



Exploring Global Justice and Personal Responsibility in Higher Education: Teachers and Students Perspective

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Abstract: *This study explored the state of global justice, empathy, and personal responsibility that is substantial for individual and social development in the globalized era. The sample of this study were teachers (n= 454) and students (n= 202) from 6 public sector universities of Punjab using a multistage sampling technique. The researcher adapted Morais and Ogden's (2019) questionnaire to collect data related to global justice, empathy and personal responsibility. Perceptions of students and teachers were analyzed through descriptive statistics by calculating percentage, mean and standard deviation. The overall study revealed medium-level situations of justice, empathy and social responsibility among students and teachers of higher education. The exploring level of global justice, empathy and personal responsibility indicates that the behaviour of teachers and students in higher education is not at par with the desired behaviour of 21st-century teachers and students. It is recommended that the higher education system should cultivate global justice, empathy and personal responsibility through training, modelling by faculty and curriculum inclusion, media, technology, arts and dialogues with civil society.*

Key Words: Higher Education, Global Justice, Personal Responsibility

Introduction

Although altruism, integrity, empathy, respect, and responsibility are qualities that humans are capable of, this does not mean that they will inevitably develop them. They gain observational skills, an understanding of the significance of these behaviours, practical experience using them, and an appreciation for how educators—including teachers, bus drivers, cafeteria staff, administrators, and others—can support a learning environment that supports these behaviours. People are more worried about neighbours or people who are similar to them. To build a sense of belonging within the school and develop compassionate students, this is insufficient. People from all backgrounds, worldviews, and other characteristics are treated with empathy and reliability by students and teachers in strong institution communities. When teachers care about each pupil in the classroom (Meyers *et al.*, 2019; Tariq, Rasheed & Tavakol, 2017).

The US Institute of Peace has been conducting research, providing analysis, and encouraging dialogue in Pakistan since the 1990s. The organization has had an office there since 2013. The Institute works to strengthen social cohesion and combat Pakistan's growing intolerance of diversity. USIP supports regional organizations that develop cutting-edge strategies for fostering peace and advancing narratives of inclusion through the use of media, the arts, technology, dialogues, and education. In Pakistan, nearly two-thirds of the population is under the age of 30. Youth with a higher education wield disproportionate power in society. However, Pakistan's compartmentalized educational system forbids interactions between different groups or campuses, breeding intolerance and, in some cases, radicalization. USIP has collaborated with civil rights organizations to address university campuses' growing intolerance of diversity and injustice (Serbati, Grion & Doria, 2022; USIP, 2013; Reason *et al.*, 2013).

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Justice, Responsibility & Empathy in Institutions of Higher Education

Universities can emphasise these values-driven actions as knowledge-building seats to connect more intensely with shareholders and their local bodies by utilizing liberating pedagogies, freedom of inquiry, and community activities. The first and second missions of the university—teaching, learning, and research—have been widened as a result. As a result, universities can actively support stakeholders' needs, take steps to build a more dynamic and well-informed community, and maximize their investment returns thanks to their evolving strategic management and mission. Societal change and an analysis of local social injustices are among the quantifiable university outcomes. The same is true of the numerous programs that colleges and universities run to spread knowledge throughout society and to promote innovation, social welfare, and the growth of human capital.

Higher education institutions contribute positively to society by addressing the moral, social, political, economic, and environmental issues that impact both local communities and society as a whole. Universities that emphasize social justice, empathy, and responsibility make their values and philosophies known through their mission and goals. The idea that universities should act as catalysts for global justice and community involvement has been incorporated into the missions of an increasing number of universities. A concept like that begs for action, which is now more crucial than ever. The teaching and learning community should consider adopting universally accountable practices in order to uphold and fulfil their mission (Alfire *et al.*, 2023, Meikle, 2023; Young *et al.*, 2014).

Learning institutions can start by recognizing and changing the internal values and structures of institutions that limit the participation and advancement of underrepresented students, faculty, and staff (Tittler *et al.*, 2020; Miller, 2019). Creating an environment at home that supports success for students from disadvantaged groups and backgrounds is essential to making a difference. It entails addressing institutional/structural forces as well as individual social inequality experiences. Poverty, inadequate healthcare, overbearing control by the criminal justice system, and insufficient instruction frequently impede or even prevent the success of students from underrepresented groups.

If youth are to advance, they must develop a global justice consciousness and realize how social, economic and learning institutions, practices, and

policies can each impede or stimulate youth progress. Higher Institutional change is the first step in bringing about social revolution. We have observed that minority retention in educational programs is aided, in part, by involving students in resolving issues that are important to their communities. Sorrells & Nakagawa encourage colleges and universities to act by implementing fresh racial and ethnic equity priorities and fostering justice throughout campus culture. They exhort higher institution officials to discuss how historical racial and ethnic injustices benefited the university and to be aware of the institution's past. They contend that this might encourage increased institutional commitment and equity in the future (Coelho & Menezes, 2021; Haski, 2020; Sorrells & Nakagawa, 2008).

Rehman *et al.* (2018) found that universities in Pakistan had little impact on civic values and that students were dissatisfied with the civic services provided as a result of the universities' preference for low tuition and other extracurricular activities over student development. These institutions did not provide instruction or programs to help students develop their leadership skills. The way civic education is developed will depend on the curriculum's structure. The universities provided some basic instruction and practical advice, but no real-world knowledge was provided. In order to function effectively, universities must encourage the development of civic values in their students. Therefore, it is necessary to increase opportunities for effective democratic governance participation. Although most universities have installed basic civic amenities, some still don't.

Responsibility, Global Justice, Empathy and Teachers of Higher Education

A teacher must first actively participate in global civil society in order to effectively teach civic values (Jeong & Bang, 2020). The freedom of each person to teach and learn for the benefit of their own development should be respected by a teacher, who should also support transformative pedagogy. Since transformative pedagogy transcends modernism, cyberspace, ethnicity, and religious convictions, educators need to be aware of it (Halai & Durrani, 2018; Jeong & Bang). Why transformational pedagogy is still necessary in the modern world may be questioned. The solution is easy to understand. Learners need transformative pedagogy in a world that is becoming more interdependent and connected, plagued by issues like climate change, conflict, energy security, poverty, unequal population distribution, and all other types of injustice and inequality that must be addressed

globally and collectively rather than by any one country acting independently (Jeong & Bang) (United Nations Educational & Organization, 2014). Teachers are encouraged to join social movements for social justice as part of their responsibility to promote social change, rather than focusing solely on teaching and remaining in the classroom. Furthermore, educators must work to uplift and develop each individual in accordance with fundamental human rights (Jeong & Bang, 2020).

According to Reysen and Katzarska-Miller (2013), educators who serve as role models for global civic values should make a concerted effort to support their students' normative contexts and global knowledge in order to support them to develop a stronger sense of global civic identity. Teachers' behaviours, attitudes, and teaching beliefs are crucial within educational organizations for classroom instruction objectives, which are directly related to student achievement and institution performance (Guskey, 2002). Additionally, they enhance the instructor's social, psychological, and intellectual well-being.

University teachers have the ability to influence the values, career aspirations, and community aspirations of their students. By defining and putting into practice goals related to social responsibility, empathy, and justice, they also have the power to establish the parameters of an inclusive society. So, a strong global justice stance call for inclusivity and the reduction of inequalities by helping students develop attitudes towards a just society and prepare for contemporary workplaces. Such viewpoints are ingrained in people's consciousness as well as in institutional and personal philosophies that combat social injustices in day-to-day life. These approaches envision fair and responsible social justice pedagogies and curricula (Meikle, 2023; Zainab, Sarwar & Riffat, 2022).

Justice, Responsibility, Empathy and Students of Higher Education

Some academics claim that many university students lack a sense of personal responsibility for their education and are unaware of how their attitudes and behaviours impact others' educational opportunities. This has been connected to ineffective interpersonal communication, unpleasant teaming situations, and missed learning openings (Dallas & Hataaka, 2016). The relationship between accountability and learning has been thoroughly investigated. For instance, according to some researchers, one trait that successful learners have in common is that they take a dynamic role in ensuring that their needs are met and sustained over time (Cook-Sather & Luz, 2015; Alghamdi, 2016).

Others assert that taking personal responsibility can assist individuals in achieving lifelong learning by helping them get past many of the challenges that materialize as learning opportunities deepen and become more significant over time (Fulford, 2022). It is well known that assuming responsibility for one's education is essential for success in both academics and one's personal and professional life. The growth of personal responsibility is beneficial to one's well-being, self-esteem, and mental health because it enables people to take ownership of their behaviours and actions (Cho & Hongsik, 2015).

According to educators who place a strong emphasis on the overall development of students, teaching civic values such as empathy, justice, respect, integrity, and responsibility is just as important as academic instruction. Each student, the classroom, the school community, and the larger world benefit from teaching these values. Civic education provides students with knowledge and abilities that may change the way they relate to others for the rest of their lives. Studies show that students who uphold these values are more attentive in class, perform better in their academic studies, have better communication skills, are less likely to engage in bullying, show less aggression and emotional disorders, and develop more positive relationships (Fulford, 2022; Meyers *et al*, 2019).

In general, there isn't much research on how students and teachers view responsibility, compassion, and justice. The method used by studies to investigate these variables may be a part of the issue. Similar to this, Paul D. Sherma's (2017) research was limited to Soka University students' comprehension of specific topics related to responsibility. Additionally, Michelle Douglass (2020) looked at some of these factors among teachers using the Bandura triadic reciprocity.

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore global justice among teachers and students of higher educational institutions.
2. To analyze personal responsibility among teachers and students of higher education.
3. To examine empathy among teachers and students of higher learning.

Significance of the Study

The Present study is expected to be useful for teachers to find out their level of global justice, empathy, and personal responsibility. It will equally be helpful for students of higher education to explore their level of personal responsibility, empathy, and global justice. The researcher hopes that the present study is

expected to outspread the vision of local, National, and international bodies working on global justice, responsibility, and empathy through learning institutions.

Research Methodology and Participants

A quantitative method that is descriptive in nature was implemented for this study. All students of the B. Ed Hons program and faculty members working in the public sector general universities in Punjab constituted the participants of this present study. A Multistage sampling technique was used to select the sample from 6 randomly selected universities. A total of 700 questionnaires were administered through personal visits and mailed from which 656 questionnaires were received back 454 from teachers and 202 from students.

Instrument and Data Collection

Morais and Ogden's questionnaire was adapted to quantify global justice, personal responsibility, and

empathy level among students and teachers of higher education. The instrument was validated through the following phases:

1. In the first phase, the instrument was discussed with a focus group comprising different experts in the field of education for face and content validity.
2. In the second phase, the questionnaire was distributed among twenty teachers and twenty students for the pilot study to determine if the items are understandable and if measures of internal consistency are satisfactory.

Results and Discussion

The perception of teachers and students of higher education about global justice, empathy and personal responsibility were analysed by calculating their percentage, and mean values and three levels were defined.

Table 1. Levels of Global Justice, Empathy and Personal Responsibility

Low	1.00-2.33
Medium	2.34-3.67
High	3.68-5.00

Table 1 depicts the criteria for defining levels and these levels were defined on the basis of mean score values. So mean values ranging from 1-5 were distributed into

3 equal intervals –low, medium and high similarly divided in literature (Zainab, G, 2022).

Table 2. Analysis of Teachers' Level of Global Justice, Empathy & Personal Responsibility

	Teacher's level	SD (%)	D (%)	SD+D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	A+SA (%)	Mean	Level
1	Global Justice	8	21	29	14	39	18	57	3.38	Medium
2	Empathy	4	15	19	18	42	21	63	3.59	Medium
3	Personal Responsibility	4	13	17	15	48	20	68	3.66	Medium

Table 2 indicates the views of teachers about their level of global justice, empathy and personal responsibility. 57% of teachers reported that they have a medium level (M=3.38) sense of global justice via supporting statements: 'People around the world get the rewards and punishment they deserve', and "the world needs to be a fair place". Similarly, 63% of teachers opined that

the "world's most fragile people are more pressing than my own" with a mean score of 3.59. On the other hand, 68% highly believe (M=3.66) that "the advanced nations should follow more sustainable and equitable behaviours with under advanced nations" and "they don't feel responsible for the world's injustices and problems".

Table 3. Analysis of Students' Level of Global Justice, Empathy & Personal Responsibility

	Students level	SD (%)	D (%)	SD+D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	A+SA (%)	Mean	Level
1	Global Justice	3	22	25	23	50	14	64	3.35	Medium
2	Personal Responsibility	4	13	17	15	48	20	68	3.66	Medium
3	Empathy	5	15	20	25	38	17	55	3.51	Medium

Table 3 depicts that a large number of the students (64%) reported that they have global justice at the medium level (M=3.35) by sharing: "It is sometimes necessary to use force against others to get what you need", "world order needs to satisfy public expectations" and "no country or group should dominate and exploit others in the world". Likewise, 68% (M=3.66) of the students said that "they have personal responsibility by supporting their life in terms of giving back to the global society". Moreover, 55% of students thought that empathy at a medium level (M=3.51) among students of higher education via supporting that "they respect the rights of all individuals globally".

Discussions and Conclusions

Overall little research work exists that explores students' and teachers' perceptions related to personal responsibility, empathy, and justice. Part of the issue likely stems from the way studies attempt to explore these variables. Likewise, Paul D Sherma (2017) study investigated just Soka University students understanding of some aspects of responsibility. As well, Michelle Douglass (2020) examined some aspects of these variables among teachers through the lens of Bandura's triadic reciprocity. On the other side most of

the presented data on global justice, personal responsibility, and empathy from the perspective of Western culture so there was a need to address these variables from an Eastern perspective despite its diverse cultural philosophy and ethnic differences.

The present study concluded that students and teachers of higher institutions maintain a medium level of global justice, empathy, and personal responsibility. Therefore finding of the study revealed that teachers' and students' level of justice, personal responsibility, and empathy is not compatible with 21st-century teachers and students' desired level. So it is suggested on the basis of results that higher learning institutions need to cultivate personal responsibility, empathy, and global justice via training, modelling by faculty, and curriculum inclusion (media, technology, art, and dialogues).

Recommendations

Research is a continuous process. It can't end, so the present study is value-adding to the existing corpus of knowledge but- for further validation of results, the researcher be interested in recommending it to future researchers. This work may be replicated with different samples to ensure the generalization of results.

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