

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CITIZENSHIP OF STUDENTS IN SAUDI ARABIA: CONTRIBUTIONS AND PRACTICES

Ali S. Shayea, Ph.D.

Associate Prof. of Educational Management & Planning
College of Education- Qassim University
Saudi Arabia
ashayea@qu.edu.sa

ABSTRACT

The current study aims at identifying the school administration's role in developing citizenship in students, and the extent to which the school administration practices this role. To achieve the objectives of the study, a random sample of (60) administrators and (50) deputies were selected from all general education levels in the Qassim district of Saudi Arabia. Results showed that while participants believed that the school administration should be a significant contributor in the development of citizenship among students, they also believed that it practices this role only moderately.

Keywords: school administration, citizenship, Saudi Arabia.

1. INTRODUCTION

Saudi Arabia is faced with a set of challenges that have a significant affect on societal cohesion, harmony, and development. The most remarkable challenge is developing youth citizenship. The strength of the affiliation youth have with their country contributes to positive identity development, increased feelings of reassurance and stability, and more active participation in societal decision-making. As noted by Nower (2003):

Developing citizenship of youth is one of the most important ways in facing the challenges the 20th century. As the real development of the country; in the light of the new century and its innovation, makes brains and citizens' arms, so this development is considered to be the main positive substrate in improving the social, economic and political development. So these institutions must hold an essential role in developing citizenship. (p. 1095)

Educational policy in Saudi Arabia aims at preparing good citizens who adhere to the Islamic values of their society (Ministry of Education, 1996). In addition to preparing citizens who believe the Islamic message, a primary goal of Saudi educational policy is to assist students in mastering their work and improving human knowledge (Al-Sonbol et al., 1996, p. 129). To this end, the Ministry of Education (1996) applied independent material dealing with national education to each of its three educational levels based specifically on the following three reasons of importance:

1. A national importance of improving students' feelings of identity and belonging;
2. A social importance of improving students' knowledge, capacities, values, trends, participation in the social service, and awareness of duties and rights; and
3. An international importance of preparing students within the context of global conditions and variables.

1.1 The Problem of the Study

Saudi Arabia has been victim to a set of terror acts that were carried out by a number its youth and took many innocent lives. These acts are an indication that many Saudi youth may have lost a feeling of belonging towards their country, and that their sense of citizenship may have disappeared. Several studies of students in Saudi Arabia, such as Al-Suliman 2006, Al-Eisa 2000, Al-Faraag 2008, which dealt with the topic of national belonging support this indication. These studies also reveal that there are many obstacles that prevent schools from strengthening feelings of national belonging. Some concepts related to national belonging such as loyalty, discipline, identity, etc. are distorted among students.

Dealing with the issue of the national belonging, Al-Reiad journal (Vol. 13431, 2 April 2005.) created a questionnaire and polled 100 females with variable positions such as housewife, teacher, and student. The questionnaire explored the question: Does the new generation have a national belonging?

The results showed the following:

1. (51%) don't know the meaning of national belonging.
2. (28%) answered that the new generation doesn't have a national belonging.
3. (20%) answered that the new generation has a national belonging.
4. (1%) no answer.

Based on these results, the fourth national forum, held in the western region on December 7, 2004, recommended adding national belonging to scholar material.

The researcher of this study focused on the role of the school administration in developing citizenship among students. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following question:

What is the role of the school administration in developing the concept of citizenship for students?

The problem of this study can be formulated in the following questions:

1. To what extent does the school administration practice and contribute in developing citizenship among students?
2. To what extent are there differences in appreciation for the contributions and practices of the school administration in developing citizenship?

1.2 Study Significance

The importance of this study is revealed in the following points:

1. The results derived from this study could have a positive affect Saudi Arabia's social, cultural, and economic conditions.
2. Given the spread of terrorism in Saudi Arabia, the results of this study could help to mitigate the affects of some foreign powers in the country that work to weaken the concept of citizenship for Saudi nationals.
3. The study supplies school administrations with aims, content, and activities to achieve greater loyalty to country among students.
4. The study explores recommendations made by the national forums and other studies that have analyzed factors affecting Saudi loyalty. It also explores some of the educational requirements that could reinforce the loyalty of the Saudi students.
5. The study supplies relevant stakeholders with new recommendations that the researcher hopes will increase citizenship for the students, consequently strengthening national unity and the ability to face different challenges.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition of Terminology

-Role:

Role is defined as the contributions of the school administration in developing citizenship for the students.

-School Administration:

School administration is an educational authority that supervises schools in achieving planned educational aims. School administrations also work on developing student citizenship according to the general policy of the country.

-National Belonging:

National belonging is a person's love for his or her country, his or her sense of unity with society, and the extent to which he or she following societal values. National belonging is also manifested through a person's behaviors in defense of his or her rights.

2.2 Research Approach

This study utilized a descriptive approach with data obtained from a survey concerning the current contributions of the school administration in developing citizenship for the students, and the extent to which the school administration practice this role. Items designed to measure differences between the ideal contributions and actual practices of the sample's subjects were also included in the survey.

2.3 Study Sample:

The questionnaire developed for this study was given to 120 randomly selected graduates in Saudi Arabia. Incomplete participant data was excluded from analysis. The following table presents the distribution of the study sample:

Table 1: The sample distribution according to current work, last qualification, educational stage and years of experience

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Current work		
Administrator	60	54.5%
Representative	50	45.5%
Last qualification		
Educational	110	90.9%
Non-educational	10	9.1%
Educational stage		
Primary	30	27.3%
Preparatory	33	30.0%
Secondary	47	42.7%
Years of Experience		
5 and less	38	34.5%
More than 5 and less than 10	41	37.3%
More than 10	31	28.2%

2.4 Psychometric Conditions of the Questionnaire

The researcher investigated the psychometric conditions of the questionnaire to assure its validity and reliability. Psychometric conditions of the questionnaire were determined by administering it to 75 people from the same segment of society.

Reliability:

The researcher investigated the reliability of the current study by counting the correlation coefficients between each degree and the whole degree of the questionnaire. Table (2) shows the results of reliability:

Table2: The correlation coefficients between phrase degree and whole questionnaire degree

Appointed Role to Students			
Administration's Role		Practice of the Role	
Phrase	r	Phrase	r
1	0.681	1	0.744
2	0.710	2	0.647
3	0.769	3	0.772
4	0.690	4	0.728
5	0.557	5	0.628
6	0.516	6	0.375
7	0.638	7	0.687
8	0.637	8	0.751
9	0.602	9	0.741
10	0.605	10	0.678
11	0.640	11	0.715
12	0.689	12	0.540
13	0.642	13	0.797
14	0.667	14	0.733

The above table shows that there is homogeneity between the correlation coefficients of the survey item phrases, and the whole degree of the questionnaire concerning the school administration's role in developing citizenship and its practices in either its appointed role of the teacher or as students. Statistical significance was found at (0.01) level, which further assures the reliability of the questionnaire.

Stability:

The stability of the questionnaire was measured using Alfa-cronbag. Table (3) shows the results of the stability analysis:

Table 3: The stability of the questionnaire concerning the school administration's role in developing citizenship

Citizenship development	Appointed role to students
Contributions	0.894
Practices	0.913

Table 3 shows that the correlations of the stability are of high and acceptable degrees..

3. Results

3.1 Results of Question (1):

Research question (1) was: To what extent does the school administration practice and contribute in developing citizenship among students? In order to answer this question, the researcher calculated the means and standard deviations for participant responses to each item on the survey. Table (4) presents the results:

Table 4: The school administration's role in developing citizenship

No.	Phrase	Mean	Std.D	Contributions
1	Presenting authentic programs about the achievements of the kingdom	3.50	1.06	Very good
2	Organizing poetry competitions about kingdom on the school	3.60	1.16	Very good
3	Organizing tribes to the cultural and historical places of the kingdom	3.79	1.20	Very good
4	Organizing interviews with national commanders	4.17	1.17	Very good
5	Strengthening tolerance between students	3.90	0.96	Very good
6	Repetition of the national commend	4.35	1.14	Very good
7	Highlighting the kingdom importance and its religious position	4.14	0.78	Very good
8	Participation of the students in the national occasions	4.11	1.02	Very good
9	Highlighting the national symbols' role in building our home country	3.96	0.89	Very good
10	Activating students' participations in social programs	3.49	0.93	Good
11	Participations of students in school's councils	3.44	1.21	Good
12	Organizing cultural and historical small museum in each school	4.05	1.08	Very good
13	Preparing some logos in school's corridors about our home's religious and historical position	3.67	0.91	Very good
14	Formatting scholar dialogues to clarify our home's role and achievements	3.50	1.10	Very good
15	The school's contributions in developing citizenship	3.86	0.70	Very good

Table 4 shows that the overall mean of the sample's opinions about the school administration's role in developing citizenship for the students reached 3.86, indicating that the sample believed that the school administration contributes with a high degree in developing citizenship. The school administration roles with the highest means (4.17, 4.35) were those related to repetition of the national commend and organizing interviews with national commanders. The roles with the lowest means were formatting scholar dialogues to

clarify our home's role and achievements and activating students' participations in social programs with the degrees (3.44, 3.49).

Table5: The school administration's practices in developing citizenship for students

No.	Phrase	Mean	Std. D	Contributions
1	Presenting authentic programs about the achievements of the kingdom	3.04	1.15	Good
2	Organizing poetry competitions about kingdom on the school	2.99	1.29	Good
3	Organizing tribes to the cultural and historical places of the kingdom	2.56	1.24	Good
4	Organizing interviews with national commanders	2.46	1.17	Good
5	Strengthening tolerance between students	3.14	1.23	Good
6	Repetition of the national commend	3.68	1.25	Very good
7	Highlighting the kingdom importance and its religious position	3.78	1.06	Very good
8	Participation of the students in the national occasions	3.69	1.21	Very good
9	Highlighting the national symbols' role in building our home country	3.43	1.18	Good
10	Activating students' participations in social programs	3.16	1.07	Good
11	Participations of students in school's councils	2.62	1.34	Good
12	Organizing cultural and historical small museum in each school	2.42	1.10	Weak
13	Preparing some logos in school's corridors about our home's religious and historical position	3.66	1.10	Very good
14	Formatting scholar dialogues to clarify our home's role and achievements	2.21	1.09	Weak
15	The school's practices in developing citizenship	3.06	0.82	Good

Table 5 shows that the overall mean of the sample's opinions about the school administration's practices in developing citizenship reached 3.06. This indicates that participants believed that the school administration practices its role in developing citizenship to a medium degree. The highest degree went to the phrase highlighting the kingdom importance and its religious position and the phrase participation of the students in the national occasions as their scores are 3.78 and 3.69. The lowest degree was for formatting scholar dialogues to clarify our home's role and achievements with a mean of 2.21.

3.2 Results of Question (2):

Research question was: To what extent are there differences in the appreciation for the contributions and practices of the school administration in developing citizenship?

To answer this question, t-test was used to investigate the sample's opinions about the extent to which the school practices its role in developing citizenship for the students. Table (6) shows the results as following:

Table 6: The differences between the appreciation of the sample's subjects for the contributions and practices of the school administration in developing citizenship

Citizenship	Mean	Std.D.	T	Free degree	Significance
Contributions	54.07	9.84	9.6	109	0.000
Practices	42.84	11.54	5		

Table 6 shows a t-value at the 0.001 level, which indicates that there was statistical significance in the appreciation for the contributions and practices of the school administration in developing citizenship among participants. On the basis of this finding, in the sample's opinion, the school administration's practices are less than what was expected.

4. Recommendations

Based in the results presented above, the following recommendations are provided for school administrations, teachers, and researchers:

1. The school administration must give more attention to the citizenship material and the choice of the perfect teacher to teach it.
2. It is important to use appropriate and modern teaching aids to strengthen the concepts of national belonging for the students of different educational levels.
3. Revising learning materials, especially the materials of national education, history, and reading among the educational levels to include values such as love country and belonging, is important so that citizenship can start in young students and continue to develop in the older ones.
4. Educators must highlight the students' role in solving issues that face their home through participation in the national programs and general awareness of different fields.
5. Scholars should be open to dialogue and be willing to accept others opinion.
6. The school should concentrate its effort to strengthen the concepts of national belonging in the shape of some behaviors and activities the students can practice even in summer activities.

References

1. Al-Riyadh Journal (2005), VI. 13413, Abril 2005.
2. Al-Salman (2005); "School Administrations' Role for Enhancing the Students' Intellectual Security". A survey study applied on the schools of general learning in Riyadh. Unpublished master thesis, Faculty of high studies, Al-Nayief University of security sciences.
3. Al-Sonbol, Abd El-Aziz and others (1996), " Learning System in Saudi Arabia.". Al khreigy for publishing and distribution.
4. Al-Eisa, Ibrahim (2000), "The Reality of Belonging for the Students of Saudi Arabia and the School Administration's Role for Strengthening It". Unpublished master thesis, Faculty of Education, King Saud University, Al-Riyadh.
5. Al-Farag, Hassan Abdullah (2008), "General Learning's role to strengthen National Belonging." An applied study on general learning on Riyadh. Unpublished phd, Faculty of High Studies. Nief University for Arabic Security Sciences.
6. The Fourth National Dialogue Conference (2004), The Eastern Region 7-12-2004.
7. Noear, Abdelsalam (2003), Learning as Crucible for Citizenship. Research presented to the Seventeenth Annual Conference of Political Research, c 2, National Library of sunrise, Cairo.
8. The Ministry of Education (1996). Education policy document in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, presses statement.