Understanding Civic Actions and Their Economic Implications: A Quantitative Study Among Higher Education Learners in Dadra and Nagar Haveli

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Abstract:

This study investigates the link between civic sense and community financial well-being, specifically among higher education students in Dadra & Nagar Haveli. Based on survey responses, the research assesses the level of civic awareness and habits such as cleanliness, traffic rule adherence, and respect for public property among students. Results reveal that those who understand the benefits of civic responsibility—like keeping areas clean or using dustbins—are more likely to participate in activities that enhance their environment and support public welfare. The findings further indicate a positive connection between family income and engagement in civic practices. By showing that civic sense helps save government spending on repairs and allows funds to be redirected to education or healthcare, the study highlights the broader impact of students' behavior on community finances. The analysis suggests that educational institutions should promote civic responsibility and regular participation in community activities to build these habits early, reinforcing that student actions have real economic consequences for society

1. Introduction:

Civic sense can be understood as an unwritten agreement that guides individuals to maintain order, respect, and harmony in shared spaces, manifesting in behaviours such as proper waste disposal, respect for public property, and adherence to rules even in the absence of supervision. For higher education students, college environments are significant spaces where civic responsibilities are tested and shaped. Existing literature highlights that while civic sense is often regarded as a moral virtue, it also has tangible consequences for community efficiency and well-being, reducing government expenditure and supporting public welfare.

Despite the recognized importance, civic sense sometimes suffers in India due to behavioural and cultural challenges, such as the prevalent "chaltahai" attitude that treats minor violations as trivial. However, when students engage in civic actions—such as cleanliness drives and responsible behaviours—they help build social trust and contribute to the collective financial strength of their community. This research investigates these links among higher education students in Dadra & Nagar Haveli, examining how beliefs about civic responsibility, willingness to change, and family income influence civic habits and their economic impact.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Civic sense can be understood as the unwritten agreement people have with one another to live in a way that maintains order, respect, and harmony in shared spaces. It is reflected in everyday habits—whether that is waiting patiently in a queue, using public property responsibly, or following traffic rules when no one is watching. Humayun, Ali, and Khan

(2021) describe it as a deep-seated awareness of social ethics, one that finds expression in ordinary acts such as proper waste disposal, refraining from vandalism, and respecting community rules. While often seen as a moral virtue, civic sense also has tangible effects on a community's efficiency and well-being.

For young adults, universities and colleges often provide one of the first real-world platforms where civic responsibilities are put to the test. The University of Okara study by Humayun et al. (2021) highlights that students frequently receive little formal education about civic duties, leaving such values to be picked up informally. This gap means that higher education institutions—such as those in Silvassa—can play an important role in designing structured activities and programs that nurture civic responsibility alongside academic learning. Supporting this, Sasi and Thomas (2017) found that even among tribal students in Kerala, focused interventions were able to strengthen habits like protecting public property and obeying rules, showing that civic values are teachable and adaptable to different social contexts.

In India, encouraging civic sense faces cultural and behavioural obstacles. Shibili (2023) notes that despite awareness campaigns, small but persistent acts of disregard—littering, ignoring traffic signals, or damaging public amenities—remain common. Much of this is tied to the casual "chaltahai" attitude, a mindset that treats minor violations as inconsequential. In a diverse setting like Silvassa, where students come from varied socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, such attitudes may influence how civic duties are understood and acted upon.

The academic discussion around civic sense also draws on broader concepts such as civic engagement and social capital. Putnam's (2000) influential work Bowling Alone argues that when people participate less in community life, social trust declines and the shared responsibility for public spaces weakens. Similarly, the concept of active citizenship places emphasis on being informed, taking part in governance, and working with others to address community needs (Wikipedia contributors, 2025a). Applying these ideas to Silvassa suggests that giving students opportunities to engage in community projects, local governance, or environmental drives could help strengthen both civic discipline and a sense of belonging.

A key theme running through the literature is that civic sense is not just socially desirable—it has economic consequences. When citizens respect rules and public property, governments spend less on repairs, cleaning, and enforcement. Those saved funds can then be redirected to education, healthcare, or infrastructure, all of which contribute to a community's financial well-being. This makes civic sense particularly relevant for a developing industrial hub like Silvassa, where public resources can be stretched thin. Shibili (2023) recommends

practical approaches such as Japan's school-cleaning tradition, which builds personal responsibility early. On the policy side, stricter enforcement of penalties for violations, coupled with rewards or recognition for positive behaviour, can reinforce good habits.

Non-governmental organizations are also active in this space. Janaagraha, for example, has developed civic learning programs that help school children understand their rights, responsibilities, and how urban governance works (Wikipedia contributors, 2025b). Adapting similar initiatives for Silvassa's colleges could bridge both awareness and action gaps, making civic responsibility a shared commitment rather than an abstract ideal.

Overall, the literature makes it clear that civic sense is a learned and cultivated behaviour, shaped by education, culture, and institutional support. It is both an ethical obligation and a practical necessity, contributing to the efficient use of public funds and, by extension, the economic health of a community. Yet, studies that directly explore this link in smaller, mixed urban-industrial centres like Silvassa are scarce. This gap provides the rationale for the present study, which seeks to understand how civic sense among higher education students relates to the financial well-being of the wider community.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Objectives

- To examine whether students who believe that civic responsibility is important for the economy are also more likely to take part in community drives.
- To examine whether students who demonstrate a higher level of civic sense are also more likely to express willingness to change their civic behaviour after learning about its economic impact.
- To examine whether students from higher-income families tend to have stronger civic habits.

3.2 Research Design

The study utilizes a quantitative, questionnaire-based research design, combining descriptive and inferential analysis. This approach enables measurement of civic sense levels, tests relationships with beliefs and socio-economic backgrounds, and identifies differences in civic engagement.

3.3 Population and Sample

The population consists of higher education students in Silvassa/Dadra & Nagar Haveli. Using purposive/convenience sampling, valid survey responses were collected

from 204 students across academic programs and income backgrounds, ensuring representation for inferential statistics.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

Primary data were gathered using a structured questionnaire with closed-ended, Likert-scale questions (1–5) covering:

- Individual civic habits (e.g., littering, rule-following, dustbin usage, participation in drives, belief in positive impact)
- Beliefs about the economic impact of civic actions
- Willingness to alter behaviour given economic implications
- Family income/demographics

3.5 Statistical Tools

- Descriptive Statistics: Means, standard deviations, and frequency/percentage for civic behaviours.
- Chi-square Test: To analyse association between belief in civic responsibility's economic impact and participation in community drives.
- Chi-square/Correlation Analysis: To examine whether higher civic sense is linked with willingness to change behaviour after learning about economic impact.
- One-Way ANOVA/Regression: To determine if students from higher-income families exhibit stronger civic habits.
- Pearson's Correlation: For relationships between civic sense and awareness of financial impact.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

- Data is anonymized, with informed consent obtained.
- Participation was voluntary, ensuring confidentiality and unbiased reporting.

4. FORMULATION OF HYPOTHESES

- H_{01}: There is no significant association between students' belief in economic civic responsibility and community drive participation.
- H_{11}: There is a significant association.
- H_{02}: There is no significant link between civic sense and willingness to change behaviour after learning about its economic impact.
- H_{12}: There is a significant positive association.
- H_{03}: There is no significant difference in civic habits across family income groups.

- H_{13}: Higher-income students demonstrate stronger civic habits.

5. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 To examine whether students who believe that civic responsibility is important for the economy are also more likely to take part in community drives.

Analysis

Table No 1 presents the association between students' belief in civic responsibility and their participation in community drives. Among students who agree that civic responsibility is important for the economy, a large majority (87) participate in community drives, while fewer (60) do not participate. In contrast, among students who do not agree with the importance, only 24 participate and more (33) do not. This pattern indicates that agreement with civic responsibility strongly correlates with higher involvement in community activities.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to assess the relationship between students' belief in the economic importance of civic responsibility and their participation in community drives. The results revealed a statistically significant association, χ^2 (1, N = 204) = 4.83, p = .028. The effect size, measured by Cramer's V = 0.154, indicates a weak association.

Interpretation

The chi-square test was significant ($p < .05$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. This confirms that students who believe civic responsibility is important for the economy are more likely to participate in community cleanliness and awareness drives. Although the strength of association is weak, the relationship is statistically significant and aligns with the stated research objective.

5.2 To examine whether students who demonstrate a higher level of civic sense are also more likely to express willingness to change their civic behaviour after learning about its economic impact.

Analysis

Table 2 (Civic Sense & Willingness to Change Frequency Distribution) shows how students with varying levels of civic sense (low, medium, high) differ in their willingness to change. Most students with high civic sense are willing to change (138.42 out of 204), while very few with low or medium civic sense are unwilling to change. This suggests that higher civic sense is closely linked to increased willingness to adopt better practices.

Table 3 (Expected Counts) provides the expected frequencies if there were no relationship between civic sense and willingness to change. These counts are used to compare with the observed data, helping determine if differences are due to chance.

Table 4 (Chi-Square Components) breaks down the contribution of each cell to the overall chi-square test. The highest contributions to the chi-square statistic come from students with low civic sense who are unwilling to change (7.36), suggesting this group deviates most from what would be expected if civic sense and willingness to change were independent. The results indicate a statistically significant association: those with higher civic sense are much more likely to show willingness to change than expected by chance.

The analysis shows a statistically significant association between civic sense and willingness to change. The chi-square test statistic exceeds the critical value of 5.99 (at $\alpha = 0.05$, $df = 2$), and the p-value is 0.005, which is less than 0.05. This means the null hypothesis of no association is rejected, indicating a significant relationship between civic sense levels and willingness to change.The Cramer's V value of 0.23 indicates a small to moderate strength of association between these variables. Overall, this suggests that students with higher civic sense are significantly more willing to adopt changes than those with lower civic sense.

Interpretation

The observed chi-square value (10.80) is substantially higher than the critical value (5.99), and the p-value (0.005) is well below the threshold of significance (0.05).

This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis: There is a statistically significant association between the level of civic sense and the willingness of students to change their civic behaviour when made aware of its economic impact.

Additionally, Cramer's V (0.23) indicates a moderate association—students with higher civic sense are distinctly more likely to be open to improving their habits, once the importance of these actions for financial well-being is communicated.In practical terms, the results demonstrate that as students' civic sense increases, so does their willingness to commit to positive change, supporting educational efforts that highlight the economic benefits of civic responsibility.

This confirms and strengthens the case for integrating civic education with clear explanations of economic consequences, as students with stronger civic attitudes are significantly more responsive to educational interventions.

5.3 To examine whether students from higher-income families tend to have stronger civic habits.

Analysis

Table 5 presents the One-Way ANOVA results analysing civic sense across different monthly family income groups.

- The between-groups variance (SS = 8.46, df = 4) compared to the within-groups variance (SS = 166.54, df = 199), results in an F value of 2.53.
- The p-value is 0.0419, which is less than the significance level of 0.05, indicating a statistically significant difference in civic sense between at least some of the income groups.
- The F critical value is 2.42, and since the calculated F (2.53) is greater than this, the null hypothesis of equal means across all income groups is rejected.

Table 6 shows the mean civic sense values for each income group, where the group earning ₹25,001–50,000 has the highest mean civic sense (4.38), followed by the >₹1,00,000 group (4.23), and lower means are seen in the lower income groups.

This indicates that civic sense varies significantly with family income, with some middle and higher-income groups showing higher civic sense levels than others.

Interpretation

The ANOVA test was significant ($F(4,199) = 2.53$, $p = 0.042 < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that monthly family income has a significant effect on students' civic sense. Higher-income groups (particularly those in the ₹25,001–₹50,000 and >₹1,00,000 categories) reported slightly higher civic sense scores compared to lower-income groups. While the effect size is modest, the findings support the objective that students from higher-income families tend to have stronger civic habits.

6. FINDINGS

- Most students consistently practice positive civic habits like avoiding littering, following traffic rules, using dustbins, and believing their actions contribute to societal improvement.
- Participation in community cleanliness drives, while present, is less common compared to individual civic actions.
- There is a statistically significant association between students' belief in the economic importance of civic responsibility and their participation in community drives ($\chi^2(1, N$

= 204) = 4.83, p = .028), indicating that stronger economic beliefs lead to more active participation.

- A chi-square test revealed a significant link between higher civic sense and willingness to change civic behaviour after learning about economic impact, with the null hypothesis rejected (chi-square statistic = 10.79 > critical value 5.99, df = 2).
- ANOVA analysis showed that monthly family income significantly affects students' civic sense (F(4,199) = 2.53, p = 0.042), with higher-income groups reporting slightly stronger civic habits.

7. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that higher education students in Dadra & Nagar Haveli generally possess a satisfactory level of civic sense, especially in areas of cleanliness and respect for public property, but collective participation in community activities could be further encouraged. Civic sense is positively influenced by beliefs about the economic benefits of responsible behavior and by family income levels, validating that both attitude and socioeconomic status matter. Importantly, students who understand the financial implications of civic actions are more likely to change and improve their habits. Thus, promoting civic responsibility in educational settings not only builds ethical citizens but also supports the financial sustainability of local communities.

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10.TABLES

Table 1: Cross-tabulation

Belief about Civic Responsibility	Participation = Agree	Participation = Not-Agree	Total
Agree	87 (79.99)	60 (67.01)	147
Not-Agree	24 (31.01)	33 (25.99)	57
Total	111	93	204

Note. Values in parentheses are expected counts.

Table 2: Civic Sense & Willingness to change Frequency Distribution

Willingness to change / Civic Sense	**Yes**	**No**	**Total**
Low	19	6	25
Medium	28	0	28
High	140	11	151
Total	187	17	204

Table 3: Expected Counts Table

Willingness to change / Civic Sense	**Yes**	**No**
Low	22.92	2.08
Medium	25.67	2.33
High	138.42	12.58

Table 4: Chi-Square Components

Willingness to change / Civic Sense	**Yes**	**No**	**Total**
Low	0.67	7.36	8.03
Medium	0.21	2.33	2.55
High	0.02	0.20	0.22
Total	0.90	9.90	10.80

Critical Value= 5.99 (α=0.05 &df=2)

P value = 0.005

Cramer's V = 0.23

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA Results for Civic Sense across Monthly Family Income Groups

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	8.459434	4	2.114859	2.527084	0.041928	2.417028
Within Groups	166.5385	199	0.836877			
Total	174.9980	203				

Table 6:Group Means (Civic Sense Index):

Income	Mean
<₹10,000	4.12
₹10,001–25,000	3.85
₹25,001–50,000	4.38
₹50,001–1,00,000	4.02
₹1,00,000<	4.23