

Effectiveness Of Civic Engagement Programme On Attitude Towards Diversity Of Std Xi Students

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Abstract:

According to National Youth Policy 2014, the 'civic engagement of the youth' is a priority area of holistic vision for the youth of India that is "to empower the youth of the country to achieve their full potential and through them enable India to find its rightful place in the community of nations."¹ There is a need to develop lesson plans that will provide students with knowledge and skills to develop their civic attitude that will help to improve civic engagement of the students. The present study uses the quasi-experimental pretest and posttest design and the learning modules, designed by the researcher to enhance the civic engagement of the students of Std. XI. The effect of civic engagement programme on attitude towards diversity was tested and discussed here.

Introduction

Civic Education is an important pillar of democracy. The importance of a good civic education system in making responsible informed citizens needs no reiteration.² Thus; it becomes even more important for a growing democracy like India to have such citizens who will become the architects of their own future. The dynamic energy of youth can be used for creating a sustainable environment where everyone will truly become sovereign, liberal, and social. Youth becomes an agent of change when it is engaged in the community. They begin to see that they can positively influence a situation. They see themselves in a more positive light, and others in the community do so as well. In order to improve students' attitude towards diversity, a programme on civic engagement was developed. The programme was implemented and its' effect on the attitude towards diversity was seen.

1. NEED OF THE STUDY

It has been recommended in the National Youth Policy (2014), "It is important to build national pride and ownership in the youth through a programme of education on social values including respect for diversity and the importance of harmony. Youth must be encouraged to participate in community service and development activities, especially in the most backward regions. The youth of India must have a strong sense of moral responsibility towards their fellow

citizens especially those that are less fortunate than they are. The youth of the country must be encouraged to fulfill their duties as citizens and thus create an environment in which all citizens enjoy the rights guaranteed in our Constitution. Youth in the age group of 15-29 years comprise 27.5% of the population, it is essential to create mechanisms for youth participation in politics and governance”.³

It has been seen as a result of Gallop polls that India lags behind the other neighboring countries in civic engagement. Therefore, there is a need to carry out research in this area so that a new programme will be developed which will help to improve civic attitude. The statement of the problem for the present research is as follows;

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem for the present study was stated as, “Effectiveness of Civic Engagement Programme on attitude towards diversity of Std. XI Students”

DEFINITIONS OF THE VARIABLES

Civic Engagement

For the present study, civic engagement has been operationalized in terms of civic indicators, written by The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement.⁴

Civic Indicators are defined as:

- *Community problem solving*: Working together informally with someone or some group to solve a community problem
- *Regular volunteering for a non-electoral organization*: Working in some way to help others for no pay (includes volunteering for an environmental organization; a civic/community organization, a social services organization to help the poor, elderly, or homeless; a hospital; or an organization involved with youth, children, or education)
- *Active membership in a group or association*: Belonging to and actively participating in (not just donating money) groups or associations, either locally or nationally

- *Participation in fund-raising run/walk/ride*: Personally walking, running, or bicycling for a charitable cause (does not include sponsoring or giving money for this type of event)
- *Another fundraising for charity*: Helping raise money for a charitable cause

Attitude towards Diversity

For the present study, it is defined as per B.E. Moely and *et.al* (2002), “respondents describe their attitude toward diversity and interest in relating to culturally different people”.⁵

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present study are stated as follows;

1. To develop and implement civic engagement programme to develop students attitude towards diversity
2. To study and compare the pretest and posttest scores of students of the experimental and control groups on attitude towards diversity

NULL HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

There is no significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores of students of the experimental and control groups on attitude towards diversity.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Methodology of the Study

For the present study, quasi-experimental pretest and posttest design have been used. Modules were designed by the researcher referring to online material related to civic engagement such as syllabi of community colleges based on civic engagement activities; various lesson plans to teach civic activities and civics lesson plans, various research papers, learning activities for developing an attitude towards diversity. The experimental group was administered with the Civic Engagement Programme and control group was taught civics subject by using regular teaching methods by their teachers.

Sample of the Study

The sample consisted of total 72 students, 35 in the experimental group, and 37 in control group. The students of Std. XI class from HSC board junior colleges were selected for this programme.

Sampling Technique

For the present study, the researcher has made use of multistage purposive sampling.⁵ In the first stage, the two junior colleges who gave permission to conduct the experiment were chosen. It was ensured that both the junior colleges were similar. In the second stage, the researcher randomly assigned one junior college as an experimental group and the other as a control group.

Tools for the study

For the present study, the researcher has used the readymade tool called civic attitude and skills questionnaire by B.E. Moely & *et.al.*

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was delimited to Std. XI students studying in HSC Board curriculum through English medium co-educational junior college in Panvel, Navi Mumbai.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores of students of the experimental and control group on the attitude towards diversity.

The table No. 1 below gives the overview of difference in the pretest and posttest scores of students of the experimental and control group on the attitude towards diversity.

Table No. 1
Difference in the Pretest and Posttest Scores of the Experimental and Control Group on Attitude towards Diversity of Students

Variable	Groups	Scores	N	Mean	t ratios	p - values	Level of significance
Attitude towards Diversity	Experimental group	Pretest	35	15.20	4.84	0.00	Significant
		Posttest	35	17.66			
	Control Group	Pretest	37	16.03	0.03	0.97	Not Significant
		Posttest	37	16			

P value > 0.05 = Not Significant; P value < 0.05 = Significant

Findings and Conclusions

From above table, it can be seen that for the experimental group, the p-value is less than 0.05, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. In case of control group null hypothesis is accepted as p-value is greater than 0.05.

Thus, it can be said that the treatment i.e. Civic Engagement Programme using interactive methods of teaching given to the experimental group was effective in enhancing the students attitude towards diversity.

DISCUSSION

From the finding and conclusions, it can be stated that there is a **significant difference** in pretest and posttest scores of the **experimental group** students on the attitude towards diversity. Thus, it can be seen that the civic engagement programme consisted of learning modules on community participation, community problem solving, charity, group work activities campaigning for fundraising, videos on different social activities as well as leaders, and volunteering was effective in improving the diversity attitude of students. The students were enthusiastic to be a part of a group where the fellow students from diverse cultural background and language were also involved in their group activities. Initially, there were some difficulties but they did overcome it until the end of the course. At the end of the course, students have shown improvement in their attitude towards diversity.

There is **no significant difference** in pretest and posttest scores on attitude towards diversity of students of the **control group** at post-test level. This means that the control group students did not improve the attitude towards diversity.

CONCLUSION

The students have shown a change in their attitude towards their fellow students and citizens from a different social background. Thus, it can be concluded that civic engagement programme was effective to improve students' attitude towards diversity.

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