



# Citizenship Education and Awareness of Secondary School Students

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## 1. Introduction

Students are also citizens of India and they will have to directly deal for the better future of our country. The development of the country depends on how citizens are aware about their rights as well as their duty toward our country. Citizenship in India like a democratic country is very tough, facing responsibility to educate every citizen of India and train them properly. As mentioned earlier, every student is also a citizen of India, they must be aware about their citizenship. In the present study, the researcher has constructed a Citizen Awareness Inventory for the students of secondary schools. The researcher has conducted this study on a sample of students of standard 9 from Ahmedabad Schools. For this, the researcher has chosen two different schools from Ahmedabad city.

## 2. Definitions and Meaning of Citizenship

“A knowledge of the nation’s institutions, and also an awareness that the rule of law applies to social and human relationships is known as **Citizenship Awareness.**”

Citizenship Awareness also defined as,

“State of citizens of being aware of their civic obligations.”

Citizenship involves people working together to make positive differences to the society in which they live—locally, nationally and globally. This process is good for individuals, and essential for strengthening and safeguarding our society and democratic way of life.

## 3. What is citizenship education?

All human beings are both individuals and citizens of the society to which they belong. Therefore, human rights and citizen rights are interdependent. Men, women and children all come into the world as individual human beings. Thanks to the immense historical conquest of human rights, we are equal, in rights and dignity, to all other human beings. When citizenship education has the purpose of ‘educating future citizens’ it must necessarily address children, young people and adults, who are living beings, having the status of human beings endowed with conscience and reason. It cannot, therefore, exclude consideration of individuals as subjects, each with individual characteristics.

Moreover, human rights include civil and political rights, the latter obviously relating to the rights and obligations of citizens. Thus a comprehensive human rights education takes account of citizenship, and considers that good citizenship is connected with human rights as a whole. Conversely, citizenship education which trains ‘good’ citizens, i.e. citizens aware of the human and political issues at stake in their society or nation, requires from each citizen ethical and moral qualities. All forms of citizenship education inculcate (or aim at inculcating) respect for others and recognition of the equality of all human beings; and at combating all forms of discrimination (racist, gender-based, religious, etc.) by fostering a spirit of tolerance and peace among human beings.

Thus, when we speak of the purposes to be ascribed to either citizenship education (producing citizens with moral qualities) or human rights education (comprising a knowledge of the social and political rights of all human beings, and their recognition) we inevitably end up with the complementarity between citizenship and human rights. Depending on the cultural traditions of each education system,

we shall have, in some cases, civics education, comprising a knowledge of human rights and their exercise, and in others, human rights education, stressing civil and political rights as the basis of citizenship, and hence the national features assumed by these rights and guaranteed by states. Bearing in mind this complementarily, citizenship education means not only 'educating citizens' but also 'training children for adulthood and citizenship'.

There are three main objectives of citizenship education:

1. Educating people in citizenship and human rights through an understanding of the principles and institutions.
2. Learning to exercise one's judgement and critical faculty.
3. Acquiring a sense of individual and community responsibilities.

These three objectives correspond both to educating the individual as a subject of ethics and law, and to educating citizens. These objectives suggest four major themes for citizenship education:

- The relations between individuals and society: individual and collective freedoms, and rejection of any kind of discrimination.
- The relations between citizens and the government: what is involved in democracy and the organization of the state.
- The relations between the citizen and democratic life.
- The responsibility of the individual and the citizen in the international community.

#### **4. Democratic culture and citizenship education**

If there is one idea inherent in civics education, because it concerns politics and institutions, it is the idea of democracy. Comprehensive citizenship education cannot dispense with this concept or with a knowledge of the institutions that enable a country to function democratically. Rather than confining ourselves to noting and describing institutions (the necessary but not sufficient requirement for civics education), we should explain how the operation of the machinery of state respects government of the people by the people, and makes it accountable to citizens.

However, this way of tackling democracy may seem remote and foreign to the world of school and of children. It is therefore desirable to imbue the whole of school life with a culture of democracy. Educational practice is of equal value with knowledge when we come to tackle civics education. One of the major flaws in civics instruction has been that it fails to bring democracy to life in schools, and remains at the stage of merely enunciating principles and describing institutions. When the organization of a school does not lead to a democratic mode of operating on which pupils can give their opinions, children and adolescents lose interest in citizenship and see only the mismatch between what adults say and what they do, between knowledge and action, a mismatch which they usually call 'hypocrisy'.

Schools should therefore set up 'governing boards' with representatives of pupils and staff, and other bodies in which pupils express their views and in which decisions are taken in consultation with everyone, both young people and adults. The representation of pupils in these various bodies can and should be achieved by an open election system which has the same qualities of transparency as in any democracy worthy of the name. If we are to develop a credible civics education, respect for others – pupils and teachers, administrators and minor employees – and non-violence in attitudes and behaviour must be the rule in schools. Respect for others, and their dignity, in the same way as the self-respect of a free autonomous individual, springs from each individual's personal ethic, the will to 'live together, with and for others in just institutions'. These qualities, whether described as 'moral' or 'ethical', are required of all human beings and all citizens. They form part of both civic 'virtues' and individual 'virtues'. They enable each individual to live as a 'good' citizen.

In other words, in citizenship education, respect for the 'Other', regarded as one's equal, with his or her individual differences and distinctive physical, intellectual and cultural features, is to be explained and above all experienced in daily life in all schools. Based on these principles of equal dignity and respect for others, citizenship education has the task of combating all forms of negative discrimination and racism, sexism and religious fanaticism. Thus citizenship education can be regarded as an ethical (or moral) education as well as education in citizenship.

### **5. A new way of teaching citizenship education**

The introduction and continuance in schools of a democratic culture forbid dogmatism in any kind of civics education. The methods and approaches chosen are those based on discussion among pupils and between pupils and teachers, and make provision for children and young people to speak and express themselves. Modes of expression may be varied: in addition to oral exchanges, drawings, songs, poems, different kinds of written material are excellent instruments for reflection on citizenship, democracy, justice, freedom and peace.

In a democracy, citizenship education seeks to educate citizens who will be free to make their own judgements and hold their own convictions. Compliance with existing laws should not prevent citizens from seeking and planning better and ever more just laws. Respect for law, which is one of the objectives of civics education, calls not for blind submission to rules and laws already passed but the ability to participate in drawing them up.

One of the practical tasks of citizenship education is therefore to look at the rules governing a school, improve them and reformulate them. The values transmitted by citizenship education are not dogmatic principles laid down once and for all. A living culture calls for the creation of new values, although they should all be judged by the criterion of respect for others and for human dignity. Thus, with regard to the laws and values accepted by an entire social group, citizenship education can in no way be a catalogue of set questions and answers. Citizenship education should be the forum which gives rise to and nurtures a genuine culture of discussion. Whatever the problem posed, such as the ongoing development of humanity or the stability of the rule of law, an exchange of ideas, notions, judgements and individual opinions is necessary. Even among young children, dialogue of this kind is possible. Citizenship education needs also to be taught in ways that bring out the ever-constant link between knowledge and practice. The interaction between concepts and action gradually produces the ability to think in terms of values and to refer to them. Values are universal when they concern human rights: for example, the values of liberty, dignity, solidarity and tolerance. As they are firmly anchored and promoted in different cultures they can also concern a region of the world or even a special country, nation or religion. All should be made the subject of discussion and reflection and be studied in each course of citizenship education.

In other words, citizenship education is based on knowledge, practice and values that constantly interact. To be precise, let us say that awareness of the necessary reference to values gradually gives rise to practices and action which are themselves related to knowledge and skills about human rights and the institutions that regulate life in society. Pupils benefiting in this way from citizenship education learn step by step that citizenship unfolds and develops in a society imbued with values and in the human community as a whole.

### **6. Global dimensions in citizenship education**

The large worldwide population flows that are a characteristic feature of the modern world mean that schools cater for children from different cultural backgrounds. This cultural heterogeneity should be regarded as an opportunity for citizenship education.

In this situation, children are all required to mingle with and thus learn about and understand cultures other than their own. Far from blurring the cultural diversity of pupils, citizenship education can bring out the value of differences while respecting and affirming the universality of human rights principles. Respect for others - a universal principle - means, in the daily life of the school, a dialogue with others, and taking an interest in other family lifestyles, social habits and cultural practices. Citizenship education is the ideal forum, since discussion on social issues can be organized so that opinions can be expressed on ways of looking at the world, in other words, on cultures.

This is a new form of action to combat racism. Racism is frequently due to the ignorance in which children are reared in respect of cultures other than that which is the majority culture of their country. Through knowledge of these other cultures and the very existence of multicultural life in the classroom, children are fortified against despising the 'Other' and against hostile indifference, both of which are sources of racist behaviour.

### 7. Objectives of the present study

1. To study the effectiveness of students of secondary schools.
2. To study the effectiveness of students of secondary schools in context of standard.
3. To study the effectiveness of students of secondary schools in context of gender.

### 8. Hypotheses of present study

1. There is no significant difference between mean scores of Citizenship Awareness Test of students of standard 9 and standard 10.
2. There is no significant difference between mean scores of Citizenship Awareness Test of boys and girls.

### 9. Research Methodology

In present research the researcher had constructed a Citizenship Awareness Test for the students of secondary schools. The researcher had used survey method to perform this study.

### 10. Introduction to Citizenship Awareness Test

The researcher had constructed Citizenship Awareness Test with the help of experts. In this test total 30 items were comprised in it. Each item has 4 responses, out of which one response is correct while other three responses were incorrect. For each correct response there is one mark and for incorrect response there is 0 mark to each items. Thus, 30 marks for 30 items for awareness test. The students were provided 1 hour to complete this test.

### 11. Sample of the test

The researcher had chosen 278 students from different secondary schools of Ahmedabad city. There were 151 students from standard 9 and 127 students from standard 10. The boys were 152 and 126 were girls in overall sample.

### 12. Results of testing of Hypotheses

#### 12.1 Hypothesis 1

Standard	N	M	SD	SED	df	Table t value		Calculated t value
						0.05	0.01	
Std 9	151	20.46	4.39	0.67	276	1.97	2.59	6.04
Std 10	127	24.51	5.21					

#### 12.1.1 Interpretation

Calculated t value is more than table t value at 0.05 and 0.01 levels. Therefore hypothesis is rejected and there is a significant difference. In above result, students of standard are more aware in citizenship.

**12.2 Hypothesis 2**

Gender	N	M	SD	SED	df	Table t value		Calculated t value
						0.05	0.01	
Boys	152	23.41	5.87	0.82	276	1.97	2.59	0.66
Girls	126	22.87	5.92					

**12.2.1 Interpretation**

Calculated t value is less than table t value at 0.05 level. Therefore, hypothesis is not rejected and there is no significant difference between mean scores of boys and girls. Therefore, it is said that boys and girls were equally aware towards citizenship.

**13. Conclusion**

For the development of country, the people of the country must be aware towards their citizenship. In present study, the researcher had studied the citizenship awareness of students of secondary schools. The researcher had performed this study on the secondary schools' students of Ahmedabad city. The study revealed that the students of standard 10 are more aware towards citizenship than the students of standard 9. But the boy and the girls are equally aware towards citizenship.

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