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Umair Ahmed, Shaista Maryam

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Secondary School Students' Attitude towards the Social Science Studies in Sargodha City, Pakistan

Umair Ahmed, Shaista Maryam

Department of Sociology, University of Sargodha, Sargodha

Abstract

The present study was to examine the attitude of students toward social sciences in Sargodha city, Pakistan. The major objectives of the study were to find out the students' information regarding social science subjects and their attitude, as well as motivation towards for those subjects in the future education. The study was quantitative in nature and a sample of 20% students was selected from both public and private secondary schools in the Sargodha city conveniently. By applying the survey method, the structured questionnaire was used for data collection and the collected data were analyzed by SPSS. The results showed that students had less information about social sciences because their teachers, parents and peers did not tell about those subjects and their worth in our society, so they were more interested to study natural science subjects in their future studies. Most respondents said that their Parents did motive their children to study natural science subjects because they claimed that the students those who study natural sciences subject can get attractive and high paying job then social science subjects.

Introduction

In order to check the student's attitude toward the social sciences and to create awareness about social sciences in Pakistan, this type of effort has been made since 1980s. In 1988 Qaid-I-Azam University had organized the conference to create social awareness about the sciences and also publish some papers under the title "The state of social sciences in Pakistan". In 2002 a paper published under the statement "The dismal state of social sciences in Pakistan" (Zaidi, 2002).

History, philosophy and politics were oldest subjects in the social sciences that were used as to understand the societies. However, some new social science subjects like sociology, psychology and economics were introduced during the industrial revolution. The British were introduced the new educational system of schools, colleges and universities in the 19th century in sub-continent that was at that time British colony. The Punjab University was one of the first five universities established in the Indo-Pak in the last quarter of the 19th century. A new discipline that was developed in Europe were introduced into that colony like anthropology, ethnography, linguistics and some traditional disciplines such as economics, political science, history and philosophy were taught at undergraduate levels in colleges. This practice continued since Pakistan becomes

American ally With American assistance, newer disciplines were introduced: Public Administration in 1955, Sociology, Social Work, Applied Psychology in the 1960s, Anthropology, Area Studies, Strategic Studies, International Relations in the 1970s , Peace and Conflict Studies and Women's Studies in the 1990s. That significant development of the late 1970s had been the decline of the discipline of History and the introduction of the subject of Pakistan Studies become a compulsory subject up to the undergraduate level (Alam, 2007).

In literature, researchers interchangeably use the word attitude, interest, and motivation (Ramsden, 1998). An attitude is the tendency to think, feel or act positively or negatively towards objects in our environment. Attitude is learned from society; affected by group norms, positive or negative attitude with reference to the object and the strength of the effect are co-related to the content of the associated cognitive structure, determine the behavior, affect perception, education and teacher education bring the change in attitude (Salta and Tzougraki, 2004).

Attitude towards science is linked to the views and images that the individual develops about science as a result of interaction with different situations, while the term scientific attitude is linked to the ways of thinking or scientific method, which covers the skills and is related to the undertaking of practical work (Bennett, 2003). Attitude towards science denotes interest or feeling towards studying science. It is the student's disposition towards liking or disliking science (Yara, 2009). It also observed that attitude towards natural science and technology of girls of primary level was more positive than boys. Attitude of students toward natural sciences is more in rural areas of Pakistan than in urban areas (Akpinar *et al*, 2009). While the urban respondents scored significantly higher on the subscale of the adoption of scientific attitudes than the rural respondents (Anwer and Muhammad, 2012). The interest was more related to performance than students' beliefs about the importance of effort or natural abilities and when students are interested in something, they tend to pursue it and excel at it. One of the greatest gifts that parents can give their children is the freedom to explore interests. It can set young people on a lifelong path of discovery and learning that culminates in a creative, productive life. Parents, teachers, peer groups and relatives attitude should be positive for better outcome but unfortunately, they have no awareness of subject as well as their financial and psychological support (Siegle, 2009). The majority of people are not aware about social sciences subject, their importance and their scope. Dourish defined awareness as "awareness is an understanding of the activities of others, which provides a context for your own activity" and it can be in the form of activity awareness, cultural awareness, social awareness, work place awareness, location awareness and knowledge awareness (Reinhardt *et al.*, 2012).

no doubt hard sciences are essential for the development of our country and to be a part of the list of developed countries, which have been made in the fields of science and technology within the past sixty-six years have had the effect of creating many social problems like cultural lag and adult deviant behavior, alienation, health problems by extra use of mobile and internet and etc. The social studies draw subject matter from the social sciences, are a specific and important part of the elementary school curriculum, acquaint the child with his social and physical environments, and have a unique responsibility to help the child learn those understandings, attitudes, and skills which are necessary for democratic citizenship. Social studies as a part of the elementary school curriculum draw subject-matter content from the social sciences- geography, history, sociology, political science, economics, anthropology, social

psychology. It is true that the social studies make an important contribution to the social education of children.

Significance of the Study

The social sciences deal with the study of man, his relationship with other men and also with his environment. The basic purpose of the social sciences is the development of demographic and good citizen (person likely to hold a number of positive attitudes which have to be the basis of the spiritual, moral, and ethical values). The continuing importance of the social science in increasing responsibility of citizenship, increasing industrialization of society, readjustment in family life; suburbanization, rapid growth in communication and transportation, increasing personal responsibility for democratic living and etc.

Objective of the Study

- To find out the students' information/knowledge about social sciences.
- To find out the attitude of students toward the social sciences.
- To find out the motivation of students towards social sciences from their significant others, i.e parents, friends, teachers, relatives etc.

The state of the social sciences in Pakistan is very miserable. The quality research had been rare in Pakistan. Many would argue that benefaction at the private and at the state level had distorted the environment under which the research in the social sciences was takes place. The motivation and salary structure in public sector institutions has been dwarfed by private donors and NGO supported sectors. There are no community academics or scholars left to interact or share the ideas with few journals and almost no professional associations (Zaidi, 2002).

Challenges had been faced by public policy, why the social scientists have been not able to contribute to dialogue on these challenges in a well-versed manner and what can be done to promote social science research on public policy issues in Pakistan? The social scientists can make a difference by enhancing our understanding about these issues and to analyas them systematically and able to suggest possible options that relate to governance scarcity, trust deficit, distributional in-equities, underdeveloped human resources, competitiveness wrap, identity crisis, self-Confidence deficit and food-Water-Energy crisis. Social scientists has been not contributing because of unfertile place, government didn't funding and journals are neither sufficient in quantity nor in quality. In policy making process religious teachings are more involved then the social scientists. There is a lack of communication between academics and policy makers (Husain, 2008).

Hypothesis

- Students perceive that those who study natural science subjects can get more opportunities for job both in public and private sectors.
- Students study natural science subjects because their parents don't allow them to study social science in future studies
- Teachers don't motivate their students to study social science subjects for future study.
- Students perceive that those who study natural science subjects can get high paying jobs.

Research Methodology

In order to conduct the study, a sample of 193 metric levels students of Sargodha city were selected through multi stage sampling. At the first stage of sampling, researcher select four schools, two schools of girls and two schools of boys according to simple random sampling from Sargodha city. At the second stage, the researcher selected 20% population of metric level student from each school randomly. The quantitative method was used for conducting research. In present study Questionnaire was used as a tool for data collection. The questionnaire contained 72 items to check out the attitude of students toward the social sciences. The questionnaire was distributed personally to the students who are included in the sample of study. The data was analyzed by SPSS program. The hypothesis was constructed after literature review and tested on empirical evidence taken from the data. The chi-square test was applied to match up the observed data. In order to evaluate the significance associated between attributes, the calculated value of chi-square were compared with corresponding table. 0.05 level significant value.

Findings and Discussions

Table No.1: Some major findings with percentage of responses are discussed as under:

Serial No.	Questions	Percentage
1.	I am independent enough to select my future subject as social sciences.	39.1%
2.	My Peer group encourages me to study social science subjects in future.	31.7%
3.	My parents encourage me to study natural science subjects.	73.9%
4.	My teachers motivate me to study natural science subjects.	70.6%
5.	My parents give the worth of my opinions in the selection of my future subjects.	52.5%
6.	I think natural science has more scope in society than the social sciences.	68.5%
7.	I think natural sciences subject are economically beneficent then social sciences.	69.7%
8.	I will go for social sciences when I fail to get admission in natural sciences.	60.8%
9.	I want to select social sciences subject in future studies.	10.4%
10.	I want to select natural sciences subject in future studies.	69.7%
11.	I have enough information regarding social sciences.	38.4%
12.	My teachers guide me about social sciences subjects.	40.6%
13.	I think tuition academies give preference to natural sciences subject.	68.7%
14.	I think students those who study natural science subjects can get high paying jobs then social science subjects	69.4%
15.	I think those who study natural science subjects can get more opportunities for job both in public and private sectors	64.4%
16.	I think better job opportunities can motivate students toward the selection of social sciences as a future study subject.	58.5%
17.	If HEC offers scholarship, then it could provide motivation for students to study social sciences.	71%

Above table states that mostly students have less idea about social sciences subjects and only few students want to be expert in social sciences, Ramachandran and Pandian, (2014) also

confirmed that students have unfavorable attitude toward social sciences. At high school level, children are not independent, and prefer their parent’s choice for them and more than half parents want their children study in natural sciences. Similarly, Rana (2002) found parents socio-economic status, and students self-concept and gender as the important factors influencing students, attitude towards science. Table shows teacher help students in their studies, some studies have indicated that personality and behavior of the teacher is very important in the formation of pupil’s attitudes (Mcmillan and May, 1979). Table shows peer group of student want to study natural sciences subject, and studies shows that in adolescence age peer group become all important. Most researchers (Osborne *et al.*, 2003; Nieswandt, 2005) consider the effects of curriculum on science attitudes.

I Prefer to social sciences subject in future	I think government and private Sectors offer maximum jobs for social sciences subjects then natural sciences.			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Low	46	18	31	95
Medium	5	12	6	23
High	28	9	38	75
Total	79	39	75	193

Table shows that student think natural sciences has more scope in society and are economically beneficent, and more than half student study for the sack of earn money. Jegede and Fraser (1989) have reported that socio-cultural factors and attitude influence each other in technology or natural science. Anwer and Iqbal (2012) consider that engineering and medical are considered as the most worthwhile professions due to which natural science subjects are precursors and rural students considered it ideal for better future career and to increase socio-economic status as a result rural students show higher attitude towards natural science and urban students are enforced by the society and parents to take on scientific attitudes to adjust in the modern society.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis No.1

Students perceive that those who study natural science subjects can get more opportunities for job both in public and private sectors.

Cross tabulation between “I prefer to social sciences subject in future” and “I think government and private Sectors offer maximum jobs for social sciences subjects then natural sciences”.

Chi-square (X^2) = 22.149, DF = 4, level of significance = 0.05, P value = 0.000**

Discussion

The table shows that if governments provide better job opportunities in government and private sector for social sciences than student will be motivated to prefer the social sciences. The better policies can change the attitude of students toward the social sciences. Zaidi, (2002) had stated the dismal state of social sciences in Pakistan and some policies that was made up to better the situation of social sciences was not taken under implementation.

George, (2006) has argued that attitudes towards natural science have increased the recognition of the importance and economic utility of scientific knowledge. The Economist Intelligence Unit, (2014) reported that the estimate graduate unemployment rate in Pakistan is 28%. In South Asia unemployment rate is high among art and business students then the medical and engineering students. Jegede and Fraser (1989) reported that socio-cultural factors and attitude influence each other in science. That’s why the majority of students want to get enrolled in natural sciences subjects. Moreover business of tuition academies of English, biology, mathematics, physics and chemistry is recognized as highly profitable job is either available or not. The researcher assumes the relationship among two variables (when students failed to get admission in natural sciences subjects then they will go for social sciences subjects). The calculated value is greater than tabulated value. So the alternative hypothesis was true. The value of chi-square is 22.149 and tabulated value was 4.65. Above table shows that most of the respondent want to get admission in natural sciences subject because of unemployment.

Hypothesis No.2

Students study natural science subjects because their parents don’t allow them to study social science in future studies

Cross tabulation between “I prefer to get admission in social sciences in future studies” and “My parents allow me to get admission in social science subjects”.

I prefer to get admission in social sciences in future studies	My parents allow me to get admission in social science subjects			Total
	Low	Medium	high	
Low	81	6	58	145
Medium	5	5	7	17
High	9	6	16	31
Total	95	17	81	193

Chi-square(X^2) = 21.743, df = 4, level of significance = 0.05, P-value = 0.000

Discussion No.2

Many respondents argued that if their parents allow them to get education in social science subjects, they will prefer to study in social sciences. The alternative hypothesis was true because the chi-square value was 21.743 which is greater than tabulated value. Table shows that the

parents don't allow their children to get admission in social sciences subjects because they perceived that children who study social science subjects, they will unable to get prestigious and high paying job. Ramachandran and Pandian (2014) also reported that the large numbers of the high school students and their parents have unfavorable attitude towards social science.

Hypothesis No.3

Cross tabulation between “I prefer to study social science subjects in future” and “I have enough information about social science subjects”.

I prefer to study social science subjects in future	I think social science subjects are more interested then natural sciences subjects			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Low	50	19	26	95
Medium	13	10	16	39
High	15	9	35	59
Total	78	38	77	193

Chi-square(X^2) = 17.899, df = 4, level of significance = 0.05, tabulated value = 7.68, P = 0.001

Discussion No.3

Researcher test out the relationship between respondent preference toward social sciences in future and basic information's about social sciences subjects. The calculated value was greater than tabulated value. So the alternative hypothesis was true. The chi-square value is 17.899 and tabulated value was 7.68. Students revealed that an interest in social studies, in both the middle and high school, resulted in progress, ultimately preparing them for the future. These comments, however, contradict research findings by Haladyna (1982) and Schug (1982) that suggested middle school and high school students saw little relevance in social studies, and that it was boring. Above table shows that students have little interest insocial sciences subjects so that why they will not prefer social sciences in future.

Hypothesis No.4

Cross tabulation between “I prefer to study social sciences subjects in future studies” and “I think social science subjects have high paying jobs, then natural sciences”.

I prefer to study social sciences subjects in future studies	I think social science subjects have high paying jobs, then natural sciences			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Low	55	9	26	90
Medium	11	5	7	23
High	27	6	47	80
Total	93	20	80	193

Chi-square(X^2) = 19.973, df = 4, level of significance = 0.05, tabulated value = 2.38, P = 0.001

Discussion No.4

Economist Intelligence Unit, (2014) reported that attitude of students towards social sciences is increasing in South Asia. But student prefer natural sciences to study because in job sectors, salaries are high for science students, and also they find jobs more easily than the art business and social sciences students. Employment rate of science graduates is also very high the social sciences and arts students. Researcher assumes the relationship between two variables that did student wants to study in social sciences or respondent prefer natural sciences just because of high salaries in job sectors. The calculated value is greater than tabulated value. So the alternative hypothesis was true. The calculated value is 19.973 and the tabulated value was 2.38. Above table shows that mostly students want to study in social sciences, but they give preference to natural sciences at graduate level because of high salaries.

Conclusion

The present study concluded that mostly students had negative attitude towards social science subjects because they are dependent on their families. Their parents motivate them for those subjects who have greater high paying job opportunities in society i.e. pre-medical, pre-engineering, biology, physics, in short all natural sciences. The students also reported that their teacher did not motivate them for social science subjects so that’s why they had little or no knowledge about social sciences. They also did not know the scope of social sciences in future. All of these factors contribute to de-motivate the students for social science subjects and they will not get admission in social sciences subject in future education.

Suggestions

The following are the major recommendation that have been made from this study to tackle the problems of gloomy attitude towards social science.

- Only teacher can produce a positive attitude towards social sciences by classroom atmosphere.

- Several classroom exhibition and group performance by students in social science laboratory will develop a encouraging attitude towards social science.
- Provisions of a multitude of co-curricular activities in social science like social science club activities, participation of quiz, field trip, small project, social service activities, conducting map drill program, coin collections, stamp collections etc, will be supportive in approving attitude towards the study of social science.
- Summer camps at school/college level have to organize to provide students information about social sciences, their scope, need and future in Pakistani society. That type programs should broadcast on television channels and radio.
- To change the mind setup of parents about social sciences columns on newspapers should be written and programs on TV channels should be broadcast in family timing.

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