

Social Wellbeing of Secondary School Students in Relation to Human Rights and Legal Literacy: An Analytical Study

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ABSTRACT

Human by virtue of human being possess certain basic and inalienable rights which are commonly known as human rights. We call these rights by other names, also, like fundamental rights, basic rights, inherent rights, natural rights and birth rights etc. All the secondary school students should have favourable awareness about the human rights. They should have sufficient education on the matters related to law and justice. Legal Literacy is very important for the individual to live a better life in the society. These two aspects, Human Rights Awareness and Legal Literacy have direct relationship with Social Wellbeing of an individual. Social Wellbeing involves a person's relationships with others and how that person communicates, interacts and socializes with other people. It can also relate to how people make friends and whether they have a sense of belonging. All these three variables are very much important when we consider the students at secondary level. This paper presents the Social Wellbeing of Secondary School Students in relation to Human Rights and Legal Literacy. There is wide criticism that many of the students at secondary schools are not having favourable awareness of human rights, many of them are not properly taught with Legal Literacy, and they are unable to maintain Social Wellbeing in their life situations. The present study is intended to identify the secondary school students' Human Rights Awareness, Legal Literacy and Social Wellbeing and to ascertain whether there is any relationship among these variables. The present

study also intended to find out the difference between boys and girls, secondary students from private and government secondary schools, students from rural and urban schools etc. on Human Rights Awareness, Legal Literacy and Social Wellbeing.

Key Words: *Human rights, Legal literacy, Social Well being, Secondary School*

Introduction

Education has continued to evolve, diversify and extend its reach and coverage since the dawn of human history. Every country develops its system of education to express and promote its unique socio-cultural identity and also to meet the challenges of the times. Education has an acculturating role. It refines sensitivities and perceptions that contribute to national cohesion, a scientific temper and independence of mind and spirit - thus furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy enshrined in our Constitution.

The twentieth century witnessed two world wars along with massive violation of human rights. The formation of United Nations after World War II was based on the feeling of responsibility to stop the recurrence of such behaviour on the part of human kind. It dawned upon the leaders of various nations that human rights of all nationalities and communities have to be preserved. The result was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the subsequent Covenants. Even in the post-war era, it has been seen that human rights are still being violated everywhere. Most of the people are unaware of their rights and what can they do when their rights are denied. Translating the information and meanings of the legal system to learners and people with limited literacy skills requires that lawyers and others clearly understand the dual nature of legal literacy: the ability to read and familiarity with the legal context.

Social wellbeing is a state of affairs where the basic needs of the populace are met. This is a society where income levels are high enough to cover basic wants, where there is no poverty, where unemployment is insignificant, where there is easy access to social, medical, and educational services, and where everyone is treated with dignity and consideration. Many attempts have been made to quantify social well-being. In this context, human rights education, legal literacy and social wellbeing have gained currency and significance. In our endeavour to educate our children, we need to inculcate the values of Human Rights and Legal Literacy from the very beginning so that when they grow up they work towards peace and harmony in the world.

Need and Significance of the Study

Human Rights, Legal Literacy and social wellbeing are dynamic concepts that

will find expanded expression and constantly cover new areas as human society continues to evolve to higher levels of development. Education for these concepts is applicable at all levels of education. From the child's early years itself, the human rights education, legal literacy and social well-being are necessary. Preschool and early primary education can highlight a sense of common humanity among children. The older primary school children are aware of social and political issues and they have a right to learn about values which have been universally proclaimed. But at the secondary school level, students are mature enough to appreciate more fully the significance of struggle for civil and political rights and for economic, social and cultural rights. Education can play a strong role to secure human rights and dignity of human being. Before imparting this kind of education to them, how far they are aware about human rights and legal literacy should be measured.

Education should help the children become better citizens to the nation. For experiencing social wellbeing they should have proper awareness on human rights and knowledge about legal aspects. Though the teachers of secondary school system work hard, the result is not satisfactory when we consider the wellbeing of the individual. There is wide criticism among the people who are in the field of education that the students at secondary level do not possess proper human rights awareness, they have no idea about the legal aspects related to a better living in their society and are unable to experience happiness and social wellbeing due to many reasons. There are many factors which directly or indirectly affect the social wellbeing. Social wellbeing of a secondary school student is related to the human rights awareness acquired from their life situations and through their education. Legal literacy of the students also has relation with their social wellbeing. Thus this is a dire need to understand the awareness of Secondary School Students regarding Human Rights and Legal Literacy on their social well-being.

Statement of the Problem

Secondary students' social wellbeing is related to human rights awareness and legal literacy. If the secondary students of today get proper human rights awareness, if they are trained to make them legally literates, then only they can develop a proper social wellbeing, without which they will not be able to live a life with harmony and peace in the present society. It also empowers the scholastic achievement and academic growth of students. Hence, the problem of the present study has been stated as under, "*Social Wellbeing of Secondary School Students in relation to Human Rights and Legal Literacy - An Analytical Study*".

Operational Definitions

1. *Awareness*: Awareness refers to the level of familiarization and acquaintance with any particular subject' or 'possessing knowledge of something'.
2. *Secondary School Students*: The students belonging to standard VIII, IX and X are considered as the secondary school students. In the present study standard X students has been taken as secondary school students.
3. *Human Rights*: Human rights are basic rights which many societies believe that all people should have. It can be generally defined as those rights which are inherent in our nature and without which we cannot live as human beings.
4. *Legal Literacy*: It is the possession of an awareness regarding the law. 'Legal' is used to describe things that relate to the law. 'Literacy' is the ability to read and write.
5. *Social Wellbeing*: It is a state of affairs was the basic needs of the populace are met. It is a state of being healthy, happy or prosperous.

Objectives of the Study

The investigator conducted the present study based on the following objectives.

1. To find out the relationship between Human rights awareness and social wellbeing of secondary school students.
2. To find out the relationship between Legal literacy and social wellbeing of secondary school students.
3. To find out the difference between Boys and Girls in Human Rights Awareness, Legal Literacy and Social Wellbeing.
4. To find out the difference between Rural and Urban students in Human Rights Awareness, Legal Literacy and Social Wellbeing.
5. To find out the difference between Government and Private Students in Human Rights Awareness, Legal Literacy and Social Wellbeing.

Methodology

Sample and Sampling Procedure: In this study, population included secondary schools students of government and private schools in Malappuram and Calicut Districts of Kerala. For the present study six hundred students were selected from various Secondary schools. The sample was selected by following the stratified random sampling method. The sample comprised boys, girls, rural, urban, government and private students.

Tools used

1. *Human Rights Awareness Questionnaire*: Human Rights Awareness Questionnaire was developed and standardized by the investigators. The tool was developed and standardized to measure human rights awareness of students at secondary level. A large number of items are prepared by the Investigator according to the aims and objectives of the study. The items are prepared to check the awareness of human rights related to Human Rights in General, Human Rights and the world, Right to Education in India, Right to Information Act and Human Rights and Children areas of secondary school students. A thorough comparison is made between the prepared items and corresponding items collected from various sources. Thus the final form of the items is prepared. There are 40 items and these items are included under two dimensions namely general rights and right to individuals. These 40 items are supplemented by a careful study of related literature and informal meetings with experienced teachers, head masters and teacher educators. Thus the items are finalized, listed and rearranged. The tool prepared was administered to a sample of 60 secondary school students for pilot study. There are 38 questions in the final tool which are presented under the different areas of Human rights awareness.
2. *Legal Literacy Scale*: Legal literacy scale was developed and standardized by the investigators. The tool was developed and standardized to measure legal literacy of students at secondary level. A large number of items are prepared by the Investigator according to the aims and objectives of the study. Items related to Constitution and Democracy, Legislative Power of Government, Executive Power of Government, Judiciary, consumer laws and Social Laws. The final form of the items is consists 40 items. This list is examined by experts for item-relevance and usefulness. This tool is administered to a try-out sample of 60 secondary school students. The responses are scored according to the key. As the tool is a three point scale, the responses can be made with 'YES', 'NO' and 'UNKNOWN' by the subjects. Each response which is marked with UNKNOWN have one score, NO have two score and YES will have three scores. High score indicates high legal literacy, low score indicates less legal literacy. For the purpose of determining the degree to which each item is effective in discriminating between high and low legal literacy, an item analysis of the data obtained from the above sample is undertaken. Finally 36 items are retained after testing their relevance and grammatical fitness, related to different areas of legal literacy.

3. *Social Wellbeing Inventory*: A large number of items were prepared by the Investigators according to the aims and objectives of the study. The items are prepared to check the social wellbeing related to the areas like dealing with wellness, personnel wellbeing, social wellbeing, day to day life situations and life skills of secondary school students. The final form of the Pilot Social Wellbeing Inventory consists 40 items. The tool prepared was administered to a sample of 60 secondary school students for pilot study. For the purpose of determining the degree to which each item is effective in discriminating between high and low social wellbeing, an item analysis of the data obtained from the above sample is undertaken. Arithmetic means and standard deviations for all the 40 items of the upper-lower halves were calculated. There are 37 items retained after item analysis for the final study in social wellbeing inventory.

Major Findings of the Study

Majority of the secondary school students possess an average level of Human Rights Awareness, Legal Literacy and Social Wellbeing. Human Rights Awareness and Social Wellbeing of secondary school students is significantly correlated. There exists a significant positive relationship between Legal Literacy and social wellbeing of students at secondary level.

Gender wise Comparison

The table 1 mentioned below shows the gender wise comparison between Secondary School Boys and Girls with regard to their Human Rights Awareness, Legal Literacy and Social Wellbeing.

Table 1: Comparison between Secondary School Boys and Girls with Regard to their Human Rights Awareness, Legal Literacy and Social Wellbeing

Variable	Boys			Girls			t'-value	Level of Significance
	N	Mean	S.D	N	Mean	S.D		
Overall Human Rights Awareness	300	20.706	5.232	300	20.406	5.470	0.686	N.S
Legal Literacy	300	74.18	15.028	300	68.476	16.009	4.498	0.01 level
Social wellbeing	300	118.486	37.146	300	103.623	39.212	4.766	N.S

1. *Gender and Human Rights Awareness*: Boys and girls do differ significantly with regard to general rights dimension of Human Rights Awareness. Boys possess high Human rights awareness in general rights dimension of Human Rights Awareness. Boys and girls do differ significantly with regard to right to individual dimension of Human Rights Awareness. Girls possess high Human Rights Awareness in right to individual

dimension of Human Rights Awareness. Boy and girl students do not differ significantly with regard to overall Human Rights Awareness.

2. *Gender and Legal Literacy:* There is a significant difference between boy and girl students with regard to constitution and democracy dimension of Legal Literacy. Boys possess high Legal Literacy with regard to constitution and democracy dimension of Legal Literacy. There is a significant difference between boy and girl students with regard to powers of government dimension of Legal Literacy. Boys possess high Legal Literacy with regard to powers of government dimension of Legal Literacy. There is a significant difference between boy and girl students with regard to consumer and social laws dimension of Legal Literacy. Boys possess high Legal Literacy with regard to consumer and social laws dimension of Legal Literacy. There is a significant difference between boy and girl students with regard to overall Legal Literacy. Boys possess high Legal Literacy with regard to overall Legal Literacy.
3. *Gender and Social Wellbeing:* There is a significant difference between boy and girl students with regard to personal wellbeing dimension of Social Wellbeing. Boys possess high Social wellbeing with regard to personal wellbeing dimension of Social Wellbeing. There is a significant difference between boy and girl students with regard to emotional wellbeing dimension of Social Wellbeing. Boys possess high Social Wellbeing with regard to emotional wellbeing dimension of Social Wellbeing. There is a significant difference between boy and girl students with regard to social wellbeing dimension of Social Wellbeing. Boys possess high Social Wellbeing with regard to social wellbeing dimension of Social Wellbeing. There is a significant difference between boy and girl students with regard to overall Social Wellbeing. Boys possess high Social Wellbeing with regard to overall Social Wellbeing.

Rural/Urban Comparison

The table 2 mentioned below shows the locality wise comparison of secondary school students with regard to their Human Rights Awareness, Legal Literacy and Social Wellbeing.

Table 2: Comparison between Secondary School Rural and Urban Students with regard to their Human Rights Awareness, Legal Literacy and Social Wellbeing

Variable	Rural students			Urban students			‘t’-value	Level of significance
	N	Mean	S.D	N	Mean	S.D		
Human rights awareness	300	20.823	5.604	300	20.29	5.078	1.221	Not Significant
Legal Literacy	300	70.366	16.140	300	72.29	15.365	1.494	Not significant
Social wellbeing	300	108.94	40.451	300	113.17	37.189	1.333	Not Significant

1. *Locality and Human Rights Awareness:* Rural and urban students do not differ significantly with regard to general rights dimension of Human Rights Awareness. Locality has nothing to do with general rights dimension of Human Rights Awareness. There is no significant difference between rural and urban students with regard to right to individual dimension of Human Rights Awareness. Rural and urban students do not differ significantly with regard to overall Human Rights Awareness.
2. *Locality and Legal Literacy:* There is no significant difference between rural and urban students with regard to constitution and democracy dimension of Legal Literacy. There is no significant difference between rural and urban students with regard to powers of government dimension of Legal Literacy. There is no significant difference between rural and urban students with regard to consumer and social laws dimension of Legal Literacy. There is no significant difference between rural and urban students with regard to overall Legal Literacy.
3. *Locality and Social Wellbeing:* There is no significant difference between rural and urban students with regard to personal wellbeing dimension of Social Wellbeing. There is no significant difference between rural and urban students with regard to emotional wellbeing dimension of Social Wellbeing. There is a significant difference between rural and urban students with regard to Social Wellbeing dimension of Social Wellbeing. Urban students possess high Social Wellbeing with regard to Social Wellbeing dimension of Social Wellbeing. There is no significant difference between rural and urban students with regard to overall Social Wellbeing.

Institution wise Comparison

The table 3 mentioned below shows the institution wise comparison of secondary school students with regard to their Human Rights Awareness, Legal Literacy and Social Wellbeing.

Table 3: Comparison between Government and Private Secondary School Students with Regard to their Human Rights Awareness, Legal Literacy and Social Wellbeing

Human Rights Awareness	Government students			Private students			‘t’-value	Level of Significance
	N	Mean	S.D	N	Mean	S.D		
Human rights awareness	300	20.626	5.295	300	20.486	5.411	0.320	Not Significant
Legal Literacy	300	73.816	15.226	300	68.84	15.944	3.909	Significant at 0.01 level
Social wellbeing	300	117.856	37.450	300	104.253	39.153	4.348	Significant at 0.01 level

1. *Type of institution and Human Rights Awareness:* Government and private students do not differ significantly with regard to general rights dimension of Human Rights Awareness. Type of institution has nothing to do with general rights dimension of Human Rights Awareness. There is a significant difference between government and private students with regard to right to individual dimension of Human Rights Awareness. Private students possess high level of awareness with regard to right to individual dimension of Human Rights Awareness. Government and private students do not differ significantly with regard to overall Human Rights Awareness.
2. *Type of institution and Legal Literacy:* There is a significant difference between government and private students with regard to constitution and democracy dimension of Legal Literacy. Government students have high legal literacy in constitution and democracy dimension of Legal Literacy. There is a significant difference between government and private students with regard to powers of government dimension of Legal Literacy. Government school students have high legal literacy in powers of government dimension of Legal Literacy. There is a significant difference between government and private students with regard to consumer and social laws dimension of Legal Literacy. Government students have a high legal literacy in consumer and social laws dimension of Legal Literacy. There is a significant difference between government and private students with regard to overall Legal Literacy. Government school students possess a high level of overall legal literacy.
3. *Type of the School and Social Wellbeing:* There is a significant difference between government and private students with regard to personal wellbeing dimension of Social wellbeing. Government students possess high social wellbeing in personal wellbeing dimension of Social wellbeing. There is a significant difference between government and private students with regard to emotional wellbeing dimension of Social wellbeing. Government school students possess a high level of social wellbeing in the emotional wellbeing dimension of Social wellbeing. There is a

significant difference between government and private students with regard to social wellbeing dimension of Social wellbeing. Government students possess high Social wellbeing with regard to social wellbeing dimension of Social wellbeing. There is a significant difference between government and private students with regard to overall Social wellbeing. Government students possess high Social wellbeing with regard to overall Social wellbeing.

Educational Implications

Each and every educational research will be focusing on the development of educational status of the country. In the same way the present study has also some educational implications for the development of the teaching-learning process. The present study is an eye opener to the all concerned in the secondary education system. The positive correlation between Human rights awareness and Social Wellbeing confirms that if the Secondary students possess high human rights awareness, they can achieve good social wellbeing. The positive correlation between the legal literacy and social wellbeing also remind us about the need of legal literacy among secondary school students. It is necessary to help the Secondary School students to improve their human rights awareness and legal literacy so that they can improve their Social Wellbeing. The curriculum planners, educationists, administrators and academicians should plan programmes and courses to improve the awareness of human rights and legal literacy among secondary school students.

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