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Awareness about Human Rights: A Case Study among Final Year College Students

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Abstract

The fundamental freedoms and rights that all people have, irrespective of their gender, religion, nationality, or race, are known as human rights. Every individual on the planet is entitled to the fundamental freedoms and rights necessary to have a respectable life. People cannot enjoy their rights if they are not aware of them. The best way to improve the quality of life on Earth is for people to be more aware of their human rights. So, the primary goal of this study is to find out how knowledgeable college students are of human rights. Descriptive survey approach was used by the researcher to accomplish the study's goals. The sample of 150 students were taken from AKPC Mahavidyalaya. The tool used for the study is Awareness Scale developed by the researcher. The findings of the study indicates that the college students have high level of human rights awareness. It is also found that students have responded that educational institutions, media, and social engagement have great role to play to promote Human Rights Education.

Keywords: Human rights, awareness, college students

1. Introduction

Human rights are the fundamental rights and freedoms that belong to every person, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, gender, or religion. They are essential for individuals to lead dignified lives, free from oppression and discrimination. Human rights include the right to life, freedom of expression, equality before the law, and access to education and health. However, these rights cannot be enjoyed or protected without widespread awareness about their existence and significance. Awareness of human rights is critical, as it empowers individuals to understand and assert their rights. It also plays a pivotal role in promoting justice, equality, and respect for all members of society. Without this awareness, people may be unaware of their rights and might unknowingly fall victim to violations. Therefore, raising awareness on human rights is a vital step towards creating a fairer, more compassionate world.

In India, while human rights awareness is gradually increasing, it still remains limited in certain regions and among certain sections of society. Among students, especially in higher education institutions, there is potential for cultivating a deep understanding of human rights principles, which could be transformative for both individuals and society. College students, who are the future leaders, educators, and influencers, are in an ideal position to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights.

Human rights are vital because they shield us from unfair treatment, discrimination, and exploitation. It encourages and cultivates all of the principles that people need to live in harmony with one another. Values including equality, camaraderie, fraternity, solidarity, and respect for human beings are at the heart of the concept of "human rights".

According to Donnelly, "Human rights are necessary for leading an honorable life, not for the purpose of life." Human rights enable us to respect each other and live together amicably. In other words, they are rights to be respected and held accountable, not just rights to be asked for or demanded.

Lawson in Encyclopedia of Human Rights defined Human rights are the generally acknowledged values and norms that uphold morality and enable every person to live in a setting of liberty, fairness, and peace. Accordingly, human rights are the fundamental moral rights that everyone has in order to

live a prosperous and contented life, regardless of their country or culture. Human rights are such that no one can be denied them by a court of justice, and they apply to both men and women equally. People's daily lives are significantly impacted by human rights. Everyone needs these.

Table 1: Review of literature

Author Name	Title of the study	Objectives	Methodology/ design of the study	Findings/Conclusion
Ashraf (2013) ^[10]	A Study of Human Rights Awareness among Prospective teachers	1. To study the level of human rights awareness among prospective teachers. 2. To study the comparison of level of human rights awareness among B.Ed and D.Ed teacher trainees.	* Survey type descriptive research * Stratified random Sampling * a self-made Human Rights Awareness (HRA) was used.	The level of Human Rights Awareness among prospective teachers was very low. The level of awareness of human rights in B.Ed students were more than the D.Ed Students. Prospective teachers have no sufficient knowledge about the human rights.
Agarwal (2014) ^[9]	Human Rights Awareness among the People of Agra City: A Comparative Study	1. To check the level of awareness regarding human rights among the people of Agra city. 2. To assess the Knowledge and Application of Human Rights Concepts among the people of U.P in regards to their gender, occupation, education and age groups. 3. To assess the Knowledge of human rights violations among the people of U.P in regards to their gender, occupation, education and age groups.	*Survey method was used *Using Stratified random sampling technique * A structured interview scheduled with close ended questions was prepared by the researcher.	The study found that the number of people with average level of human rights awareness (65.0%) had more than the people with high level of human rights awareness (35.0%). Result indicated that there was no significant difference between male and female in their level of Human Rights awareness.
Paulbhai (2017)	A Study of Human Rights Awareness among College Students	To study the Human right awareness among rural and urban students.	*Normative Survey *Used stratified Random Sampling technique * self-made Human Rights Awareness Questionnaire	Found that boys have more aware of Human Rights compared to girls.
Narad & Kaur (2019)	Awareness and Exercise of Human Rights among Women of Punjab	1. To explore awareness and exercise of human rights of women. 2. To compare working and non-working women with regard to awareness of human rights and exercise of human rights 3. To compare rural working and urban working women with regard to awareness of human rights and exercise of human rights 4. To compare rural non-working and urban non-working women with regard to awareness of human rights and exercise of human rights	* Descriptive survey method used. * Employing simple random sampling technique * A self-constructed Human Rights Awareness and Exercise Questionnaire was used.	* Working women had a greater awareness of human rights and exercise more human rights in comparison to their non-working women counterparts. *Further, rural working and urban working women had greater awareness of human rights rural working women while exercise more human rights as compared to urban counterparts. *While rural and urban non-working women had similar awareness as well as knowledge about human rights.
Kandpal & Pawar (2021)	Investigations on Human Rights Awareness among B. Ed Level Prospective Teachers based on the Demographic and Academic Characteristics	*To find out the level of human rights awareness among groups of teacher trainees identified based on academic and demographic factors (gender, nature of residence, academic stream, marital and educational status.	*Descriptive method used. * Applied Purposive sampling * Self-made Human Rights Awareness Questionnaire	Finding of the study revealed that female, rural, Arts-stream, unmarried, and postgraduate level teacher-trainees were found more aware of human rights.
Baglari (2021)	A Study on the Awareness of Human Rights Education among Higher Secondary Students	1. To know about the awareness of students' towards Human Rights Education 2. To Know the awareness of Human Rights Education among Male and Female Students	* Descriptive survey method * Purposive Sampling * self-structured questionnaires	found that there exist significant differences among male and female students in awareness towards Human Rights Education
Lahon & Saikia (2022)	Human Rights Awareness of College Students: A Study in Collages of Kamrup District of Assam	*To study the human rights awareness among the college students. *To find out whether the college students differ in their human rights awareness with regards to their gender (boys and girls) or not.	*Descriptive Survey method *Using simple random sampling technique *used a standardized scale developed by Sood and Anand.	* Found that college students possess higher level of Human Rights Awareness. * Also been found that the girl students possess higher human rights awareness than the boy students.

Binjha (2022)	Students' Awareness of Human Rights Education at Higher Secondary School level	To study the awareness level of human rights education amongst higher secondary school students.	* Descriptive survey design method * Random sampling technique * self-developed awareness scale on Human rights education	The findings of the study indicated that many of the students have awarded of fundamental human rights while limited awareness about the right to education as a human right and its provisions
Yadav & Chouhan (2024)	Awareness of Human Rights Among Students of Higher Secondary School of Rajasthan State	*To study the awareness of human rights among teachers and students at higher secondary school level in the following contexts- Civil rights, Political rights, Economic rights, Social rights, Cultural rights. *To study the awareness of human rights among students on the basis of gender.	* Survey method has been used. * The random sampling method used. * Self Constructed Test (Human Rights Awareness Questionnaire) used.	*Not much difference in the awareness of human rights among men and women, because due to the impact of women's empowerment and compliance with government policies, the level of knowledge was found to be good among women.

Need of the Study

Unfortunately, violations of human rights are common in Indian society. In India, common issues that result from ignorance and human rights violations include rape, murder, dowry, early marriage, polygamy, injustice, regionalism, secularism, violence, illiteracy, explosions, terrorism, witch hunting, child labor, child trafficking, exploitation of women and the poor, and medical experimentation. In daily life, there are numerous instances of human rights violations. Unless the people for whom they are intended are aware of them, all rights are meaningless. It appears that the majority of people are not aware of human rights. Human rights violations and exploitation will persist if people are not aware of them. The goal of human rights education is to raise people's awareness of human rights and to educate them about them. It educates kids about human rights and cultivates in them a favorable attitude toward them. After recognizing the significance of human rights awareness in the current environment, the researcher studied college students to find out how conscious they were of these rights.

Significance of the Study

This study is important because it provides insights into how well college students understand human rights and where there are gaps in their knowledge. By identifying the level of awareness and the factors influencing it, this study can guide policymakers, educators, and organizations in designing more effective educational interventions to increase awareness. The findings could help improve human rights curricula in colleges and contribute to creating more informed, responsible, and active citizens.

Statement of the problem

“Awareness about **Human Rights**: a case study among Final year College Students at AKPC Mahavidyalaya, West Bengal, India.”

Objectives of the Study

The objectives are

- To study the human rights knowledge among the college students.
- To explore the role of formal education, media, and social engagement in shaping students' understanding of human rights.

Research Methodology

The descriptive survey method was adopted for this study, which is suitable for obtaining detailed information from a large sample of college students. The descriptive survey method helps to describe and analyze the awareness levels of students regarding human rights by gathering data through questionnaires and surveys.

Sample Selection

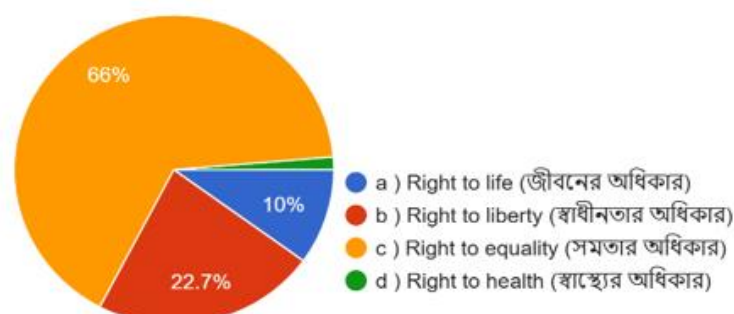
The study focuses on AKPC Mahavidyalaya 6th Semester final year students during last three-year students (2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023). 150 students were selected for the study. Where 123 females and 27 males were taken by the researcher.

Tool

A self-developed awareness scale on Human rights and focus group discussion was used to collect data.

A'dalit' person has been refused entry into a temple a violation of একজন 'দলিত' ব্যক্তিকে মন্দিরে প্রবেশ করতে অস্বীকার করা হয়েছে

150 responses



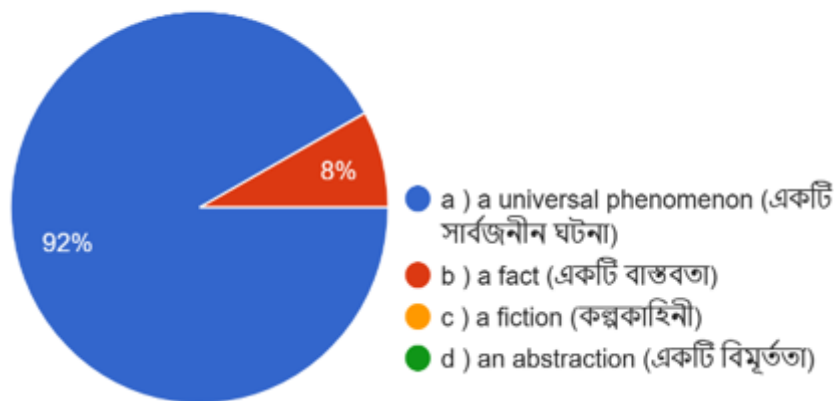
Data Analysis

Here the investigator used percentage wise analysis of some

item for the interpretation of the obtained data.

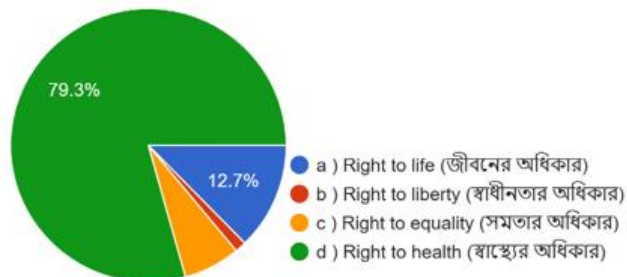
Human rights is মানবাধিকার হল

150 responses



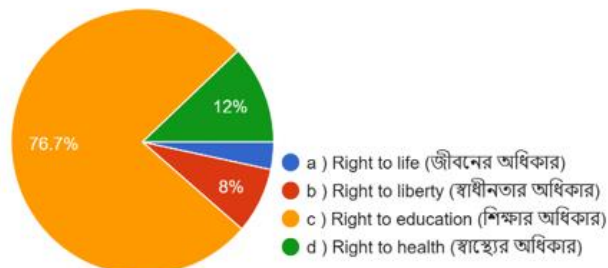
A mother has not given polio drops to her child at due time . It is related with একজন মা তার সন্তানকে সঠিক সময়ে পোলিও ড্রপ দেননি। এটি র সাথে সম্পর্কিত

150 responses



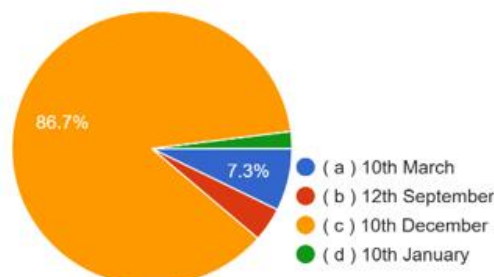
A student was reprimanded for wearing a dirty school uniform in the class . It is a violation of ক্লাসে নোংরা স্কুল ইউনিফর্ম পরার জন্য এক শিক্ষার্থীকে তিরস্কার করা হয়েছিল। এটি একটি লঙ্ঘন

150 responses



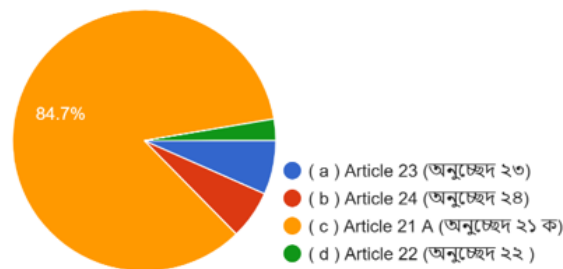
Which day of the year is celebrated as World Human Rights day ? বছরের কোন দিনটি বিশ্ব মানবাধিকার দিবস হিসাবে পালিত হয়?

150 responses



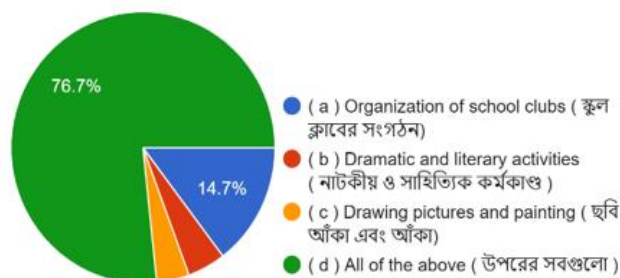
Indian constitution provides the provision for free and compulsory education for children till the age of 14 years as per ভারতীয় সংবিধান অনুযায়ী ১৪ বছর...জন্য বিনামূল্যে এবং বাধ্যতামূলক শিক্ষার বিধান করে

150 responses



The organization of co - curricular activities to impart human rights education at the primary stage can be done through প্রাথমিক পর্যায়ে মানবাধিকার...হ-পাঠ্যক্রমিক ক্রিয়াকলাপের আয়োজন করা যেতে পারে

150 responses



Finding of the Study

Based on some item for the interpretation of the obtained data, the study revealed the following major findings-

1. It has been found that college students possess higher level of Human Rights Awareness.
2. It is being found that students think that Human Rights Education is important and feel it necessary to share knowledge about Human Rights with others.
3. It is also found that students have responded that educational institutions, media, and social engagement have great role to play to promote Human Rights Education.

Conclusion

The study on human rights awareness among college students in Hooghly district will serve as an important step toward understanding the current state of human rights education in higher education institutions. By raising awareness and advocating for increased education on these critical issues, this research aims to contribute to the broader goal of creating a more just and equitable society where everyone's rights are respected and protected. Education that fosters human rights principles, knowledge, and skills is known as human rights education. Students get knowledge of and a favorable attitude toward human rights because of it. School, college, and university curricula should include instruction on human rights. It is crucial to include human rights education in degree programs. Understanding human rights will make it easier to comprehend issues like discrimination, injustice, violence, and exploitation.

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