

Human Rights Values among High School Students of Mizoram

Zodinsanga Sailo and B.B. Mishra

Department of Education, Mizoram University, Aizawl, Mizoram, India

Corresponding author: oliasnid@gmail.com \ bana.mishra55@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The main concern of the present time is peaceful coexistence of human beings. The whole world is panic of arms race, terrorism, religious fundamentalism, murder, rape, scams, cyber crimes and other forms of crimes. Insecurity prevails in the minds of all. It is because there is degradation of values, particularly lack of respect to human rights. Human rights refer to the fundamental freedoms and basic liberties without which men, women and children cannot live with respect and dignity. Basic to human rights are the values of non-discrimination and equality, which contribute to building a culture of peace in society. Every individual acquires values through his/her orientation in families, schools, and society. Most of the human traits get relatively stable during late adolescent period. At this stage individual's learning, experiences and exposures along with ambitions and aspirations get consolidated in the form of personality. That's why adolescent period is recognized as most critical stage of life. High school students are in adolescent stage. Mizoram is a small state, which is situated, in the northeastern corner of India. This study aimed at assessing the human rights values among high school students of Mizoram. In the present study, the awareness of human rights values of 400 high school boys and 400 girls, both from rural and urban areas, was assessed. The study revealed that there was high level of awareness of civic, political, economic, social and cultural values among the high school students of Mizoram.

Keywords: Peaceful Coexistence, Human Rights Values- Civic, Political, Economic, Social and Cultural

Every society in every age has acknowledged peace as a noble and necessary ideal. The need for culture of peace has been emphasized by every religion, society, and nation and also by international organizations. Values and attitudes are the building blocks of the culture of peace. Historically, moral instruction and value education were the precursors of culture of peace. They share much in common. Religion, according to the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE)-2000, is a source of value generation. That is why great spiritual leaders of the past have been recognized as educators for peace.

One of the great achievements of the United Nations is the creation of a comprehensive body of human rights law known as The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). It was adopted by the

United Nations on 10th December, 1948 with 30 articles that specify a set of rights and freedom for survival of mankind. It defined specific rights like civil, political economic, social and cultural with equality and freedom from discrimination as a principle. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948 proclaim that *recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world*. It is in this context that the concept of human rights arises. The concept of human rights emphasizes the worth of the individual and to recognize his or her rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: *All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in*

a spirit of brotherhood. This basic concept needs to be understood, appreciated and practiced by all people irrespective of any kind of diversity - age, sex, race, religion, nationality and the like. Every human being should be aware of the basic rights and responsibilities that each individual possesses which will lead to develop a culture of prevention of human abuses and peaceful coexistence.

Human Rights Education in India

Indian civilization has adopted the concept of “*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*” since time immemorial. At the time when the Indian constitution was being drafted coincidentally the UN adopted and proclaimed the UDHR on 10th December, 1948. Our constitution framers had taken note of it and had incorporated many provisions in the constitution. The preamble of the constitution of India, the fundamental rights and duties, directive principles of state policy as has been enshrined in the constitution reflect the steps taken by our nation towards the realization of human rights.

In 1980 the University Grants Commission (UGC) appointed a committee on Human Rights Education (HRE) under the chairmanship of Justice S.M. Sikiri to consider different ways of promoting Human Rights Education (HRE) in India. The report of this committee, entitled ‘Human Rights Education at All levels’ suggested different approaches at different levels of education. In India, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) was set up in 1993. The functions of the commission have been outlined in section 12 (h) of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. The Human Rights Commission has been entrusted with the responsibility *to spread human rights literacy among various sections of society and promote awareness of safeguards available for the protection of these rights through publications, the media, seminar and other available means.* The commission has been continuously coordinating for this purpose with the Human Resource Development Ministry, the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT) and Universities to

introduce human rights education programmes in their courses. The commission has taken initiatives to generate awareness towards human rights education by integrating it with curriculum at different stages of education and teacher education curriculum by active collaboration with NCERT and NCTE. All these national organizations are putting their efforts to make human rights education in our country successful.

Human Rights in Mizoram

Mizoram is a small state and is situated in the north-eastern corner of India having a total area of 21,081 sq. km. Administratively, It has 8 districts and has a population of 10, 97, 206 (2011 census). Mizoram is one among the peaceful states of our country. Mizoram is one among the few states of the country, which yet not have set up State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) as the government has not felt the need for establishing such commission. From the very childhood both boys and girls are involved in various social activities such as church and other voluntary social organizations which promote religious and social values. However, in recent years, it is being observed that there is a change in the scenario. It is being found that crime rate of different kinds are growing over periods of time.

Need of the Study

India needs creation of a strong and pro-active human rights community having strong inclination for peace and it can be achieved through a well thought-out programme of education. Education is an instrument for development of human rights related values among the future citizens. High school stage is an important stage of education and at this stage the values that the students acquire become relatively stable. The school environment has great impact in inculcation of human rights values among the students. There are reports from different parts of the country relating violation of human rights in the schools such corporal punishment, sexual abuse, imperfect relations, murders, and violent conflicts in all types of schools, primary to high

school. Mizoram may not be an exception to it. Such situations in schools break the human rights values in the schools and deter the promotion of human rights values among the students. But, such cases are not being reported by the victims to the administration and parents/ guardians. It is not that human rights education is only imparted at the high schools; such types of education are imparted starting from primary level of education. The high school students have exposures of both primary and high schools. In this context, the following broad research questions are raised:

1. Are the primary and high schools in Mizoram able to inculcate human rights values among the students?
2. Is there any variation in human rights values of the high school students in Mizoram with reference to their gender, locale and school background?

Objectives of the study

1. To assess the human rights values of high school students in Mizoram.
2. To compare human rights values of high school students in Mizoram with reference to their gender (Boys and Girls).
3. To compare human rights values of high school students in Mizoram with reference to their locality (Urban and Rural).

Hypotheses of the study

In relation to the objectives 2 and 3, the following Null hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no significant difference in the human rights values of high school boys and high school girls of Mizoram.
2. There is no significant difference in the human rights values of urban high school students and rural high school students of Mizoram.

Methodology

Population and Sample

The target population of the study was the secondary school students of Mizoram. As such, all students,

both boys and girls, pursuing their studies in the urban and rural areas in the state of Mizoram constituted the population of the study. To have a representative sample of students both from urban and rural areas, multistage stratified cluster random sampling technique was used. Initially, out of 8 districts of Mizoram, 4 districts were selected randomly. At the 2nd stage, schools from rural and urban areas were randomly selected. From the selected schools, all the students present on the day of visit of the researchers were included in the sample. The total sample comprised of 400 boys and 400 girls among which 400 were from rural and urban secondary schools in both categories.

Tools used

For assessment of Human Rights Values, the English Version of *Manavadhikar Moolya Vikash Prashnawali* (Human Rights Value Development Questionnaire) standardized by Paramanand Singh and Lal Dhari Yadav was used. This questionnaire is standardized in 2010 with students belonging to the age range 11 to 18 years and assesses five types of values – Civic, Political, Economic, Social, and Cultural with 9, 13, 8, 12, and 6 questions for these values respectively. The maximum possible scores on these five components are 18, 26, 16, 24, and 12. For easy comprehension of the high school students, the test was translated into Mizo language and finally the questionnaire became bilingual (English and Mizo). Data were collected through personal visits to the selected schools by the researchers.

Analysis of Data

The data were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviations. Further, 't' test was used for the purpose of comparison between different groups of high school students. The mean and standard deviation of different groups on various components of human rights values (Civic, Political, Economic, Social, and Cultural) are given in Table 1. The 't' values on comparison of different groups are given in Table 2.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Different Groups High School Students in Mizoram on Various Components of Human Rights Values

Groups	N	Components of Human Rights Values									
		Civic		Political		Economic		Social		Cultural	
		MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
Boys	400	12.42 (69.00)	2.27	19.88 (76.46)	2.84	10.38 (64.88)	2.14	17.01 (70.88)	2.84	7.30 (60.83)	1.87
Girls	400	12.27 (68.17)	2.15	19.76 (76.00)	3.39	10.17 (63.56)	2.21	16.59 (69.13)	3.02	7.91 (65.92)	1.90
Rural	400	12.32 (68.44)	2.37	20.15 (77.50)	3.07	10.15 (63.44)	2.19	16.71 (69.63)	2.81	7.99 (66.58)	1.81
Urban	400	12.40 (68.88)	2.13	19.75 (75.96)	2.85	10.27 (64.19)	2.19	16.90 (70.42)	3.08	7.30 (60.83)	1.97
Total	800	12.35 (68.61)	2.23	19.88 (76.46)	3.03	10.24 (64.00)	2.18	16.80 (70.00)	2.93	7.62 (63.50)	1.88

*Figures in the Parentheses indicate percentage.

Table 2: 't'-Values for different groups compared on five components of Human Rights Values

Groups Compared	Components of Human Rights Values				
	Civic	Political	Economic	Social	Cultural
Boys Vs. Girls	0.20	0.54	1.38	2.10*	5.08**
Rural Vs. Urban	4.62**	1.91	0.8	0.95	5.18**

*Significant at .05 level, **Significant at .01 level.

Findings

- ⊙ On the civic component of human rights values the average performance converted to percentage of high school students were found to be 64.88% and 68.17% for boys and girls respectively. Similarly, the average performance converted to percentage of rural and urban high school students were found to be 68.44% and 68.88% respectively, and 68.61% for all students. The results indicate that both boys and girls pursuing their studies in rural as well as urban high schools have high civic human rights values.
- ⊙ On the political component of human rights values the average performance converted to percentage of high school students were found to be 76.46 % and 76.00% for boys and girls respectively. Similarly, the average performance converted to percentage of rural and urban high school students were found to

be 77.50% and 75.96% respectively, and 76.46% for all students. The results indicate that both boys and girls pursuing their studies in rural as well as urban high schools have high political human rights values.

- ⊙ On the economic component of human rights values the average performance converted to percentage of high school students were found to be 64.88% and 63.56% for boys and girls respectively. Similarly, the average performance converted to percentage of rural and urban high school students were found to be 63.44% and 64.19% respectively, and 64.00% for all students. The results indicate that both boys and girls pursuing their studies in rural as well as urban high schools have high economic human rights values.
- ⊙ On the social component of human rights values the average performance converted to percentage of high school students were

found to be 70.88% and 69.13% for boys and girls respectively. Similarly, the average performance converted to percentage of rural and urban high school students were found to be 69.63% and 70.42% respectively, and 70.00% for all students. The results indicate that both boys and girls pursuing their studies in rural as well as urban high schools have high social human rights values.

- ⊙ On the cultural component of human rights values the average performance converted to percentage of high school students were found to be 60.83% and 65.92% for boys and girls respectively. Similarly, the average performance converted to percentage of rural and urban high school students were found to be 66.58% and 60.83% respectively, and 63.50% for all students. The results indicate that both boys and girls pursuing their studies in rural as well as urban high schools have high cultural human rights values.
- ⊙ Comparison between boys and girls reveals that boys have significantly better social values than girls but their cultural values are significantly less than girls. In civic, political and economic values, no significant difference was revealed between the high school boys and girls.
- ⊙ Comparison between rural and urban high school students reveals that urban students have significantly better civic and cultural values than rural students. In political, economic and social values, no significant difference was revealed between the two groups high school students in Mizoram.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that the high school students of Mizoram have high level of awareness about the civic, political, economic, social, and cultural values which would help the to respect human rights. However, the level of awareness has to be highest. The task of promoting human rights values ought to be focused at two distinct levels i.e. imparters (teachers) and receivers (students). For the receivers provisions are not only to be made in curricular and co-curricular activities but also it should be reflected

in their daily life. For effective promotion of peace culture and development of human rights values teachers' role is important. The teachers are required not only transact the curricular and co-curricular components related to peace and human rights but also create conducive atmosphere and culture in the schools which will meet the goals i.e. development of proper knowledge, skill, habits, attitude, etc. It is because children close their ears to advice and open their eyes to examples. This is especially true in the context of our country where teachers are respected as the fountainheads of knowledge and wisdom. Society as another influential agency of education, must respect human rights values in every societal activity so that children do not confuse with what is taught and what is practiced. Children will learn peace values only if these are modeled by their teachers as well as their elders. If there is a mismatch between what teachers and adults do and what they say, children will imitate what is done. Teachers and elders need to be aware of the effects of their behavior on students.

REFERENCES

- Borkar, A. 2014. Transacting Peace Education in School Using PETS–A Study. *Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 4(1): 30-34.
- Government of India 1949. *Report of the University Education Commission, (1948-49)*, New Delhi: Ministry of Education, Government of India.
- Government of India 1966. *Report of the Education Commission 1964-66 on "Education and National Development"*, New Delhi: Ministry of Education, Government of India.
- Government of India. 1986. *Report of the National Policy on Education (1986)*, New Delhi; Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India.
- Mishra, L. 2011. Pre-service teacher training for peace education. *International Journal of Peace and Development Studies*, 2(7): 203-210.
- National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) (2000). *National Curriculum Framework for School Education*, New Delhi: NCERT.
- Statistical Handbook Mizoram 2016. Directorate of Economic & Statistic Mizoram: Aizawl.

