



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Perceptions and Practices of Civic Values in Pakistani Society:  
Secondary School Students Perspective**

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**ABSTRACT**

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The development of good citizens is the one of the important tasks which a society has to accomplish in order to produce such citizens. One of the major roles of education is to cultivate such virtues in students. The main objective of the study was to investigate student's perceptions about civic values and their practices in society. All the secondary level students in Punjab were taken as the population for the present study. Multiple cluster random sampling techniques were used to select 1800 students as a sample. The researcher used a questionnaire comprised thirty nine (39) restricted response questions. The questionnaire was divided in to two major sections, first section focused on three factors of civic education that were moral, social and political aspects while the second section analyzed the practices of civic values in our society. The data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results of the study showed a gap between the perceptions of students for civic values and their practices in society

**Introduction**

What are civic values? To answer this question, it is necessary to know what civic education means. There is much confusion about what constitutes Civic Education as there is about citizenship itself (Sigauke, 2019). According to Arthur and Wright (2001 as cited in Sigauke, 2019) it is, "education about citizenship; education for citizenship and education through citizenship," . Osler and Starkey (2005) and Magudu (2012) add that if citizenship is as controversial and as contested a concept as noted above then being a "good citizen" is therefore similarly contentious. So, a good citizen could mean someone who automatically accepts and conforms to values, norms, and beliefs as defined by civic education. Another concept of Civic Education has been described by Runhare and Muvirimi

(2017) as authentic Citizenship Education. The aim of this citizenship education is to produce and developed skills, attitudes, beliefs and values in student that will empower them to participate and remain busy and involved in their society's culture, politics, governance and general democratic activities.

According to Winston (2007), it is a process which aimed to empower the learners and individuals in general to learn to struggle for positive social change and social justice. This type of Civic Education could help the learners become dynamic, informed and significant citizens and can participate effectively in civic life and in the affairs of the state. This version is supported by Duffy and Cunningham 1996, as cited in Davies, (2018). Civic Education is a education which produce competences in learners required for development at various levels. As Gopinathan (2018) contends that meaningful sustainable Civic Education requires a "total curriculum" approach (Lee, 2013) where attitudes and values are "caught" rather than "taught" (Sim, 2013).

Civic Education should be based on what Zimenkova describe as cited in Hedtke & Zimenkova, 2013 a school subject which provide young citizens the concept of citizenship, its rights and duties, its moral, social and political obligation towards the nation. .In the same way valuable civic education programs offer learners with different chances for the growth of desirable features of public and private character. For example, courage, civility, self-control, determination, apprehension for the common good, admiration for others, and other features important to nationality can be promoted in the course of supportive learning activities and in class meetings in civic education, (Ben porath, 2007). Self-discipline and self- control, civility, respect for others, regularity, personal liability, loyalty ,tolerance, justice, equality, cooperation, care for neighborhood and relatives and other character traits can be encourage in under the umbrella of civic education (Banks, 2004).

It is clear from all above discussion that civic education is the education of civic values .Civic education includes moral values as honesty, truthfulness, care for kids and elders, awareness for good and bad. Social values such as cooperation, competition, equality, justice, tolerance, sacrifice. Political values such as accepting the opinions of others, participating in political activities ,take part in voting, involving in policy decisions, knowing the rights and responsibilities of different government institutions, (Dean, 2004).

The development of good citizens is one of the important tasks which a society has to accomplish. It is noted that Countries are sustained by citizens who have the requisite knowledge and skills. Good civic education promotes an understanding of how and why one's own security, quality of life, and economic position is connected to that of neighboring countries, as well as to major regional and international organizations. New political and social realities within and among states have led to an increased emphasis on civic education in both

emerging and established democracies in order to build and secure democracy. (Davies & Issitts, 2005)

However, apart from civic education, struggles to develop education system are also part and parcel since education is the real factor which empowers the nations. From a personal perspective it become a source of skills, knowledge, self-confidence and values to make out personal judgments. From the community point of view, it provide them skills as well as knowledge which are required to secure and move ahead their fundamental rights and may take part actively being citizens of a political and social life (Hahn, 1999). One of the major roles of education is to cultivate such virtues in students so that they become responsible citizens, in addition to enhance cognitive skills and producing students for future career (van de Werfhorst, 2017). Schools are supposed very important tools to provide such civic values (Niemi & Sobieszek, 1977; Campbell, 2006).

Just like in most established and emerging democracies, civic education was a goal of education. It was part of the curriculum and all students received citizenship education. Pakistan, however, does not have a universal, compulsory and free system of education. Therefore, only a few receive civic education was of poor quality. A large population of school-age children was denied the opportunities of receiving an education and thereby civic education. We have to find innovative ways to provide civic education to young people in school. In order to provide civic education to all civic education programs must be supported by the government and the government must commit resources to it (Ahmad, 2008). In this context, the secondary level of education in considered as the backbone of education system and stress on the civic schooling at this level may be very helpful to address the condition as expressed above. So keeping in view of this importance, the researcher in this article wants to examine the perceptions of secondary school students about civic values and their practices in society.

### Material and Methods

The study was descriptive in nature with quantitative design. Wiersmal, 2005 advocated and supported for a quantitative approach for research in social sciences. According to Bell, 1987, quantitative approach in social sciences research is perceived more worthwhile if the data and analysis is of statistical in nature. All the secondary school students of ninth and tenth class were taken as the population for the present study. The total number of secondary school students in Punjab is given below in the table:

**Table 1**  
**Total number of high schools and total number of students in Punjab**

	Male	Female	Total
Schools	11927	3763	15690
students	2166461	158170	2324631

(School education department Government of Punjab)

Different techniques are used for the selection of sample from the population. According to Mills and Gay, 2016 if the size of population is greater than a certain value (about N=500) the 400 sample size will be appropriate. Because it was a survey research, it was adequate to select a researchable big sample (Creswell, 2017). So, eighteen hundred (1800) students were selected for the adequate representation of the population by using research advisor table. Multiple cluster sampling technique was used for this study. In multistage cluster sampling, the research chooses a sample in two or more stages because the population is extremely large (Vogt, 2005). There are nine divisions having 36 districts. Each district was selected randomly from each division to represent the all the divisions. In random sampling, the researcher selects participant (or unit, such as school) for the sample so that any individual has an equal probability of being selected form the population (Creswell, 2017). From each district 5 male and 5 female schools representing both the rural and urban areas were selected using stratified sampling technique. In stratified sampling, researcher divides the population on some specific characteristics (e.g. Gender or area etc (Creswell, 2017). From each school, 20 students were selected randomly. In this way eighteen hundred (1800) students were selected as a sample from the whole population. The following table shows all the sampling details:

**Table No.2  
Sample Table**

Administrative Divisions	Nine Administrative divisions having 36 districts			
Stratum	Each administrative division was taken as one stratum			
Districts	One District From Each Administrative Division			
Schools	10 schools from each District			
Division of schools by gender	Male	No of schools	Female	No of schools
	50%	45	50%	45
Total number of schools selected	45+45=90 schools			

For the collection of data, a questionnaire was used. The questionnaire survey has had a purpose to achieve a broad understanding about the perceptions of the students regarding the civic sense and its practices in society. It has total of 39- items for students. This scale varies from strongly agree to strongly disagree. According to McNabb (2004), a five point Likert-type scale is thought to be most useful tool because of its freedom from the use of panel of judges. Kothari (2005) also supports the idea of using Likert scale. Validation of the research tools were done by getting expert opinion from the senior educationist and senior faculty members of department of education, B.Z.U, Multan.

The following tables show the perceptions of secondary school students about the civic sense for all three aspects and their practices in our society

## Results and Discussion

**Table 3**  
**Showing Perception of students regarding Moral Aspect of Civic values**

Statement	N	Mean	S.D.
Accepting defeat open heartedly is the sign of a civic personality.	1800	4.43	.954
Civic education creates a sense of cooperation.	1800	4.24	1.021
Cleanliness should be adopted as a part of faith.	1800	4.61	.838
Honesty is the symbol of successful life.	1800	4.55	.866
Obedience and respect of others' should be learnt by students.	1800	4.43	.824
Obedience to elders is the duty of younger generation.	1800	4.83	.523
Obeying the rules and regulations of the state is our moral duty.	1800	4.59	.696
A person can celebrate his success without hurting the feelings of others.	1800	4.34	.932
To be properly dressed, is a sign of a civilized personality.	1800	4.30	1.034
We should prefer the others' rights instead of only watching our own interests.	1800	4.08	1.404
Civic education helps the citizens to choose good leaders.	1800	4.28	1.030
Total		4.43	0.92

The Table 3 shows that the overall mean value of all moral aspects of civic values is 4.43. It reflects the highly positive attitude of respondents towards different moral aspects of civic values. However, there is little variation in attitude of respondents towards different moral aspects of civic values. For example, the mean value for four moral aspects of civic values is greater than 4.50. These aspects include: cleanliness, honesty, obedience to elders and obeying the rule and regulation. Whereas, the mean values of seven moral aspects of civic values are less than 4.50. These aspects include accepting defeat, cooperation, proper dressing and choice of good leadership.

**Table 4**  
**Showing Perception of students regarding political Aspect of Civic Values**

Statement	N	Mean	S.D.
Democracy is the fundamental unit of civic education.	1800	4.18	1.028
Democracy nourishes civic education.	1800	4.08	1.095
Every citizen has a right to join of joining of political parties of his choice.	1800	3.64	1.461
Practice of democracy is the need of the present time.	1800	4.07	1.154

Sacrifice for the homeland reflects civic spirit.	1800	4.53	.873
		4.1	1.12

The Table 4 shows that the overall mean value of all political aspects of civic values is 4.1. It reflects the highly positive attitude of respondents towards different political aspects of civic values. However, there is little variation in attitude of respondents towards different political aspects of civic values. For example, the mean value for four political aspect of civic values is greater than 4.00. These aspect include: democracy, nourishment of democracy, democracy the need of present time, sacrifice for the homeland whereas the mean value of one political aspect of civic values is less than 4.0 (i.e. 3.64). This aspect includes joining of political parties.

**Table 5**  
**Showing Perception of students regarding Social Aspect of Civic Values**

Statement	N	Mean	S.D.
A student should lead a disciplined life.	1800	4.66	.710
A well-managed classroom is comfortable for the students.	1800	4.42	.853
Civic Education emphasizes on the social interaction.	1800	4.19	.995
Civic education promotes tolerance.	1800	3.99	1.054
Civic education tells us about our constitutional rights.	1800	4.33	.999
Love for the country is the first obligation of a citizen.	1800	4.62	.752
Obedience of law lies in the civic education.	1800	4.24	.971
To defend the honor of our society is our civic responsibility.	1800	4.46	.745
		4.36	0.88

The Table 5 shows that the overall mean value of all social aspects of civic values is 4.36. It reflects the highly positive attitude of respondents towards different social aspects of civic values. However, there is little variation in attitude of respondents towards different social aspects of civic values. For example, the mean value for six social aspects of civic values is less than 4.5. These aspects include: well managed classroom, social interaction, tolerance, constitutional rights and honor of society whereas the mean value of one social aspect of civic values is greater than 4.5 (i.e. 4.66). This aspect includes disciplined life.

**Table 6**  
**Showing Perception of students regarding practicing of civic Values in society**

Statement	N	Mean	S.D.
Cooperation is the basic virtue of us.	1800	3.04	1.429

We always prefer to care the rights of other instead of watching our own rights	1800	2.24	1.239
Our leader open heartedly accept their defeat.	1800	1.92	1.189
As a nature we have strong believe in democracy.	1800	3.15	1.317
We prefer national interest than personal interest.	1800	2.34	1.202
We always work for the honor of our society.	1800	2.86	1.318
We as a national work in a disciplined way in our daily life.	1800	2.07	1.131
Equal opportunities are available to all citizens of Pakistan.	1800	1.72	.922
Justice is generally done in our society.	1800	1.76	1.026
As a nation we have firm believe in equal rights.	1800	2.97	1.382
We honestly perform our national responsibilities.	1800	2.33	1.112
We openly accept difference of opinion.	1790	2.77	1.219
We as a nation care the cleanliness of public places.	1800	2.10	1.146
We always ready to cooperate with others.	1800	2.85	1.304
We always try to get our institutional rights.	1800	3.04	1.317
		2.47	1.21

The Table 6 shows that the overall mean value of all practicing aspects of civic values was found 2.47. It reflects the negative attitude of respondents towards different practicing aspects of civic values. However, there is little variation in attitude of respondents towards different practicing aspects of civic values. For example, the mean value for three practicing aspect of civic values is greater than 3.0 it means the opinion of respondents for that aspects are slightly positive. These aspects include: cooperation, believe in democracy, to get institutional rights whereas the mean value of other practicing aspect of civic values is less than 3.0. It shows negative attitude of respondents towards other practicing aspect of civic values. These aspects include watching other rights, accepts, defeat open heartedly, prefer national interest than personal interest, work for the honor of society, work in a discipline way, equal opportunities for all citizens, justice in society, perform national responsibilities, accept difference of opinion, care the cleanliness of public places and cooperate with other.

**Table 7**  
**Correlations between various factors of Civic Values**

		Moral	Political	Social	Action
Moral	Pearson Correlation	1	.509**	.715**	-.071**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.003
	N	1800	1800	1800	1800

Political	Pearson Correlation	.509**	1	.654**	-.033
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.162
	N	1800	1800	1800	1800
Social	Pearson Correlation	.715**	.654**	1	-.036
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.132
	N	1800	1800	1800	1800
Action	Pearson Correlation	-.071**	-.033	-.036	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.162	.132	
	N	1800	1800	1800	1800

Table 7 reflects that all aspects of civic values have positive correlation with each other (i.e., moral, political, and social). The values of correlations for moral aspects of civic values with political and social aspects are .509 and .715. The value of correlation for political aspects of civic values with social is .654. However, all these aspects (i.e. moral, political, and social) have negative correlation with action aspect. The values of correlations for moral, social and political aspects of civic values with action are -.071, -.033, -.036 respectively. It can be conclude that all these aspects have negative tendency towards action (practicing of civic values in society)

### **Conclusion**

The overall mean value of the all moral aspects of civic values is 4.43. It reflects the highly positive attitude of respondents towards different moral aspects of civic values. The overall mean value of all political aspects of civic values is 4.1. It reflects the highly positive attitude of respondents towards different political aspects of civic values. The overall mean value of the all social aspects of civic values is 4.36. It reflects the highly positive attitude of respondents towards different social aspects of civic values. The overall mean value of all practicing aspects of civic values is 2.47. It reflects the negative attitude of respondents towards different practicing aspects of civic values. No significant difference was found between the perceptions of male, female, urban and rural sample about the importance of civic values as well as the practicing level of these civic values in society. This is the why the Pakistani community knows all the virtuous activities but do not practice these ones resulting in zero progress. Another example may be quoted here to explain the position: Most of the Muslims recite the Holy Quran but do not know what it is saying.

The results of correlation of all aspects of civic values reflect that all aspects of civic values have positive correlation with each other (i.e. moral, political, and social). The values of correlations for moral aspects of civic values with political and social aspects are .509 and .715. The value of correlations for political aspects of civic values with social is .654. However, all these aspects (i.e. moral, political, and

social) have negative correlation with action aspect. The values of correlations for moral, social and political aspects of civic values with action are -.071, -.033, -.036 respectively. It can be concluded that all these aspects have negative tendency towards action (practicing the civic values in our society)

It is concluded that respondents have positive attitude towards moral, political, and social aspect of civic values. So, it means that they have very clear perception about all these aspects. Also they agreed that the different civic values such as cleanliness, honesty, obedience, cooperation, good leadership, democracy, nourishment of democracy. Sacrifice for homeland, social interaction, tolerance and honor of society etc are very important for a society and created through civic education. However, they have negative attitude towards the practicing of civic values in society. It means they are of the opinion that all these aspects are theoretically present but not practiced.

From the results of correlation it is concluded that all aspects of civic values have positive correlation with each other (social, moral and political) but all aspects have negative correlation with practicing aspect. . It means participants have only knowledge about these civic values and their practice in society is not present. These results of the study are supported by the other studies conducted by (Persson, 2012; Witschge *et al.*, 2014). The results of the study are also in line with the study done in Hong Kong and other similar studies found from other countries by Kubow (1996), Parker (1999), and UNICEF (2000). Davies's (2006) study also supports the results of this study that if we want to incorporate civic values in our youngsters, we should include more activities in their school curriculum. The model of citizenship education suggested by Heater (1990 & 2004) also supports the research finding that the independent subject of civic education in curriculum which emphasizes on activity based helps students to acquire critical thinking and civic sense. Some other studies show the opposite results that general education is more helpful for increasing levels of civic sense and their practice in society (Eckstein *et al.*., 2012; Hoskins & Janmaat, 2016). It is need of the day that the Pakistani Community particularly educated should emphasize on the practical aspect of all the disciplines either in natural sciences or in social sciences in order to win progress in any field of life. For this purpose, a change in curriculum is considered inevitable because the present curriculum occupies much more theoretical stuff.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are suggested in this study:

1. A compulsory activity based subject of civic education may be introduced for all students at secondary level.

2. Teachers should practice the civic values in practical form; for instance the behavior of the students in public places (Canteens, recess time, etc.) should be monitored and corrective measures should be adopted.
3. Positive activities should be introduced and their effect should also be monitored.
4. Healthy habits of cleanliness, truthfulness, cooperation, sacrifice, tolerance, free expression of opinion and critical thinking should be developed among the students through suitable activities.

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