

Education for Citizenship in Democracy

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Abstract

Democratic system of governance is considered as the best system available for managing conflicts without having to recourse to cruel means and violence. In order to make democracy live long, we must progress in two directions. Firstly, people's approach towards violence must undergo a transformation and there should be scope for training of peaceful reconciliation of differences. Secondly, people's participation in democracy should be healthy and based on notion of justice. As democracy provides scope for participation to all and people can have their share in governance. For this, education should be life-oriented. Education for future citizens in democracy offers a lasting solution to these problems. Here, knowledge of theoretical aspect should be merged with practice and right conduct. The people at large should come to realise the significance of education for future citizens in democracy. The present study is looking into the research question of the perceptions of school teachers towards the role course content, transactional strategies, co-curricular activities, textbooks, evaluation procedures and the school environment in developing education for citizenship in democracy in relation to gender? To find the answer to the question exploratory research method is undertaken in the exploration of teachers' perception. The tool comprises perception scale and semi-structured interviews with the teachers. In the last part of the article, detailed research findings is discussed which signify that teachers have positive perception towards education for citizenship in democracy.

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RESEARCH PROBLEM

Education for citizenship in democracy— an exploratory study of perception of school teachers

RATIONALE OF THE PROPOSED STUDY

Education for future citizens in democracy provides strong foundations of character building. It also helps in offering a lasting solution to problems confronting a democracy like violence, corruption, terrorism etc. The knowledge of theoretical aspect should be merged with practice and right conduct. The people at large should come to realise the significance of education for future citizens in democracy. Marsialas (1975) cited a number of studies from various regions of the world concluding that positive political socialisation outcomes were associated with students classroom inquiry into social issues. Meier (2009) calls for schools to provide students real opportunities to contribute to communities, and to help them form relationships, exchange ideas, and use a range of strategies to bring change, some having little to do with government. Once school environment fosters equality and equity in its approach, then the teacher can be asked to replicate the ideals of democracy into the classroom practices. Initiative on education for democracy depends on the ideals, motivation, awareness and skills of teachers in order to make it a real success. As

teachers are fairly responsible for inculcating tradition of democracy in a student's life, they should themselves be able to cherish the ideals of democracy.

In the year 2000, Silverman analysed the teacher beliefs and practices through a grounded theory approach. Deucher (2003) argued that citizenship as an ideal had been embraced as a priority by some schools, but others had yet to develop strategic plans to ensure that their pupils would become active and responsible citizens. Westheime and Kahne (2004) argued that is emphasis placed on individual character and behaviour. During this period, the debate over citizenship revolved around the individualistic education and the collective community education programmes.

The question is how do school teachers articulate citizenship in democracy? As it is a well-known fact that education is a means to bring desirable changes in the learner it seems important to know whether the teachers perceive education as a tool for enhancing responsible citizenship. School teachers are expected to be reflective practitioners as they are role models for the generations they are teaching. They must be aware of the surroundings for the sake of the betterment of the system. So, it is important to know how much awareness school teachers possess of the role of education for citizenship in democracy. Perceptions might differ due to differences in gender; as gender

is a social construct. So the specific question for this research is how does the gender of school teacher effect their perception towards education for citizenship in democracy? The present research study articulates the perception of school teachers on basis of gender.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To study the perceptions of school teachers towards the role of course content, transactional strategies, co-curricular activities, textbooks, evaluation procedures and the school environment in developing education for citizenship in democracy in relation to gender.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Teachers have differing perceptions towards the role of course content, transactional strategies, co-curricular activities, textbooks, evaluation procedures and the school environment in developing education for citizenship in democracy in relation to their gender.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The present study, 'Education For Citizenship In Democracy' is an exploratory study where the behavioural or psychological phenomenon of the community or the institution is explored. In the present study, the teacher community and the school as an institution in which the teachers are teaching was explored through the perception of school teacher.

RESEARCH METHOD— DESCRIPTIVE SURVEY METHOD

The objective of this research is to study the out perception of school teachers towards education for citizenship in democracy. On the basis of this objective and the nature of the problem, descriptive survey method was considered most appropriate to carry out the research.

SOURCES OF DATA

The school teachers teaching at elementary and secondary school of rural as well as urban were the sources of data of the study.

Table 1
Sources of Data

Sl. No.	Objective	Sources of data
1	Perception of school teachers related to personal factors :Gender	Male and female school teachers A sample of 560 school teachers (Male 303 and female 257) from 18 schools was taken.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

Population comprises of the entire group of persons that is of interest to the researchers and on whom the research result can be generalised. As Delhi is the national capital territory, it can be considered as representative of the functioning of government in the nation as a whole. Being a capital, Delhi is the focal point of governance of Indian Federation. Delhi has numerous private and governments schools running in urban as well as rural areas. These schools cover the entire range from theory to development to skills of democratic citizenship. Of the massive population of Delhi, school teachers from two zones

south and east were taken for the study.

SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The sample selected is representing the teachers of east and south zones of Delhi. The teachers teaching in these schools, male as well as female were included in the sample. A sample of 560 school teachers (male 303 & female 257) from these 18 schools was taken.

For studying the perceptions of school teachers, the sample consisted of 560 teachers in all, approximately equal number from each of the school. The sample of 560 school teachers have been selected through stratified purposive sampling. The sample for the study is represented in the following figure—

Table 2
Sample of the Research Study

RURAL 250	Government-145	Elementary- 75	Male - 30	Female -45
		Secondary - 70	Male - 32	Female -38
	Private- 105	Elementary-53	Male - 25	Female -28
		Secondary - 52	Male - 28	Female -24
URBAN 310	Government-170	Elementary- 75	Male - 32	Female -43
		Secondary - 95	Male - 55	Female -40
	Private- 140	Elementary- 80	Male - 28	Female -52
		Secondary - 60	Male - 24	Female -36
TOTAL= 560	Govrnmnt-315, Private -245	Elementary-283, Secondary- 277	Male-254	Female -306

56 teachers (ten percent of the sample teachers) were interviewed to corroborate the data obtained through the perception scale.

INSTRUMENTATION

The present study aimed to explore the perception of school teachers towards education for citizenship in democracy. Self-made tools were prepared by the researcher. The tools were developed according to the purpose of the study. These were developed with the help of experts from the field of political science, social sciences, education and research. The following data gathering tools were used for the study.

1. Perception scale for school teachers (aspects covered in perception scale is as follows-role of course content, transactional strategies, co-curricular activities, textbooks and evaluation)
2. Semi structured interview schedule (after taking responses on perception scale the researcher interviewed teachers on these aspects)
 - Name of the teacher, gender, qualification, teaching experience, teaching subject, type of school, demography.
 - Course-content of all common school subject is based on democracy
 - School curriculum inherits in itself the basic knowledge of democracy in terms of functioning

- Democratic ideals and values are the most important part of National Curriculum Framework 2005
- Their views about curriculum transactional strategies-teachers incorporate relevant local content in teaching learning process
- Strengths and limitations of textbooks used in school- scope of improvement in relation to democracy
- Course content should be transacted through interdisciplinary approach to study one particular theme per year
- Their views about co-curricular activities, its working and outcome, fair chance to participate
- CCA is the way of celebrating democracy (active citizenship) in school life
- Learning of democracy best takes place when students can test out their ideas with other students

NATURE OF DATA

The data is quantitative as well as qualitative in nature.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Raw scoring based on frequency analysis was entered into the master excel sheet and the percentage analysis of the whole data was done. After the preparation of excel

sheets the data was analysed and interpretation was done on the basis of percentage analysis of each parameter considered in the study. The perception scale collected data on five point Likert type scale and for

analysis it was converted into three point scale, on the agree, disagree and neutral. Then, the percentage scoring was done to compare the response given to a particular item.

Table 1.12
(i) Gender-wise teachers' perceptions towards

Item	Table (i) Course Content and Curriculum Aspect	Male %	Female %
1	The present day curriculum is based on democracy.	81.19	83.74
2	Democratic ideals and values are the most important part of National Curriculum framework 2005.	77.72	84.24
3	Course-content of common school subject inherits in itself the basic knowledge of democracy in terms of functioning.	67.33	73.4
4	Secondary school curriculum focuses more on facts rather on how to think critically about the society.	68.81	73.4
5	School curriculum is too much text – centered and merely transmits information for due memorisation of exam related facts.	58.42	70.44
6	In school curriculum, children's conceptual understanding is largely ignored as the focus is on providing unnecessary details about the past.	55.94	61.58
7	The course content of school specifically focuses on concepts and ability to analyse socio-political realities.	59.9	61.58
8	It is important in a country like India, which has so many diversities that course content suits all religion and diversified groups.	75.25	81.28
9	It is often not possible to cater to diversity of country given the centralised nature of curriculum.	64.36	65.52

On the basis of table 1.12(i) it can be said that perception of male and female teachers is almost similar in respect to four statements related to course content (statement no.1, 7, 8, 9). This perception of teachers would affect strongly and positively in strengthening the roots of democracy. Further it can be said that perception of male and female teachers differs slightly in respect to two statements related to course content (statement no.3, 4). Greater differences in perception of male and female teachers are seen in respect to two statements related to course content (statement no. 5, 6).

In the perception scale, majority of female teachers (84.24 per cent) as compared to male (77.72 per cent) perceive democratic ideals and values as the most important part of NCF 2005. In interview session, it came

out that the teachers, both male and female, have only heard about the document and only few have read it thoroughly. On another aspect, 58.42 per cent male and 70.44 per cent female teachers perceive that school curriculum is too much text – centered and merely transmits information for due memorisation of exam related facts. It suggests that female teachers are more sensitive towards the practical orientation of the curriculum. 55.94 per cent male and 61.58 per cent female are of the view that in school curriculum, children’s conceptual understanding is largely ignored as the focus is on providing unnecessary details about the past. Here also, the perception of male teachers is more negative than that of female teachers which shows that they often fail to relate the content to the current scenario.

Table 1.12

(ii) Gender-wise teachers’ perceptions towards curriculum transaction and transactional strategies

Item	Table (ii) Curriculum Transaction and Transactional Strategies	Male %	Female %
10	Instead of relying solely on the guidelines of curriculum, teachers must incorporate relevant local content in teaching learning process.	75.25	75.86
11	How to teach the topic in the classroom’ is decided by teacher alone.	58.91	59.61
12	Ideas of subject experts, fellow colleagues and student are worth considering while deciding upon transactional strategies.	73.76	78.82
13	A teacher generally adopts only that method which is suitable to majority of the students in the class.	79.21	74.38

14	In a particular standard generally, all students are equal and they can understand equally through all methods.	44.55	49.75
15	While teaching, the teacher involves students in discussion about major socio-political issues in the class.	66.83	79.8
16	Teacher should not ask those question of socio-political importance which are not directly related to their syllabus.	39.11	47.29
17	Kids will waste time if you let them have some input in deciding what will be taught in class.	42.57	48.77
18	Course content should be transacted through interdisciplinary approach to study one particular theme per year for e.g. 'Market' as theme can be used to make connections between various disciplines. This approach is good theoretically but practically it is not feasible.	60.89	64.04
19	All school subjects can best be taught when students bring their own experiences and knowledge to the lessons.	76.24	73.4

Table 1.12(ii) reveals that perception of male and female teachers is almost similar in respect to seven statements related to transactional strategies (statement no.10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 20, 49). Both male and female school teachers perceive that local content is most relevant and must be considered in teaching learning process. School teachers perceive that how to teach topic in the class should be decided by teacher alone. This kind of approach of teachers is not in tune with the democratic traditions. At this particular point the democratic traditions are hampered. A 73.76 per cent male and 78.82 per cent

female teachers perceive that ideas of subject experts, fellow colleagues and student are worth considering while deciding upon transactional strategies. Here also female teachers seem to be more open minded than male teachers. Majority of school teachers affirm that which method is to be adopted, is generally decided by teacher. In practice, teachers adopt that particular method which is suitable to majority of the class. Regarding the interdisciplinary approach which is being promoted so strongly in NCF 2005, 60.89 per cent male teachers and 64.04 per cent female teachers perceive course

interdisciplinary approach is good theoretically, but there are problems in practical implementation as no orientation is being given on these kinds of transactional strategies to them. Item no. 12 indicates that in males as well as females a majority of teachers perceive that student ideas, experiences and knowledge is important for transacting any particular topic. School teachers during one to one interaction confirm that students' ideas, examples and participation in discussions form a ground for transaction effectively.

Further, it can be said that perception of male and female teachers differs slightly in respect to two statements related to transactional strategies (statement no.15, 19). On the one hand teachers perceive it positively to consider student ideas important, on the other hand, 42.57per cent male and 48.77per cent of female teachers

consider giving students a chance to give input in deciding what will be thought in class as a waste of time. Approximately, 50 per cent of male and female teachers perceive that students can contribute some inputs in deciding transaction strategies. Teachers are not utilising the inputs of students this is negative feature of classroom in any democracy. Strong differences in perception of male and female teachers are seen in respect to one statement related to transactional strategies (statement no.18) where 47.29 per cent of female teachers and 39.11 per cent of male teachers believe that teacher should not ask those question of socio political importance which is not directly related to syllabus. As per teachers point of view, this can lead to widening of gaps between the learners as they belong to different socio-economic backgrounds.

Table 1.12

(iii) Gender-wise Teachers' perceptions towards Co-curricular activities

Item	Table (iii) Co-curricular activities	Male%	Female%
20	All school subjects can be and should be linked to other subjects such as integration of social science with literature, art and drama.	82.67	75.86
21	In co-curricular activities each student should be given a fair chance to participate, irrespective of any kind of differences.	84.65	78.33
22	Each school should have a CCA committee of its own so that they can promote healthy relationships among students.	86.63	73.4
23	In CCA committee, the activities should be decided by the teachers collaboratively.	72.77	79.8

24	CCA charge should be transferable and it should go in hands of different teachers.	75.25	79.8
25	In CCA, celebration of festivals related to the majority community should be given priority.	52.48	56.65
26	CCA transacts the idea of functioning of democracy on a small scale to the students involved.	65.84	71.43
27	The socio-economic background of the children is kept in mind while giving any task.	75.25	71.43
28	Through CCA students realise their rights and responsibilities in a group.	74.26	75.86
29	Active participation is the key to a successful group; the idea is promoted through CCA.	87.62	79.31
30	CCA gives a chance to students to appreciate each other's talent, role and participation.	78.22	85.22
31	CCA is the way of celebrating democracy (active citizenship) in school life.	71.78	79.8

Table 1.12(iii) reveals that perception of male and female teachers is almost similar in respect to six statements related to co-curricular activities (statement no.21, 29, 32, 33, 36, 38). It shows that 82.67 per cent male teachers and 75.86 per cent female teachers perceive that all school subjects can be and should be linked to other subjects. One can say on superficial grounds male teachers are supporting the idea of democracy but

when it comes to giving a chance to participate; female teachers are more open to it. School teachers perceive that in co-curricular activities each student should be given a fair chance to participate irrespective of any kind of differences. But during the interview session it came out that mostly those students are given chance who has participated in the activity earlier. Some teachers agreed that in CCA there is a creamy layer

of students who dominates in all the activities. School teachers perceive CCA and its functioning on democratic lines as majority of teachers feel that CCA activities should be decided in collaboration and CCA charge should be transferable. In schools, the practice is that teachers once given a chance to handle CCA continue as in-charge. Only in rare cases, someone voluntarily demands for the charge.

Further, it can be said that perception of male and female teachers differs slightly in respect to these statements related to co-curricular activities (statement no.30, 31, 34, 35, 37, 39). A majority of school teachers feel that through CCA students realise their rights and responsibilities. On the aspect of celebration of festivals related to different (male 52.48per cent and female 56.65per cent) communities, teachers feel both are equally important but this number is not impressive at all. In any democracy there should be celebration of all the festivals keeping in mind the community variation. In interviews, teachers revealed that much time is spent on these activities hence

it should be controlled. In school, 75.25 per cent female and 71.43 per cent male teachers perceive that socio economic background of the children is kept in mind while giving any task. 87.62 per cent of male and 79.31 per cent of female teachers perceive active participation is the key to a successful group; and this idea is being promoted through CCA. This gap of 8 per cent shows that male teachers are more active when it comes to involving students. 78.22 per cent male and 85.22 per cent female teachers perceive that CCA gives a chance to students to accept each other and appreciate other's talent, role and participation. 71.78 per cent male and 79.80per cent female school teachers perceive co-curricular activities as the way of celebrating democracy in school life. This also points towards gender differences in society as females supports the cause of democracy but practically faces challenges in implementation sometimes due to influence of patriarchal system and at times due to lack of support from school system.

Table 1.12

(iv) Gender-wise Teachers' perception towards Evaluation Procedure

Item	Evaluation Procedure	Male %	Female %
32	The most effective means to evaluate student's preparedness for citizenship performance is paper pencil test.	56.93	48.77
33	As a good evaluator, teacher should decide upon the tools of evaluation according his own choice.	61.88	66.5

34	During evaluation teachers get a chance to work according to future needs of citizens in our country.	72.28	73.4
35	Citizenships skills can best be evaluated among school children through cooperative and collaborative learning tasks.	81.68	76.85
36	School students cannot decide how they should be evaluated.	63.37	67.49
37	When school lacks time or resources to do everything, it would be better to cut back on social studies than to cut back on language or mathematics.	46.53	50.74
38	In school, all students should be encouraged to be skeptical and to question what they read and learn.	73.76	73.89

On the basis of Table 1.12 (iv) it can be said that perception of male and female teachers is almost similar in respect to three statements related to evaluation procedure (statement no.42, 44, 48). Table 4.2.1(iv) shows that 56.93 per cent male and 48.77 per cent female perceive that paper pencil test is the most effective means to evaluate students' preparedness for citizenship. Approximately, 73 per cent teachers feel that all students should be encouraged to be skeptical so that they can question what they read and write. It is indeed a very positive perception which shows teachers want students to learn and develop the skill of citizenship. Teachers feel that when they encourage them to question in class, they in way train them to question

wrong things in the society and ultimately the wrongs of democracy come under the scanner.

Further, it can be said that perception of male and female teachers differs slightly in respect to two statements related to course content (statement no. 40, 41, 43, 46). One aspect which is quite disturbing are that 46.53 per cent from male and 50.74 per cent from female teachers feel that when school lacks time or resources it is better to cut back on social studies than to cut back on language or mathematics. It shows that one of the subjects of importance, which is embedded in our social life i.e. social sciences, is being given a secondary status.

Table 1.12
(v) Gender-wise teachers' perception towards textbooks

Item	Table (v) Textbooks	Male %	Female %
39	Secondary school textbook merely transmit information and is too much factual.	56.44	68.47
40	The content of school textbooks is considered to be unconnected to daily life legalities.	49.5	48.77
41	In social science textbooks, the focus is on providing unnecessary details about the past and not on developing conceptual understanding.	49.01	45.81
42	School textbooks specifically focus on concepts and ability to analyse socio-political realities.	65.35	67.98
43	It is important in a country like india that all religions and social groups are able to relate to textbooks.	68.32	76.35
44	It is often impossible to cater to diversity of the country given the centralized nature of textbook production.	67.33	60.59
45	Instead of relying on textbook alone, it is important to incorporate relevant local content in teaching learning process.	75.74	83.74

On the basis of Table 1.12 (v) it can be said that perception of male and female teachers is almost similar in respect to three statements related to textbook(statement no.23,24,25). So, in all school teachers perceive that text books must focus on democracy in India. 65.35 per cent male and 67.98 per cent female feels that textbook focus on concepts and ability to analyse socio-political realities. It can be correlated positively that students can analyse the system of governance

and it means they are heading close to democracy. But at the same time, nearly half of the male as well as female teachers perceive that in social science textbooks the focus is on providing details of the past.

Further, it can be said that perceptions of male and female teachers differ slightly in respect to two statements related to textbook (statement no. 22, 26, 27, 28). A majority of school teachers feel that is important in a country like India

that all religions and social groups are able to relate themselves to textbooks. This infact is a positive sign when we consider teachers' beliefs and perception towards education for democratic citizenship. School teachers feel unity diversity is a great feature of Indian society. 67.33 per cent male and 60.59 per cent female

teachers accept centralised nature of textbook production is responsible for ignoring diversity of India in textbook content material. They believe that textbook must incorporate practical day to day related things. Female teachers are more aware of the need to incorporate local content during teaching.

Table 1.12
(vi) Gender-wise teachers' perception towards school environment

Item	Table (vi) School Environment	Male %	Female %
46	Students are challenged to think critically about situations or issues.	78.71	69.95
47	In school, students are often engaged in discussion of subjects or issues that might be perceived as controversial.	58.42	61.58
48	In school, students feel that they are free to express their own views openly.	64.85	67
49	Generally, teachers don't let their students work in small groups because they believe that students would engage in unfruitful activities.	58.91	46.31
50	Secondary school students are not emotionally prepared to handle learning about problems in our society.	58.42	58.62
51	During school days, students find a lot of questions related to socio-political environment really have no one right answer.	61.88	60.59
52	Learning of democracy best takes place when students can test our ideas with other students.	84.16	82.27

On the basis of Table 1.12 (vi) it can be said that perception of male and female teachers is almost similar in respect to five statements related to evaluation procedures (statement no.17, 45, 50, 51, 52). Both male and female school teachers perceive that often students are engaged in discussion of issues that might be considered as controversial. 64.85 per cent male and 67 per cent female teachers think that students are free to express their own views openly. In interview sessions it came out that teachers do promote students to share their view point, but they admitted that there are some barriers. As many as 84.16 per cent male and 82.27 per cent female teachers believe that learning of democracy happens when students can test out their ideals with other students. Teachers know the process and idea of learning of democracy but they are not letting their students engage in those group activities which will provide those opportunities. This is happening because of the gaps in knowledge of theory and practical implications. Further (statement no.16, 47). 78.71 per cent of male and 69.95 per cent female hold that school students are challenged to think critically about situations or issues. While female teachers seem to be more aware of the need to link content with daily life and are more open to democratic ideas while teaching. Male teachers emerged as better organisers of co-curricular activities related to development of democratic ideals.

Hypothesis 1.4 states that the gender-wise teachers' have differing perceptions. But teachers' perception towards education for citizenship in democracy is not affected by gender. This hypothesis is not accepted. On the basis of data analysis, it can be concluded that both male and female teachers perceive the role of course content positively in developing citizenship in democracy.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Perception was measured by self-made questionnaire developed by the researcher.
- For this study, schools functioning under CBSE were taken.
- This study was limited to Delhi (National capital territory) only.
- This study was limited to east and south zones of Delhi.
- This study was limited to government and private institutions only.
- The study included only those teachers who are faculty in formal setup teaching at elementary and secondary schools.

CONCLUSION

According to school teachers, democratic values are the most important part of National Curriculum Framework 2005 and it is being reflected in course content of school curriculum. So course content can play a vital role in developing education for citizenship in democracy. Male and female teachers believe that

transaction can be made effective if there is scope for incorporation of ideas of students, fellow colleagues and subject teachers. Both male and female teachers perceive the role of co-curricular activities as positive in promoting healthy relationships among students. For evaluation procedure, the scope of democratic

functioning is less according to both male and female teachers. To them evaluation is an area of teachers and should be decided by teachers. They perceive the role of school textbooks as positive in developing citizenship skills in democracy. Gender doesn't affect the perception of school teachers.

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