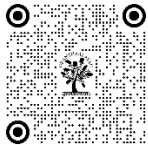


HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS AMONG POST GRADUATE STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PITHORAGARH DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Human rights refer to the fundamental freedoms, without which men, women and children cannot live with respect and dignity. Basics to human rights are the values of non-discrimination and equality, which contribute to building a culture of peace in society. In this study an attempt has been made to investigate the awareness of human rights among post-graduate students studying in the L.S.M. Campus, Pithoragarh and Government postgraduate college, Berinag. In the present study descriptive survey method was adopted. Simple random sampling technique was used to select samples of 100 post graduate students with the objective to study level of human rights awareness and to compare human rights awareness with respect to sex, academic stream and nature of residence among post-graduate students. A standardised Human Rights Awareness Test by Vishal Sood & Arti Anand, (2012) was used to collect the data. To analyse the data mean, standard deviation and t-test was used. The findings of the study reveals that majority of the students (42 percent) showed average level of awareness. On the other hand female post graduate students, urban residing and having Science stream students have shown more awareness. So, there is a need to provide human rights education in schools and colleges. Human Rights Education mission is to encourage personal growth and acceptance of others to foster cooperation and peace among individuals and countries. Students' awareness of human rights helps in transferring the same to future citizens. Hence adequate awareness in them can help to create a sensitive, informed, and enlightened society.

Keywords: Human Rights, Human Rights Education, Human Rights Awareness, Post-Graduate Students

1. INTRODUCTION

The emphasis on Human Rights Education began in 1995 with the beginning of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education, though previously addressed in 1953 with the UNESCO Associated Schools Program, which served as an "initial attempt to teach human rights in formal school settings". The first formal request for the need to educate students about human rights came about in UNESCO's 1974 article Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace, and Education Relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms.

—Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

All men and women are equal and are dependent upon one another. They have equal rights and responsibilities for social growth. According to J.J. Rousseau, "All men are born free but everywhere they are in chains". The foundation of peace in the world rests on the basic principles of justice, equality and freedom enjoyed by all the people. Wherever these rights have been denied to people or nations, there have been conflicts between man and man and nation and nation. Everyone has got the rights to live with liberty and security.

Amnesty International defines Human Rights Education as a "deliberate, participatory practice aimed at empowering individuals, groups and communities through fostering knowledge, skills and attitudes consistent with internationally recognized human rights principles" and explains the goal of Human Rights Education is to "empower yourself and others to develop the skills and attitudes that promote equality, dignity and respect in your community, society and worldwide." Human rights have been a very burning issue around the globe from last few years. With time being, it was felt must for the protection of human rights and for the achievement of the same various steps were taken and human rights were declared legal. Every individual without any discrimination of caste, colour, creed, religion is entitled to enjoy these rights. The purpose of these rights is to protect the human beings living in every corner of the world from exploitation and to create necessary conditions for their development (Nivedita and Rani, 2015).

1.1. STUDIES ON HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS:

Akiri (2013), evaluated people's level of awareness of their rights amongst students and teachers of secondary schools in Delta Central Senatorial District. The stratified random sampling technique was adopted. Urban or rural teachers and students were selected as study sample from 146 public secondary school. The findings indicated that there was limited awareness of the fundamental rights amongst secondary school students and teacher. It was found that more students are unaware of the existence of the Nigerian constitution as well as the students in secondary schools in Delta. Hong Sun – Woo et.al. (2011) evaluated the factors affecting human rights for nursing students. They found human rights was the mother's rearing attitude as predicting factor (7.6%). There was a significant difference in Human Rights for nursing students according to age and awareness, were related to perceived parents' rearing attitude, self-esteem and psychological home environment.

Humtsoe and Kapoor (2019) studied to find out the level of human rights' awareness among the post graduate students studying in Assam Don Bosco University. Descriptive cum normative survey method was adopted with a sample of 162 post graduate students selected by simple random sampling technique. It was found out that majority (61.73%) of the students possess average and below average level of human rights awareness and only about 3.70 % of students has high level of human rights awareness and 34.57% students has above average level of awareness. Sharma (2020), summarized that ICT is playing a vital role in establishing awareness and preventing violation of human rights of the global citizens in his study. In Guwahati, Balgari (2021), found that secondary school students had no in-depth knowledge of human rights, their broad areas as well as applicability. Although, 40% of the students had Human Rights awareness as a subject and 51% of the students have Human Rights Education in Syllabus.

1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the level of Human Rights awareness among post-graduate students.
- To compare Human Rights awareness among post -graduate students with respect to sex, academic stream and nature of residence.

1.3. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

There is no significant difference in human rights awareness among postgraduate students with respect to sex, academic stream and nature of residence.

2. METHODOLOGY

The present research is a survey method in nature. The study is quantitative in nature. The survey method is adopted. A standardized Human Rights Awareness Test (HRAT) developed by Vishal Sood and Arti Anand, (2012) was used to

measure awareness of post graduate students. The test was classified into three dimensions; (i) Knowledge of Human Rights related Documents, (ii) Knowledge and Understanding about Human Rights Concept, (iii) Understanding of Situations involving Human Rights Violation/ Non-Violations, consisting of 50 statements with three alternatives i.e., true, undecided and false. The population of the study covers post graduate students from Pithoragarh district. A sample of 100 post graduate students, in which 50% of the students from L.S.M. Campus, Pithoragarh and rest of the 50% of the students from Government post graduate College, Berinag were sampled by using simple random sampling technique. Researcher personally visited to the degree colleges for data collection regarding to the present study. Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyse the data such as mean, standard deviation and t- test. Later the results were interpreted and conclusions were drawn.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After analyzing the data, the level of human rights awareness among post graduate students is presented in the table1, which reveals that none of the students fall in category A (Extremely high degree of HRA) and category B (High degree of HRA). The largest group falls into the "Average" (D) category, comprising 42% of students. 25% fall into the "Below Average" (E) category, which indicates that a substantial number of individuals may have limited awareness of human rights issues. Only 4% of respondents are in the "Low" (F) category, suggesting that very few people are completely unaware of human rights. This raises concerns about the knowledge gaps that exist within this population. It is shown in the following table and figure clearly.

Table 1. Human rights awareness level among post graduate students

S.No	Degree of Human Rights Awareness	Grade	N	Percentage (%)
1	Extremely High	A	Nil	
2	High	B	Nil	
3	Above Average	C	29	29.00%
4	Average	D	42	42.00%
5	Below Average	E	25	25.00%
6	Low	F	4	4.00%

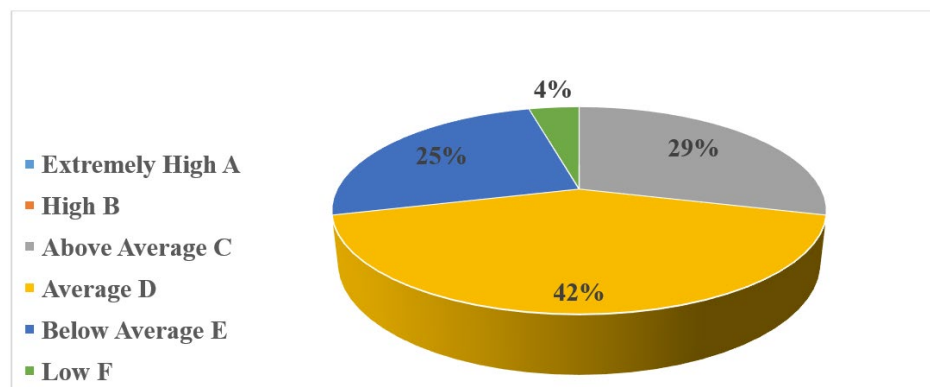


Figure1 Human rights awareness level among post graduate students

Table 2. Human rights awareness of under graduate students on the basis of Sex.

Sex	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Results
Male	34	68.00	10.81	0.11	non-significant
Female	66	71.78	10.50		

Table 2. further reveals that, male students have a mean score of 68.00, while Female students have a higher mean score of 71.78. The standard deviation for male students (10.81) is slightly higher than that for female students (10.50),

representing a bit more variability among male students' scores. The t-test result of 0.11 indicates that the difference in mean scores between Male and Female students is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This suggests that there is not enough evidence to conclude that gender has an effect on the scores.

Table 3. Human rights awareness of under graduate students on the basis of Academic stream

Academic stream	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Results
Arts	41	68.71	10.32	0.01	Significant
Science	59	75.56	7.08		

Table 3. reveals that, it was found that mean score of postgraduate students, having arts stream was lesser (68.71) than postgraduate students having Science stream (75.56). Standard deviation of Arts was calculated 10.32 and value of SD for Science students was found 7.08. The lower SD in Science (7.08) indicates less variability in scores compared to Arts (10.32). The t-test result of 0.01, indicates that the difference in means was statistically significant at the 0.05 level, which indicates strong evidence that the mean scores between the two groups are different.

Table 4. Human rights awareness of post graduate students on the basis of nature of residence

Nature of Residence	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Results
Urban	40	65.15	15.34	0.04	Significant
Rural	60	69.57	4.73		

Table 4. reveals that, urban students have a mean score of 65.15, while Rural students have a higher mean score of 69.57. Urban students have a higher standard deviation (15.34) compared to Rural students (4.73), representing greater variability in urban students' scores. The t-test result of 0.04 indicates that the difference in means between Urban and Rural students was statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This means, the null hypothesis was rejected and concluded that there was a significant difference in scores between the two groups.

4. FINDINGS

- It was found that the majority of the post graduate students with their entire sample have average level of human rights awareness.
- It was found that the male and female postgraduate students do not differ significantly in their human rights awareness.
- It was found that the arts and science post graduate students differ significantly in their human rights awareness levels.
- It was found that the urban and rural post graduate students differ significantly in their human rights awareness. Students, belonging to rural areas were performed significantly more awareness.
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5. CONCLUSIONS

From this study, it can be depicted that majority of the students fall in the category of below average level of human rights awareness. Therefore, there is a strong need to develop their human rights awareness level through various programmes which will help them to understand the human dignity, values and rights. So that students can able to analyse the forces which violates their rights and dignity. It was found that the postgraduate students did not differ significantly in their human rights awareness levels. This study can also help institutions to understand the actual human rights awareness levels of the students. It also indicates lack in certain dimensions like Knowledge of human rights related documents, understanding about human rights concepts, understanding of situations involving human rights

violation/non-violations. Therefore, it needs value and awareness model of human rights education as a separate subject as quoted by Pandey (2005) and human rights are not taught as a separate subject instead various values related to human rights have been integrated in all subjects and in all stages of curriculum.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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