Perceptions and Practices of the University students towards civic skills in the Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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Abstract

In Pakistan, civic education is being given at different levels through different subjects like Pakistan Studies, Social Studies, Islamic Studies, and linguistics. However the contents so taught are mostly related to the aspect of value education. After reviewing the related literature it is observed that in the education so given, civic skills are not that much focused as compared to the values. In this context the present study was made to gauge the level of awareness, perception and practices of the students towards civic skills at tertiary level, in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

Keywords: Perception, Practice, University Students, Civic Skills, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Introduction

The aim and objective of education is not just bread and butter, however the education should be able enough to cause the overall development i.e. physical, intellectual, moral, vocational, religious,

recreational, and aesthetic development to make an individual a good citizen (Samuel, R., 2011)**.**

Civic education leads to develop and produce the people who are really educated and civilized and so can form a civil society, (UNESCO, 1995) the society that is aware about the rights and duties of their own and others as well. They neither exploit others nor can be exploited by others. The aim of education is to inculcate maximum of the virtues to make education viable in producing active citizens. To impart C.E. in Britain the citizenship education was made compulsory in 2002, following the Crick Report 1998 (Osler, 2005). It sounds good to educate people to become good citizens.

Besides taking part in democratic activities it has positive effects on overall personality of an individual.

Similarly Flanagan &Levine stated that C.E. is not only important for functioning democracy but it also plays its role in bringing maturation among the adults. The adults in earlier generations were more participatory and civically active than the adults of today. Civic education can be termed as a yardstick to measure the future of a democratic society and country. The educational institutions at higher level play a vital role in fostering the adults to learn democracy and civics and get involved in civic engagements. (Flangan, C. & Levine, 2010).

The young people who are civically motivated and active, can be an asset to any society and can perform far better role for the well-being and welfare of any society as compared to the dormant or inactive youth (Brennan, 2007). Strength, hope and beauty of nation are her youth. The more the youth is civically charged the brighter the future of a nation will be. However the same youth can be disastrous and dangerous if not trained and directed in a positive direction. Youth has the ability either to make a nation or a country or to destroy it.

In this context the present study was designed to gauge the level of awareness, perceptions and practices of the students at tertiary level towards civic skills. The tertiary level was focused for the reason that in the system of education in Pakistan, civic education is somehow imparted up to fourteenth grade. Therefore the study was made at tertiary level and the questionnaire was administered upon the students who had completed the grade or level to make the results more valid and objective. Therefore the responses are related to the lot of the students who had got the civic education up to the highest level in prevailing system of education system of Pakistan.

The sampled population was consisted of ten Public sector Universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa listed below:

1. University of Peshawar
2. Swat University, Swat
3. Malakand University, Chakdara
4. Hazara University, Mansehra
5. Islamia College University, Peshawar
6. University of Engineering and Technology, Peshawar (U.E.T. Pesh.)
7. Khyber Medical University, Peshawar (K.M.U.Pesh)
8. Agriculture University, Peshawar
9. Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar (I.M.Sciences,Pesh)
10. Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Shringal, Dir Upper

Population

The population of the present study was forty one thousand five hundred and ninety seven (41597) in the ten public sector universities of the province of K.P.

Sample

A sample of one thousand students 520 male and 480 female was taken on random basis.

Research Instrument

A questionnaire covering different aspects consisted of 22 items was used to gather the data.

Data Collection

Data was collected personally and through a representative.

. **Data Analysis**

The data was initially analyzed by using the software of S.P.S.S. and applying the chi square test. However it is presented in the form of percentages to be understood more easily.

Table Showing % age of the responses to each statement by male and female respondents

S. No.	Statement/ Item	Yes Male	Y. Fem-ale	No Male	N. Fe-male	Don't Know M.	D. Kw. .Fem-Ale
1	Do you believe in changing the society through ballot?	70.	68.3	29.2	28.3	0.76	3.33
2	Are you satisfied with the present political environment and other condition of the country?	10.7	12.0	87.3	84.3	1.92	3.54
3	Did you cast your vote in the last General Elections?	78.0	55.8	21.3	42.5	0.57	1.66

4	Democratic thinking is…..of positive change?	79.6	77.9	11.5	12.7	8.84	9.37
5	Do you know the exact of Pakistan's National Assembly seats?	66.7	41.0	29.0	48.9	4.2	10
6	Do you know the KP. Assembly seats?	62.3	36.2	32.5	54.7	5.19	8.95
7	Do you really believe that national assets are a trust?	81.7	86.0	11.9	14.5	6.34	9.37
8	Do you throw wrappers, paper bits, fruit peels, bubble gums etc. everywhere?	36.3	26.6	60.9	70.8	2.69	2.5
9	Do you think you ought to use electricity gas carefully?	88.6	87.5	8.46	9.58	3.12	2.91
10	Do you use people's shoes, socks, mobiles etc without permission?	19.2	19.3	79.2	77.5	1.34	3.12
11	Do you respect people's views/ emotions?	89.4	82.7	7.5	10.8	3.07	6.45
12	Do you read newspaper daily?	48.4	34.1	49.8	62.7	1.73	3.12
13	Do you watch TV news?	68.0	61.0	29.2	32.8	2.69	3.33

14	Do you watch TV Talk-Shows about national issues?	70.1	69.1	28.6	27.9	1.15	2.91
15	Do you discuss national issues with friends?	79.8	72.2	17.1	23.3	3.07	4.37
16	Do you shares your problems with sympathetic person or friend	65.1	65.8	31.5	30.	3.26	4.16
17	Did you ever inform through written application any government official of our social ills such as Hygiene, Health, Law & Order?	23.0	16.6	75.3	81.6	1.53	1.66
18	Did you ever write an Email to a concerned authority as regards social problems?	10.7	9.37	86.5	87.5	2.69	3.12
19	Do you help the phone number of the bomb disposal squad in your mobile or phone diary?	17.3	13.1	81.1	83.7	1.53	3.12
20	Do you help the phone number of Fire Brigade?	47.3	47.0	51.7	50.4	0.96	2.5.
21	Do you know the phone number of Edi Ambulance or any other	54.0	48.9	45	48.9	0.96	2.08

	Ambulance service?						
22	Do you know Police Emergency number?	67.6	62.5	31.3	36.0	0.96	1.45

The responses to the questions by the respondents, belonging to both the genders reveal that significant majority of the respondents believe in ballot to bring change in a society, but they are not satisfied with the prevailing political situation of the country. This might be the reason that not an overwhelming majority did cast their vote in the last general election 2013. The results in the Table show that most of the respondents have positive attitude towards democracy. But a reasonable number of the respondents are unaware about the exact number of the National and even Provincial Assembly seats of their own province. The situation of the female respondents is rather worse regarding such awareness. Interestingly female are better than male respondents in reading newspaper. But male respondents are better in watching TV. News .A reasonable number of the respondents watches Talk shows on the current affairs on national issues. The respondents though discuss national and social issues with their friends but a vast majority of the respondents has never written an application or email to the concerned authority. More than 80% of the respondents do not have the phone number of the Bomb Disposal Squad. Almost 50% do not have the phone number of Fire Brigade, or Ambulance service. But they are more informed about the Police emergency number.

It is important to teach students about emergency numbers when they are young, even at pre-school stage, and they should be made aware about the situations in which they may call the emergency numbers (Walsh, K.2011.). But it is a pity that the province of K.P. has been a battlefield of war on terror and terrorism for more than a decade; More than a hundred and forty five people including 132 innocent students were brutally killed in Peshawar in school attack by the terrorists,(Walsh D.,2014). Even then, more than 80% of the respondents did not have the phone number of Bomb Disposal Squad. Almost 50% did not have the

phone number of Fire Brigade or Ambulance service. However they were more informed about the Police emergency number.

Findings

Analysis of the data of the present study leads to the following findings:

- The students of Public sector Universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (K.P.) believed in ballot to bring change in the society.
- The respondents were not satisfied with the prevailing political situation of the country.
- Majority of the respondents did cast vote in the last general elections 2013.
- The respondents were not well aware of the basics of the prevailing political system, even number of seats in the National or provincial Assembly.
- The situation of the female respondents was rather worse regarding such awareness.
- Most of the respondents had positive attitude towards democracy.
- Female respondents were found better than male respondents in reading newspaper.
- Male respondents were better in watching TV. News.
- A reasonable number of the respondents used to watch Talk shows on the current affairs or National issues.
- The respondents though would discuss national and social issues with their friends, but a vast majority of the respondents had never written an application or email to the concerned authority.
- More than 80% of the respondents did not have the phone number of the Bomb Disposal Squad.
- Almost a half of the respondents did not have the phone number of Fire Brigade, or Ambulance service.
- The respondents were found more informed about the Police emergency number.

Conclusions & Recommendations

On the basis of the Findings and analysis of the research, the following conclusions and recommendations are made:

- It is recommended that a special course of Civic Education may be developed specially at Tertiary level.
- The course so developed may have contents related to the rights and duties as a citizen of Pakistan, as a Muslim, and Human Being.
- Moreover, rights of Minorities, Basic fundamental Human rights mentioned in the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, may also be included in the course.
- The course so designed should provide an opportunity to learn a balance of values and civic skills.
- The awareness about basics of the political system should also be focused.
- A further research may be carried out at higher secondary or under graduate level to assess the level of awareness of the students towards civic skills.

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