

CIVIC CONSCIOUSNESS OF HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS

G. P. SUJA

PhD Scholar, NVKSD College of Education (Autonomous), Attoor, Kanniyakumari District, Tamil Nadu, India.

Dr. S. SREELATHA

Principal, NVKSD College of Education (Autonomous), Attoor, Kanniyakumari District, Tamil Nadu, India.

Abstract

In this study, an attempt has been made to study the civic consciousness of higher secondary students. The sample for the study comprised of 300 higher secondary students selected from schools of Wayanad district in Kerala state using random sampling technique Normative survey method was used. The finding of the study revealed that the levels of civic consciousness higher secondary students were moderate and also significant gender and locality difference were noted.

Keywords: Civic Consciousness, Higher Secondary Students, Gender difference, Locale.

INTRODUCTION

Civic consciousness is the recognition that each citizen is for the society and the genuine interests of the society are the interests of the citizen. Civic Consciousness of higher secondary students is an important aspect of their education and personal development. It refers to their awareness, understanding and active engagement in civic and social issues as well as their sense of responsibility towards their communities. In the sphere of education, nurturing civic consciousness among students in higher secondary levels is of utmost importance for shaping the future of democratic societies. Civic consciousness, which entails awareness of civic rights, responsibilities, and active participation in societal affairs, is fundamental in fostering engaged and accountable citizens. As adolescents transition into adulthood, developing civic consciousness becomes crucial for their growth, influencing their roles as active contributors to communities and society at large. Several scholars have underscored the pivotal role of education in promoting civic consciousness among young people (Delli Carpini & Keeter, 2020; Kahne & Westheimer, 2021). Educational institutions serve as vital platforms for instilling democratic values, imparting civic knowledge, and encouraging civic engagement among students (Hess, 2016). However, understanding the factors that shape civic consciousness among higher secondary students is multifaceted and requires a comprehensive approach to develop effective strategies for its enhancement.

Need and Significance of the study

Understanding civic consciousness help students become actively engaged citizens who participate in the democratic process and contribute to their communities. It fosters a sense of social responsibility, encouraging students to address social issues and work towards positive change. Civic consciousness equips students with the skills needed for peaceful conflict resolution. It encourages students to take an active role in community building and promoting social cohesion. In an interconnected world, understanding civic

consciousness can help students become responsible global citizens who are aware of global issues and their role in addressing them. The youth of today will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the country. These future citizens are the young generation who will inherit and govern India in the coming years. The future citizens of India need access to quality education and skill development opportunities. Future citizens should be environmentally conscious and advocate for sustainable practices. Addressing issues like climate change, pollution, and resource management is vital for India's future. The young generation of India will be catalysts for positive change, progress, and development. Their collective actions and choices will determine the trajectory of India's future, making it imperative for society and policymakers to invest in their education, empowerment, and well-being. A well-educated and skilled population can contribute significantly to the country's economic growth and innovation. The future of India, therefore, is closely tied to the aspirations, actions, and values of its future citizens.

The study of civic consciousness holds immense importance in shaping informed and engaged citizens. Understanding civic consciousness aids in designing effective citizenship education programs aimed at nurturing responsible and active citizens (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). It also promotes democratic engagement by encouraging individuals to participate in civic and political activities, such as voting and community organizing (Galston, 2001). Additionally, a strong sense of civic consciousness contributes to social cohesion by fostering shared values and responsibilities within society (Putnam, 2000). Research on civic consciousness is crucial for policymakers to develop initiatives that promote civic engagement and address societal challenges (Levinson, 2012). Moreover, studying civic consciousness among youth is essential for their development as civically minded individuals who can positively contribute to their communities and society (Flanagan & Levine, 2010). Overall, investigating civic consciousness is imperative for nurturing active citizenship, promoting democratic values, and building cohesive and inclusive societies.

Higher secondary students are future leaders and decision-makers, so fostering civic consciousness at this stage can have a long-lasting impact on the quality of governance and civic life in a society. Studying the civic consciousness of higher secondary students is significant as it contributes to the development of informed, engaged, and responsible citizens who play an active role in shaping their communities and nation.

Objectives

1. To study the level of civic consciousness among higher secondary students.
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference in the civic consciousness of higher secondary students with regard to the background variables Gender and locale.

Hypotheses

1. There exists significant difference in the mean scores of civic consciousness of male and female higher secondary students.
2. There exists significant difference in the mean scores of civic consciousness of rural and urban higher secondary students.

METHODOLOGY

The investigator adopted normative survey method for the study. Data was collected from a sample of 300 higher secondary students studying in Wayanad district in Kerala state using random sampling technique. Civic consciousness scale (Suja and Sreelatha 2023) was used to collect data. Civic consciousness scale include 35 statements in the five dimensions namely Social responsibility, Moral consciousness, Political consciousness, Legal consciousness and Ecological consciousness. Validity and reliability of the tool were established. Percentage, t test, ANONA were used for the analysis of the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Percentage wise Distribution of different levels of Civic consciousness of higher secondary students.

Table 1: Different levels of Civic Consciousness of higher secondary students.

Civic Consciousness	Count	Percent
Low	47	15.67
Moderate	193	64.33
High	60	20.00
Total	300	100.00

From the above table, it is clear that majority of the higher secondary students possess moderate level of civic consciousness. Nearly 64 % (64.33) students have moderate level of Civic Consciousness, nearly 16% (15.67) of students have low level and 20% of students possess high level of Civic Consciousness.

Gender wise comparison

Table 2: Gender wise of differences in the civic consciousness of higher secondary students.

Gender	Mean	SD	N	t	P	Remarks
Male	77.27	9.03	123	5.464	0.000	0.01 level
Female	82.85	8.20	177			

Results in table - 2 shows that, the calculated t value ($t = 5.464$; $p = 0.000$) is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the hypothesis 'there exists significant difference in the mean scores of Civic consciousness of male and female higher secondary students' is accepted. It show that there existed significant difference in the civic consciousness of male and female higher secondary students. Mean values shows that Civic Consciousness of female higher secondary students is higher than that of male higher secondary students.

Locality wise comparison of Civic Consciousness of higher secondary students.

Table 3: Comparison of Civic Consciousness based on Locale of the school.

Locale of the school	Mean	SD	N	t	P	Remark
Rural	78.43	8.95	187	5.740	0.00	Sig. at 0.01 level
Urban	84.09	7.84	113			

Results in table 3 shows that the calculated t value (t=5.740; p=0.00) is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the hypothesis 'there exists significant difference in the mean scores of Civic consciousness of rural and urban higher secondary students' is accepted. It shows that there existed significant difference in the civic consciousness of rural and urban higher secondary students. Mean values shows that urban students are having higher civic consciousness than rural students.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Civic consciousness has to be developed for the welfare of all and for the reconstruction of the society. A civic minded person is willing to serve their community sacrifice their personal interests for the welfare of society.

A strong civic consciousness among higher secondary students is essential for building a better and more inclusive future for all. The result of the present study revealed that 64% of students possess moderate level of civic consciousness. So their civic consciousness interests should be promoted. Fostering civic consciousness among higher secondary students is crucial for nurturing responsible and active citizens. The role of schools and educators is fundamental in nurturing this civic consciousness through both academic and extra curricular activities. Educating students about rights, responsibilities and the importance of active citizenship fosters a sense of social responsibility. The result revealed that civic consciousness of female students have high civic consciousness compared to male students and urban students possess high civic consciousness than rural students. To engage rural students, it's crucial to cultivate a sense of community belonging and duty through participation in local activities and groups. Introducing civics education into the curriculum with topics pertinent to rural life can deepen their comprehension of civic obligations. Hands-on learning experiences like community service projects or simulated elections allow rural students to grasp the practical aspects of civic involvement. Similarly, for male students, exposure to positive male role models and mentors who actively participate in civic affairs can serve as inspiration and guidance. So develop long-term strategies for sustaining youth civic engagement ensuring that it becomes a lifelong commitment. Fostering civic consciousness is an ongoing process, and it requires the collaboration of educators, community leaders and parents to create an environment where civic engagement is valued and encouraged.

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