

## **The Competencies Reality of Spreading the Children's Rights Culture in Kindergarten in Egypt after the Revolution of 25 January, 2011**

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**Abstract:** The current study aims at monitoring the reality of the culture of children's rights in kindergartens in the Arab Republic of Egypt after the revolution of 25 January, from the view point those who in charge of the kindergarten to identify the deficiencies in order to achieve competencies of spreading this culture to reach the most appropriate methods to overcome the deficiencies and to develop mechanisms to ensure these competencies. The current study is classified as of the descriptive studies, which focuses on a description and analysis of all the factors associated with spreading this culture in the institutions of kindergarten strategies starting from management, training and curriculum, the parents' culture and monitoring deficiencies that will stand as an obstacle in order to promote a culture of child's rights in kindergarten. To achieve the objectives of the study, questionnaires have been used for the application on a regular sample of 134 female teachers, principals and female specialist educator in the kindergarten of Education Directorate in Port Said. The study concludes that the obstacles hindering the expansion of the child's rights culture in kindergarten from the viewpoint of the female teachers, female specialist educator, principals represented in the following factors: (1) The lack of strategic and management competencies and (2) the lack of training competencies for teachers and those who in charge of kindergarten child and (3) the insufficient parental culture of child's rights or who responsible for the child-rearing. The results of the study concludes that there are deficiencies towards achieving competencies spreading of the of children's rights culture. The researcher proposed some solutions and proposals to overcome the deficiencies in achieving the competencies of spreading the culture of children's rights.

**Key words:** Child's rights culture • Competencies • January 25, 2011 Revolution • Kindergarten

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Paying attention to the child's rights is very necessary as a result of the changed political, economic and environmental conditions where the child's rights has become and one of the most important humanitarian issues that have dimensions of local, regional and international. In spite of the adoption of the international community of those rights through international documents since the twenties of the twentieth century, beginning with the announcement of Save the Children Alliance for the Child Rights, 1923 through the Declaration of the Geneva for Child Rights, 1924, the declaration of the International Union for Child Welfare, 1948, the Declaration on the Rights of the Child, 1959, the Convention on Rights of the Child, 1989, World Declaration for Child Survival, Protection and Development, the working plan as approved by

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World Summit for Children, 1990, Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 and a document about "A World Fit for Children", 2002. However, these rights have remained as intellectual literature and so as not to become a mere texts of regulations and international, regional or local agreements, those rights should have a culture to make those texts have significances of values, ideas, trends and methods of implementation until those rights have actually been enforced [1, 2, 3]. The culture of human rights in general and child rights in particular, represent a major challenge in the developing countries. This is indicated by the study of Bame [4], which confirmed that the challenges facing all African countries, with regard to the texts of the rights of the child and the associated factors such as: Family atmosphere, the integrated growth, the factors affecting his/her health and the methods to protect him/her from diseases and disabilities, education. It is believed that all of these aspects are the basis of a future life of the child.

In the light of political developments and social conditions experienced by the countries of the Arab Spring, including Egypt, an urgent need has been emerged resulted in the interest of children's rights culture under the pressures children suffered from as a result of these revolutions and the legacy of the negative effects of slogans and calls impacted on getting his/her different rights. The study of Birgitta [5] indicated that one the child rights are that an opportunity is available to him/her to have serious education, which does not mean reading or writing, but the arts of life and how to deal with the group and how to unit with them and mutual benefit among them. The results indicated the need of establishing the education conditions during this phase including: education is done through the activities of cooperative and collective games. This playing is not merely playing, but it is done by the rules and foundations designed to achieve the efficiency of the child and his/her responsibility towards the society. The secureness of good primary education for every child is one of the major challenges facing our society in the coming years at a time the knowledge has become, more than any time before, the most important tool at all to prepare the next generations to gain the immune and fusion causes in the world of tomorrow. This is not to be achieved only through curricula prepared specifically for this reason. This is confirmed by Articles (28 and 29) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and articles (53 and 54) of Egypt Child Law 126 of 2008. Due to the fact that education is not just teaching reading or writing, integrated programs for the revision of the curriculum in kindergarten should be developed and made it compatible with the whole values and principles expounded by international charters and conventions. This is in agreement by the study of Seidel and Rokne [6], which conducted an analytical study of the content of the children curricula in the kindergarten. The results confirmed that theactivity curricula in the kindergarten didn't include and concepts of human rights.

To enable the child to satisfy his/her needs to normal education, which include his/her rights, integrated growth programs which is really intrinsic legislative rights of the child must be planned. This is what indicated by the study of Scheider and Ramires [7], that education programs for children really consider one of the legislative rights of the child, which seek to achieve his/her integrated growth. They also considered the responsibility for child care starts since he/she is in his mother's womb. The results also demonstrated that the most important years of a child's life are the first three years of his/her age. They recommended that the directory on the Rights of the Child should be distributed and his upbringing should be with every born child, with a follow-up from the Brazilian government on such existing educational process. Therefore, integrated programs for kindergarten curriculum review should be developed and they should also be compatible with the whole values and principles provided in Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Taking advantage of the experiences that have been achieved in some countries and experiences available for the same purpose gained by relevant organizations. The study of Covell [8] aimed at evaluating the Canadian experience in teaching the rights of the child in kindergarten. The study resulted in the contribution of the curricula of child rights taught in Canadian kindergartens in positive results for teachers and kids. The sense of self-esteem increased, the classroom environment improved and the behavior of children changed, especially when the practice of democracy in the methods of education was applied. The results are in agreement with findings of Mahmoud [9],who indicated that the integration of the concepts of human rights within the content of the curriculum is important. The results also emphasized that the concepts of human rights should not be involved in separate activities so as not to lose the association with the child reality as he/she associates with the reality of human experience that he/she live inside and outside the kindergarten.

The expansion of the culture of child's rights requires a set of competencies, including strategic competencies that involve the provision of typical spaces of activity halls and what should be available of corners, games, equipment and raw materials as well as the availability of bathrooms, playgrounds and gardens to provide a typical environment for the rights of the child. Regarding the curriculum, it must include a set of knowledge, information and skills to meet the needs of children and to develop the ideas and concepts that will help them understand their rights and that depends on the activity of child and his/her interaction through cheerful and attractive attitudes to himself, where he/she can express his/her opinion and freely choose from among activities, acquire knowledge, skills, his/her trends grow, his/her abilities and talents are discovered, then they can be developed and refined. It can be argued that the nature of the curriculum in kindergarten enables him/her to achieve a balance between the needs of society and the needs and privacy of the child so that his/her personality mature and evolve. It also enables him/her to get his rights and enjoy it; at the same time he/she gives others and the community what they owe him/her of rights and duties. He/she also takes responsibilities towards his/her country, community and the nation and thus the curriculum becomes appropriate environment to activate the child's practice of his/her rights. This was confirmed by the study of Seidel and Rokne [6], Covell [8], Mahmoud [9], Almon [10] and Saad [11]. Regarding human competencies, they require a sufficiently educational preparation of the teacher during his/her first academic year. In addition, special programs of training teachers are to be developed before and during the in-service to direct their teaching methods towards a culture of child's rights. This is what indicated by the study of Almon [10], which aimed at detecting about the range of primary teachers' familiarity with the rights of the child contained in the Charter of UN on the Rights of the Child. The success of programs that the teachers got has been approved. They have gained the knowledge of the rights of the child during their training on teaching. Therefore, it is obvious that kindergarten teachers' preparation programs must be modified to take into account contemporary issues in education, especially with regard to the rights of the child. Regarding the family, the study of McMillan [12], emphasized on the necessity to take a series of effective measures in order to provide a family environment providing the child with a full care and with the reasons for the various dimensions of healthy, emotional, social, intellectual growth. The results indicated that the parents should have amount of parental culture, especially with regard to the rights of their children and the culture of their parents and the culture and education of the parents are a right of the Rights of the child. This gives the child the opportunities for the perfect integrated growth with the protection and safety. The culture of parents also gives them the opportunities for collaboration with the kindergarten environment to achieve the greatest degree of care for the child.

There is no doubt that the upbringing on the Rights of the Child contributes to build civil society according to practical and comprehensive plan adopting the awareness of rights which helps to save, practice and invest those rights in achieving secured freedom for peaceful and safe coexistence. The plan can be implemented through two main aspects; one of them is teaching the principles of human rights in educational institutions starting from the kindergarten through the inclusion of child rights education within the activity curriculum as a separate one or as concepts embedded in other fields of the curriculum. The other is the expansion of the culture of human rights outside to kindergarten through media and awareness and guidance so as to ensure the integration between what is taught in kindergarten and what is being practiced outside it.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study has been applied on a sample of (90) female teachers of kindergarten in regular public kindergartens and experimental of the North and East Port Said Educational Department and (14) of the female principals of kindergarten selected of the North and East Port Said Educational Department. And (30) of the specialist educators kindergarten selected from specialist educators in Department of Education, Port Said Governorate.

**Psychometric Tools:** Questionnaire of competencies associated with the culture of the rights of the child in kindergarten for teachers, principals and specialist educators (Prepared by the researcher). The competencies associated with the culture of the rights of the child in kindergarten are listed in (Table 1). After surveying the competencies lists in the previous

Table 1: Questionnaire of competencies associated with the culture of the rights of the child in kindergarten.

Competencies	Yes	No
<b>I. Strategic Competencies</b>		
1- The current curriculum does not include the concepts of the rights of the child		
2- The content of the rights of the child is not inadequate in the current curriculum		
3- There is no guidance of curriculum for female teachers on the rights of the child		
4- There is no clear strategy within the activities of the curriculum on the rights of the child		
5- The models of spreading experiments of the culture of the rights of the child in the ministry's plan for kindergarten		
<b>II. Training Competencies</b>		
1- The Ministry of Education does not commit to make courses for female teachers on the rights of the child		
2- The training of female teachers concerned with the rights of the child is insufficient		
3- Female teachers is not informed on foreign experiences in the field of the rights of the child		
4- The concepts associated with the rights of the child within the training plan are inadequate		
5- Training material is inadequate to meet the requirements of the culture of the rights of the child		
<b>III. Social and Cultural Competencies</b>		
1- The culture of the child's parent (Father) is deficient in the rights of the child		
2- The culture of the child's parent (Mother) is deficient in the rights of the child		
3- The information provided on the rights of the child in the media is insufficient		
4- Civil society organizations role to foster the culture of the rights of the child of those who are in charge of the child is deficient		
5- The culture of the rights of the Child in the universities is not a concern		

Table 2: Validity of internal consistency by calculating Pearson correlate

Serial	Competencies	Pearson correlate
1-	Strategic competencies	0.86
2-	Training competencies	0.88
3-	social and cultural competencies	0.81

Table 3: Reliability of questionnaire by calculating the validity Alpha Spearman Brown

Serial	Competencies	Alpha	Spearman Brown
1-	Strategic competencies	0.936	0.89
2-	Training competencies	0.889	0.84
3-	Social and cultural competencies	0.866	0.82

studies especially those ones related to culture of the rights of the child in kindergarten. Questionnaire consisted of 15 statements; every 5 statements represent a pattern of competencies related to the culture of children's rights set out in the list of Table 1 and are competencies (strategy competencies, training competencies, community culture competencies). A standard was set for evaluating the questionnaire according to two levels of answer to the statement (Yes - No). The statement with answer (Yes) takes (1) and answer (No) takes (0). The questionnaire was applied to the study sample of 134 female teachers, directors and inspectors. To verify the validity of the questionnaire, internal consistency has been calculated through calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient between the scores of the words of each competence as well as its total score by conducting a test on a set of individuals and then re-conduct the same test on the same group after an appropriate period of time and eventually the correlation coefficient between the scores obtained by the members of the sample in the first and second time is calculated (Table 2).

**The Questionnaire Validity:** The validity was calculated by re-administering the test in order to verify the existence of relational connection between the scores of the two applications by using both alpha and Spearman Brown's correlates as shown in Table 3.

**Statistical Analysis:** The data were obtained using both alpha and Spearman Brown's correlates and subjected to statistical analysis by using SPSS.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**The Results of the First Question:** What is the reality of strategic competencies to spread the culture of child's rights?. The results presented in Table 4 indicated that despite the modernity of the recent curriculum applied since 2011, it does not include the concepts of the rights of the child. This has been emphasized by increasing the degrees of female teachers and female specialist educators' responses. This has been reflected to the inadequacy of the content of the rights of the child in the current curriculum to fulfill the rights of the child in kindergartens. The results emphasize on the necessity of adopting a clear strategy included in the curriculum activities to teach the child his/her rights which requires the preparation of guidance for the female teachers and access to the models of experiences to spread the culture of child's rights for those in charge of kindergarten.

To answer the second question: are the training programs offered to female teachers, principals and specialist educators interested in the basic concepts of children's rights? The results of the study emphasizes that the Ministry of Education does not commit to make courses for female teachers on the rights of the child, which has clearly appeared in the responses of the study sample, who has mostly confirmed the lack of commitment of the ministry. This result also confirms that the concepts related to the rights of the child within the plan of training female teachers are inadequate. Even if training opportunities on the rights of the child are available, the training material does not meet the requirements of the culture of the rights of the child. The results also confirm that Female teacher is not informed on foreign experiences in the field of the rights of the child, which requires raising the awareness with regard to the expansion of the culture of the rights of the child, the use the specialists in the field of rights of the child to prepare and review the training material and the use of them in the workshops for those courses as indicated in Table 5.

The results indicate social and Cultural Competencies (Table 6) that father and mother are not interested in the culture of the rights of the child. This has been confirmed through the increase of the degrees of the sample's responses. Therefore, the parents who have adequate amount of the parental culture, especially with regard to the rights of their children, giving them the opportunities to teach the child of his/her rights. This result also confirms that civil society organizations role to foster the culture of the rights of the child for the female teachers is deficient. Despite the importance of the role of these organizations, their role is limited to deal with the administrative authorities. Therefore, they need to open communication channels between them and kindergarten teachers. The results also confirm that although the curriculum of human rights has become a university requirement in universities, this curriculum does not include the concepts of the rights of the child and therefore it does not fulfill the requirements of the preparation of kindergarten teachers in this field.

### **Recommendations and Proposals**

- A guidance of curriculum for the female teachers on the rights of the child should be prepared.
- A clear strategy is developed within the activities of the curriculum of teaching the rights of the child, corresponding with the nature of the stage.

Table 4: indicates the responses of strategic competencies related to the culture of the rights of the child in kindergarten

Strategic Competencies	Female teachers' responses		Principals responses		Female Specialist Educators Responses		Total	
	Repetition	Percentage	Repetition	Percentage	Repetition	Percentage	Repetition	Percentage
1-The current curriculum does not include the concepts of the rights of the child	24	26%	4	30%	10	33%	38	28%
2-The content of the rights of the child is not inadequate in the current curriculum	20	23%	3	21%	6	20%	29	21%
3-There is no guidance of curriculum for the female teachers on the rights of the child	19	21%	3	21%	4	14%	26	20%
4-There is no clear strategy within the activities of the curriculum on the rights of the child	15	17%	2	14%	7	23%	24	18%
5-The models of spreading experiments of the culture of the rights of the child in the ministry's plan for kindergarten	12	13%	2	14%	3	10%	17	13%
Total	90	100%	14	100%	30	100%	134	100%

Table 5: The responses of training competencies related to the culture of the rights of the child in kindergarten.

Training Competencies	Female teachers' responses		Principals responses		Female Specialist Educators Responses		Total	
	Repetition	Percentage	Repetition	Percentage	Repetition	Percentage	Repetition	Percentage
1-The Ministry of Education does not commit to make courses for female teachers on the rights of the child	25	28%	2	14%	6	20%	33	24%
2-The training of female teachers concerned with the rights of the child is insufficient	5	5%	3	21%	8	27%	16	10%
3- Female teacher is not informed on foreign experiences in the field of the rights of the child	20	23%	5	37%	10	33%	35	26%
4- The concepts associated with the rights of the child within the training plan are inadequate	22	24%	2	14%	3	10%	27	20%
5- Training material is inadequate to meet the requirements of the culture of the rights of the child	18	20%	2	14%	3	10%	23	20%
Total	90	100%	14	100%	30	100%	134	100%

- Kindergarten departments are adopted training project, including experiences and practices of the rights of the child in different countries.
- The ministry of education and the media communicate together in order to activate the role of the media in raising societal awareness of the culture of the rights of the child.
- Preparing programs to support parents' acknowledgement of the rights of their children and promoting the cooperation between parents and kindergarten with regard to the protection of rights of child.

Table 6: Indicates the responses of social and Cultural Competencies related to the culture of the rights of the child in kindergarten

Social and Cultural Competencies	Female teachers' responses		Principals responses		Female Specialist Educators Responses		Total	
	Repetition	Percentage	Repetition	Percentage	Repetition	Percentage	Repetition	Percentage
1-The culture of the child's parent (Father) is deficient in the rights of the child	25	28%	4	29%	8	27%	37	28%
2-The culture of the child's parent (Mother) is deficient in the rights of the child	20	22%	4	29%	6	20%	30	23%
3- The information provided on the rights of the child in the media is insufficient	15	17%	2	14%	10	33%	27	20%
4- Civil society organizations role to foster the culture of the rights of the child of those who are in charge of the child is deficient	13	14%	2	14%	3	10%	18	13%
5- The culture of the rights of the Child in the universities is not a concern	17	19%	2	14%	3	10%	22	16%
Total	90	100%	14	100%	30	100%	134	100%

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion it can be said that the study concludes that the obstacles hindering the expansion of the child's rights culture in kindergarten from the viewpoint of the female teachers, female specialist educator, principals represented in the following factors: (1) The lack of strategic and management competencies and (2) the lack of training competencies for teachers and those who in charge of kindergarten child and (3) the insufficient parental culture of child's rights or who responsible for the child-rearing. The results of the study concludes that there are deficiencies towards achieving competencies spreading of the of children's rights culture. The researcher proposed some solutions and proposals to overcome the deficiencies in achieving the competencies of spreading the culture of children's rights. Integration of the concepts of the rights of the child within the content of the current curriculum is important which includes the knowledge, values and skills. the knowledge includes documentation of the appropriate rights of the child for the stage and a study of some of the concepts associated with the rights of the child, such as equality, justice, peace, human dignity, freedom of expression, tolerance and renunciation of violence and democracy, which contributing to the formation of the strong structure of knowledge and awareness of the importance of the rights of the child which leads to be widespread and respected. Regarding the values, they include the adoption of positive attitudes toward the importance of respecting human rights and the promotion of human values on the rights of the child, which contribute to the formation of a positive trend towards them and a sense of their importance. Skills are taught through supplying the child of daily life experiences and the actual practices in the educational reality to acquire the skills of listening to others and to cooperate with them. These values also help the child gain the skills of solving problems to propose changing the current conditions for the better, which contribute to follow the correct methods to improve their lives and the others' and to work to protect human rights. And so also the concepts of the rights of the child should not be involved in separate activities so as not to lose the association with the child reality as he/she associates with the reality of human experience that he/she live inside and outside the kindergarten. It also requires the adequately educational preparation of the teacher during his first academic year. In addition, special programs of training teachers are to be developed before and during the in-service to direct their teaching methods towards a culture of the rights of the child. Regarding family, parents should have adequate amount of the parental culture, especially with regard to the rights of their children.

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