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A STUDY OF HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS OF MALAPPURAM DISTRICT IN RELATION TO THEIR SECULAR ATTITUDE

Dr. K.T.Showkath Hussiain¹ and Saleena Varghese²

Abstract

Secularism is one of the important national values enshrined in the constitution of India. Our constitution has a character of secularism. The word 'secularism' is derived from the Latin word meaning 'Generation or Age'. It is concerned with the affairs of the world. Its sphere is temporal not sacred or monastic. But it does not mean anti-religious ideology.

INTRODUCTION

India's present education system promotes secular attitude and values through its broad aims, curriculum enlightened teachers and appropriate activities, all emphasizing open mindedness, rationality, freedom from superstitions and equal respect of all religions. Most of the Indian Educational Institutions are based on secular principles. The aims and objectives of the secular educational system seek to develop India as a rational democratic progressive and modern welfare state. The Educational curricula at all levels in India lay special emphasis on promotion of secular values. In India the teachers today are expected to treat their pupils in a secular manner. Equal respect is given to all students and religious groups. Thus in the present India's secular Attitude of educational system, values are sought to be promoted efficiently and enthusiastically.

Secularism is one of the important national values enshrined in the constitution of India. Our constitution is a character of secularism. The word 'secularism' is derived from the Latin word meaning 'Generation or Age'. It is concerned with the affairs of the world. Its sphere is temporal not sacred or monastic. But it does not mean anti-religious ideology

Secularism has been conceptualized as an attitude with a number of dimensions. On the basis of its socio-political aspects writing of scholars and open ended interview with a cross section of people, four broad elements of secular attitude have been identified.

- a) Secular Attitude and Religion.
- b) Secular Attitude and Equality.
- c) Scientific Temper and Rationality.
- d) Secular Attitude and Identity.

¹ Principal, ISS college of Teacher Education, Perinthalmanna.

² Research Scholar, Karpagam University, Coimbatore.



NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

In this 21st century, secular attitude and values are considered to be essential ingredients of Education. Secular attitude results in development of moral outlook. It is the foundation of the development of character and moral development. It inculcates in students humanity, truthfulness, tolerance, honesty, sympathy, spirit of service and sacrifice which form the noble character of a man and develop his personality. Secular attitude helps students in developing democratic qualities like liberty, equality, fraternity and co-operative thinking. It also helps in the promotion of cultural development and fostering scientific spirit. It stands for peace, good will and understanding. So the present attempt is to study the secular attitude of the higher secondary students.

RELATED LITTERATURE

Roy Chowdary (1979) undertook the study of the religious education in schools of Bombay with special reference to its impact on the secular concepts of the pupils. He found a very significant difference in the religious and secular concepts of the pupils of denominational and non-denominational schools, the former having more religious concepts and less secular concepts than the latter. The same holds good in respect of the principals and teachers of those schools. Thus, the type of schools seems to influence the secularity of their inmates.

Rajamanickam (1996) conducted "A psychological study of religious and related attitudes of students and professional groups in South India". He found that the moral and religious instruction, rural and urban background, size of the family, caste and parental occupations influenced the religious attitude of the students. He also found that the students were more religious than professionals.

Reddy (1983) conducted a study on "Attitude towards god; A study of Generation gap". He found that there is a generation gap in the attitude towards God. He also found their attitude to God is less favorable compared to the attitude of their adult groups.

Kumar (1986) a study on "Development of religious identity and prejudice in Christian school students" found that preference was not influenced by sex. He also found that the level of religious information was rather less for Christian items and much lower for items of other religions. Further he found the Christian children accepted other religions on par with the order of Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam.

Fr. Williams (1999) conducted a study of "Religious tolerance of Higher Secondary School students with reference to certain selected variable". He has mentioned that the level of attitude of higher secondary school students towards religion has been highly favorable and the religious tolerance of higher secondary school was not being influenced by the type of family from which they hailed.

Shehata, Talaat Elsayed (2001) conducted a study on "The American effect; migration, nationality and identity in Egypt, 1952-1970 (Jamal Abd'al-N'air)". Historians of American foreign relations have tended to take little interest in the effect that U.S. policy has had on the cultures which it has touched, much beyond political events. To remedy this deficiency, this dissertation takes Egypt as a case study, by first considering the longer back ground of oriental attitude in Europe, which was transmitted to the United States, mostly in the Nineteenth century.



OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the level of Secular Attitude of higher secondary students with respect to their Gender, Locality, Nature of Subject and Religion.
2. To find out whether there is any difference in the attitude of students towards secularism with respect to their Gender, Locality, Nature of Subject and Religion.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. There exists difference in the level of secular attitude among the higher secondary school students.
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude of students towards secularism with respect to their Gender, Locality, Nature of Subject and Religion.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

360 XI standard students from the total population are taken as the sample of the study. Random sampling technique was used in the present study. The sample was selected from 3 rural and 3 urban areas of schools in Malappuram district. The samples are 180 boys and 180 girls. There are 220 Hindu, 89 Muslim and 51 Christian students selected as the sample.

The investigator approached the head of the institutions and the objectivity and utility of the study were explained to them. With their permission and co-operation, group administration of the scale was done in the selected sample.

The investigator approached the subjects in their classrooms. After developing good rapport with the subjects the investigator distributed the scale to the subjects. The subjects were asked to write down their name, sex, locality of the school, nature of subject and religion on the specified column of the answer sheet. Then the subjects were asked to carefully read the instructions given in the front page of the tool.

The investigator cleared the doubts raised by the subjects. It took 30 minutes to complete the scale. Two weeks were taken to collect the data from six higher secondary schools.

SCORING PROCEDURE

With the use of manual and scoring key given by the author of the tool, the scoring was done. Hand scoring was used for assessing the responses of the subjects.

The 35 items of secular Attitude scale indicates modes of secularism. Each of the 35 items has five points graded on a 5 point scale on the positive dimension and one point on the negative dimension.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The descriptive statistics and test of significance are used for the analysis of the data. (Mean, Standard Deviation and t- test)



ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

One of the important objectives of the present investigation is to study the level of Secular attitude of students. It may be recalled that the Secular attitude scores have been arrived at by calculating the scores secured by each in the Secular attitude Scale. It may also remember that the scale administered for the maximum of 175. Hence securing below 98 are considered to be less secular in attitude while those obtaining scores higher than 130 are considered to be more in secular attitude. The calculated mean and Standard deviation of secular attitude for the entire sample is presented in the table.

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of Secular Attitude Scale

Sample	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Mean	Error
Entire	360	119.07	12.11	.6384	

Table 2. The Mean and S. D of Secular Attitude of Male and Female Students

Sample	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Mean	Error
Male	180	119.37	13.17	.9814	
Female	180	118.77	10.99	.8190	

Table3. The Mean and S. D of Secular Attitude of Rural and Urban Students

Sample	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Mean	Error
Rural	180	121.90	11.56	.8618	
Urban	180	116.23	12.02	.8957	

Table 4. The Mean and S. D of Secular Attitude of Humanities and Science Students

Sample	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Mean	Error
Humanities	180	118.98	11.99	.8942	
Science	180	119.15	12.26	.9138	

Table 5. The Mean and S. D of Secular Attitude of Hindu, Muslim and Christian Students

Sample	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Mean	Error
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Hindu	220	117.23	11.25	.6288
Muslim	89	118.00	13.11	1.6787
Christian	51	119.02	14.14	1.9614

Differential Analysis

Test of significance between the Means of the pairs of sub samples with respect to their Secular Attitude. For this purpose it has been decided to apply test of significance difference between two mean groups i.e. 't' test. The appropriate Null hypothesis is framed.

Null Hypothesis:-“There is no significant difference between Male and Female, Rural and Urban, Humanities and Science, Hindu, Muslim and Christian students in respect of their Secular Attitude”.

Table 6. Significance of Difference between the Mean Scores of Secular Attitude of Male and Female Students

Sample	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' Value	Level of Significance(0.05)
Male	180	119.37	13.17	0.47	Not Significant
Female	180	118.77	10.99		

Table 7. Significant Difference between the Mean Scores of Secular Attitude of Rural and Urban Students

Sample	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' Value	Level of Significance(0.05)
Rural	180	121.90	11.56	0.92	Not Significant

Table 8. Significant Difference between the Mean Scores of Secular Attitude of Humanities and Science Students

Sample	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' Value	Level of Significance(0.05)
Humanities	180	118.98	11.99	0.13	Not Significant
Science	180	119.15	12.26		

Table 9. Significant Difference between the Mean Scores of Secular Attitude of Hindu and Muslim Students

Sample	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' Value	Level of Significance(0.05)
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Hindu	220	119.32	11.42	0.74	Not Significant
Muslim	89	118.08	13.11		

Table 10. Significant Difference between the Mean Scores of Secular Attitude of Hindu and Christian Students

Sample	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' Value	Level of Significance(0.05)
Hindu	220	119.32	11.42	0.14	Not Significant
Christian	51	119.02	14.14		

Table 11. Significant Difference between the Mean Scores of Secular Attitude of Muslim and Christian Students

Sample	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' Value	Level of Significance(0.05)
Muslim	89	118.08	13.11	0.36	Not Significant
Christian	51	119.02	14.14		

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The secular attitude of the higher secondary students is average.
- The male and female higher secondary students have no difference in secular attitude.
- The rural and urban higher secondary students have no difference in secular attitude
- The humanities and science higher secondary students have no difference in secular attitude
- The Hindu and Muslim higher secondary students have no difference in secular attitude
- The Hindu and Christian higher secondary students have no difference in secular attitude
- The Muslim and Christian higher secondary students have no difference in secular attitude.

CONCLUSION

The Secular attitude of higher secondary school students is average. The sexes, locality of school, nature of the subject and the religion of the students have not significantly differentiated the students in respect of their secular attitude.

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Perinthattiri P.O, Cheloor, Malappuram Dt. Kerala, India, Pin - 676 507

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