction when comparing the intervention and control arms in terms of **prevalence** of reports of *witnessing domestic violence* from boys and girls. There was a 65% decrease among boys and a 70% decrease among girls.



4. Depression

Depression scores** decreased by 7% in boys and by 10% in girls.

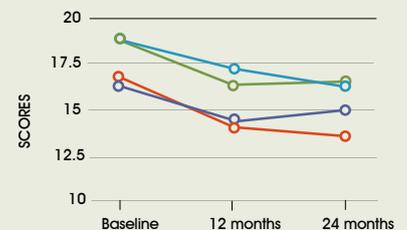
The **prevalence** of depression was reduced from 18% to 5% among girls and from 19% to 10% among boys.



** Depression scores were derived as a sum of the items in the CDI 2 scales; a higher score represents a greater number of depression symptoms.

5. Patriarchal gender attitudes scale

Patriarchal gender attitude scores* decreased by 10% in both boys and girls.



* To measure the intervention outcomes, scales of items that measure peer victimisation and perpetration, corporal punishment, and gender attitudes were developed. The scores presented in the graphs were derived as a sum of these items. A higher score indicates more violence perpetration, more violence experienced or stronger gender inequitable attitudes.

IMPLICATIONS

Violence against and among children is a global public health problem and human rights violation that annually affects billions of youth worldwide. It has major impacts on key child development outcomes and future trajectories, including increased risk of experiencing and/or perpetrating violence later in life

This research demonstrates the potential of investing in approaches such as Right To Play's sport and play based learning in schools and communities. This can reduce violence in schools and wider society, promote gender equality, and help young people to lead healthy lives in the future.

REFERENCES

1. Global Gender Gap Report 2016. [online] Available at: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/> [Accessed 2 Aug. 2018].
2. Karmaliani R, McFarlane J, Somani R, Khuwaja HM, Bhamani SS, Ali TS, Gulzar S, Somani Y, Chirwa ED, Jewkes R. Peer violence perpetration and victimization: prevalence, associated factors and pathways among 1752 sixth grade boys and girls in schools in Pakistan. *PLoS one*. 2017 Aug 17;12(8):e0180833.

LEAD RESEARCH TEAM

Professor Rozina Karmaliani

Aga Khan University

Professor Judith McFarlane

Texas Woman's University

Professor Rachel Jewkes

South African Medical Research Council

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Iqbal Ali Jatoi

Right To Play, Pakistan

Email: ijatoi@righttoplay.com

Professor Rozina Karmaliani

Aga Khan University

Email: rozina.karmaliani@aku.edu

LEAD RIGHT TO PLAY TEAM

Iqbal Ali Jatoi

Country Director, Pakistan

Muhammad Atta Soomro

Right To Play, Pakistan

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The What Works to Prevent Violence against Women and Girls Programme is a flagship programme from the UK Department for International Development, which is investing an unprecedented £25 million over five years to the prevention of violence against women and girls. It supports primary prevention efforts across Africa and Asia that seek to understand and address the underlying causes of violence, and to stop it from occurring. Through three complementary components, the programme focuses on generating

evidence from rigorous primary research and evaluations of existing interventions to understanding what works to prevent violence against women and girls generally, and in fragile and conflict areas. Additionally the programme estimates social and economic costs of violence against women and girls, developing the economic case for investing in prevention.



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