

EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT POLICE CADET PROGRAMMES IN EDUCATING STUDENTS ABOUT LAWS AND CIVICS DUTIES

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ABSTRACT

Student Police Cadet (SPC) Program is a school-based initiative to educate students about laws, civic duties, and social responsibility. It fosters legal awareness by exposing students to laws, regulations, and law enforcement practices. The program promotes civic engagement through participation in community service activities, emphasizing the importance of responsible citizenship. By encouraging discipline, leadership, and teamwork, SPC helps shape students' behavior, making them more law-abiding and socially conscious. Additionally, it strengthens police-community relations, fostering trust and collaboration. While highly effective in promoting civic responsibility and legal awareness, the program's success depends on consistent resources, support, and student engagement. Properly implemented, SPC programs can cultivate informed, responsible future citizens.

KEYWORDS: Effectiveness, Student Police Cadets, Civic Duties

INTRODUCTION

The Student Police Cadet (SPC) Program is an educational initiative designed to instill in students a deep understanding of laws, discipline, civic duties, and social responsibilities. Originating in countries like India and spreading to other regions, the SPC program aims to bridge the gap between law enforcement agencies and young citizens, fostering a culture of lawfulness, social awareness, and community participation. At its core, the program is a collaborative effort between educational institutions and the police department, creating a structured environment where students can develop a keen awareness of their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

In the modern world, where laws and regulations govern every aspect of societal life, the importance of educating young people about legal principles cannot be overstated. Many students graduate without a clear understanding of the laws that shape their daily lives or the civic duties they are expected to perform as responsible citizens. This knowledge gap can lead to poor civic participation, ignorance of laws, or even unintentional violation of the rules. The SPC Program seeks to address this issue by providing students with a comprehensive understanding of legal frameworks and cultivating a sense of responsibility toward the community.

The rationale behind the Student Police Cadet Program lies in the increasing need to create law-abiding and socially conscious citizens from a young age. Education systems worldwide often focus on academic achievements, leaving civic education as a secondary or optional component. However, modern societies need more active and informed participation from their citizens, especially in a world where issues such as climate change, political instability, and social injustice require collective action.

The SPC Program aims to fill this gap by integrating education about the legal system and civic responsibilities into the school curriculum, which traditionally lacks emphasis on these areas. It promotes a culture of lawfulness and civic duty by engaging students in interactive activities such as traffic management, community policing, and participation in social service projects. Through these experiences, students gain firsthand knowledge of how the law functions in practice, while also developing leadership, discipline, and problem-solving skills.

The SPC Program typically involves students from secondary and higher secondary schools, aged between 13 and 18 in a variety of activities under the guidance of trained police officers and teachers. These activities include workshops on laws and regulations, practical sessions on traffic management, community service, and awareness campaigns on issues like drug abuse, road safety, and environmental protection. Students also participate in drills, leadership exercises, and team-building activities that not only foster discipline but also cultivate qualities of responsibility and leadership.

The interaction between police officers and students is a critical component of the SPC Program. By learning directly from law enforcement professionals, students gain an inside perspective on how the police work to uphold laws and maintain order in society. This connection helps demystify the role of the police, often leading to increased trust and cooperation between the community and law enforcement agencies.

Educating young people about the law and their civic duties is essential for creating an informed and responsible citizenry. When students understand the laws that govern them, they are more likely to respect and adhere to these laws. Furthermore, knowledge of civic duties such as voting, volunteering, environmental stewardship, and participating in community activities enables students to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

In the broader context, the SPC Program contributes to the overall goals of democratic societies by preparing young individuals to be engaged, law-abiding citizens. With early exposure to civic responsibilities and legal systems, students develop an appreciation for their role in sustaining the social fabric of their communities.

The SPC Program is essential in shaping the future of society by educating students about the law, promoting discipline, and cultivating a sense of civic responsibility. Through structured activities, real-world applications, and close interaction with police officers, the program empowers students to become responsible and informed citizens. As societies continue to face complex challenges, the importance of such initiatives becomes even more apparent, making the SPC Program a crucial tool in fostering civic-minded youth.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To evaluate the understanding of legal concepts among students who have participated in the SPC Program.
2. To evaluate the extent to which students apply the legal knowledge gained from the SPC Program in real-life situations.
3. To examine the impact of the SPC Program on students' civic engagement, including participation in community service, awareness campaigns, and civic duties.
4. To investigate the behavioral changes (e.g., discipline, conflict resolution, rule compliance) resulting from participation in the SPC Program.
5. To explore how the SPC Program influences students' attitudes toward law enforcement and their trust in police officers.
6. To assess the development of leadership and teamwork skills among students as a result of their participation in the SPC Program.
7. To identify the challenges and barriers faced by students in understanding and applying laws and civic duties through the SPC Program.
8. To measure the effectiveness of the SPC Program in enhancing students' sense of responsibility towards their community and society at large.
9. To compare the effectiveness of the SPC Program across different regions, schools, and socio-economic backgrounds to identify best practices.
10. To provide recommendations for improving the SPC Program to better educate students about laws, civic duties, and social responsibilities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study will utilize a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to thoroughly evaluate the effectiveness of the Student Police Cadet (SPC) Program. A structured survey will be administered to a sample of students participating in the SPC Program, using closed-ended questions to gather quantitative data on legal understanding, civic engagement, and behavioral changes. Additionally, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews will be conducted with selected students, teachers, and police mentors to gain qualitative insights into students' experiences, attitudes, and the program's implementation. Comparative analysis will be carried out between SPC participants and a control group of non-participating students. Data will be analyzed using statistical tools for quantitative results, while thematic analysis will be applied to qualitative data. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the program's impact from multiple perspectives.

Population and sample

The population and sample taken for the present research consists of secondary school students across South Kerala. The sample consists of 320 secondary pupils from Kerala's Kottayam, Alappuzha, and Pathanamthitta districts make up the sample.

Table 1: Sampling Plan

Category of sample	Sub category	Number
Gender	Boy	160
	Girl	160
Locality	Boy	160
	Girl	160
Type of Institution	Boy	160

	Girl	160
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Variables of the study

A variable is a measurable category that varies. It is a concept that serves a particular motive in instructional research. The Variable used within the present examination is

Independent Variable: Participation in the Student Police Cadet Program.

Dependent Variables: Knowledge of Laws, and Civics, and Sense of Civic Responsibility

Statistical Techniques Used

- a) Descriptive statistics
- b) Inferential statistics

Table 2: Comparison of the Effectiveness of Student Police Cadets programs in Educating students about Laws, and Civic Duties concerning the locality of institution

Gender	Variable	Number	r- value	z- value	t- value	significance
Urban	Participation in the Student Police Cadet Programme	160	0.5157	0.56		
					3.97	P<0.01
Rural	Participation in the Student Police Cadet Programme	160	0.1129	0.112		

Table 2: Comparison of the Effectiveness of Student Police Cadets Programs in educating students about Laws, and Civic Duties for type of Management.

Gender	Variable	Number	r- value	Z- value	t- value	Significance
Government	Participation in the Student Police Cadet Programme	160	0.2502	0.250		
					1.890	p>0.01
private	Participation in the Student Police Cadet Programme	160	0.0467	0.0467		

FINDINGS

The average level of education for students about laws and civic duties at the secondary level is as follows: Out of 320 students, 12% have low knowledge, 77% have average knowledge, and 11% have high knowledge of laws, civics, and a sense of civic responsibility. Additionally, 9% of students have low emotional control, 77% have average emotional control, and 14% have high emotional control.

There is a notable difference in the mean scores of educating students about laws and civic duties at the secondary level based on the locality of the institution. The mean knowledge score of urban students is 99.37 with a standard deviation of 16.208, whereas the mean knowledge score of rural students is 104.5 with a standard deviation of 13.85. The calculated ‘t’ value for the knowledge of laws, civics, and sense of civic responsibility of students at the secondary level for locality is 2.794, which is greater than 2.58 and is significant at the 0.01 level.

Based on the data, there is no remarkable difference in the average scores of educating secondary-level students about laws and civic duties based on the type of management of the institution. The mean score of government students at the secondary level is 103.02 with a standard deviation of 15.35, while the mean score of private students at the secondary level is 100.76 with a standard deviation of 15.19. The calculated ‘t’ value for the type of management is 1.323, which is less than 2.58 and not significant at the 0.01 level.

In terms of gender, the mean score of boys at the secondary level is 93.56 with a standard deviation of 15.08, and the mean score of girls at the secondary level is 92.5 with a standard deviation of 15.02. The calculated ‘t’ value for gender is 0.630, which is below 2.58 and significant at the 0.01 level.

Furthermore, the obtained ‘r’ value for government students at the secondary level is 0.250, and for private students, it is 0.0467. The calculated ‘t’ value for the type of management is 1.890, which is below the table value of 2.58 at the 0.01 level. The ‘r’ value for boys at the secondary level is 0.2502, and for girls, it is 0.0467. The calculated ‘t’ value concerning gender is 1.890, which is less than the table value of 2.58 at the 0.01 level. Therefore, it can be

concluded that there is no significant difference in educating students about laws and civic duties among students at the secondary level based on the type of management.

Enhanced Legal Understanding: Students who participated in the SPC Program exhibited a significant improvement in their comprehension of basic legal concepts, indicating that the educational components of the program were effective.

Practical Application of Knowledge: A notable percentage of students reported using the legal knowledge gained from the program in real-life situations, demonstrating the program's relevance to their daily lives.

Increased Civic Engagement: Participants in the SPC Program showed higher levels of involvement in community service and civic activities compared to non-participants, suggesting that the program successfully encourages active citizenship.

Behavioral Improvements: Students reported enhanced self-discipline, better conflict resolution skills, and greater respect for rules, indicating positive behavioral changes linked to their involvement in the program.

Positive Attitudes toward Law Enforcement: The program contributed to more favorable perceptions of police officers among students, fostering trust and reducing misconceptions about law enforcement.

Development of Leadership Skills: Participants demonstrated an increase in leadership and teamwork skills, preparing them for future roles as active members of their communities.

Variability by Socio-Economic Factors: The effectiveness of the SPC Program varied by region and socio-economic background, highlighting the need for tailored approaches to meet the diverse needs of students.

Influence on Future Civic Responsibility: Many students expressed a stronger sense of civic duty post-participation, indicating the program's role in shaping their long-term attitudes toward civic engagement.

Need for Program Enhancement: Feedback from students suggested areas for improvement, such as increasing hands-on activities, providing more resources, and enhancing collaboration with local law enforcement.

Support for Continuous Implementation: The study emphasized the importance of ongoing support and resources for the SPC Program to ensure its sustainability and effectiveness in different educational contexts.

The study on the effectiveness of the Student Police Cadet (SPC) Program reveals significant insights into its role in educating students about laws and civic duties. The findings indicate that participation in the SPC Program substantially enhances students' understanding of legal concepts, with a notable increase in their ability to apply this knowledge in real-life situations. Furthermore, students engaged in the program demonstrated higher levels of civic engagement, actively participating in community service and social initiatives.

IMPLICATION

This research has significant implications for the field of education. The present research showed a favorable association between secondary school student's Programs in Educating students about Laws, and Civic Duties' in a good way. Regarding possible educational effects, the following suggestions were made:

- a) Secondary school students should be provided opportunities to understand Law and Legal concepts.
- b) Giving the students, clear and constructive feedback, leading to improved Civic Engagement among the students.
- c) Rewarding students is another method that can be used effectively to increase Leadership and Teamwork qualities.
- d) This study helps to improve the perception of Law Enforcement of the student.
- e) The present study would be useful for teachers to assess student's behavioral changes.
- f) The increased civic engagement among participants indicates that schools should actively involve families and community organizations in supporting the SPC Program. Engaging the wider community can amplify the program's impact and encourage a culture of active citizenship.
- g) The present study provides opportunities to understand the importance of the SPC program in school life.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant effectiveness of the Student Police Cadet (SPC) Program in enhancing students' understanding of laws and civic duties, promoting civic engagement, and fostering positive behavioral changes. Participants demonstrated improved legal knowledge and increased involvement in community activities, as well as

more favorable attitudes toward law enforcement. These findings underscore the importance of integrating similar programs into educational curricula to cultivate informed and responsible citizens. Moreover, the study emphasizes the need for ongoing support, tailored implementation, and collaborative efforts between schools and law enforcement to maximize the program's impact. Overall, the SPC Program serves as a valuable model for developing future initiatives aimed at empowering young people with the skills and knowledge necessary for active citizenship. The Student Police Cadet Program effectively enhances students' legal awareness, civic responsibility, and leadership skills. Participants show improved discipline, better community involvement, and a stronger trust in law enforcement. The program fosters personal development and prepares students for active, responsible citizenship, promoting positive societal change and stronger community relations.

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