
HUMAN RIGHT AWARENESS AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN RELATION TO URBAN AREA AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

The growth of responsible citizens and the defence of individual liberties, irrespective of colour, race, language, political views, socioeconomic or national origin, assets, or place of birth, depend on an understanding of and respect for human rights. The purpose of this study was to investigate the association between academic achievement and senior secondary school students' understanding of human rights in urban areas. A simple random sample of 100 pupils (50 males and 50 females) from five government urban schools in the Himachal Pradesh district of Kangra was utilised in a descriptive study. The Human Rights Awareness Test (HRAT-SVAA), created by Dr. Vishal Sood and Mrs. Arti Anand (2012), was used to gauge human rights awareness, while the students' prior year's class scores were used to gauge academic achievement. The coefficient of Pearson correlation was used to analyse the data. The results showed that students' comprehension of the importance of human rights for defending constitutional rights and advancing society is inadequate. Additionally, the study found a weakly negative relationship between academic achievement and human rights knowledge among urban senior secondary students in general and among male and female students in particular. The findings highlight the necessity of well-designed human rights education initiatives taught by trained teachers in order to help pupils develop a more profound and enduring grasp of human rights.

Keywords: Human Rights Awareness, Senior Secondary School Students, Urban Areas, Academic Achievement, HRAT-SVAA, Correlation, Gender Differences, Education Programs

Introduction

The basic rights that every person has just by virtue of being human are known as human rights. They are the cornerstone of freedom, justice, and social harmony and are universal, unbreakable, and inherent (United Nations, 1948). In its broadest definition, education is a continuous process that helps people develop the information, abilities, values, and attitudes necessary for both individual and societal advancement (UNESCO, 2015). It is essential in producing responsible individuals who can respect democratic values and dignity for others (Nayak & Mohanty, 2020). Human Rights Education (HRE), which aims to promote students' understanding, respect, and protection of human rights, has emerged as a crucial component of education. Through HRE, students are inspired to act empathetically, identify injustice, and take part in social change (Kumar, 2021). Human rights knowledge is especially important in India, where race, religion, gender, and socioeconomic inequality still exist (Upadhyay et al., 2025). Violations like discrimination, child labour, and gender-based violence persist despite constitutional provisions, underscoring the disconnect between understanding and application (National Human Rights Commission [NHRC], 2023). Students in rural areas frequently encounter extra difficulties, such as restricted access to resources, fewer chances for civic engagement, and sociocultural limitations, which may have an impact on their academic performance as well as their understanding of human rights (Binjha, 2022; Singh & Kaur, 2020).

According to empirical research conducted in India, HRE has a favourable effect on students' attitudes and social consciousness. According to Kumar (2021) and Gupta and Sharma (2020), rights-based teaching techniques improve students' comprehension of social justice and democratic values while also fostering inclusivity, empathy, and civic duty. However, due in part to restricted exposure and educational resources, rural pupils frequently exhibit lower levels of human rights knowledge than their urban counterparts (Binjha, 2022; Singh & Kaur, 2020). Similarly, Chopra and Kapoor (2019) discovered that students in rural areas tended to have a more particular community knowledge of rights, underscoring the influence of contextual factors on awareness. Additionally, studies show a connection between academic performance and human rights knowledge. According to research by Tiwari and Galundia (2017) and Nayak and

Mohanty (2020), students who are aware of their rights and learn in fair, participatory settings are more engaged, motivated, and self-assured. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that HRE programs promote social responsibility, increase gender sensitivity, and lessen tolerance for prejudice (Rao et al., 2018; Emmert et al., 2021). Despite these results, there is still a dearth of targeted research on the connection between academic achievement and human rights awareness among senior secondary students in rural India, underscoring the need for more study (Upadhyay et al., 2025).

Thus, the purpose of this study is to assess senior secondary school students' understanding of human rights in urban Kangra District, Himachal Pradesh, and investigate the relationship between this awareness and their academic performance.

Objectives:

1. To investigate the significance of relationship between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban senior secondary school students.
2. To investigate the significance of relationship between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban female senior secondary school students.
3. To investigate the significance of relationship between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban male senior secondary school students.

Hypotheses:

1. There will be no significant relationship between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban senior secondary school students.
2. There will be no significant relationship between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban female senior secondary school students.
3. There will be no significant relationship between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban male senior secondary school students.

Material and Methods:

The study was quantitative in character because its variables were measured and statistically analyzed. A descriptive survey method was used since the study's objective was to increase senior secondary school students' understanding of human rights issues in relation to academic accomplishment and urban areas. The Himachal Pradesh Government Senior Secondary Schools provided the sample for this study. For this study, five government senior secondary schools in the urban region of the Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh were selected at random. Additionally, 100 students—50 male and 50 females—were chosen for sampling using the simple random sample method. Out of the twenty students from each school, ten male and 10 female students were selected as a sample. The HRAT-SVAA, which the researcher used to collect relevant data, was created and standardized by Dr. Vishal Sood and Dr. (Mrs. ArtiAnand) (2012). This scale has fifty items. Three options are available on the questionnaire: True, False, and Uncertain. One of these options must be chosen by the respondent. The researcher collected the findings from the previous year in order to assess the academic achievement of senior secondary school students. To achieve the objectives of this study, the data was examined and interpreted using the statistical technique known as the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

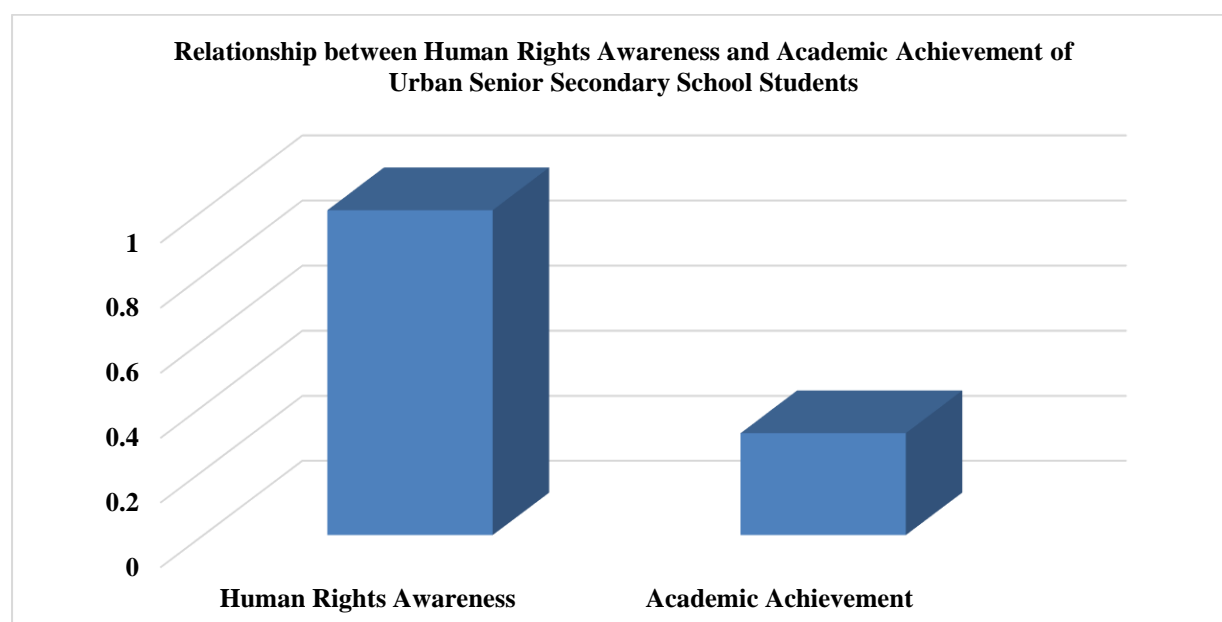
Result and Discussion:

Hypotheses:

1. There will be no significant relationship between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban senior secondary school students

S.No.	Variables	Degree of freedom	Computed Correlation (r)	Critical value (r)	Level of significance	Interpretation
1.	Human Rights Awareness (Male & Female)	98	-0.315	0.273	0.05	Not Statistically Significant
2.	Academic Achievement (Male & Female)					

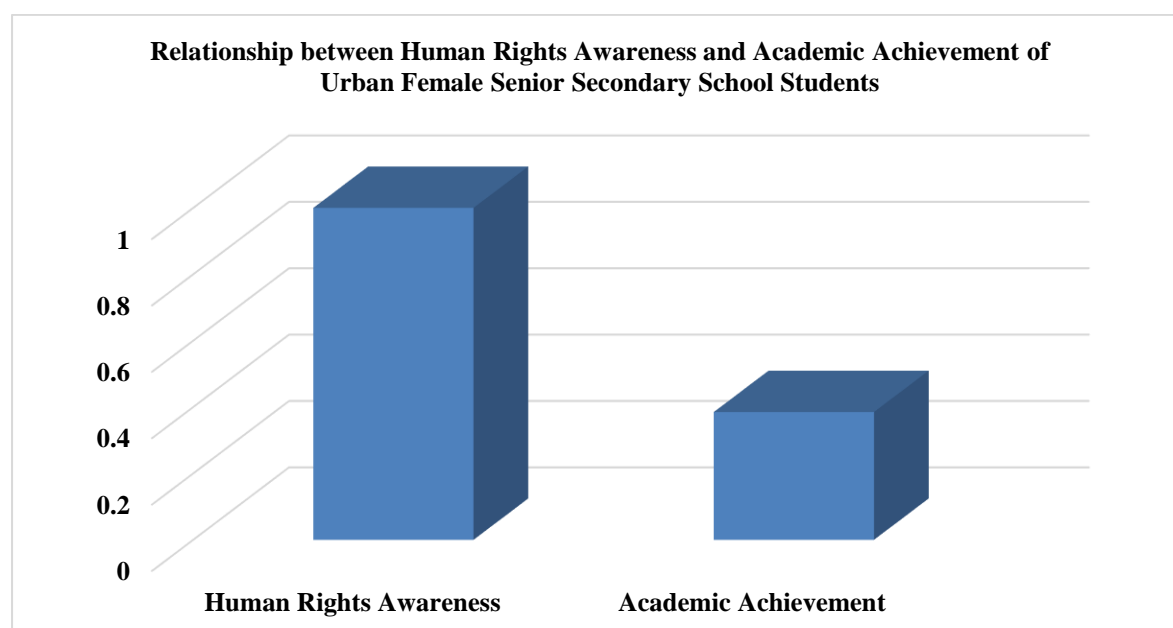
It is clear from the table that the calculated value of r (-0.315) is negative and lower than critical value of r (0.273) for 98 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is weak negative correlation between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban senior secondary school students. Therefore, the null hypothesis, “There is no significant relationship between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban senior secondary school students” is accepted.



2. There will be no significant relationship between of human rights awareness and academic achievement urban female senior secondary school students

S.No.	Variables	Degree of freedom	Computed Correlation (r)	Critical value (r)	Level of significance	Interpretation
1.	Human Rights Awareness (Female)	49	-0.385	0.195	0.05	Not Statistically Significant
2.	Academic Achievement (Female)					

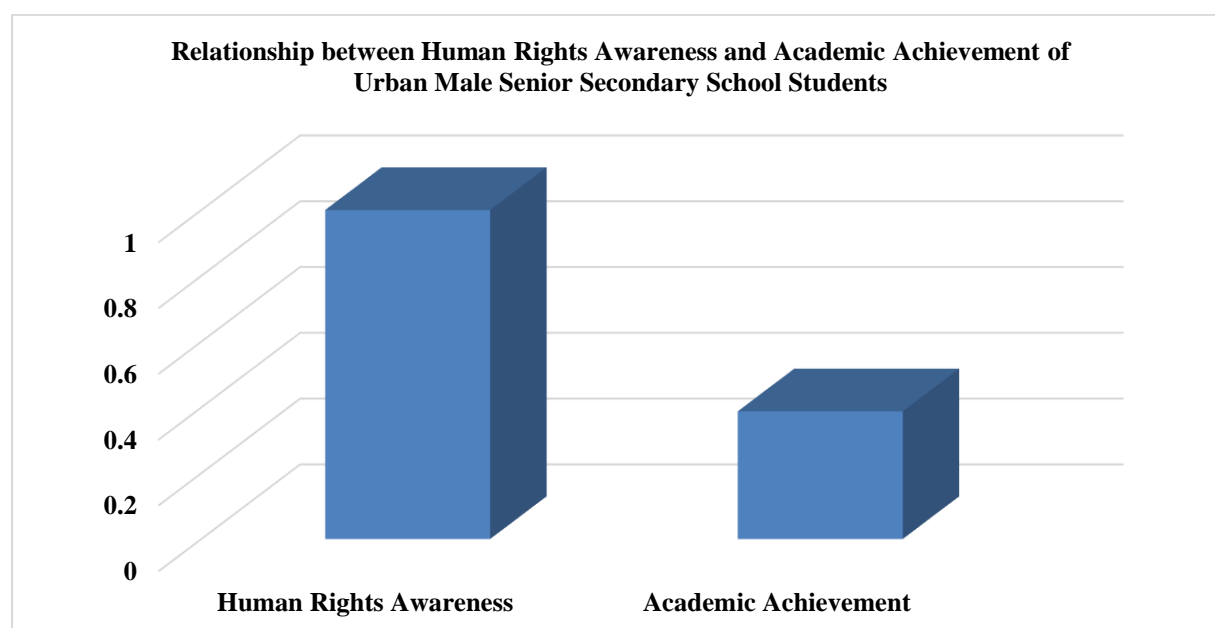
It is clear from the table that the calculated value of r (-0.385) is negative and lower than critical value of r (0.195) for 49 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is weak negative correlation between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban female senior secondary school students. Therefore, the null hypothesis, "There is no significant relationship between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban female senior secondary school students" is accepted.



3. There will be no significant relationship between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban male senior secondary school students

S.No.	Variables	Degree of freedom	Computed Correlation (r)	Critical value (r)	Level of significance	Interpretation
1.	Human Rights Awareness (Male)	49	-0.388	0.195	0.05	Not Statistically Significant
2.	Academic Achievement (Male)					

It is clear from the table that the calculated value of r (-0.388) is negative and lower than critical value of r (0.195) for 49 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is weak negative correlation between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban male senior secondary school students. Therefore, the null hypothesis, “There is no significant relationship between human rights awareness and academic achievement of urban male senior secondary school students” is accepted.



Conclusion:

The study's conclusions show that, despite social science curricula's partial coverage of the subject, senior secondary school pupils in urban Kangra district, Himachal Pradesh, have little knowledge of human rights. The study found a modest negative association between human rights awareness and academic performance among both male and female students, indicating that students' comprehension of human rights does not always improve with higher academic ability. This implies that awareness of basic rights and social obligations is not ensured by academic achievement alone. The findings highlight the necessity of comprehensive, well-structured human rights education programs taught by qualified teachers in order to guarantee

that students acquire a more profound and enduring grasp of human rights. A focus on human rights education can benefit youth. A more conscientious, accountable, and peaceful society can be fostered by placing a strong emphasis on human rights education, which can assist youth in appreciating the principles of equality, justice, tolerance, and social responsibility.

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