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Effect of Higher Education in Fostering Civic Values among University Students

Muhammad Ihsan *

Zainab Sherazi †

Khizar Hayat ‡

Corresponding Author: Lecturer, Department of Education, University of Sargodha, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: ihsantiwana@gmail.com

Abstract: Education plays a pivotal role to shape students personality for the benefit of society. The objective of the study was to find out the existing and achieved level of civic values. The population was undergraduate students studying social sciences at the University of Sargodha. The intact classes of BS 1st and 8th semesters were the sample of the study. The data were collected through a questionnaire regarding higher education and civic value. The data were analyzed by applying an independent sample t-test to compare the existing and achieved level of civic values of the students. The result revealed that the achieved level of civic values was more prominent than the existing level. It is recommended that such research should be conducted in different universities in Pakistan to find out the effect of the philanthropist role of students in building peace, cooperation and tolerance in society.

Key Words: University Students, Higher Education, Civic Values

Introduction

The article finds out the effect of higher education and civic values among the students of the University of Sargodha's three departments through a self-devised questionnaire. It further investigates how and to what extent higher education is incorporating civic values and engagement among the students of different disciplines at the University of Sargodha.

According to Carter *et al.* (2021), the importance of education for society can never be neglected. It is very much important to foster civic sense and values among the posterity of any culture and civilization. The child after her birth comes in contact with multiple kinds of experiences within the

environment and as a result, learns to cope with the environment, and society and adjust through the process of socialization in the society to fulfil her needs. While doing this the child becomes a member of a society. So, the child becomes conscious and aware of the values of the culture of his/her in which s/he is surviving and can respond to the stimuli of society accordingly.

Aziz *et al.*, (2010) assert that education is important to promote economic growth. It plays a prominent role in acquiring human skills and enhances capital through knowledge and education for the benefit of society. Education not only benefits the economy but it is enhancing civic values. They further found out that in the case of Pakistan, where growth

* Lecturer, Department of Education, University of Sargodha, Punjab, Pakistan.

† Lecturer, Department of Education, University of Sargodha, Punjab, Pakistan.

‡ PhD, Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

in a knowledge economy is mandatory to let out of poverty, that education has a pivotal role to play. For many years, Pakistan is putting great emphasis on primary as well as secondary education. But higher education is being neglected as it is the main source to improve economic growth in the country.

According to Memon (2007), education is important for reducing poverty and fostering social development. The poor-quality educational system of any country may be one of the most main hurdles in the growth and development of the poor countries. In Pakistan, the quality of education has always been on the declining end. It is realized that science education is particularly declining and it is need of the time to improve it on urgent basis. The shortage of teachers is also a major reason. The educational institutions generally are not functioning well in the country. The factors that are causing the decline are defective curriculum, bilingualism as a medium of instruction at the secondary level as well as poor quality of teachers' pieces of training.

Walker *et al.*, (2019) investigate that higher education plays a prominent role in the development of socioeconomic conditions and the development of the country. Rethorst *et al.*, (2014) argue that the main role of higher education institutions is to prepare the human capital with the knowledge and skills that they can play their role in government, business, and other professions as well as for the betterment of society.

According to (Education Policy 1998-2010) cited in Raza *et al.*, (2019) that the universities and degree awarding institutions in Pakistan are not fulfilling the purpose which is their fundamental responsibility in their existing situation. These institutions are not backing up the academic as well as research purposes to fulfil according to international standards. The existing system cannot fulfil the market demands for jobs. The government policies and regulatory authorities are not aligning the universities with the market and its principles. It was also found out that the universities and higher education institutions might be provided with enough funds by

several resources like market-based research as is initiated in developed countries across the globe.

Awan *et al.*, (2022) concluded that the role of education as human capital is important because it plays a prominent role in the socioeconomic condition and sustainable development of the country. Siddiq & Scherer (2019) argue that there is no deficiency of talent in Pakistan and other South Asian countries as compared to the other developed countries of the world. The problem has always been due to colonial rule of nearly two centuries. The people strengthen their virtues by blindly imitating Western attitudes and it brought a bad name to their intellectual abilities.

HEC Vision 2025 also focused on sustainable development goals. These are the United Nations' 17 goals of sustainable development goals to transform the world over the next 10 years and the implication of these goals is that higher education will function as the engine of socio-economic progress. The first of the goals is to protect the environment from all kinds of oppression.

NEP (2017) chapter ten entitled 'Higher Education' also highlights the importance of higher education institutions to produce leadership for all sectors of society. The catalytic role of higher education is not only nurturing the individual for their career but also for economic development, social transformation and political enlightenment for the whole society (page, 76)

According to Dee (2020), individuals learn civic values and responsibilities through socializing themselves in educational institutions in a democratic society. Education at higher institutions enables them to recognize collective interests rather than individual interests and benefits.

Giroux (2011) argued that there are certain other views that the universities are not fulfilling the purpose of civic sense among the students. Huang *et al.*, (2011) are of the view that universities and higher education institutions prepare graduate and undergraduate students to take part in some

volunteer service. Tansey & Gallo (2018) found out that college graduates volunteer themselves for the benefit of the community as compared to non-college graduates.

Uzoagba, *et al.*, (2020) found out that civic education enables individuals to take part in the political, social, cultural and economic sides of their state and their behaviour for the community should be obligatory. Dee (2020) claims that both education and civic outcomes are the results of the families and societies in which individuals are born and nurtured.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Find out the views of students of the University of Sargodha about civic values.
2. Identify gender-wise comparison of students' views regarding civic values.
3. Compare the views of BS 1st and BS 8th students regarding civic values.

Hypotheses

Following were the Hypotheses of the study:

1. H01: There is no statistically significant difference between the three departments' students of the University of Sargodha regarding civic values.
2. H02: There is no statistically significant difference between male and female students' views about civic values.
3. H03: There is no statistically significant difference between BS 1st and BS 8th students' views about civic values.

Significance of the Research

Table 1

Views of University Students about Civic Values

No	Dimensions	SA (%)	A (%)	(SA+) %	N (%)	DA (%)	SDA (%)	(DA+SDA) (%)	Mean	SD
1	Humanitarian/ Philanthropic view	14	70	84	14	2	0	2	3.96	.593
2	Sustainable development	8	60	68	28	3	1	4	3.73	.682

This study is the first of its kind conducted in the faculty of social and behavioural sciences at the University of Sargodha. It finds out the gaps in education at different levels and different departments of the University of Sargodha. It would equally be significant for policymakers, curriculum developers, teachers and the Office of Research, Innovation & Commercialization (ORICs).

Research Methodology and Sample

The research approach was quantitative in nature. The causal-comparative research method was applied to collect data. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher. The convenient sampling technique was applied to collect data. Twenty students (10 Male & 10 Female) studying in BS 1st and twenty students studying in BS 8th semester from each department i.e. (Department of Education, Social Work & Psychology) the University of Sargodha were selected as the sample.

Instrument and Data analysis

The questionnaire was developed in the light of relevant literature i.e., higher education and civic values. Four indicators were kept in mind while developing the questionnaire. The indicators were Philanthropic views, sustainable development, Knowledge of current affairs, leadership and management skills etc. The data were analyzed through SPSS. The indicator-wise responses of students are analyzed and compared by applying an independent sample t-Test. The data were analyzed under the title of the following four factors.

3	Understanding current affairs	7	60	67	28	4	1	5	3.68	.694
4	Leadership and Management Skills	8	58	66	27	6	1	7	3.66	.748
5	overall Civic values	6	70	76	22	1	1	2	3.79	.592

Table 1.5 reflects the views of university students about civic values. 84% of respondents with a mean of 3.96; SD=.593 highly favouring and agreed with the existence of Humanitarian civic values among students of the University of Sargodha. 68% of university students viewed with a mean score of 3.73; SD=.682 that higher education fosters Sustainable development. The 67% of respondents depicted with a mean of 3.68; SD=.694 that civic values about understanding current affairs are in practice among students of the University of Sargodha. The 66% of university students reflected with a mean score of 3.66; SD= .748 that higher education is developing Leadership and Management Skills among students of the University of Sargodha. The 76% of respondents with a mean score of 3.79; SD=.592 depicted that higher education is fostering civic values among students of the University of Sargodha.

Figure 1

Gender-wise Comparison of Students' Views of civic values

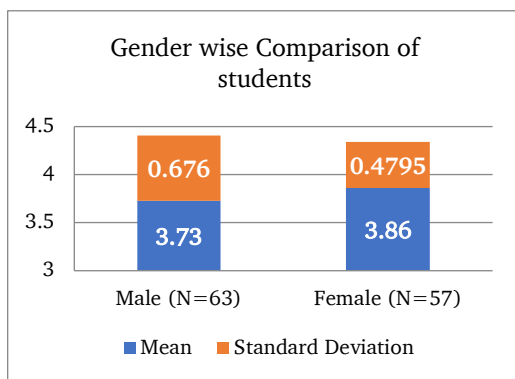
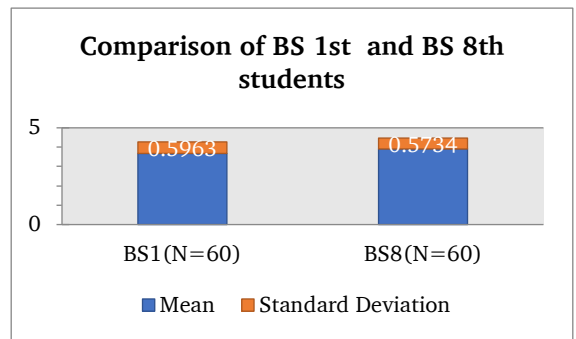


Figure 1 shows that an independent-sample t-Test was applied to compare gender-wise differences regarding the views of male and female students about civic values. There was

significant difference in scores of males (M = 3.730, SD =.6760) and female (M = 3.860, SD = .4795), $df(118) = -1.197, p = .234$ about civic values. So, the null hypothesis "There is no significant difference between male and female students about civic values" is rejected. It means that there is a difference in the views of male and female students of the University of Sargodha about civic values.

Figure 2

Comparison of BS 1st and BS 8th Students' overall views Civic Values



"There is no significant difference between BS₁ and BS₈ students of the University of Sargodha about the views of civic values."

Figure 2 shows that an independent-samples t-test was applied to compare the views of BS 1st and BS 8th students about civic values. There was significant difference in mean scores of BS 1st (M =3.683, SD =.5963) and BS₈ (M =3.900, SD = .5734), $t(118) = -2.029, p = .045$ about civic values. So, the null hypothesis that "There is no particular difference between BS 1st and BS 8th students of the University of Sargodha about the views of civic values." is rejected. It means that there is a difference in the views of BS₁ and BS₈ students of the University of Sargodha about civic values.

Conclusion and Discussion

In light of the above data analysis, it is found that the University of Sargodha is incorporating a sense of civic values when they reached the terminal level of getting their master's degrees instead of those who are at the entry-level at the University of Sargodha. The same is the case regarding gender-wise comparison (Diagram.1) that the male students' results were found significant than the female students studying at the faculty of Social and behavioural sciences University of Sargodha. It was found that an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the overall views of BS1 and BS8 students about civic values. There was a significant difference in scores of BS1 about civic values (Table.3).

It means that there is a difference in views of BS 1st and BS 8th students of the University of Sargodha about civic values. So, it is concluded that the University of Sargodha is gearing its students to become beneficial members of society in a practising civic sense like humanitarian, and philanthropic views, to take part in achieving sustainable development goals, to have managerial abilities to cope with the difficult situations and disasters etc.

The results of the study by Shephard and Edgon (2018)'s study of Higher Education for Professional and Civic Values: A Critical Review and Analysis results confirm that the values are of great interest to higher education. It has a

significant focus on experiential learning and in the context of role modelling. But it is challenging to define and evaluate the attainment of these values.

The study by Cogan and Morris (2001) The Development of civics values: an overview is comparable so far as civic values are concerned at the secondary school level. This study was conducted in secondary schools in six different countries. Regarding the context and themes of the study, its results are compatible with this study as secondary school-level education is enhancing and instilling civic values among students around the globe.

Recommendations

In light of the study result following is the recommendation:

1. Such kind of study should be conducted at the elementary and secondary level in Pakistan.
2. The qualitative study be conducted to explore the syllabuses of school, college and university levels to review what level of civic values and behaviours are included in education in the Pakistani context.
3. Further studies should be conducted in different disciplines at different universities across the country.

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