



Civic Engagement among University Students in Relation to their Personological Variables

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ABSTRACT

The present study was aimed at civic engagement among university students in relation to their personological variables. Data was collected through the application of stratified random sampling techniques. Application of self-constructed tool helped to infer the results. The results revealed that there exists a significant difference in the civic engagement of male and female students of university, Boys were found to be less engaged in civic engagement activities as compared to female university students. However, with regard to students belonging to different streams, no significant difference was found. The study indicated the need to bring constructive changes in the curriculum in the light of development of civic engagement among youth.

Keywords: *Civic Engagement, Personological variables, Streams*

Introduction

Civic engagement is the participation of the people to do work for the society voluntary for the benefit of the society and for himself. It can also be said that it is the participation of the people in the political sphere and the factors that bring change in the community, varies among different generations. Participation of citizen in the community activities, which is of benefit for others is called civic engagement. It helps in shaping the future of the community. It is a mean to improve the condition of life in a community. Its main purpose is to make the citizens active who can take part in public sphere.

As India is a very big country having different cultures, religions, social structures etc. India is still a developing country. Its fellow nations like China and Japan have made significant development in all aspects compared to India. Even after being welfare state, there are many developmental problems which India is facing nowadays like lack of Infrastructural development i.e. (highways, roads, buildings, flyovers etc.), Educational development (reformation of govt. schools and construction of new schools with efficient staff for improving literacy rate and knowledge level of Indian people, reformation of education system, (practical oriented), Socio-economic development (providing job opportunities to deal with unemployment, controlling population by making people literate, stopping child labour, removing corruption through efficient governance, improving Gross domestic production and Gross national production through imports and exports).

For solving all these problems and many more India adopted the idea of welfare state that is working for the whole society. It is based on the law of equality of opportunity, common distribution of wealth, and civic duty of people who are not able to make profit for their survival and development of lively hood for living better and comfortable life. According to experts, citizens do not understand the government in its true sense. People really need to be involved in their communities rather than be unconscious regarding governmental actions. People need to be conscious regarding the action of the government so that they can help other people to promote welfare to whole society. The various forms of civic participation are associated with in elections, petitions and public deliberation etc.

Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is based on the positive perceptions which helps the youth in adopting active role in their communities for the development. Nowadays young people are taking leading roles in their community building and they are seen as a potential source for solving main problems of the society. They are capable of bringing change and overall development in the society. But it has been seen that although youth is always excited to criticise the role of the government, corruption in the arena of politics, they rarely take initiative to solve the various problems on their own which exists at ground level.

It has been observed that young people from sound family background are less eager to take part in civic engagement. On the other hand uneducated people are not able to take part in civic engagement activities. Social environment has a great role to play in the civic engagement. The Social environment, especially family and peer, has a significant influence in civic engagement. Through their interaction with family and peers, young people can obtain system of beliefs and values pertaining to community engagement and can form and express opinions on a range of social and political issues all of which

can add to their enthusiasm and can make them civically engaged. Positive social environment encourage the youth to take part in civic engagement whereas negative environment discourage youth participation in the civic engagement.

Education also plays important role in civic engagement. Hence, educational institutions should promote the civic engagements by involving students in programs and activities that stimulate the community involvement, such as service-learning projects. Lower education can limit the participation of youth in the civic engagement.

Current Scenario

India is country with a robust and sophisticated civil society, with various civil society organizations providing opportunities for youth participation in civic engagement. Governmental frameworks are also supporting youth policies and youth participation in civic engagement. Youth Civic Engagement activities are taken by various organizations in India through citizenship education, opportunities for exposure to social issues through rural camps, internships, action projects and social service campaigns. Many educational institutions involve students in activities like sending volunteers to Bihar for flood relief, organizing blood donation camps, running evening classes for poor children of physically impaired children.

There are various international NGOs, these NGOs are also important in the development of youth in civic engagement activities. International volunteer agencies such as Volunteer Service Overseas, Peace Corps and United Nations Volunteers work to build national volunteer capacity into their programs.

Significance of the Study

Today we are living in a modern world. Being busy with technology we get disconnected with the policies and decisions of community which impact our life. Although being a welfare state India has initiated many programs, policies, schemes for the welfare of the citizens of the country, but due to one reason or the other there has been not so satisfactory implementation of these programs. One thing needs to be highlighted here is that mere implementation of programs and schemes by the government will not serve the purpose rather common man will have to step forward by the way of their involvement in civic activities. This clearly highlights the need of civic engagement in our society. Civic engagement helps to build the better society. In this, citizens participate in the political and non-political processes of society. Various types of problems which exists at the grassroot level of society can be easily solved through civic engagement. Today there is much need to spread awareness among the people about civic engagement. The active participation of the citizens in the civic engagement is much necessary because with the help of this participation people will be able to face the challenges of the society. It is a kind of tool to transform community. This research has revealed the inclination and involvement of college students in the civic engagement activities. It is of great importance because this facilitates in improving the societal situations. The present study explored the level of civic engagement among youths from different streams at university level.

Objectives

1. To find out the difference in civic engagement of male and female students of university
2. To find out the difference in civic engagement among university students from different streams.

Hypotheses

1. There exists no significant difference in the civic engagement of male and female students of university.
2. There exists no significant difference in the civic engagement among university students from different streams.

Review of related Literature

Dudley, Roison and Taylor (1999) suggested that educational program focused on civic engagement should foster knowledge of difference in culture. The course work should help students to become aware of individuals manifold political identities based on social constructs.

Craig, W (2005) investigated many facets of civic engagement by analysing how college undergraduate students conceptualize civic engagement and by examining factors that predict greater student involvement in political, social, and community affairs. A survey was conducted on college students at the beginning of fall, winter, and spring terms, 2001-02. The result indicated that expectations of efficacy significantly predict students' direct political action, monthly volunteer hours, organizational participation, advocacy, and voting attitude. Students' sense of control over public affairs significantly predicts organizational participation, advocacy, and voting attitude. The implications of these results hinted towards designing curriculum to foster civic engagement among students.

Romer, D (2006) conducted study to analyse the use of mass media to develop civic activity and political awareness in 14 to 22 years old. The author founded that the civic engagement and political awareness have positively associated. It was conveyed that the media plays an important role in civic engagement among youths.

Kent e. Portney (2007) conducted the "national survey of civic and political engagement of young people". By taking sample of 1000 people of aged 18 to 24 years old. The purpose of this survey was to examine two specific subgroups of young people. The study provided information regarding political

and civic attitudes and behaviour. The result revealed that only small portion of the people were engaged in the civic engagement. Whereas college students were founded more involved than non-college students.

David Campbell (2008) conducted study on voice in the classroom. How an open classroom climate fosters political engagement among adolescents. It was found that the climate of the open classroom has a positive impact on adolescents.

Stacy Ulbig (2009) concluded that every nation face a problem of lack of civic engagement among young adults. The researcher gave stress to enhance the civic engagement among youth, students. Findings suggest that the use of simple visual images can enhance students' impressions of the discipline of political science and boost their interest in and knowledge of politics and public affairs more generally.

Brayan lilly (2010) conducted study on relationship between college students and civic engagement. The results revealed the positive relationship between college students and civic engagement. The engagement was higher among men than women.

Nielsen. R (2012), conducted study on, Civic Engagement a Cornerstone of Contemporary America. An examination of civic engagement in American society. In this study the investigator gave the information regarding the civic dissatisfaction in America. The researcher argued that the Americans are becoming disconnected with each other and it will turn out to be split and become danger to democracy.

Eddie R. Cole, Elijah C. Howe (2013) conducted a study on “responsive and responsible levels of faculty encouragement of civic engagement. The study highlighted that how often teachers encouraged students to participate with campus, local, state, national and global issues. The result revealed that teachers are more likely to encourage students to engage in civic engagement. It was founded that there is a prominent role of teachers in providing awareness of civic engagement among students.

Pancer (2014) examined the impacts of civic engagement on youth. For young people, civic engagement takes the form of activities such as joining a club or team at school, doing volunteer work, and participating in a youth group at church or in the community. Youth who participate in these kinds of activities are less likely to abuse drugs or alcohol, smoke, engage in delinquent acts, drop out of school, They are more likely to have higher self-esteem, better relationships, better school achievement, higher aspirations for their future, and a greater sense of social responsibility. These benefits can last for many years and, quite possibly, for a lifetime.

Research Method

The present study aimed at studying civic engagement among university students in relation to person logical variable (age and stream) So considering the nature of research, descriptive survey method was used in the present study.

Sample

It is the area where the investigator collects the units from the population units. In the present study the investigator collected the data from four different streams of students studying at Lovely Professional University, Phagwara. In the present study , sample comprised of 100 students from four different streams in which 50 students are male and 50 are female students. As far as sampling technique is concerned, stratified random sampling technique was used by the investigator.

Table 1.1 List of Students from Different Streams

| Sr.No. | Stream | No. of Students |
|--------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Science | 25 |
| 2 | Social science | 25 |
| 3 | Management | 25 |
| 4 | Engineering | 25 |
| Total | | 100 |

Tools

No standardized tool is available to test the civic engagement among youth. Therefore, in the present study the investigator resolved to construct the questionnaire to assess civic engagement among youth. In the initial draft, 40 statements were developed with Yes/ No options. The items were developed under the guidance of the supervisor and other expert researchers. Sources like Law books; journals, articles, magazines etc were consulted for the framing of same To assess the validity of the questionnaire, it was shown to research experts. After taking into consideration the comments of research experts, 30 items were kept in final draft in questionnaire.

Results Analysis and Interpretation

On the basis of results hypothesis were tested and conclusion were drawn.

Hypothesis: -There exists no significant difference in the civic engagement of male and female students of university.

Table 1.2 Showing Men, SD and t-value of Civic Engagement of Male and Female Students of University.

| Group | N | Mean | S.D | t-value | Remarks |
|--------|----|-------|------|---------|-------------|
| Male | 52 | 10.09 | 3.37 | -2.08 | Significant |
| Female | 52 | 10.82 | 3.50 | | |

Significant at 0.05 level.

Interpretation

The above-mentioned table shows that the mean score for the difference in civic engagement among male university students came out to be 10.09 and 10.82 in case of female students respectively. The calculated t-value for civic engagement among male and female university students came out 2.08 whereas the table value is 1.98 and 2.62 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance respectively. As the calculated value is greater than the table value at 0.05 level of significance, hence the hypothesis i.e. There exists no significant difference in the civic engagement of male and female university students is not accepted. This shows that there exists a significant difference in civic engagement among male and female university students. The investigator is of the view that such result came out because female students are more familiar and more emotionally connected with engaging in civic engagement activities.

Hypotheses 2 :- There exists no significant difference in the civic engagement among university students from different streams.

Table 1.3 Showing SS, DF, MS, and F-Value of the civic engagement among university students

| Groups | SS | DF | MS | F-value | Remarks |
|----------------|---------|-----|-------|---------|---------------|
| Between Groups | 21.03 | 3 | 7.10 | 0.59 | Insignificant |
| Within Groups | 1202.53 | 100 | 12.02 | | |

Interpretation

Table 1.3 indicates that the F-value of the civic engagement among university students came out to be 0.59 and whereas table value is 2.69 and 3.98 at 0.01 and 0.5 level of significance respectively. This shows that F-value is insignificant at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis i.e. There exists no significant differences in the civic engagement among male and female University Students is accepted. The investigator is of the view that such results came out as the university provides the basic education and practical work for the civic engagement. equally for all students irrespective of their stream (science, social science, management and engineering) hence difference in stream does not impact their involvement in civic engagement activities.

CONCLUSION

The main findings of the study have been given.

- ❖ The hypothesis that there exists no significant difference in the Civic Engagement of male and female university students is rejected. Although it has been found that the score of Civic engagement among male and female differs. There is a visible difference in the mean value of male and female university students. On comparing the mean value of male and female students, it is concluded that level of civic engagement among male students is lower than female university students. It means the male have low level of civic engagement as compared to female university students.
- ❖ The hypothesis that there exists no significant difference in the civic engagement among university students from different streams is accepted this shows that there is no significant difference in Civic Engagement among university students from different streams (science, social science , management and engineering).

Recommendations

- ❖ As per the mean result it has been found that Civic Engagement among male students is lower than female university students. On the basis of this result the researcher suggests there is necessity to develop positive attitude among male students towards civic engagement activities. Hence, curriculum needs to be modified in this direction. The co-curricular activities should be designed in such a manner that it will facilitate spirit of civic engagement among student community.

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