



# STUDENTS ATTITUDE TOWARDS CIVIC EDUCATION ACROSS GENDER AND LOCALE IN PAKISTAN

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**ABSTRACT-** Civic education seeks to change attitudes and communicate the information needed by individuals to make them a valuable and active member of society. The purpose of this study was to explore the students' attitude towards civic education at secondary school level. Quantitative approach was adopted whereas the research design was descriptive in nature. The population consisted of all the secondary schools' students that are enrolled in grade 10 of session 2017-2019 in the administrative division of Lahore. The researchers used two-stage sampling technique to draw a sample of 1480 students. A five-point Likert-type questionnaire was developed in Urdu language by the researchers to measure the students' attitude towards Civic Education. For the analysis of the collected data, descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were applied. Results concluded that the students have a positive attitude towards civic education. Moreover, it was determined that there is a significant difference in students' overall attitude based on gender and locale. It is recommended that curriculum planners make appropriate planning to enhance civic education by reviewing the curricula to meet the affective and knowledge –based goals. Furthermore, schools should create an environment where the students have a chance not only to learn civic education, but also to experience it.

**Keywords:** Attitude, civic education

## I. INTRODUCTION

Civic education is a key component through which states train their people to carry out their civil duties. International Encyclopedia of Education defines Civic Education (CE) as "development of citizenship or civic competence through conveying the unique meaning, obligation, and virtue of citizenship in a particular society" (Finkel & Ernest, 2005). CE relates to students' knowledge and awareness of human rights, civic activities, responsibilities, and tolerance. It brings positive change in students' attitude towards social and democratic life, enhances their abilities to become polite with children, elderly, and the disabled, and show consideration in day-to-day conduct. A good citizen always requires good manners. Without them, he cannot spend his life honorably in society. CE aids in developing good manners through school. It is believed that schools play an important role in providing basic training to encourage the democratic values and social traits (Blasko, Costa, & Vera, 2018). Scholars have noted that citizenship training should convey knowledge, character, and competencies that are consistent with democratic principles. However, there is an ongoing debate regarding the specific components and elements of civic education.

CE tries to modify the attitude, and communicate information needed by individuals to make them a valuable and active member of the society. There are a number of agents, like family, social groups, religious institutions, military, and schools, which exist in every society to train it. However, out of all these agents, only the school has strong, effective, and formal mechanisms to involve citizens in the activities that are conducive to preparing a civilized society (Carnegie Corporation, 2003; Crittenden & Levine, 2013).

The researchers believe that there is a need to study students' attitude towards civic education. Only a handful of studies have been found to explore the students' attitude towards civic education at secondary school level in Pakistan. Therefore, this study is an attempt to address this gap in literature.

## Statement of the Problem

It is stated that positive attitude of students towards civic education leads them to success in every field of life. It is, therefore, imperative to have a deeper understanding of this phenomenon for the enhancement of

their academic and social life. The researchers hardly found a few studies on this topic. Hence, this research study is an endeavor to explore students' attitude towards CE at secondary school level in Pakistan.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Explore the students' attitude towards civic education at secondary school level.
2. Find out the difference between secondary school students' attitude towards civic education based on demographical variables, i.e. gender and locale.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the level of students' attitude towards civic education at secondary school level?
2. What is the difference in male and female students' attitude towards civic education?
3. What is the difference in students' attitude towards civic education based on locale?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study may be important for educational institutions to define students' attitude towards civic education. This may enable the administrators to provide prompt support to the students in order to reshape their attitude so that they may become sensible members of the society. This study may also be beneficial for teachers in encouraging their students to learn manners to be good citizens.

Youngsters play a vital role in making a nation active and responsible by involving themselves in decision-making process. The results of this study may help to influence the minds of stakeholders, such as parents, social groups, religious institutions, schools, curricula planners and policy makers, to understand what they are providing and what should be provided through the education system to develop the attitude of students towards civic education in order to make them patriotic, democratic and civilized citizens.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Civic education is essential to develop a positive attitude in students towards state and personal affairs. It should be a part of education at all levels (Pirsl, Marusic & Pokrajac, 2007). The purpose of CE is to create citizens who are aware and responsible. It attempts to empower nations to participate and add to the foundation of fair administration and citizenship. This will, in the end, lead to advancement of a stable popularity-based political framework (Keating & Benton, 2013). It has been noted that there is a huge difference between the goals and objectives of CE given by the civic education programs, and those perceived by the stakeholders. This can be properly understood through Gaston's (2007) five domains of curriculum theory.

Pirsl et al. (2007) conducted a behavioral analysis of student and teacher attitudes towards civic education and civil rights. Their aim was to inspect the point of view of primary and secondary school students and teachers. They took 208 primary school students, 106 high school students and 111 instructors as sample. Their measure of examination was based on rights, duties, responsibility, consensus, free will, and peace. This was seen in terms of subjects' age, gender and school level. A notable difference was observed in free will in decision making among female and male students of primary and high school. About school level, student and teachers' results were statistically different. Primary school students showed a higher degree of freedom to make decisions at school than their high school counterparts did. Primary school teachers tended to educate their students about human rights and civic duties. Moreover, there was a notable difference in the behavior of younger and older teachers in providing their students with the knowledge of human rights, and civic education. Young teachers were more optimistic hence, they also added such content in their curriculum. They valued human rights and civic education as compared to their older colleagues (Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Kerr, & Losito, 2010).

Owen (2004) investigated the public's attitude about civic education. Attitudes about the goals and content of civic education shift in light of historical circumstances, educational philosophies, and political sentiments. This study begins with an overview of the philosophies supporting civic education in America and identifies civic education goals that are currently in play. The analysis starts with an assessment of the public's general level of support for civic education. It explores specific priorities that the public assigns to various aspects of

CE specifically developing civic skills, knowledge, and dispositions related to cultural understanding. The research concludes with an account of the public’s assessment of the quality of precollege civic training.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Quantitative research approach was adopted to conduct this study and survey research design was used to explore students’ attitude towards civic education at secondary school level.

#### Population and Sample of the Study

The population comprised of all grade 10 students enrolled in the session 2017-2019, in the Lahore division. According to census of school education department, there were 728 (373 male and 355 female) secondary schools in administrative division of Lahore. The total numbers of students in grade 10 for the academic years (2017 to 2019) were 69690 (35797 male and 33913 female).

The researchers used two-stage sampling technique to draw a sample. Firstly, proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select 10% of the total secondary schools from each district of administrative divisions of Lahore. Secondly, the researchers selected 20 students through simple random sampling technique from each selected school. Ultimately, the sample comprised of 1480 grade 10 students of secondary schools from administrative division of Lahore.

**Table 1**

*Sample of the Study*

District	Schools		Selected schools		Total students
	Boys'	Girls'	Boy	Girl	
Lahore	16	18	34	320	680
Kasur	9	7	16	180	320
Sheikhupura	8	7	15	160	300
Nankanasahib	5	4	9	100	180
Total	38	36	74	760	1480

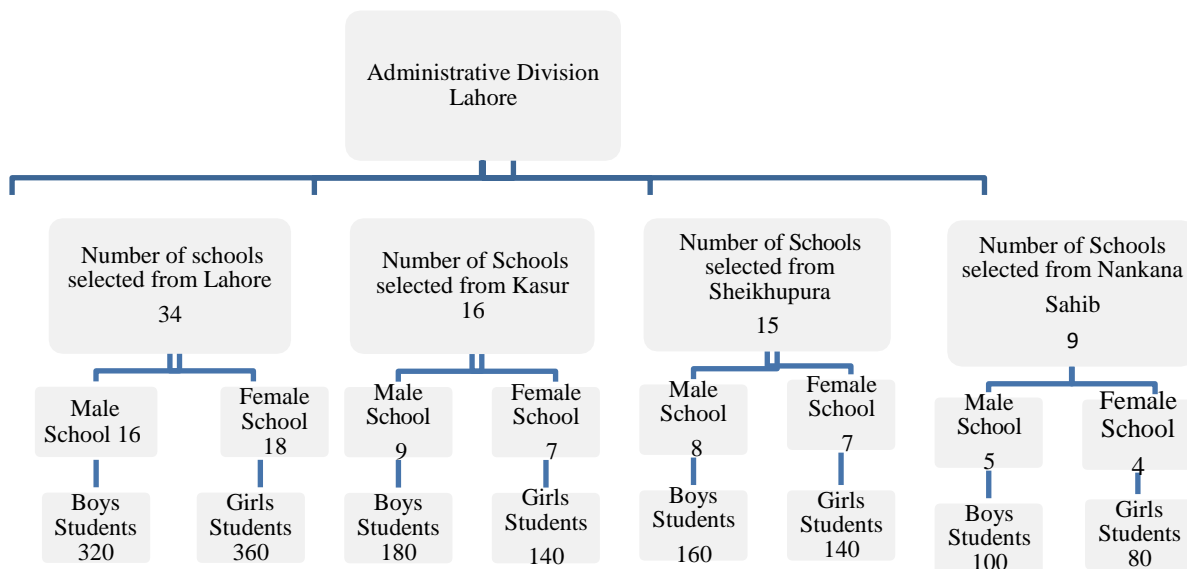


Figure 1: Selection of sample

## *Instrumentation*

A five-point Likert-type questionnaire was developed by the researchers to explore the students' attitude towards Civic Education. It consisted of 2 parts: the first part collects data about demographical variables, and the second part consists of 40 statements to gather data about attitude towards CE. The questions in the second part were divided into four sub-scales namely, Importance of Civic Education, Civic Responsibility, Tolerance and Human Rights. Each sub-scale consisted of 10 statements.

Three research experts in the discipline of education ensured the validity of the questionnaire. Moreover, the reliability of the questionnaire was calculated through Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha = .899$ ).

**Table 2**

*Reliability of the Questionnaire*

N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
40	.899

## IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Students' attitude towards civic education was measured on a 5-point Likert-type questionnaire. For the analysis of the collected data, descriptive statistical techniques were used; mean and standard deviation were computed. Moreover, in inferential statistics, independent sample t-test was applied to determine the difference between students' attitude towards CE based on gender and locale.

Data analysis and interpretations are given blow:

**Table 3**

*Summary about the level of student's attitude towards civic education at secondary school level*

N	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
1480	40.00	200.00	157.63	20.81

Table 3 shows that overall mean score of the students' attitude towards civic education ( $M = 157.63$ ). It implies that the attitude towards civic education is positive.

**Table 4**

*Summary about the difference between male and female students' attitude towards civic education*

Factors	Gender	N	M	SD	t-value	df	p
Overall attitude towards CE	Male	760	154.58	22.04	-3.06	1478	.001
	Female	720	160.84	18.92	-3.07	2	
Importance of civic education	Male	760	38.82	6.73	-6.96	1478	.199
	Female	720	39.83	5.90	-6.91	2	
Civic responsibilities	Male	760	37.78	6.26	-3.09	1478	.004
	Female	720	40.45	8.36	-3.10	2	
Tolerance	Male	760	39.48	6.49	-5.01	1478	.000
	Female	720	40.43	5.25	-5.05	2	
Human rights	Male	760	38.50	7.13	-5.84	1478	.003
	Female	720	40.12	5.11	-5.86	2	

Table 4 represents the results of independent sample t-test that was applied to find out the difference between the levels of male and female students' attitude towards CE. The results show that there was a significant difference in total score of students' attitudes towards civic education ( $p = .001 < .05$ ). However, a statistically significant difference does not exist with regard to the sub-scale "Importance of Civic Education"

( $p = .199 > .05$ ). Nevertheless, significant difference was found between male and female students' attitude with regard to the sub-scales "Civic Responsibilities" ( $p = .004 < .05$ ), "Tolerance" ( $p \leq .000 < .05$ ), and "Human Rights" ( $p = .003 < .05$ ).

In the light of the statistical data provided by table number 4, researchers concluded that a significant difference exists in male and female students' overall attitude toward civic education and regarding to the sub-scales "Civic Responsibilities", "Tolerance", and "Human Rights". On the other hand, no significant difference was found in the case of sub-scale "Importance of Civic Education".

**Table 5**  
*Summary of students' attitude towards civic education based on locale.*

Factors	Locale	N	M	SD	t-value	df	p
Overall attitude toward CE	Urban	658	155.76	21.74	-3.09	1478	.045
	Rural	822	159.12	19.92	-3.062		
Importance of Civic Education	Urban	658	38.94	6.61	-2.001478		.007
	Rural	822	39.60	6.13	-1.982		
Civic Responsibilities	Urban	658	38.49	7.06	-2.701478		.029
	Rural	822	39.55	7.76	-2.732		
Tolerance	Urban	658	39.57	6.18	-2.181478		.004
	Rural	822	40.24	5.71	-2.162		
Human Rights	Urban	658	38.75	6.76	-2.911478		.002
	Rural	822	39.71	5.84	-2.862		

Table 5 shows the results of Independent sample t-test applied to determine the difference between levels of students' attitude with regard to locale. A statistically significant difference was found in the total scores of students ( $p = .045 < .05$ ). Moreover, significant difference was found between urban and rural area students' attitude with regard to sub- scales "Importance of Civic Education" ( $p = .007 < .05$ ), "Civic Responsibilities" ( $p = .029 < .05$ ), "Tolerance" ( $p = .004 < .05$ ), and "Human Rights" ( $p = .002 < .05$ ).

The results of table concluded that a significant difference was found in students' overall attitude towards civic education based on locale. Similarly, significant differences also exist between levels of students' attitude towards all the four sub-scales.

## V. FINDINGS

1. Mean of overall score of the students' attitude towards civic education is ( $M = 157.63, SD = 20.81$ ). This means that the level of students' attitude toward civic education is positive.
2. Significant difference was found in total score of students' attitudes towards civic education ( $p = .001 < .05$ ).
3. There was no significant difference found between male and female students' attitude with regard to the sub-scale "Importance of Civic education" ( $p = .199 > .05$ ).
4. Significant difference was found between male and female students' attitude with regard to the sub-scale "Civic Responsibilities" ( $p = .004 < .05$ ).
5. In case of sub-scale "Tolerance", significant difference between male and female students existed ( $p \leq .000 < .05$ ).
6. There was also a significant difference between male and female students with regard to sub-scale "Human Rights" ( $p = .003 < .05$ ).
7. A statistically significant difference was found in the total score of students' attitudes towards civic education ( $p = .045 < .05$ ).
8. There was significant difference between urban and rural area students' attitude with regard to sub-scale "Importance of Civic Education" ( $p = .045 < .05$ ).
9. 3. There was significant difference between urban and rural areas students' attitude with regard to sub-scale "civic responsibilities" ( $p = .029 < .05$ ).
10. There is significant difference found between urban and rural areas students' attitude with regard to sub-scale "Tolerance" ( $p = .004 < .05$ ).
11. Significant difference was found between urban and rural areas students' attitude with regard to sub-scale "Human Rights" ( $p = .002 < .05$ ).

## VI. CONCLUSION

Based on findings it is concluded that students in secondary schools have a positive attitude toward civic education. Significant difference exists in male and female students' overall attitude toward civic education. A statistically significant difference also exists in students' overall attitude towards civic education, and in all four subscales of rural and urban area students. However, on the basis of gender, male and female students showed no significant difference in level except in the subscale "Importance of Civic Education". Findings from this empirical study, therefore, may add an important aspect to the body of knowledge that is already available related to Civic Education.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers make the following recommendations:

1. To develop students' attitude toward civic education, is the need of the hour. In this regard, it is recommended that all the stakeholders of the educational system such as family, social groups, media, religious institutions, and especially schools, curricula planners, and policy makers should contribute appropriately for the enhancement of content related to civic education at secondary school level.
2. Schools should create an environment where the students have a chance not only to learn civic education, but also to experience it.
3. Since the teachers are major stakeholders of educational system, they play a vital role in modifying students' attitude and making them a good citizen. Therefore, there should be satisfactory and enriching content related to civic education included in teacher education and different training programs.
4. Media should also make efforts to provide awareness to the students about civic education through different programs.
5. The Government should take concrete steps to develop the students' attitude towards civic education through different programs and workshops.
6. It is recommended that curriculum planners make appropriate planning to enhance civic education by reviewing the curricula to meet the affective and knowledge - based goals. Furthermore, schools should

create an environment where the students have a chance not only to learn civic education, but also to experience it.

7. In order to gain deeper understanding, more information is required which maybe obtained by conducting studies including student observations and interviews.

8. Civic related studies should be conducted in other geographical locations in the country.

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