

Evaluating Active Citizenship in Young Learner in The Context of Karachi

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Abstract

This article defines Active Citizenship within a level of education in young generation context as a broad range of value-based participation. In this study researcher used a framework for evaluating this phenomenon which combines the four dimensions of Protest and Social Change, Community Life, Representative Democracy and Democratic Values. The framework which researcher uses also used in The European Social Survey 2002 to populate the framework as this survey provided the best data coverage available and covered 19 European Countries. In this research total 61 indicators were selected. A composite indicator, The Active Citizenship Composite Indicator (ACCI), The limitations to the ACCI are explained in terms of the limitation of the data availability in particular concerning the new forms of participation and less organized forms of participation. For measuring the active citizenship in young generation 100 questionnaires were prepared for university students (bachelors level student and for master level). Survey results are given in the body below under the heading of results. Most of the results are as expected and matching with many international surveys conducted outside Pakistan but few results are really very unexpected and shocking. The results of Active Citizenship Composite Indicator exhibit interesting and quite distinct regional patterns. The results showed that the mostly students cannot be considered as active citizen at social level but in political, democratic and religious indicators students have shown highest rate of Active Citizenship, followed by human right and social violently work indicator.

Introduction

The study of active citizenship has evolved as a specific strand within research on social capital. Robert Putnam states that “active citizenship” is strongly related to “civic engagement” and that it plays a crucial role in building social capital. He considers that the pursuit of shared objectives provides a way for people to experience “reciprocity” and thus helps to create webs of networks underpinned by shared values. The resulting high levels of social trust foster further cooperation between people and reduce the chances of anti-social conduct (Putnam 2000). This approach shows how the idea of active citizenship is an aspect of the concept of “social capital,” which is generally used to refer to all the resources that people derive from their relationships with others. Specifically, *social capital* has been defined as “the institutions, relationships, attitudes and values that govern interactions among people and contribute to economic and social development” (Grootaert and Van Bastelaer, 2001).

Such a definition describes a multi-faceted space structured around two main axes, i.e. the *forms* of capital and their scope. With regard to its forms, capital can be split into:

- 1) *Structural social capital*: Relatively objective and externally observable social structures such as networks, associations, and institutions, and the rules and procedures they embody. As reported in Portes (1998), both Coleman and Putnam insist on the role of formalized structures in the production of social capital)
- 2) *Cognitive social capital*: Subjective and intangible elements such as attitudes, norms of behaviors, values, reciprocity and trust). This approach insists on the individual aspects of social capital which are the object of the studies of Bourdieu (who looks at the advantages to possessors of social capital and the “*deliberate construction of sociability for the purpose of creating this resource*” (Bordieu, 1986, cited in Portes, 1998)) and Coleman (1988).

These forms of social capital are mutually reinforcing but can exist independently of each other.

With respect to the scope of capital, or breadth of the unit of observation, we could distinguish three levels of action:

- 1) *Micro-level* (horizontal networks of households, individual households and the associated norms and values that underlie these networks, typically in the case of choral groups in Italy as described in Putnam, 1993)
- 2) *Meso-level* (horizontal and vertical relations among groups – see for example the Andean poor people’s organizations described by Babington and Carroll, 2000)
- 3) *Macro-level* (the institutional and political environment which serves as a backdrop for all economic and social activity, cf. North, 2000)

Active citizenship is partially overlapping with the concept of social values concentrating its interest mostly at macro - and micro-level. Thus, active citizenship is understood in the very broadest sense of the word “participation” and is not restricted to the political dimension. It ranges from cultural and political to environmental activities, on local, regional, national, European and international levels. It includes new and less conventional forms of active citizenship, such as one-off issue politics and responsible consumption, as well as the more traditional forms of voting and membership in parties and NGOs. The limits of active citizenship are set by ethical boundaries. People’s activities should support the community and should not contravene principles of human rights and the rule of law. Participation in extremist groups that promote intolerance and violence should therefore not be included in this definition of active citizenship.

In order to build the composite indicator of active citizenship in a systematic manner it was necessary to operationalize the definition of the concept. Towards this end we identified measurable and distinctive elements in the definition of active citizenship, which we designated “dimensions of active citizenship.” The dimensions are: participation in Political Life, Civil Society, Community Life and the Values needed for active citizenship (recognition of the importance of human rights, democracy and intercultural understanding).

Method of Study

In order to examine the Active Citizenship attitude in learner (Special reference to Karachi) and their participation in society the present study was made through the collection of the opinion of students from two levels of education included Bachelors and Master level students who are studying in education institutional in the geographical area of Karachi in a questionnaire the objective was to collect data of formulate sound hypothesis about the extend and mode of learners participation as citizen the questionnaire consisted of a series of question coverage almost all the indicator of Active Citizenship Composite Indicator (ACCI). The questions were aimed to elicit answers reflecting the interest of students in the activities as a citizen which they are playing. The questions specially focused learners Social, Community and Political activities e.g. Political Life Dimension, Civil Society Dimension, Community Dimension and Values Dimension the questionnaire are closed ended in nature and sample can answer yes or no . A total of (100) questionnaire was collected from Bachelors and Master level students. Besides discussing the answer to each question individually the overall result were again computed using the percentage and represent the data on graph.

Dimensions of Active Citizenship

1. Dimension of Political Life

The dimension of participation in Political Life refers to the sphere of the state and conventional representative democracy such as participation in voting, representation of women in the national parliament and regular party work (party membership, volunteering, participating in party activities and donating money to political parties). The basic indicators used for this dimension are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: List of basic indicators for the dimension of political life

Political Life Dimension	
Political parties:	Membership
Political parties:	Participation
Political parties:	Donating money
Political parties:	Voluntary work
Worked in political party/action group last 12 months	Worked in political party/action group last 12 months
Donated money to political Organization/action group	Donated money to political last 12 months
European Parliament	Voting Turnout
National Parliament	Voting Turnout
Women Participation in national parliament	Women Participation in national parliament

Source: The Active Citizenship Composite indicator

2. Dimension of Civil Society

The dimension of participation in Civil Society refers in this index to political nongovernmental action Civil Society has been described as “referring to the arena of unconcerned collective action around shared interests, purposes and values’ (Centre for Civil Society 2006)

The dimension of participation in Community Life refers to activities that are less overtly political and more orientated towards the community - ‘community minded’ or ‘community-spirited’ activities. This dimension could also be understood be comprehended by Civil Society but has been distinguished because these activities are more orientated towards community support mechanisms and less towards political action and accountability of governments. This dimension is based on 25 base indicators and is divided into seven sub-dimensions as show in table 2.

Table 2: List of basic indicators for the dimension of civil society

Sub-dimensions	Description
Protest	Working in an Organization or association
Protest	Signing a petition
Protest	Taking part in lawful demonstrations
Protest	Boycotting products
Protest	Ethical consumption
HR Org.	Human Rights Organization: membership
HR Org.	Human Rights Organization: participation
HR Org.	Human Rights Organization: donating money
HR Org.	Human Rights Organization: voluntary work
TU Org.	Trade Union Org. : membership
TU Org.	Trade Union Org. : participation
TU Org.	Trade Union Org. : donating money
TU Org.	Trade Union Org. : voluntary work
Env. Org.	Environmental Org. : membership
Env. Org.	Environmental Org. : participation
Env. Org.	Environmental Org. : donating money
Env. Org.	Environmental Org. : voluntary work
Protest	Contacted a politician

3. *Dimension of Community Life*

It could be argued that further survey questions would be needed to feed indicators on informal networks, informal volunteering, and family networks. It is important to acknowledge at this point that certain characteristics of the definition are difficult to model, e.g. verifying that the participation is non-violent and does not contravene human rights and democracy. The List of basic indicators for the dimension of community life are as show in table 3.

Table 3: List of basic indicators for the dimension of Community Life

Sub-dimension	Description
Non-Organized Help	Non-organized help in the community
Religious Org.	Membership
Religious Org.	Participation
Religious Org.	Donating money
Religious Org.	Voluntary work
Business Org.	Membership
Business Org.	Participation
Business Org.	Donating money
Business Org.	Voluntary work
Sports Org.	Membership
Sports Org.	Participation
Sports Org.	Donating money
Sports Org.	Voluntary work
Cultural Org.	Membership
Cultural Org.	Participation
Cultural Org.	Donating money
Cultural Org.	Voluntary work
Social Org.	Membership
Social Org.	Participation
Social Org.	Donating money
Social Org.	Voluntary work
Teacher Org.	Membership
Teacher Org.	Participation
Teacher Org.	Donating money
Teacher Org.	Voluntary work

4. *Dimension of Values*

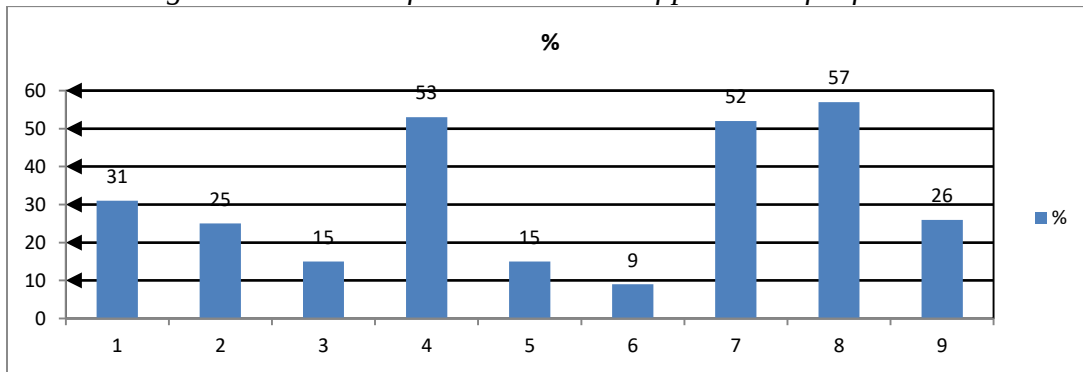
The dimension of Values is a combination of indicators on *democracy* and *human rights*, the foundation for active citizenship practices, and can be found in the definition of active citizenship. In total, the dimension of Values was based on eleven basic indicators and divided into three sub dimensions: *human rights*, *intercultural competencies*, and *democracy*. The basic indicators for this dimension are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: List of basic indicators for the Value Dimension

Sub-dimension	Description
Human Rights	Immigrants should have same rights
Human Rights	Law against discrimination in the work place
Human Rights	Law against racial hatred
Intercultural	Allow immigrants of different race group from majority
Intercultural	Cultural life undetermined/enriched by immigrants
Intercultural	Immigrants make country worse/better place
Democracy	How important for a citizen to vote
Democracy	How important for a citizen to obey laws
Democracy	How important for a citizen to develop an independent opinion
Democracy	How important for a citizen to be active in a voluntary org.
Democracy	How important for a citizen to be active in politics

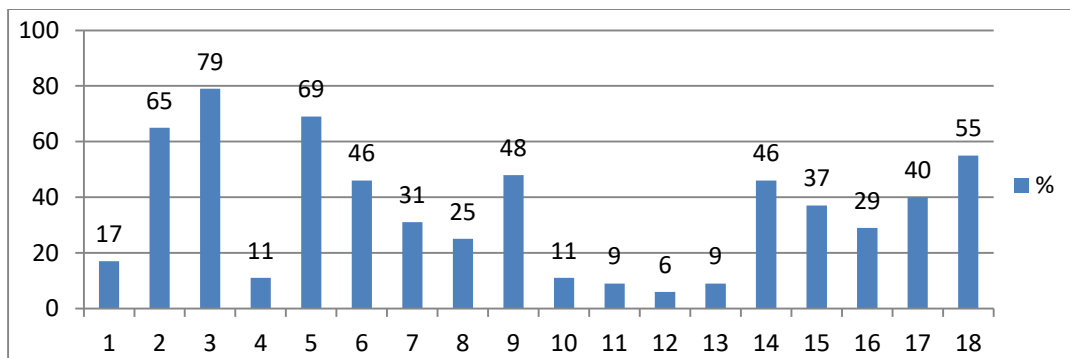
The social patron in any developing country , like Pakistan did not grow in this manner if the young generation specially those who are studding at College and University do not play there roll as a active citizen and avoid to participate in Political, Social, Cultural and Democratically role in society. Young learner of any society will consider as of future of the Nation so their responsibilities as a citizen or more than any other person in society. With particular reference to Karachi, an effort is made to present quantities assessment of active citizenship in young leaner and their contribution in society.

Figure 1: Indicators for the dimension of political life of learner



- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Political parties: Membership | 2. Political parties: Participation |
| 3. Political parties: Donating money | 4. Political parties: Voluntary work |
| 5. Worked in political party/action group last 12 months | 6. Donated money to political organization/action group last 12 months |
| 7. Provincial Parliament Voting Turnout | 8. National Parliament Voting Turnout |
| 9. Women Participation in national parliament | |

Figure 2: Indicators for the dimension of civil society and learner involvement

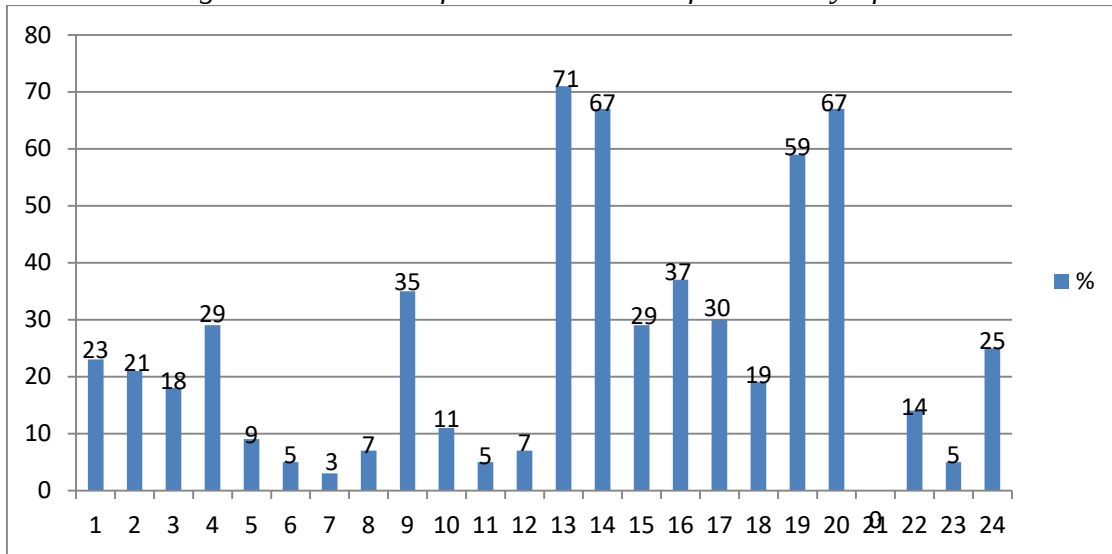


- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Protest: Working in an organization or association | 2. Protest: Signing a petition |
| 3. Protest: Taking part in lawful demonstrations | 4. Protest: Boycotting products |
| 5. Protest: Ethical consumption | 6. Human Rights Organization: membership |
| 7. Human Rights Organization: participation | 8. Human Rights Organization: donating money |
| 9. Human Rights Organization: voluntary work | 10. Trade Union Org. : membership |
| 11. Trade Union Org. : participation | 12. Trade Union Org. : donating money |
| 13. Trade Union Org. : voluntary work | 14. Environmental Org. : membership |
| 15. Environmental Org. : participation | 16. Environmental Org. : donating money |

17 Environmental Org. : voluntary work

18 Contacted a politician

Figure 3: Indicators for the dimension of community life



1 Religious Org. Membership

2 Religious Org. Participation

3 Religious Org. Donating money

4 Religious Org. Voluntary work

5 Business Org. Membership

6 Business Org. Participation

7 Business Org. Donating money

8 Business Org. Voluntary work

9 Sports Org. Membership

10 Sports Org. Participation

11 Sports Org. Donating money

12 Sports Org. Voluntary work

13 Cultural Org. Membership

14 Cultural Org. Participation

15 Cultural Org. Donating money

16 Cultural Org. Voluntary work

17 Social Org. Membership

18 Social Org. Participation

19 Social Org. Donating money

20 Social Org. Voluntary work

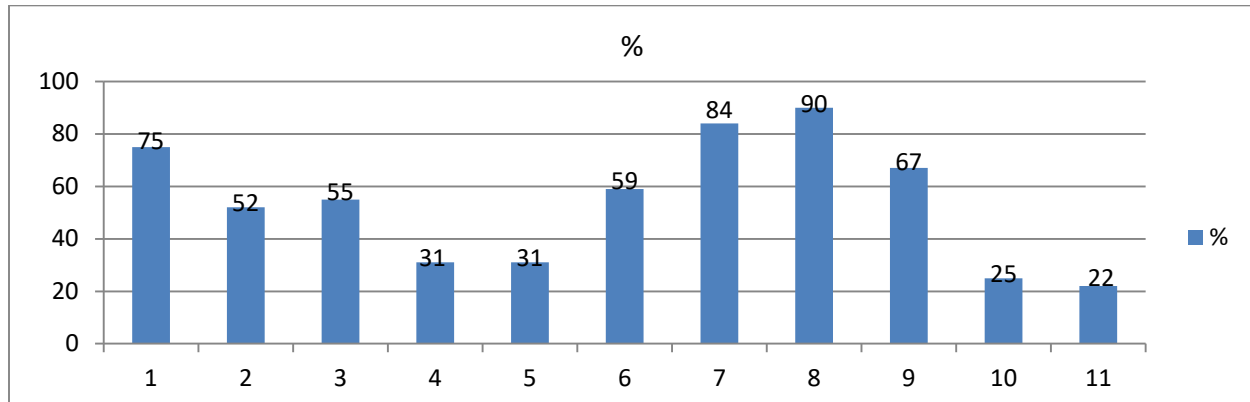
21 Teacher Org. Membership

22 Teacher Org. Participation

23 Teacher Org. Donating money

24 Teacher Org. Voluntary work

Figure 4: Indicators for the dimension of values



- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Human Rights Immigrants should have same rights | 2 Human Rights Law against discrimination in the work place |
| 3 Human Rights Law against racial hatred | 4 Intercultural Allow immigrants of different race group from majority |
| 5 Intercultural Cultural life undetermined | 6 Intercultural Immigrants make country worse |
| 7 Democracy How important for a citizen to vote | 8 Democracy How important for a citizen to obey laws |
| 9 How important for a citizen to develop an independent Democracy opinion | 10 Democracy How important for a citizen to be active in a voluntary org. |
| 11 Democracy How important for a citizen to be active in politics | |

RESULTS AND SUGGESTIONS

With the result of researcher found the Students perception about political participation is now arising and slowly they are also showing interest in volunteer work, and democratic values (see results in fig.01 about *Political life dimension*) Students discuss social and political questions. They attribute high importance to solidarity, working with human right organizations, half of them are like to donate money for social welfare, and respect for the rights of minorities, but one thing was shocking students are unaware about trade union organization and very less students are members of it. It is found that only 31% students are member of political parties and only 25% are actively participating in political, 15% donating money, 53% do political voluntary work, 52% Voting Turnout, 46% Working in an Organization or association, 65% are signing a petition, 79% are taking part in protest, 31% Taking part in lawful demonstrations, 9% Boycotting products, one shocking thing is that only few students know about trades union and only 11% Trade Union Organization membership and only 6% are donating money, 72% learner are involve in Ethical consumption, 46% Human Rights Organization membership, 25% are donating money only, and 46% Environmental Organizational membership, (see result in fig 02 Civil Society Dimension indicators) 3% are Donating money in business organization, 35% have Membership in Sports Org, 11% are Participating in Sports Org, 5% are Donating money in Sports Org, 7% are

Voluntary work in Sports Org, 71% have Membership in Cultural Org, 67% Participation in Cultural Org, 29% Donating money in Cultural Org, 37% Voluntary work in Cultural Org, 30% Membership in social Org. , (see result in fig 03 Community Dimension)

As the aim of study was to find out the knowledge about the involvement and awareness of learner in citizenship activities the finding show that more than 50% of our learner are unaware about this concept but they are actively working in some areas.. As a under developing country our system is not paying attention on it as it need. Active Citizenship supports democratic cooperation that is based on the acceptance of universal human rights and the rule of law, values diversity and includes the whole community. Education system should play attention towards gaining this knowledge developing and practicing the skills should take place in all levels of education it will give very good impact on our social life. There are some suggestions for educational and social system to develop the concept and responsibility in learners as active citizen,

Suggestions,

- Education should explain to young learner that what ‘active citizenship’ means and why we need to be active citizens for the betterment of society.
- Discuss innovative approaches to youth learner and active citizenship;
- Identify opportunities and challenges faced by students and organizations working with young learners.
- Educational institutes and teachers develop the appropriate skills, values and behaviors in learner in order to build their capacity for communication, conflict resolution and critical thinking. It was recognized that young people’s ability to take a stance on particular issues depends on their self-belief and their ability to make the connection between personal goals and social change.
- Create an environment that is non-judgmental of learners in which young people can share their ideas, take responsibility for their actions, and gain the experience of making decisions.
- Recognize young learner for their actions and achievements. This involves profiling young role models (particularly those from civil society) and redefining the criteria for success in life.

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