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Problems Faced by Teachers in Imparting Citizenship Education to Grade 10-11 Students in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The main cause of conflicts in any society is that man does not live legally. People always live by emphasizing only their rights and do not care about the duties to be fulfilled. Therefore, there are some conflicts between individuals as well as between societies. Citizens should understand from their school days that they must live together in a community. They should live legally and democratically. Accordingly, Sri Lanka's school curriculum has taken steps to provide students with an understanding of political concepts. A special emphasis is placed on the civic education curriculum for grades 10 and 11. It is designed to provide the necessary political conceptual knowledge under ten main topics. Understanding political concepts is a skill that every citizen of society should have. These In research Main aim is to understand the existing knowledge gap about the political concepts of the system and to produce new knowledge to fill it. specific purposes Three had. The first one is to identify the main political concepts in civic education and the second one is students' understanding of political concepts through civic education. level find out taking. Another objective was to uncover the problems faced by teachers in the teaching and learning process. This research is a tool as quantitative research using questionnaires. An automated questionnaire and interview schedule were used for data collection and students. Data analysis shows that civic education does not provide an adequate understanding of political concepts and students have similar problems. Although teachers with subject expertise are often appointed to teach civics, it is not done in many schools and the teachers point out that since this subject has been included in the curriculum, problems have arisen in selecting students. So Civic education can be used as a primary source to help the citizens of the society to protect their rights and fulfill their duties and responsibilities towards others.

Keywords: *Civic Education, Political Concepts, Teaching, Development, Students*

Introduction

A man began to live a civilized life in the study of human history; He realized the need for and importance of living in a way that does not disturb other living beings. They used to shape their lives because they had some understanding of the rights of others as well as their duties. Alahakon (1994) above the comment confirms that people in the past had some degree of political awareness. The main cause of conflicts in any society is that man does not live legally. He always lives demanding only his rights and does not care about the duties he has to fulfill. Due to this issue, conflicts can arise between individuals and societies.

Citizens should understand from school days that to live together in a society, they must live legally and democratically. The Grade 11 Teacher's Guide to Civics (2016) also points out that people need

to be introduced to the need for legitimacy to build a democratic society. Therefore, it is essential to give people an understanding of political concepts. Alahakon (1994) pointed out It is said that educating school children about political concepts from an early age makes a significant contribution to shaping their future political behavior. Gamage (1994) also pointed out.

Accordingly, Sri Lanka's school curriculum has taken steps to provide students with an understanding of political concepts during school. The subject named 'Civic Education' has been included in the syllabus as a compulsory subject from grade six to grade nine and as a basket subject for grades 10 and 11. Special emphasis is placed on the civics curriculum for grades 10 and 11. The civic education curriculum is planned to provide the necessary political conceptual knowledge under ten main topics. Table 1 shows some of the critical points of political concepts designed according to the syllabus of Grades 10 and 11.

Table 1: Key political concepts taught in grades 10 and 11

Grade 10	Grade 11
• Democracy • Nature of State and Government • The role of the state • Constitutional forms • The party system • Decentralization of power • Separation of powers • Unitary State and Federal State • Provincial council system • Local authorities • Multicultural society • Good governance	• Law and Justice • The judicial system of Sri Lanka • Different levels of government • Executive • Legislature • Court • Functions of local authorities • Human rights and duties • Women's Rights • Children's rights • Labour rights • Environmental issues
• Economic methods • Basic economic issues • Different interpretations • Conflict resolution	• Development and Sustainable Development • International relations • International trade • International organizations

The civic education curriculum seeks to provide an understanding of such political concepts and many related sub-concepts. Political concepts about an understanding obtaining giving Importance about Comments indicating Ritzen (2001) pointed out gives in society Equality in societies can be achieved through willingness and commitment to create equal opportunities for all members. Civics seems to be a potential subject It can be used to build students' understanding of political concepts compared to other subjects. A look at the objectives of the subject in 2016 makes this clear. Nine main objectives for civic education were introduced. there is

- To develop the skills needed to live harmoniously in a diverse society
- To produce fit citizens to protect human qualities and social values
- To develop suitable skills to contribute to society as a disciplined and law-abiding citizen
- Cooperate in personal and social activities
- To provide an understanding of governance patterns in Sri Lanka and the world
- To build a society that adheres to democratic principles and human rights charter
- To develop the strength to face unexpected and confusing situations in an ever-changing world
- To build a society that values mutual responsibilities and duties
- Directing the use of social corporations and organizations for the betterment of society

(Grade 11 Civics Teacher's Guide, 2016)

Through the highlighted objectives of civic education above, it can be recognized how the subject of civic education is structured to help students understand the basic political concepts needed to live as a social citizens at school age. Furthermore, the objectives introduced by the National Education Commission (2003) also indicate the need to understand political concepts at the school level.

Understanding political concepts is a skill that every citizen of society should have. As political concepts change over time, Sorensen (2008) noted, the political process changes and progresses with those changes. Thus, updating the understanding of changing political concepts can be said to be the responsibility of education. Hetty (2004) pointed out It is said that with the current education pattern, there is a problem in providing civic education to school students in Sri Lanka. Instead of applying education to life, it has been pointed out that the need to acquire the necessary knowledge to pass the exams is a problem of not developing the necessary skills. It is clear from the above objectives that civic education aims to produce future citizens who live peaceful life with virtues who cooperate with other members. However, it is problematic whether that goal can be achieved according to the current exam-centric education pattern. To interact with the government, the public must have an understanding of politics and political concepts. Owen (2008) points out that these concepts are often debated in the political world and therefore teaching and learning political concepts is not an easy task.

Regardless of the challenges, the school should impart an understanding of political concepts for the betterment of mankind. A study by Papaoikonomou (2017) found that boys are more interested in learning about politics than girls, And the political knowledge acquired at school will be useful in their future socialization process. In a study by Levy (2015), most of the respondents said that they first gained political understanding from the school curriculum. The study was conducted by Vonea (2014). If the individuals of a society are politically integrated, then that social integration is not a difficult task.

Abeypala (2010) has pointed out that when teaching children, the whole should be taught in a way that the whole is built up. Abeypala has further pointed out that Gestaltists have pointed out the importance of following principles such as organizing principle, image, and background principle, overall grasp, reflexive learning, reproducibility, learning transfer, and imagination. Marjorie et al (2011) have also shown that teaching subjects can be done through assignments and information retrieval. The above ideas can be done while teaching the subject of civic education.

Some teaching methods that can be used in teaching the subject of civic education can be extracted from the views of Singh (2008). That is the question and answer method, lecture method, conversation method, story method, drama method, etc. It can be pointed out here that teachers have to face various problems and challenges when using such teaching methods. Also, Wilds and Lottich (1970) stated that what the student does is more important than what the teacher does in teaching. More attention should be paid to student-centered education while teaching the subject of civic education.

Looking at all the above points, it is clear that school students are given an understanding of political concepts. It was also mentioned that there are problems with the current political understanding of Sri Lankan students. Therefore, to students of grades 10 and 11 in Sri Lanka through the subject of Civics Political Concepts about enough an understanding Is there Go find out the view and find out what the problems faced by teachers in teaching that subject timely and Essential This situation suggests that. The study aims to equip future citizens with political understanding in addition to providing insights to policymakers from the findings of the study.

Research Methodology

The main objective of the research is to understand the existing knowledge gap in the re-

searched topic and to produce new knowledge to fill it. Political Concepts about understanding for civic education contribution exploration doing These In the study Main purpose are in grades 10 and 11 To the students Political Concepts about discovering the problems faced by teachers in teaching the Main purpose achieved done the following two specific objectives were also used for taking.

- To identify the main political concepts involved in civic education
- To identify the political concepts taught by the subject of civic education
- To discover the problems faced by teachers in the teaching and learning process.

This study used a survey as a tool to collect information from participants. This is a quantitative study that aims to identify students' perceptions, Senadheera and Wanasinghe (2014) have also stated that survey design is a useful method to identify personal opinions. For example, in grades 10 and 11 civic education subjects teach Teachers 180 people purposes samples Technology was selected under Also, 110 students studying in the 11th grade were selected for the student sample under the random sampling method. Teacher participants were selected using the purposive sampling method. An automated questionnaire and interview schedule were used for the students. A questionnaire and interviews were also used to obtain information from the participating teachers. The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed in terms of percentages and the data obtained from the interviews were presented in the narrative form under the qualitative method.

Data analysis and interpretation

The first objective was to help students understand the basic concepts involved in civic education, to further facilitate their understanding of political concepts in Sri Lanka, and help them understand political concepts. The core concepts identified are presented in Table 1. Among these concepts, the following 15 concepts were selected to reveal the level of understanding of the students through the e-questionnaire.

Those concepts are.

- Understanding law and its nature
- The types of rules and their role in expressing perception
- Sri Lanka's judicial system and its judicial system
- Rule of law
- Importance of impartial justice
- Different levels of government
- Roles and responsibilities of different levels of government officials
- Government's responsibility toward the citizen
- Characteristics of a democratic system of government
- Different forms of the political party system and their characteristics
- Responsibility of political parties
- The state and its responsibility
- Different forms of government
- Decentralization and devolution
- Role of local authorities

About these concepts of understanding level check doing For, strong as agreeing of being from tough as agreeing not being to extending political concepts about of students understanding to measure Likert Scale to five prepared doing received A questionnaire through responses obtaining taking was students obtaining given Responses were calculated as a percentage to determine the level of understanding related to the second objective. Table 2 shows the responses obtained from the participating students.

Table 2: Student Responses to Understanding Political Concepts

Political concepts	Strongly agree		agree		Moderately agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree		entire
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Understanding law and its nature	24	22	42	38	12	11	20	18	12	11	110
Types of laws and the role of the state concerning them	15	14	36	33	26	24	18	16	15	14	110
Judicial System and Judicial Functioning in Sri Lanka	30	27	44	40	17	15	18	16	01	01	110
Rule of law	10	09	29	26	13	12	38	35	20	18	110
Importance of impartial justice	19	17	51	46	10	09	16	15	14	13	110
Different levels of government	12	11	20	18	12	11	42	38	24	22	110
Roles and Responsibilities of Different Levels of Government	08	07	20	18	15	14	39	35	28	25	110
Government's responsibility toward the citizen	15	14	31	28	14	13	28	25	22	20	110
Characteristics of a democratic system of government	22	20	39	35	08	07	32	29	09	08	110
Different forms of the political party system and their characteristics	26	24	32	29	10	09	24	22	18	16	110
Responsibility of political parties	26	24	34	31	14	13	26	24	10	09	110
The state and its responsibility	13	12	33	30	11	10	34	31	19	17	110
Different forms of government	19	17	37	34	12	11	22	20	20	18	110
Decentralization and decentralization	14	13	39	35	13	19	34	31	10	09	110
Role of local authorities	18	16	40	36	16	15	23	21	13	12	110
Total	271		527		203		414		235		1650
	798 (48.4%)				203 (12.3%)		649 (39.3%)				
Median	4.8				1.2		3.8				

Table 2 shows the responses to the questionnaire to determine the level of political understanding of the students. The overall analysis was divided into three categories: agree, neutral, and disagree. According to the same analysis, 48.4% of the sample believed that they had an understanding of political concepts at school. Only 39.3% rejected such an understanding. It was also observed that the difference between the two numbers is very small. This shows that the subject of civic education does not provide a sufficient understanding of political concepts. This is confirmed by the fact that the agreed percentage is less than 50%. Generally, the agreed ratio is 0.48. It further states that the school's understanding of political concepts is not satisfactory. A median response rate of 12.3% confirms insufficient knowledge.

A separate analysis of given political concepts suggests that there is a 50% higher response to the concept of law and its nature. Such responses were based on an understanding of the law and its nature, Sri Lanka's judicial system and judicial functioning (67%), and the importance of impartial justice (63%). Accordingly, steps have been taken to provide a good understanding of the concepts related to law in the school. This is well confirmed by the statements made by the students regarding their understanding of the law.

> "When learning about the judicial system in Sri Lanka, I willingly participated. The way the judiciary functions in Sri Lanka is important to all of us. So, so everyone likes this lesson. "(11th-grade student)

The reason is that every year G.C. E. This is stated in an interview with the teachers.

> "Like every year, a question is asked about the law and the judiciary. So scoring is also easy. Because there are specific subjects. It is great that the children also participate in these lessons." (Grade 11 teacher)

Responses were also received about the concepts related to democracy. There was a 59% increase in the number of responses that the citizenship education subject was understood at school. The concepts that received more than 50% response are as follows. Characteristics of a democratic system of governance (55%), various forms of the political party system and their characteristics (53%), and responsibility of political parties (55%). Thus, it is clear that students get an understanding of democracy from school. Students learn these concepts in grade 10 and a lot of time is devoted to this topic. As this is also the first lesson learned and taught in 10th grade, it is hoped that greater commitment among teachers and students will lead to increased understanding of these concepts among children. This was also confirmed by interviews with teachers.

> "There are 30 periods allotted for the lesson on democracy. Therefore, this lesson can be taught well to children." (A 10th-grade teacher)

It is important to pay more attention to the knowledge of democracy as it is useful not only for exams but also for everyday life. Different tiers of government (29%) identified different levels of government roles and responsibilities (25%) in response to areas of low level of understanding in the school. This suggests that teachers pay less attention to these parts due to the complex nature of these concepts. The students commented on these concepts as follows.

> "Government floors are useless. The subject matters related to the layers of government change from day to day. That's a lot of trouble." (10th-grade student)

It is clear from the opinion of the students that it is difficult to study policy changes related to the government from time to time. It can also be difficult to understand subordinate executives, legislature, judiciary, provincial councils, and local governments. The response is an idea submitted by another student.

> "The government floors are being taught one day at a time. At one point the executive called the "legislature" the judiciary. Another lesson is about provincial councils. Another lesson is about local authorities. It's hard to remember." (11th-grade student)

However, it is important as citizens to be aware of all these layers of government. In the student

interview, the researcher asked the students if understanding political concepts is important to them as future citizens. All the students agreed to it. They felt that an understanding of these political concepts is important in the functioning of society as adults. The reasons given were 'getting political understanding, working according to the law of the society, spending time as a good citizen, understanding the duties and responsibilities to be fulfilled as a citizen. present Political situation about understanding _

According to the inquiry made to the teachers about teaching the subject of civic education, 82 % of the teachers said that they are teaching this subject because of their interest in the subject. It was also pointed out that 14 % are engaged in teaching civic education subjects because there is no other teacher and 06 % because of the principal's request. Thus, it can be pointed out that the majority of teachers are engaged in teaching the subject with knowledge related to the subject.

Teachers and students were also asked about the teaching methods used to teach the subject of civic education. The responses received are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Teaching methods used to teach citizenship education subject

Teaching methods	Teacher Response %	Student Response %
Discussion method	94	95
Method of assignment	60	77
Group method	82	75
Lecture method	66	56
Exploration method	54	19
Dramatic method	04	17

According to these responses, it is clear that teachers are more inclined toward student-centered teaching methods. It can be assumed that due to the new educational reforms that have been introduced in schools, they have resorted to student-centered teaching methods. It is clear from a statement made by a teacher in this regard.

> It is difficult to teach a subject like civic education by lecture method. By letting the students discover the practical facts themselves, their interest increases. (teacher).
>
> Student-centered methods motivate students to perform tasks with enthusiasm. Students are provided an opportunity to exchange knowledge among students. And it becomes easier to remember the subject matter. That's why I use the student-centered method (Grade 11th teacher).

From the above statements, it can be pointed out that teachers are more willing to follow student-centered methods of teaching civic education.

Teachers were asked if they had received special training in teaching civic education and 72% of the sample teachers stated that they had not received such special training. It can be pointed out as a major problem related to this subject. The trained group also stated that they received training on special teaching methods under their postgraduate diploma course. It was further stated that there is not enough training on teaching methods during the in-service sessions. A teacher made a statement like this.

> It would be good if in-service sessions teach how to teach the subject matter. But they just spend the day without any plan. Participating in them does not help much (a grade 10th teacher)

The teachers were also asked about the problems related to teaching the subject of civic education. The teachers' responses are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Problems encountered in the use of teaching methods

Problems faced in using teaching methods	Response percentage
Insufficient number of periods	100
Broadening of the syllabus	100
Difficulty remembering periods	68
Inadequate training received	54

Problems faced in using teaching methods	Response percentage
Lack of experience in teaching the subject	52
Problems with subject matters	48
Reluctance to teach the subject	26

Three 40 - minute periods per week are allocated to the subject of civic education. The entire sample responded that it was not enough. It was pointed out that a very wide syllabus had to be covered in this short period. It was also stated that there are problems related to the school in teaching civic education. Lack of separate classrooms for teaching the subject, Inadequate supplementary readings, and Student participation is minimal. Reasons such as lack of support from fellow teachers and difficulty in obtaining necessary resources were pointed out there.

Classes in the room in the political concepts In teaching and students and teachers were also asked during the interview about the problems they face in learning. The problems that arose are as follows.

- Lack of understanding of the current political situation
- Lack of interest in current politics
- Inadequate knowledge of political concepts in the lower classes
- Teachers who teach civic education do not have much knowledge
- Difficulty in obtaining Sinhala media books related to political science
- Lack of time to read extra books
- There is not enough time to teach civics in school
- Limited opportunities to address civic education issues in practice
- Being busy with other work at school

Teachers have the same problems as students. Although it is often the case that teachers with expertise in the subject are appointed to teach civic education, this is not the case in most schools, and the inclusion of the subject in the curriculum has led to problems in student selection, teachers point out.

Conclusion

This study examined the contribution of civic education to grade ten and eleven students' understanding of political concepts in Sri Lanka. The conclusions drawn from the data analysis are as follows.

- The syllabus of civic education includes basic political concepts that a citizen should know.
- Arrangements have been made to teach relevant political concepts to the students at the school.
- By imparting an understanding of political concepts right from the school stage, one can acquire the skills needed to live as a law-abiding citizen in the future.
- Concepts related to law and democracy can be easily understood from the political concepts contained in the syllabus.
- The concepts of "different levels of government" and decentralization are difficult for school children to grasp.
- also concluded that the number of periods allocated to civic education is not sufficient to provide an understanding of political concepts. was _
- It can be concluded that the training provided on teaching the subject of citizenship education is not sufficient.
- Teachers teaching citizenship education are not sufficiently aware of the use of different teaching methods.
- Civic education can be easily taught through hands-on teaching methods
- Schools have minimal resources and facilities to teach civic education
- This subject can be taught successfully using teaching aids

Based on the above conclusions and the findings of the data analysis, the following suggestions can be made to improve how students should be taught political understanding through civic education.

- Every citizen must have an understanding of political concepts through the subject of civic education. However, under the existing syllabus, T for Grades 10 and 11, this subject is an elective subject. It is advisable to make civic education a core subject so that every student can study it.
- To teach civic education, it is necessary to give special training to the teachers of that subject. Only qualified teachers should be involved in teaching the subject.
- An additional reading book on the subject of civic education should be published.
- Political concepts should be presented very simply. Here students should be allowed to learn the subject through practical experience.
- Additional subject matter self-study modules can be provided to students through appropriate tools such as CDs.
- Civic education for political experts can be used to provide an understanding of political concepts.
- Instead of traditional teaching and learning methods, follow different methods like explorations, seminars, workshops, debates, competitions, etc.
- Organizing programs to raise awareness of teachers on subjects related to civic education
- Compilation of additional reading material related to the subject of civic education
- Provide practical training in various teaching methods during in-service training sessions
- Support teachers in providing resources including learning aids
- Providing opportunities to share good practices related to teaching civic education
- Develop and distribute a file of open educational resources related to the subject of civic education among teachers
- Providing the necessary facilities for the use of audio-visual equipment in the learning and teaching process.

In Sri Lanka, It can be pointed out that it is very important to give school children a full understanding of political concepts. It can also lead future citizens to act legally and live harmoniously with other members of society. Civic education can be used as a primary source to help the citizens of the society to protect their rights and fulfill their duties and responsibilities towards others.

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