A Study of Citizenship Education Practices in Higher Secondary Schools in Indian Perspective

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Abstract

The global community recognizes the real capital of India to be its age old democratic social order. Democracy here is not only a form of government but also a way of life. Education in this context plays a very important role in nurturing a democratic order among future generations of the country. But, somehow due to increased weightage on cognitive dimension based competition in society the schools are lagging behind in their task of developing citizenship qualities, thus, a status check is seriously needed. In such premise present study was undertaken on a randomly selected sample of 504 teachers of 68 higher secondary schools of Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh, India. The findings reveal a dismal state of citizenship education particularly in state government schools. Further, private schools and urban schools were found better in providing citizenship education in Indian context. It is recommended on the basis of the study that serious effort from all educational stakeholders is seriously needed to make education a viable tool for developing an ideal citizenry for the country.

Keywords: Citizenship Education, Civic Education, Citizenship Qualities, School effectiveness, Quality schools

Introduction

No one is born into the world with rights. Societies decide what rights it will give citizens and what powers it will give government. Rights can be taken away and governmental powers can grow beyond reasonable limits unless citizens are watchful. The core of democracy "assumes that our rights and liberties do not come for free, that unless we assume the responsibilities of citizens we will not be able to preserve them" (Barber, 1998).

In a democratic country, citizens enjoy all kinds of freedom besides ensuring their human dignity. Freedom, however, demands responsibility on the part of citizens. Somehow, these days it is generally observed that in liberal democracies commitment of citizens towards responsibilities is weakening.

This is an alarming tendency, which needs to be rectified and curbed out at utmost priority for ensuring quality of life in these societies. People throwing garbage in inappropriate places, keeping the public places dirty and using them with high sense of irresponsibility, low political interest & political participation are a few examples to demonstrate our virtues as a democratic citizen. Low election turnouts and decreasing participation in public and political life are a big threat to the democratic system itself. Such a careless attitude towards our fundamental duties and avoidance of responsibilities as a citizen is becoming an alarming concern, at least in democracy like India. In fact, it should be seen as a long-term investment for increasing the quality of life of citizens.

Certainly as bye product, the education for citizenship will promote the democratic values of human rights, tolerance and cultural pluralism.

What society is and what society wants is evident in the way society educates its young (Havinghurst & Neugarten, 1957). As John Dewey (1930) has also said that 'Education is the midwife of democracy' It is this age old agency which has to come forward for developing democratic outlook amongst our future citizens to foster democratic way of living. Most unfortunately, neither our school curricula nor our teacher preparation programmes are specifically designed for providing education for citizenship.

Education being the strongest social force has always been regarded the most potent agency to transect the desired value system among future generations. This is somewhat ironic, given the sense of crisis in the field. Steiner-Khamsi et.al (2002) in their worldwide survey of 24 countries concluded that citizenship education was a low status subject in all 24 of the countries, which participated in study in which India was one of the countries. Most unfortunately, neither our school curricula nor our teacher preparation programs are specifically designed for providing education for citizenship. Considering the fact that Education plays pivotal role for the success of any societal reform, if inculcation of citizenship qualities is desired to be a reality in our schools, we will have to urgently initiate citizenship education in our schools. It is in this context, that there is need to study the present pattern of citizenship education in Higher Secondary Schools particularly in India being the largest democracy of the world.

The review of the studies shows that at the beginning of the twenty-first century, there is a renewed interest in education for citizenship worldwide (European Commission, 1997; Niemi and Junn, 1998; Osler and Starkey, 1999, 2005a and 2005c; Torney-Purta et al., 1999, 2001; Cogan & Derricott, 2000; Council of Europe, 2000 and 2002; Parker, 2003; Banks, 2004). In Indian context also there has been a continuous stress over creation of good citizens through education NPE 1986 states that "India's political and social life is passing through a phase which poses the danger of erosion to long accepted values. The goal of secularism, socialism, democracy and professional ethics are coming under increasing strain which should be fostered through education".

The pedagogical implications of citizenship education for teachers have been addressed by a number of researchers (Osler & Starkey, 1996 and 1998; Harwood, 1997, 2001; Holden & Clough, 1998; Richardson & Wood, 1999; Richardson and Miles, 2003) at international level but none effort is seen in Indian context, thus a knowledge gap exists in this area of citizenship education in India.

The researches, conducted in the premise have been conducted on implementation of citizenship education in schools and desired effectiveness of teachers. In 2002-2004 Department for Education and Skills, London funded a study on the needs of teachers and learners in the context of global citizenship (Davies, L., et al., 2005). The research team observed lessons and worked with pupil researchers in 6 primary and 6 secondary schools in the West Midlands. They also conducted interviews with teachers, with students and staff in three initial teacher-training institutions and officers in 13 local education authorities. The study found pupils to have a sophisticated concept of global citizenship and a keen interest in the wider world, particularly contemporary wars and conflicts.

No similar study was found in India neither at institutional level nor in individual level.

Hence, it was yielded out of the review that in Indian context there has not been a serious research effort to study the citizenship education among higher secondary schools in Indian context, thus, the present study was designed to specifically study the status and pattern of citizenship education in higher secondary schools in Indian perspective.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to summarize the status of citizenship education practices of higher secondary schools according to following independent variables:

1.1 Administrative board (i.e. Uttar Pradesh Board/Central Board of Secondary Education)
1.2 Type of school (i.e. Government/private)
1.3 Habitat (i.e. Urban/Rural)

Research Design

The investigator followed descriptive survey methodology to collect data relevant to the content and methodology of practices in higher secondary schools with regard to the citizenship education. Thus, the survey tools utilized in the study provided the necessary information about the status practices in higher secondary schools related to citizenship education.

Population

The population has been defined as the aggregate or totality of objects or individuals regarding which inferences are to be made in the study. The present study was conducted on teachers of higher secondary schools. Thus, the population of this study consisted of all the teachers of higher secondary schools (i.e. teaching in classes' XI and XII) of Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India.

Sample

Kerlinger (1973) stated that sampling is taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of the population or universe. A sample is defined as a part (or sub set) of the population selected for observation and analysis. On the basis of characteristics of the sample, inferences can be made about the characteristics of the population in general.

Keeping in view the achievement of the objectives of this study random cluster sampling technique was used to select 42 UP board schools and 24 CBSE board schools as a cluster for the sample of the study.

In order to select sample from higher secondary schools under random cluster sampling successive randomization (Kelrlinger, 1973) was done to select the final sampling unit.

The Varanasi district is geographically divided into 8 blocks. Therefore, at first, cluster of 6 blocks was chosen randomly from these 8 blocks of Varanasi district. Out of the cluster of 6 blocks again a cluster of 7 schools from each block was chosen randomly to reach to final sampling unit. In this way, 42 schools of UP board were chosen and all the teachers, teaching at higher secondary level have been included in the sample. Thus all the teachers, teaching in class XI and XII of all 42 sampled higher secondary schools of UP board i.e. 504 teachers were finally selected.

Further, in case of CBSE board schools, from the cluster of 6 blocks it was found that CBSE schools are very low in number than UP board schools. In some blocks, only one or two schools were there whereas in some it was more than four. Thus for selecting CBSE schools either the whole number of CBSE schools were selected from the block or in case of good number of CBSE schools in the block a minimum of four schools were chosen in the sample. In this way, 24 higher secondary schools of CBSE board were selected for drawing the final sampling unit. Thus, all the teachers, teaching in class XI & XII of all 24 sampled higher

secondary schools of CBSE board i.e. 336 teachers were finally selected as sample of

the study.

Table 1: Design of the sample for Higher Secondary Teachers

Sample	UP Board schools (42)				CBSE Board schools (24)				Total	Total
	Government schools (21)		Private schools (21)		Government schools (12)		Private schools (12)			
	Urban (12)	Rural (9)	Urban (8)	Rural (13)	Urban (7)	Rural (5)	Urban (8)	Rural (4)		
Teachers	120	84	72	91	70	35	88	44	604	

In bracket number of schools

Findings of the Study
Different Patterns of Citizenship Education Status of Higher Secondary Schools:

In order to specifically assess the parameter of quality citizenship education the status of different dimensions of quality citizenship education was investigated. These dimensions were Recognition of civic purpose of education, Meaningful learning of civic related knowledge, Thoughtful and respectful dialogue about issue, Engagement in and learning about community, Leadership and management, Co-operation and collaboration, Student input and participation skill. These dimensions were suggested by Homana, G., Barber, C., & Torney-Purta, J. (2005) in their study *School citizenship education climate assessment.* The dimensions very much displayed the relative pattern of Citizenship Education Status (CES) in HSS in Indian perspective too along with status of different dimensions of quality citizenship education. The dimension wise analysis was also helpful to indentify the strength and weakness of HSS in different dimensions of CES.

Table 2: Different patterns of Citizenship Education practices in higher secondary schools according to Administrative board (i.e. UP & CBSE)

Citizenship Education Status Dimensions	Higher Secondary Schools							
	UP Board schools				CBSE Board schools			
	M	SD	Max.	Min.	M	SD	Max.	Min.
Recognition of civic purpose of education	17.14	2.16	21.00	13.00	17.96	2.94	22.11	11.00
Meaningful learning of civic related knowledge	12.81	1.38	16.20	10.09	12.98	1.59	15.82	10.00
Thoughtful and respectful dialogue about issue	18.63	2.11	22.80	13.80	19.38	2.80	23.50	13.00
Engagement in and learning about community	13.07	1.89	16.50	8.00	14.12	1.65	17.23	10.00
Leadership and management	16.30	2.02	21.13	12.33	18.08	1.08	19.75	16.50
Co-operation and collaboration	15.98	1.98	20.63	11.60	16.56	1.73	19.11	14.00
Student input and participation skill	19.72	2.80	26.00	15.00	20.88	2.74	25.00	13.60

In the present study, the CES has been studied as multidimensional construct having seven dimensions. The table – 1shows the CES pattern of HSS according to educational board.

According to mean, standard deviation, maximum & minimum score of each dimension of CES for UP & CBSE boards respectively, in UP board schools the highest mean score (19.72) was obtained for the dimension 'Student input and participation skill' whereas CES dimension 'Meaningful learning of civic Related Knowledge' scored lowest with mean score 12.81. The other CES dimensions i.e. 'Thoughtful and respectful dialogue about issue', 'Recognition of civic purpose of Education' 'Leadership and Management', 'Co-operation and Collaboration', 'Engagement in and

learning about community' stood second, third, fourth, and fifth position respectively.

Further, in CBSE Board schools, the table revealed that the highest mean score 20.88 was obtained for the dimension of 'Student input and participation skill' whereas the dimension of 'Meaningful learning of civic Related Knowledge' scored lowest with mean score 12.98. The other CE dimensions i.e. 'Thoughtful and respectful dialogue about issue', 'Leadership and Management', 'Recognition of civic purpose of Education', 'Co-operation and Collaboration', 'Engagement in and learning about community' stood second, third, fourth, and fifth position respectively.

Table 3: Different patterns of Citizenship Education practices in higher secondary schools according to Type of school (i.e. Government & Private)

Citizenship Education Status Dimensions	Higher Secondary Schools							
	Government schools				Private schools			
	M	SD	Max.	Min.	M	SD	Max.	Min.
Recognition of civic purpose of education	16.88	2.76	22.11	11.00	18.01	2.06	21.09	13.00
Meaningful learning of civic related knowledge	12.26	1.26	15.00	10.00	13.48	1.38	16.20	10.50
Thoughtful and respectful dialogue about issue	18.51	2.14	22.25	13.80	19.30	2.59	23.50	13.00
Engagement in and learning about community	13.17	1.40	16.11	10.60	13.73	2.23	17.23	8.00
Leadership and management	16.78	2.04	19.75	12.50	17.12	1.83	21.13	12.33
Co-operation and collaboration	15.61	1.80	19.11	11.60	16.77	1.85	20.63	13.00
Student input and participation skill	19.74	3.15	25.00	13.60	20.55	2.41	26.00	16.00

The table- 3 shows the Citizenship Education (CE) pattern of HSS according to type of schools. According to mean, standard deviation, maximum & minimum score of each dimension of CE for Government & Private schools respectively, in Government schools the highest mean score (19.74) was obtained for the dimension 'Student input and participation skill' whereas other CE dimension 'Meaningful learning of civic Related Knowledge' scored lowest with

mean score 12.26. The other CE dimensions i.e. 'Thoughtful and respectful dialogue about issue', 'Recognition of civic purpose of Education' 'Leadership and Management', 'Co-operation and Collaboration', 'Engagement in and learning about community' stood second, third, fourth, and fifth position respectively.

Further, in Private schools, the table revealed that the highest mean score 20.55 was obtained for the dimension of

'Student input and participation skill' whereas the dimension of 'Meaningful learning of civic Related Knowledge' scored lowest with mean score 13.48. The other CE dimensions i.e. 'Thoughtful and respectful dialogue about issue', 'Leadership and Management', 'Recognition of civic purpose of Education', 'Co-operation and Collaboration', 'Engagement in and learning about community' stood second, third, fourth, and fifth position respectively.

Table 4: Different patterns of Citizenship Education practices in higher secondary schools according to Habitat (i.e. Urban/Rural)

Citizenship Education Status Dimensions	Higher Secondary Schools							
	Urban schools				Rural schools			
	M	SD	Max.	Min.	M	SD	Max.	Min.
Recognition of civic purpose of education	18.21	2.03	22.11	13.25	16.57	2.69	21.09	11.00
Meaningful learning of civic related knowledge	13.08	1.14	15.33	10.09	12.64	1.72	16.20	10.00
Thoughtful and respectful dialogue about issue	20.18	1.76	23.50	15.91	17.47	2.21	22.33	13.00
Engagement in and learning about community	14.38	1.30	17.23	11.45	12.39	1.86	15.40	8.00
Leadership and management	17.68	1.55	21.13	14.80	16.12	2.01	19.33	12.33
Co-operation and collaboration	17.01	1.59	20.63	14.22	15.27	1.82	19.00	11.60
Student input and participation skill	21.49	2.22	26.00	16.88	18.61	2.64	24.50	13.60

The table- 4 shows the CE pattern of HSS according to educational board. According to mean, standard deviation, maximum & minimum score of each dimension of CE for Urban & Rural Schools respectively, in Urban schools the highest mean score (21.49) was obtained for the dimension 'Student input and participation skill' whereas other CE dimension 'Meaningful learning of civic Related Knowledge' scored lowest with mean score 13.08. The other CE dimensions i.e. 'Thoughtful and respectful dialogue about issue', 'Recognition of civic purpose of Education' 'Leadership and Management', 'Co-operation and Collaboration', 'Engagement in and learning about community' stood second, third, fourth, and fifth position respectively.

Further, in Rural schools, the table revealed that the highest mean score 18.61 was obtained for the dimension of 'Student input and participation skill' whereas the dimension of 'Engagement in and learning about community' scored lowest with mean score 12.39. The other CE dimensions i.e. 'Thoughtful and respectful dialogue about issue', 'Leadership and Management', 'Recognition of civic purpose of Education', 'Co-operation and Collaboration', 'Meaningful learning of civic Related Knowledge' stood second, third, fourth, and fifth position respectively.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1

Uttar Pradesh Board schools are particularly lagging behind in providing Citizenship education as compared to Central Board for Secondary Education schools. Private schools are better in citizenship education status in comparison to government schools. It is also concluded that no rural school is maintaining an advanced level of learning environment for citizenship education compared to urban schools.

The finding highlights the varied differences among schools according to their different attributes. As UP board schools are particularly found poorest in terms of maintaining an ideal citizenship education teaching learning whereas CBSE schools were found in better status. It may be on ground of poor infrastructure in UP board schools. Since there is scant learning provisions in these schools, the maintenance of quality citizenship education is also poor, whereas in CBSE schools, infrastructurally they were found better with good provisions for curricular & co-curricular activities. Although, a weak link with citizenship education was also found, as they had no detailed plan, there was no policy statement for parents and the community and are generally unaware of the school's approach to citizenship education. Besides this, parent's involvement in schools activities was also not up to the mark. Some other observations like lack of student enthusiasm and interest in participation; leadership, management organization, decision making, collaboration, teamwork, and low awareness towards school council were also observed, which contributed to the finding of low number of even CBSE Schools in advanced stage. Similarly, in case of rural schools also proper awareness and an ideal instructional environment were absent, which must have been the reason for their relatively poor status in citizenship education status. Lack of infrastructure, students & teachers absenteeism and lethargy of local authorities must also be contributing towards poor status of rural schools in terms of citizenship education.

Educational implication:

The finding showed that UP board schools, rural area schools and government schools are generally in focusing stage of citizenship education. Therefore, it is needed to improve all the dimensions of quality citizenship education in these schools. In such effort, schools must care for developing leadership quality at all levels, developing a plan for citizenship education, recognizing difficulties and seeking solutions, organizing civic-related curricular & co-curricular activities for students, guided discussion of current local, national and international civic and social issues so that these schools may become an effective means in nurturing democratic order in the individual and the country.

Conclusion 2:

Central Board for Secondary Education schools are better in the status of all the dimensions of Citizenship Education as compared to Uttar Pradesh board schools. Private schools are in better status in all the dimensions of Citizenship Education as compared to government schools. Further, it is also concluded that Urban Schools are in better status in all the dimensions of Citizenship Education as compared to Rural schools.

Discussion

The present conclusion is another extended justification of the status that in various dimensions of quality citizenship education private schools are found better. The reasons are quite obvious as discussed in previous conclusions on ground of infrastructural facilities and organization of different teaching learning activities in recognition of civic purpose of education.

The finding is consistent with the earlier attempts as Niemi & Junn (1998) also found small and inconsistent differences in civic instruction across public and private schools. A study by Campbell (2000) also founds that even after correcting for differences of family background among students; private schools were at least as effective as public schools in conveying democratic civic knowledge and principles. A study of the success of private schools versus public schools found that private school are more successful than public or government ones in creating good adult citizens because

they tend to integrate service-learning and volunteerism into curriculum at a higher rate than do public schools (Dill, 2009). Dee (2005) also supports this and stated that the type of school attended, whether public, private, church/religion-related or other, private schools have been found significant to a variety of cognitive and attitudinal outcomes. In this context, Gutmann (1987) also pointed out that the realm of public schooling is the most powerful and legitimate means of teaching respect for reasonable political disagreement. This is further supported by Butts (1998) who in his writing for the revival of civics learning in American schools reminds politicians and educationists of the good old days where 'schooling became the best means of educating the citizenry in the cohesive civic values, knowledge, and obligations required for everyone in a democratic republican society'. Apart from these no research effort was seen to compare gender segregated and co-educational schools in terms of providing citizenship education. Thus, no supporting study was available for the variable.

Educational implication

The seven dimensions included in the study could serve to be a good guideline for the schools to improve in the desirable direction for providing citizenship education. The dimensions as civic related knowledge, engagement in and learning about community and co-operation and collaboration have been found to be poor or in moderate status. It should be taken in due priority to strengthen school climate where proper care should be taken to organize the activities related to each dimension of effective citizenship education discussed in the study.

Recommendations of the study

The issue of nurturing an ideal citizenry for the country has remained one of the major issues of concern in Indian education. On the basis of present of the outcomes of the study following recommendations are proposed which emerged out according to conclusions and their implications:

1. A dismal status regarding maintenance of citizenship education status is explored; therefore, immediate serious effort is needed on the part of all the schools to initiate positive changes in this regard. In this effort Teacher Educational Institutes (TEIs) have to play the lead role where they can provide quality teachers for quality education in the schools focusing citizenship education.

2. The status of citizenship education explored in the study also calls for attention of policy framers, administrators, practitioners and other educational stakeholders of the country to make a holistic effort for making today's schools an effective medium for development of democratic citizenship.

3. The supreme bodies related to school education in India like NCERT, boards of school education (UP, CBSE & others), SCERTs, DIETs must also look into the findings of the study to incorporate the essential elements of citizenship education in the schools of the country.

4. Further, supreme bodies of Higher education in India like UGC, central & state ministries related to higher education, professional councils should also attest the importance to issue of democratic citizenship and introduce effective remedial measures. In this context, the role of NCTE becomes so crucial. As the TEIs are under direct control of the council NCTE should introduce essential quality control in the TEIs in the country. Effective supervision & inspection

mechanism may be introduced where the issue of quality management may be addressed seriously. The essential elements of citizenship education should also be incorporated in teacher education programs.

5. As very less number of schools were found to be serious on citizenship education, the issue may also be sufficiently addressed in in-service and pre-service teacher education programs, and also in orientation, refresher courses so that, teachers' awareness may be increased to provide quality citizenship education in the schools. Various seminars, conferences may also be organized on the issue so that large scale awareness may be increased among academicians & educators.

6. Uttar Pradesh board schools were particularly found lagging in maintaining rich citizenship education teaching & learning. Therefore, the ministry of school education in Uttar Pradesh government should intervene & organize special intervention programs so that the status may be improved.

7. The issue of citizenship education is not being paid adequate attention by the researchers in Indian context as the review of the literature indicated. Therefore, more serious effort of educational researchers is recommended to bring more conceptual clarity and useful programs for quality citizenship education in the schools.

To sum up, it is of urgent importance that the issue of citizenship education be addressed in higher secondary schools in Indian context so that the age old democratic fabric of the country be remained strong and healthy forever.

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