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## **Development and Implementation of Safeguarding policy for Pakistan Junior League (PJJL): An Initiative by Mr. Ramiz Hasan Raja**

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### **Abstract**

Sustainable development Goal (SDGs) is the global priority. To achieve the SDGs, the essential agenda of 2030 envisages a world to invest in its children. The participation in cricket or any support requires physical, psychological and social support. The agenda of safeguarding and protection is not only in supports but in all spheres of life becomes the main concerning point across the globe, at that time “Mr. Ramiz Hassan Raja”, took an initiative for wellbeing of the children while serving as a chairman of “Pakistan Cricket Board” in the form of “Pakistan



Junior League (PJL) for the players who aged less than 19 years. During his tenure the safeguarding policy has been developed, implemented and monitored throughout the league. Through the capacity building of the players, coaches and supportive staff (n=138) awareness has been increased for promoting the specific culture that is “Value, listen to and respect all people” is the responsibility of all team members. For the sustainability of the safeguarding policy a proper hierarchy system has been developed following the 06 main basic International principals of safeguarding at individual and institutional level.

**Keywords:** *Safeguarding, cricket, Pakistan Junior League (PJL), well-being, reporting procedure*

## **Introduction**

Safeguarding refers to the protection of health and well-being and enabling life free from harm, abuse and neglect<sup>1</sup>. Sustainable development Goal (SDGs) is the global priority<sup>2</sup>. To achieve the SDGs, the essential agenda of 2030 envisages a world to invest in its children<sup>3</sup>. To achieve this agenda, it is important that “every child grows up free from violence and exploitation” (United Nations General Assembly 2020)<sup>4</sup>. Abuse has no defined boundaries such as; race, gender, ethnicity and religion<sup>5</sup>. Despite a lot of attention at global and regional level, high rates of safeguarding issue have been reported across the globe<sup>6</sup>. According to an estimation the ratio has not only been increased in Low and Middle Income Countries (LMIS) but also in High Income Countries (HICs) such as; In Ireland over 10,000 safeguarding concerns were reported in 2020<sup>7</sup>, on the other hand the figures in the United Kingdom (UK) are close to 58,000 children<sup>8</sup>. Furthermore, the burden of safeguarding issue against children is also increasing in Low- and middle-income countries(LMICs)<sup>9,10,11</sup>.

According to an estimation of a report the total number of reported child safeguarding issues in Pakistan jumped to 2,960 in 2020 from 2486 cases in 2019, showing an increase of 4%<sup>12</sup>. In the year of 2020, the average of safeguarding issue was more than 8 children on daily basis<sup>13</sup>. According to the UNICEF, the children in Pakistan are vulnerable to different forms of violence and unfortunately its approximately 30 years after Pakistan ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), no public child protection case management and referral system, as aligned with international standards, has been established<sup>14</sup>. There is insufficient investment in tackling root cause and drivers of safeguarding issues as well as lack of awareness to provide support children affected due to any reason. In the most critical time when the youth of Pakistan has been neglected and reporting safeguarding issues, the chairman of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) **“Mr. Ramiz Hasan Raja”** took an initiative by providing the platform and launch “Pakistan Junior League (PJJL)”<sup>15</sup> for new players aged less than 19 years. The First-Ever PJJL T20 (Pakistan Junior League) also known as Junior PSL is announced giving young talent an opportunity to show their talent and train with Legends. In this tournament under 19 players from all over the world are allowed to participate in playing this 15 days’ league<sup>16</sup>. With the launch of PJJL an initiative of “Safeguarding” policy has been implemented by PCB from the development phase till implementation while maintaining the sustainability to develop a reporting infrastructure.

Thus, the aim of the development and implementation of safeguarding policy was to enhance awareness and provide safe and healthy environment only not for the players of under 19 league but for the coaches and associated staff involved in this league.

## **Methodology & Results**

A mixed method approach has been used to analyze the result of the safeguarding. The development of the safeguarding policy and its implementation has been conducted into three stages extracted from the World Health Organization guidelines (WHO., 2019)<sup>17</sup> these were; 1) Need Assessment 2) Planning, Structuring and Approval 3) Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Phase.

### 1. Stage 1: Need assessment

The Safeguarding structure for well-being in the sports environment has been introduced very first time in Pakistan. To analyze the need of the concept, a pre-survey has been conducted in which the Pakistan coaches who have International exposure of children coaching in cricket has been invited to fill the form. The form has been developed while following the safeguarding suggestion of International Olympic Committee (IOC)<sup>18</sup>, young athlete model of safeguarding (Mountjoy et al., 2015)<sup>19</sup>. The three main questions have been addressed from the coaches and leaders these were: “Who”, “Where” and “When”<sup>20</sup>. All coaches and leaders has been invited to fill the form and we successfully got the response from ( $n=32$ ) participants while maintaining the confidentiality. Other than these questions the following questions are also addressed in the form these were: length of the training, who need the training and reporting system.

**Table 1.1**

*Table shows that summary of the themes predicts the need assessment of safeguarding policy (N=32)*

| Major themes   | Sub themes   | Forms of inappropriate Act   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Who</b><br>who is involved in violence/ any inappropriate act | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Coaches</li> <li>• Players</li> <li>• Peers</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The act of discrimination</li> <li>• Indirect abuse</li> <li>• Cultures that normalize the act</li> </ul> |

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|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| during sports activity                                |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unhealthy training programs</li> <li>• Age cheating</li> <li>• Systematic doping</li> <li>• Abuse from spectators</li> <li>• Hazing</li> <li>• Medical mismanagement</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Where</b><br>The place where it can be happen?     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residency</li> <li>• In institutes</li> <li>• Beyond the sports environment</li> <li>• Beyond the institute's training</li> <li>• Online platforms</li> </ul>                |  |
| <b>What</b><br>What appropriate acts need to promote? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy development</li> <li>• Implementation</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> <li>• Review and follow up</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural sensitivity</li> <li>• Effective communication</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Mutual collaboration</li> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Holistic perspective</li> <li>• Dynamic</li> <li>• Reporting system</li> </ul> |
| <b>Suggested Duration of the training</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less than 3 hours (n=14)</li> <li>• More than 3 hours (n=18)</li> </ul>  |  |
| <b>Who needs the training</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only Coaches (n=03)</li> <li>• Only Players (n=11)</li> <li>• Only Supported staff (n=1)</li> <li>• All team members and supported staff including coaches (n=17)</li> </ul> |  |

The table shows that majority of the participants suggested more than the 03 hours during the 15 days' tournament that includes all staff members and coaching staff. Thus while getting the response training material, time and length has been determined for the further steps.

## 2. Stage 2: Planning, Structuring and Approval

The second phase is the development of the policy of safeguarding. The management of PCB has recruited 03 safeguarding experts, had exposure of safeguarding policies at International and National level and able to tackle the sensitive issues while maintaining the confidentiality and privacy. After the development of the panel, the experts have developed the safeguarding policy that was reviewed from the legal of the institute and from the higher authorities. The next phase was to create the awareness among team members, players, coaches and the supporting staff about the policy and its benefits. Furthermore, throughout the league the safeguarding team was remained available at the residency platform of the players (*Ground & Institute*). The separate session rooms have been developed for addressing the problems and providing them mental health care in case of any problem. The pictorial presentation of the policy hierarchy system has been extensively displayed in the institute and residency area specially in the dressing room of the players throughout the PJJL. All the plans, training material has been approved from the authorities and expert's prior delivery to the content. It has been make sure that culturally sensitive issues and words has been addressed and reported appropriately with high confidentiality.

**Table 1.2**

*Table shows about the training hours and the duration of the safeguarding training (n=138)*

| <b>Training content</b>          | <b>Hours&amp;<br/>Date<br/>(90 hours)</b> | <b>No<br/>of<br/>Participants<br/>(n=138)</b> |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Introduction of the safeguarding |   |   |

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|   |                                    |  |
|---|------------------------------------|--|
| <p>Law of child protection (International &amp; National)</p> <p>Principals of Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empowerment</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Protection</li> <li>• Partnership</li> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Reporting</li> </ul> <p>Effective Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal communication (<i>Appendix A1</i>)</li> <li>• Non-verbal communication (<i>Appendix A2</i>)</li> </ul> <p>Safeguarding Player Do's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video&amp; pictorial representation (<i>Appendix A3</i>)</li> </ul> <p>Safeguarding Players Don't</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal &amp; pictorial representation (<i>Appendix A4</i>)</li> </ul> <p>Safeguarding Coaching Do's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal &amp; pictorial representation(<i>Appendix A5</i>)</li> </ul> <p>Safeguarding Coaching Don'ts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal &amp;pictorial</li> </ul> | <p>02 Hours</p> <p>(each team)</p> | <p>N=23</p> <p>(each team members)</p> |
|---|------------------------------------|--|

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>representation(<i>Appendix A6</i>)</p> <p>Practical Implementation/ Case Scenarios</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culturally adapted Case scenarios and appropriate act (Case 1)</li> <li>• Case 2</li> <li>• Case 3</li> <li>• Case 4</li> <li>• Case 5</li> </ul> <p>Institute's Safeguarding reporting system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Types of conduct to be reported</li> <li>• Appropriate hierarchy</li> <li>• Outcomes / appropriate outcomes</li> </ul> |  |  |
| <p><b>Reporting of Safeguarding Issues</b></p> <p>*Assigned Safeguarding Team member (M.R)</p><br><p>* Assigned Safeguarding Team member (M.A)</p><br><p>* Assigned Safeguarding Team member (H.A)</p>  | <p>10:00 AM-11:30 (<i>every day in residency area</i>)</p><br><p>02:00 PM-03:00 PM (<i>every day in institute</i>)</p><br><p>During matches team members including coaches &amp; Players has been observing by safeguarding team members</p> |  |

*The safeguarding team members \*H.M, M.A,M.R addressed the cases reported during*

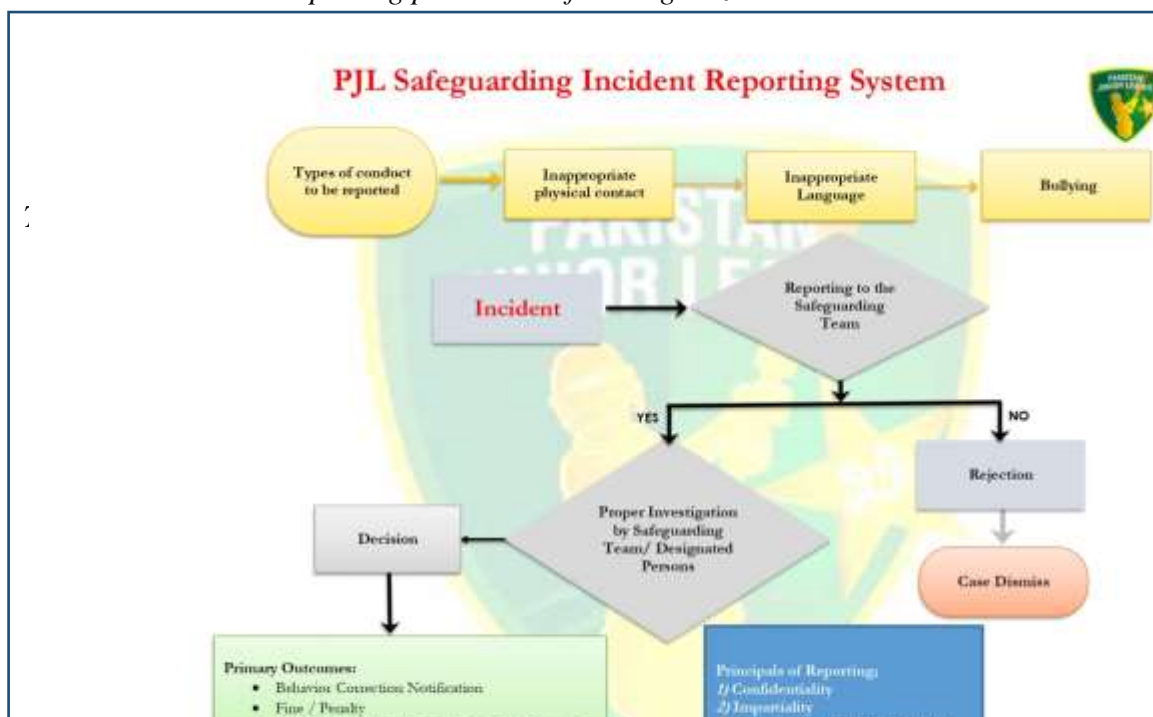


### 3. Stage 3: Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Phase

The Implementation phase has been started from signing the consent form from the all team members before starting the PJL, including players, coaches, media persons and all supporting staff. It has been delivered to all staff, that “to protect each other, provide safety and well-being and to maintain boundaries are the everyone’s responsibility. The training session was arranged separately of the 06 recruited teams named “Bahawalpur (south Punjab), Gujranwala (Upper Punjab), Gwadar (Baluchistan), Hyderabad (Sindh), Mardan (KPK) and Rawalpindi (Northern). The training content has been delivered in the 02 hours (12 Hours) every fortnightly (*During the League: 02; Hours: 12; Each Team: 02 Hours*) to every team including the specific team players, coaches, media staff, Lesion Officers (LOs) and other supporting Staff (n=138). During the Monitoring phase, the team members has been observed by the safeguarding team both in ground and in residency area. The aggressive behavior, any inappropriate act has been addressed through proper hierarchy. The evaluation phase has been done at the end of the session by doing semi-structured interviews with captains of the team and coaches on the basis of improvement in behaviors of team members.

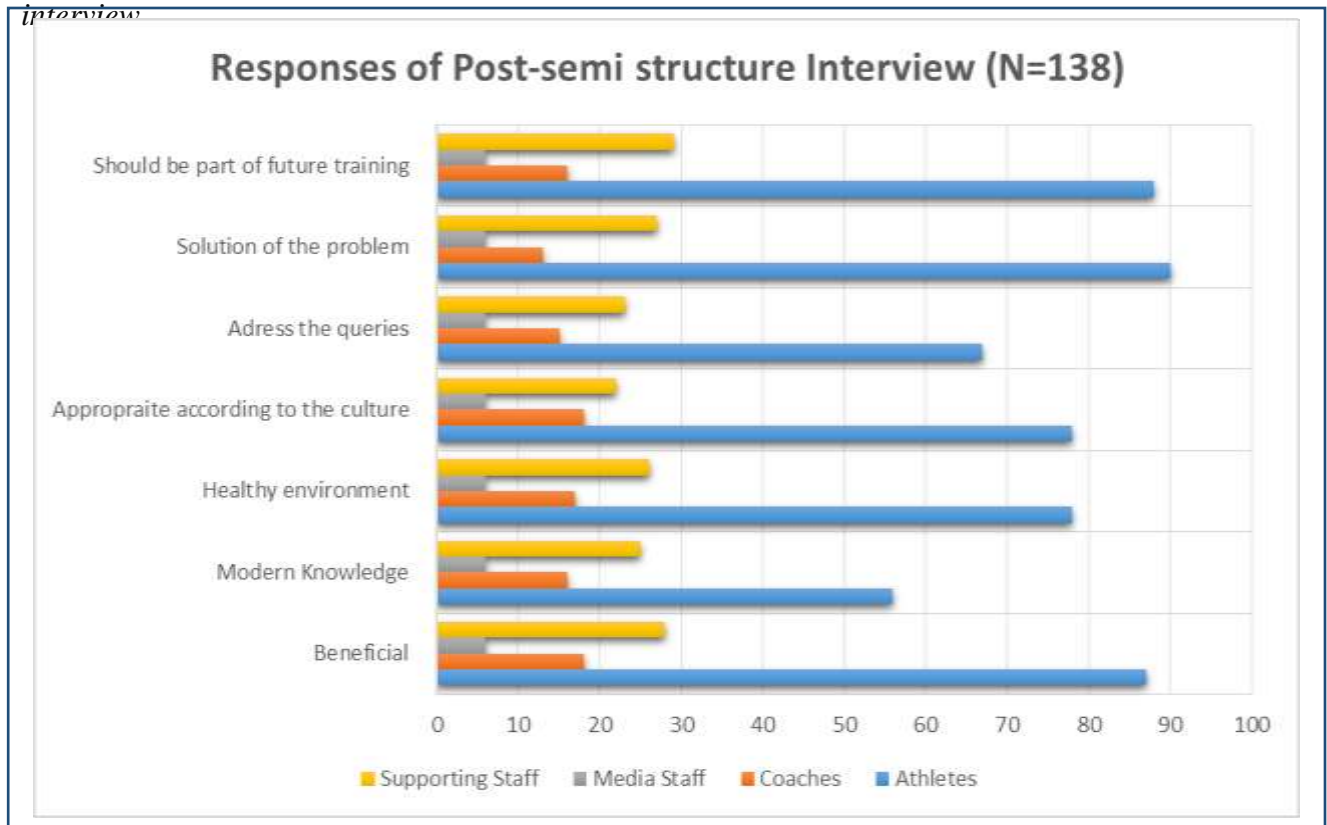
**Table 1.3**

*The table shows the reporting procedure of the organization –PCB*



**Table 1.4**

*Table shows about the impact of the safeguarding policy after semi-structure interview*



*\*Players =15\*6, coaches include: head coach, assistant coach and fielding coach=3\*6, supporting staff includes; Trainer, Physio, Analyst, Masseur and LO=5\*6*

## Conclusion

Through the implementation of the safeguarding 06 principals, mentioned above a healthy environment has been created not only for the players but also for the supporting staff associated with the Pakistan Junior League (PJL), while minimizing the individual, relational and organizational threats to children from

any inappropriate act or violence with in the sports. Through proper follow up, the sustainability can be assured. Pakistan cricket Board (PCB) under the supervision of “Mr. Ramiz Hassan Raja” took an initiative to make cricket more enjoyable for players and associated staff with the vision of “Value, listen to and respect all people whom they come into contact” first time in Pakistan.

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## Appendixes



Appendix A1

Appendix A2



Appendix A3

Appendix A5



Appendix A4

Appendix A6

Refer

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