

Secular attitude among higher secondary students

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to measure secular attitude of higher secondary students belonging to vellore district living in Tamil Nadu. The investigators employed the gender, locality of institution, type of institution, medium of instruction, parental qualification, residence of students, mode of school and type of family can influence the secular attitude of higher secondary students. The study was carried out on the sample of higher secondary students belonging to different places and studying at different schools. To measure the secular attitude the researcher used the standardized scale by Anushu Mehra and Durganand Sinha (1992) Consisting of 35 items, the maximum possible score is 175 and the minimum possible score is 35. The findings of the study revealed that there is significant difference in the secular attitude of higher secondary students belonging to type of institution and Secular attitude of higher secondary students do not significant difference depends upon certain demographic variables like gender, locality of institution, medium of instruction, parental qualification, residence of students, mode of school and type of family.

Keywords: Secular Attitude, Demographic Variables

Introduction

India is a country, in which many religions have been in existence for centuries. This coexistence of many religions had been generally peaceful, but post-independence era has faced various clashes and riots among them. We are passing through an age where co-existence is the need of the nation. There is no place to communal disharmony or intolerance for other religions. Increasing communal problems are posing threat to the development of nation. A number of divisive and fissiparous conditions are coming on the grounds. Some historical and ideological clashes, which have generated problems in the past, are still present today. But the nation can't allow them to be present in future. The concept of nationalism has undergone change due to political interference. Religion is given over priority to the interests of the nation and as a result frequently clashes between community members take place. The identity of Indians with the Indian state has been eroded by these clashes. These clashes and riots are continuously drawing obstacles in the development of the country, and have become the cause of loss a lot of lives and wealth. These forces also create feeling of inferiority and hatred among the people. The present study is an attempt to find out the level of secular attitude among young adolescents, so that timely intervention of parents and teachers may develop healthy attitude in them.

Secular Attitude

India is a Socialist, Secular Democratic Republic pledged to secure all its citizens justice, liberty and equality and to promote fraternity among nationals. It is committed to assure and maintain unity of the country in addition with maintaining the dignity of the individual. This is stated in

the Preamble of the Constitution itself. Actually, the word "secularism" was introduced by 42nd Amendment in 1976.

The Education Commission (1964) recommended that a syllabus giving well-chosen information about each of the religion should be included as a part of the course in citizenship or as a part of general education to highlight the fundamental similarities in the great religions of the country and emphasizing the cultivation of certain broadly comparable manual and spiritual values. It also emphasised training of efficient leadership at all levels by expanding secondary and higher education and providing equal opportunities for all children of merit and promise, irrespective of economic status, caste, religion, sex or place of residence. Social, moral and spiritual values were specifically suggested that education system should emphasise the development of fundamental, social, moral and spiritual values. From this point of view the Centre and State Governments should adopt measures to introduce education in moral, social and spiritual values in all institutions under their (or local authority) control on the lines recommended by the University Education Commission and the Committees on Religious and Moral Instruction.

National Policy of Education (1986) also suggested that the essence of education should be harmonious society where people with different religious beliefs can live co-operatively. The national curriculum framework should be designed to promote the secular attitude and all educational programmes should be based on secular values. Similar views were expressed by National Knowledge Commission (2009). It suggested that the civic education should be provided to adolescents so that positive attitude towards the equality of castes, religions

and gender and secularism may be developed.

Need of the Study

Unity in diversity has been a unique characteristic of Indian society. Many religions are flourishing here since long back, which have their own traditions and beliefs. Despite religious, cultural, and linguistic heterogeneity there was hardly any tension between these different groups for a very long time. But, later on, a new threat had born in the Indian society that is called communalism. Though, in India, the seeds of communalism were sown by the British rulers (Das, 1991) [10], but, even after independence, communal forces are still active and creating problems for both, the government and the society. This communal ideology leads in many cases to communal violence and riots (Chandra, 2008) [8]. As a solution, scholars like Agarwal (1984) [9] have found that education level affects the attitude towards communalism. Now, after communal incidents at global level too, the world has accepted that the peaceful survival of all the societies is possible only in a secular world. Since, the real development can take place only in secular atmosphere, by secular citizens, and the development of such citizens is a prime task of education, therefore, to develop the secular characters in our citizens is one of the major responsibilities of the education system and this can be accomplished by the teachers with secular attitude only.

Statement of the Problem

The problem chosen for the study may be stated as “Secular Attitude of higher secondary students.

Sample

The study was conducted on the sample of 300 higher secondary students studying at Vellore district in Tamil Nadu. Out of 300, 162 were male and 138 were female. The basic purpose of the present investigation was to investigate the secular attitude among the higher secondary students in relation to certain demographic variables such as gender, locality of institution, type of institution, medium of instruction, parental qualification,

Differential Analysis – In Secular Attitude Gender and Secular Attitude

Table 1: ‘T’ value between Mean and S.D scores of Male and Female in their Secular Attitude.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	‘t’ value	L.O.S
Male	162	98.79	41.88		
Female	138	95.83	40.73	0.618	NS

It is evident from the table 1, the calculated ‘t’ value is 0.618 which is not significant at 0.05 level hence, the framed null hypothesis was accepted. It is inferred that

Locality of Institution and Secular Attitude

Table 2: ‘T’ value between Mean and S.D scores of Rural and Urban in their Secular Attitude.

Locality of Institution	N	Mean	SD	‘t’ value	L.O.S
Rural	140	94.21	41.34		
Urban	160	100.25	41.21	1.26	NS

residence of students, mode of school and type of family.

Statistical Techniques

The data was analyzed with the help of SPSS. The analysis was conducted at three levels. At the first level, basic descriptive measures were calculated. At second level, the significance of difference between means was calculated using t-test or ANOVA.

Tool Used In the Present Study

Scale was developed and standardized by Anushu Mehra and Durganand Sinha (1992) this scale consists of 35 items with 5 categories. The five categories are strongly agree, uncertain, disagree and strongly disagree. The maximum score is 175 and the minimum possible score is 35.

Objectives of the Study

To study the significant difference in Secular Attitude of higher secondary students with respect to

- a) Gender (Male, Female)
- b) Locality of the Institution (Rural, Urban)
- c) Type of Institution (Government, Aided, Private)
- d) Medium of Instruction (English, Tamil)
- e) Parental Qualification (Illiterate, School Education, College education)
- f) Residence of students (Rural, Urban)
- g) Mode of School (Boys, Co-Education, Girls)
- h) Type of Family (Nuclear, Joint)

Hypotheses of the Study

There is no significant difference in Secular Attitude of higher secondary students with respect to

- a) Gender (Male, Female)
- b) Locality of the Institution (Rural, Urban)
- c) Type of Institution (Government, Aided, Private)
- d) Medium of Instruction (English, Tamil)
- e) Parental Qualification (Illiterate, School Education, College education)
- f) Residence of students (Rural, Urban)
- g) Mode of School (Boys, Co-Education, Girls)
- h) Type of Family (Nuclear, Joint)

there is no significant difference found out between Male and Female students with respect to Secular Attitude.

It is evident from the table 2, the calculated 't' value is 1.26 which is not significant at 0.05 level hence, the framed null hypothesis was accepted. It is inferred that

there is no significant difference found out between Rural and Urban students with respect to Secular Attitude.

Type of Institution and Secular Attitude

Table 3: 'F' test among the sub sample of Type of institution with respect to Secular Attitude

Type of Institution	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	DF	F value	L.O.S
Between the groups	11615.10	5807.55	2	3.458	S
Within groups	498756.56	1676.31	297		
Total	510371.66		299		

It is evident from the table 3, the calculated 'F' value is 3.458 which is significant at 0.05 level. Hence the framed null hypothesis was Rejected. It is inferred that there is

significant difference among the sub-sample of type of institution with respect to Secular Attitude.

Medium of Instruction and Secular Attitude

Table 4: 'T' value between mean scores of English and Tamil in their Secular Attitude.

Medium of Instruction	N	Mean	SD	't' value	L.O.S
English	136	102.45	40.97	1.926	N.S
Tamil	164	93.26	41.25		

It is evident from the table 4, the calculated 't' value is 1.926 which is not significant at 0.05 level hence, the framed null hypothesis was accepted. It is inferred that

there is no significant difference found out between English and Tamil students with respect to Secular Attitude.

Parental Qualification and Secular Attitude

Table 5: 'F' test among the sub sample of Parental Education with respect to Secular Attitude.

Parental Qualification	Sum of squares	Mean square	Df	F value	L.O.S
Between the groups	2009.85	1004.92	2	0.587	N.S
Within groups	508361.81	1711.65	297		
Total	510371.66		299		

It is evident from the table 5 the calculated 'F' value is 0.587 which is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence the framed null hypothesis was accepted. It is inferred that

there is no significant difference among the sub-sample of Parental qualification with respect to Secular Attitude.

Residence of students and Secular Attitude

Table 6: 'T' value between mean scores of English and Tamil in their Secular Attitude.

Residence of Students	N	Mean	SD	't' value	L.O.S
Rural	142	100.14	42.46	1.079	N.S
Urban	158	94.99	40.23		

It is evident from the table 6 the calculated 't' value is 1.079 which is not significant at 0.05 level hence, the framed null hypothesis was accepted. It is inferred that

there is no significant difference found out between Rural and Urban students with respect to Secular Attitude.

Mode of school and Secular Attitude

Table 7: 'F' test among the sub sample of Mode of school with respect to Secular Attitude.

Mode of school	Sum of squares	Mean square	Df	F value	L.O.S
Between the groups	3478.27	1739.13	2	1.019	N.S
Within groups	506893.38	1706.71	297		
Total			299		

It is evident from the table 7 the calculated 'F' value is 1.019 which is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence the framed null hypothesis was accepted. It is inferred that

there is no significant difference among the sub-sample of mode of school of students and with respect to Secular Attitude.

Type of Family and Secular Attitude

Table 8: 'T' value between mean scores of Nuclear and Joint in their Secular Attitude.

Type of Family	N	Mean	SD	't' value	L.O.S
Nuclear	161	97.83	40.47	1.079	N.S
Joint	139	96.96	42.41		

It is evident from the table 8 the calculated 't' value is 1.079 which is not significant at 0.05 level hence, the framed null hypothesis was accepted. It is inferred that there is no significant difference found out between nuclear and joint type of family students with respect to Secular Attitude.

Major Findings of the Study

1. There is no significant difference in the secular attitude of higher secondary students belonging to male and female.
2. There is no significant difference in the secular attitude of higher secondary students belonging to rural and urban.
3. There is significant difference in the secular attitude of higher secondary students in relation to their type of institution.
4. There is no significant difference in the secular attitude of higher secondary students in relation to their medium of instruction.
5. There is no significant difference in the secular attitude of higher secondary students in relation to their parental qualification.
6. There is no significant difference in the secular attitude of higher secondary students in relation to their residence of students.
7. There is no significant difference in the secular attitude of higher secondary students in relation to their mode of school.
8. There is no significant difference in the secular attitude of higher secondary students in relation to their type of family.

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