



RESEARCH ARTICLE

FACULTY MEMBER ROLE IN DEVELOPING POLITICAL AWARENESS AMONG THE STUDENTS OF QASSIM UNIVERSITY (AFIELD STUDY ON A SAMPLE OF QASSIM UNIVERSITY STUDENTS)

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed at identifying the faculty member role in developing political awareness among the students of Qassim University. However, the researcher applied the study tool which consisted of (26) items on a stratified sample involving (375) male and female students. The researcher adopted the analytical descriptive approach for the reason that it is appropriate for the study purposes. The outcomes revealed that the faculty member role in developing students' political awareness was average. The results also showed that there were no statistically significant differences due to the gender variable. Additionally, there were statistically significant difference attributed to the academic year, and in favor of the fourth year. Finally, the researcher recommends that further intensive studies should be conducted on political awareness, taking into account other variables.

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INTRODUCTION

Since late 2010, the Arab World has witnessed revolutions whose spark initiated on December 17 2010 in the southern part of Tunisia when Bouazizi, a struggling street vendor, set himself on fire after a local official confiscated his vegetable cart and humiliated him in the public, and ended with the fall of Ben Ali's regime on November 14 2010. Then, the Egyptian revolution began on January 25 after the death of Khalid Mohamed Said who had been beaten to death by the Egyptian police. Khalid's killing sparked general public outrage on social media and Egyptian street. The revolution started by calls for protests from Face book groups and ended with the fall of Mubarak's regime. However, The Tunisian and Egyptian Revolution effect spread strongly to Libya, Yemen, Syria, Iraq and other Arab countries, where either the regime was toppled or major uprisings and social violence occurred (Idrees, 2003). The Arab revolutions aimed to achieve many goals at various levels. At the political level, they aimed to build a democracy that is based on pluralism, social and political freedom, respect for human rights, peaceful succession of power, separation of powers, independence of the judiciary and establish the country in accordance with modern constitution. At the social level, they aimed to achieve social justice, combat corruption, unemployment, poverty, sustain concepts of citizenship and civil society. At the foreign

policy, they aimed to reject dependency, restore national dignity, maintain rights and the national identity, regain the role of Arab nations, protect the national assets and face external interferences and challenges caused by Israeli occupation (Al Qufy, 2011). In discussing Arab revelations, Hatamleh (2012), explained that the Arab Spring could be the spawn of the internet usage. He added that the Arab nations which initiated revolutions were similar to a barren women who had never given birth and she suddenly gave birth to five twins: Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Libya and Syria. He argues that without the internet, the Arab crowds could not gather and achieve their goals. Al Beruary (2011) , stated that under the difficult and critical circumstances of the Arab revolutions, political awareness development has become a necessity. Currently, political awareness is important as it helps people know and analyze events , mainly changes that may occur, and the effect of such changes on the international and local reality. Glickman (2012), argued that the scientific political awareness objectively analyses the surrounding events, and from various aspects .It also helps in the promotion and stability of communities. In addition, political awareness contributes to the growth of civilization at all levels as it helps get rid of dictatorship and repression which are the main reasons for the serious crises in the contemporary Arab communities. Actually, the best procedures to put an end to theses crises are the political awareness and the effective, rational participation in events. Faour (2011), explained that political awareness plays a vital role in the establishment and development of societies. Therefore, the higher the degree of

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political awareness, the greater is the community stability. He added that the lack of political awareness leads to the weakness and collapse of communities.

Al Horsh (2012), stated that when political awareness does not exist among the individuals of the community, there will be instability and imbalances. In comparison with other communities, such community becomes more backward. He added that the absence of political awareness leads to the fall of communities. Hilal (2000), Explains that the faculty member has a big role in developing political awareness among students for many reasons. First, he has a direct ongoing communication with students. Second, he knows how students think and feel. Third, he is acquainted with techniques that help promote students' thinking and behavior. He argues that through the teaching methods, the faculty member is able to do the following's) spreading the cultural and political values among students, b) contributing to the development of political knowledge of students, c) forming the students values, concepts and their political attitudes, and helping them to form comprehensive and objective political views. Abed Al Rahman (2010), explained that the role of the faculty member is to develop students politically through the stimulation of what is going in their brains to enable them access information instead of receiving it. He argued that the faculty member is the monitor and advisor of students during their study years. He does not only inspire students to be proud of their identity, but also t invites students to participate in national issues. Al Taubate (1996), stated that the faculty member has a tangible effect in developing political awareness among students, understanding the surrounding events, forming a positive philosophy of life, educating them on social, political and economic issues and determining their positions and attitudes on such issues.

Literature Review

It is worth mentioning that the studies which have tackled the political awareness are rare. The most important studies that have a relation with the topic of the study are :

Ahmad (2005) conducted a study entitled as " *Students Activities and its Role in Developing Political Awareness among University Students*". The study aimed to recognize the concept of political awareness and its dimensions. In addition to reveal the extent to which the students' activities contribute to the development of political awareness among the students of Ain Shams University. The study was applied on (630) male and female students. The survey and interview methods were used to gather information from students. The outcomes showed that there is a correlation between political awareness and a set of concepts that are associated with it, such as political culture, socialization and participation. Thus, an individual is not able to have a political awareness without political culture or socialization. Mohamed (2011) conducted a study entitled as " *Students Exposure to Political News on the Internet and Political Awareness: A Comparison between Germany and Egypt*". The study was applied on (1000) students (500 in each country). The researcher used the questionnaire instrument to gather information. The results showed that there was a positive correlation between exposure to political news on the internet and political awareness. Political awareness of the German students was higher than the Egyptian students. A study conducted by Schaefer & Bassiony (2011) entitled as " *Political Participation in Cairo after the*

January 2011 Revolution". The study aimed to reveal the effect of events of January 25, 2011 on the political awareness and participation of Cairo people. The sample of the study consisted of (952) participant from Cairo, the age ranged (from 18 to 30). Two methods were used to gather information: survey and interview. The outcomes showed that the events of January 25, 2011 had a positive impact on Cairo citizens in term of political awareness.

A study conducted by Hamdonah (2013) aimed to identify a proposed perception of the political change culture employment to enhance values of national belonging of students movement in the light of the Arab revolutions "Arab Spring". Moreover, recognize the appropriate version to be used in instilling and enforcing the political culture for the aim of promoting national belonging of students movement in the Palestinian universities. The results showed that the efforts exerted by the student movement were, to some degree, satisfying. The study recommended that the student movement should spread the political culture and promote principles of political belonging among students. A study conducted by Al Ghnemen (2014) entitled as " *Proposed Educational Foundations for Developing the Role of Jordanian Universities in the Formation of Political Awareness Among Students*". The study aimed at proposing educational foundations for developing the role of Jordanian Universities in the formation of political awareness among their students. the sample of study consisted of (820) female and male students. To achieve the aims of the study, the researcher developed a 60 item questionnaire consisting of three domains: teaching staff members, teaching curriculum, and student's affairs deanship. The outcomes showed that the role of the Jordanian universities in the formation of political awareness among students was mid, and in favor of the faculty member variable. The study recommended a number of educational foundations to develop the universities role in the formation of political awareness.

Al Slehat conducted a study (2014) entitled as " *The Consequences of Arab Spring on the Political Awareness among Students of Jordanian Universities*". The population of the study was (66945) female and male students from Jordanian universities in the middle region: University of Jordan, Hashemite, Amman and applied university. The sample consisted of (382) students. The results ensured that the impact of Arab Spring revolutions on the political awareness of students at Jordanian universities in the middle region was high in degree. In addition, there were no statistically significant differences attributed either to the gender or faculty of students. However, students of public universities showed a higher impact than their counterparts in private universities. The study concludes by highlighting the vital need for educating university students about the importance of political participation. A study conducted by Al Hijjawi (2015), entitled as " *Proposed Educational Foundations to Activate the Role of Jordanian Universities in Developing Political Awareness among Students and the relation to self-autonomy*". The sample of the study consisted of (384) female and male students from three public universities, University of Jordan, Mutah and Yarmouk University. The outcomes showed that the university role had the highest degree in developing political awareness among students, and in favor of the students' activities. The results also revealed that there was a positive correlation between the university role in developing political awareness and its role in developing autonomy. The

researcher recommended that the role of the universities in developing political awareness should be strengthened by including political concepts in the text courses. The researcher utilized the previous studies to build the present study tool and formulate its items. However, the previous studies, Al Ghnemen (2014), Al Hijjawi (2015), Hamdonah (2013), Ahmad (2005), Al Slehat (2014/2005), Schaefer and Bassiony (2011), focused on developing political awareness, while the current study tackled the role of the faculty member in developing political awareness which neglected by the previous studies.

Problem of the Study

The University years are considered as the most important stage which has an effect on students in terms of developing them physically and mentally; forming their thinking, behavior, political and social attitudes; understanding the surrounding challenges that hinder their progress. In addition to forming and developing political awareness for the aim of preparing a good citizen who is capable of being creative and innovative and taking the responsibility for positive change. However, the role of the university can be shown by the interests of the faculty member in events and political conditions of the society. In fact, The researcher believed that the reasons which lie behind conducting the current study are : the importance of the faculty member in developing political awareness among students, feeling of the importance of such topic as she is a university faculty member and rareness of studies that tackled the same topic. The study tried to answer the following questions:

1. What is the role of the faculty member in developing political awareness among his /her students from their point of view ?
2. Are there statistically significant differences at $(0.05 = \alpha)$ between the means of the faculty member role in developing political awareness of students from their point of view attributed to the following variables: gender, academic year?

Objectives of the Study

The current study aimed to recognize the role of the faculty member in developing political awareness among students. In addition, study the statistical differences of the faculty member role in developing political awareness among students in accordance with variables of gender and academic year.

Importance of the Study

- According to the researcher, the current study may be considered as one of the few studies that tackled the role of faculty member in developing political awareness. In fact, Studies that tackled this dimension are still rare.
- The study comes as a response to the latest political developments and political reform movements which took place in many Arab countries due to Arab Spring. The unstable situation of Arab countries needs profound and ongoing studies. Thus, the outcomes of this study will enrich the Arab library with a useful material.
- The importance of this study arises from the importance of the faculty member in formulation the student's

character, and his political awareness of events that take place across the Arab world.

Limits of the study

- Human limits: the study is limited to Qassim university students(male and female)
- Spatial limits: the study is limited to Qassim university in the Kingdome of Saudi Arabia.
- Time limits: the study is limited to the academic year of 2015/2016.
- Objective limits: the study is limited to the role of the faculty member in developing political awareness among his/her students from the their point of view.

Definitions

Political awareness: the individual ability to understand the political events that take place around him as well as their impact on societies, being capable of analyzing events objectively. In addition to an active participation in building and developing his community and understanding his political rights and duties,(Al Kames& Al Saied,2005).

The operational definition of political awareness: the degree gained by the sample of the study on their responses to the study tool.

Methods and procedures

Population of the study

The population of the study consisted of (9526) male and female students of Qassim University in the Kingdome of Saudi Arabia.

Sample of the Study: The sample consisted of (375) male and female students from Qassim University. The sample was selected by adopting the stratified method as shown in table (1).

Table 1. Distribution of the study sample by gender, study year variables

Variable	categories	Number	Percentage
gender	Male	164	%43.7
	Female	211	%56.3
Study year	First year	91	%24.3
	Second year	86	%22.9
	Third year	88	%23.5
	Fourth year	110	%29.3
	Total	375	%100.0

The Reliability of the Study Tool

To calculate the reliability of the study tool, the internal consistency coefficient was used according to (Cranach's alpha) equation, and the use of a test and re-test (test-retest) through its application on (40) students outside of the study sample with a time lag between the two of 2weeks. Then, Pearson correlation coefficient was used to calculate the degrees between the test and re-test (test-retest). Table (2) shows the internal consistency coefficient according to (Cranach's alpha) equation and test-retest reliability.

2. The internal consistency coefficient (Cranach's alpha) and Test-Retest reliability of domains and total degree

Domain	Test-Re-test reliability	Internal Consistency
Role of faculty member in developing political awareness among students	0.90	0.89

The Validity of the Study tool

The researcher verified the validity of tool:

1. Construct validity: the researcher calculated the correlation between each item of the domains items by the overall degree of domain.
2. Content Validity: the questionnaire was verified by viewing its primary image on (7) of experienced and competent arbitrators who are faculty members Qassim University. It was modified by the deletion and addition of some items. After the adjustment, the final questioner approved with (26) items to measure the faculty member role in developing political awareness among students.

Methodology

The researcher employed the analytical descriptive method, which is based on gathering data, since it is appropriate for the study purposes:

Table 3. The arithmetic mean, standard deviation, rank and level of the role of the faculty member in developing political awareness among his /her students from their point of view

Rank	No.	Items	AM	SD	Level
1	3	explains the rights and responsibilities of citizen	2.64	.543	High
2	5	Raises sense of loyalty and national belonging	2.56	.604	High
3	2	Urges students to observe laws and regulations	2.46	.610	High
4	4	Trains students on social responsibility	2.38	.617	High
5	18	Utilizes teaching methods that promote critical thinking	2.34	.634	High
6	26	Suggests activities that contribute to targeted and constructive criticism	2.31	.664	Mid
7	6	Explains the roles of security institutions in maintaining security and stability	2.27	.673	Mid
7	22	Urges student to respect contrary opinions	2.27	.683	Mid
9	13	Clarifies attributes of the civil society	2.26	.639	Mid
9	24	Explains the student's role in maintaining the country assets and defending it.	2.26	.648	Mid
9	17	Illustrates the necessity of putting the public interest a head of personal interest	2.20	.646	Mid
12	19	Suggests activities based on voluntary work which serves the community	2.19	.783	Mid
13	14	Introduces the national characters and their achievements that have contributed to the country development	2.15	.795	Mid
14	15	Explains the importance of national unity among people and its role in maintaining stability and security	2.10	.755	Mid
15	21	Directs students to the trustful information resources (written and visual) to get the right political news.	2.08	.675	Mid
16	23	Urges students to make decisions independently, and without the interference of others.	2.06	.673	Mid
17	25	Explains the importance of peaceful national debate between political parties and movements.	1.97	.568	Mid
18	9	Explains the importance of fighting tribalism and regionalism.	1.93	.737	Mid
19	8	Explains the necessity of combating all kinds of extremism	1.89	.655	Mid
20	7	Explains the students role in political participation in order to make decisions	1.84	.647	Mid
21	12	Urges students to evaluate news and political analysis objectively	1.73	.647	Mid
22	20	Explains the role of peaceful and non-violent sit-ins in achieving the legitimate claims.	1.69	.609	Mid
23	10	Encourages students to attend political conferences and seminars	1.67	.618	Mid
23	11	Explains the impact of current political events and Arab revolutions on the country	1.67	.590	Mid
25	1	Gives students the chance to participate and discuss the current political events freely.	1.60	.650	Low
25	16	Contributes to the introduction of the most important political parties at the Arab and international level	1.60	.686	Low
	.19	Role of the faculty member	2.08	.199	Mid

Statistical Standard of the Tool

To evaluate the study tool, the researcher adopted three –point likert scale : high(1), mid (2), low(3). The following scale was adopted to analyze the outcomes: from 1 to 1.66 (low), 1.67 to 2.33 (mid), 2.34 to 3 (high).

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

First Question: What is the role of the faculty member in developing political awareness among his /her students from their point of view ?

To answer this question the arithmetic means and the standard deviations were calculated for the degree of the role of the faculty member in developing political awareness among his /her students from their point of view, as shown in Table (3). As can be seen in Table (3), the arithmetic means ranged between (2.64) as the highest degree and was to the third item:"explains the rights and responsibilities of citizen", this may be attributed to the fact that the study courses are not associated with such topics. In addition to the overloaded schedule of the faculty member and inadequate time to present his/her lecture. On the other hand, the lowest degree was to the items (1&16) with a mean of (1.60) : "gives students the chance to participate and discuss the current political events freely, contributes to the introduction of the most important political parties at the Arab and international level", this may be contributed to the fact that the political issues and events are not linked to the topics of the study courses and insufficient time to present the lecture. In addition to the restricted freedom which prevents the faculty member discuss political issues with students. However, the arithmetic mean for the faculty member role as a whole was (2,08). Overall, there is a good agreement between the outcomes of the current study and the results of both Al-Ghnenen and Al Hijjawi.

Second Question : Are there statistically significant differences at (0.05= α) between the means of the faculty member role in developing political awareness of students from their point of view attributed to gender, study year variables:?

To answer this question the arithmetic means and the standard deviations were calculated for the degree of the role of the faculty member in developing political awareness among students from their point of view, and in terms of gender and study year variables, as shown in Table (4)

academic years. It is worth mentioning that the previous studies did not tackle this variable.

Table 4. The arithmetic mean, standard deviation of the role of the faculty member in developing political awareness among students from their point of view, in terms of gender and study year variables

Variable	categories	AM	SD	NO.
Gender	Male	2.09	.195	164
	Female	2.08	.203	211
Academic year	First year	2.02	.202	91
	Second year	2.08	.208	86
	Third year	2.09	.177	88
	Fourth year	2.13	.198	110

Table 5. Two-way analysis of variance for the effect of gender and study year on the role of the faculty member in developing political awareness among students from their point of view

Variance source	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean square	F-Value	Statistical difference
gender	.004	1	.004	.102	.750
year	.553	3	.184	4.774	.003
mistake	14.298	370	.039		
total	14.854	374			

Table 6. Post Hoc Comparisons according to Scheff'e method for the effect of the study year on the faculty member role in developing political awareness among students from their point of view

	AM	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year
First Year	2.02				
Second Year	2.08	.06			
Third Year	2.09	.07	.01		
Fourth Year	2.13	.10*	.05	.04	

*Significance at level (0.05= α)

Table (4) shows apparent variance between the arithmetic means and standard deviations for the role of the faculty member in developing political awareness among students from their point of view due to the category difference of gender and study year variables. To reveal the statistical significant differences between the arithmetic means, the two-way analysis of variance was used, as shown in Table (5). Table (5) shows that there were no statistically significant differences at the level (0.05= α) due to gender variable. The calculated F was (102), which was a statistically significant at (.750). This may be attributed to the fact that both male and female students are aware of the faculty member role in developing political awareness as they always keep in touch with him. It is worth mentioning that the previous studies did not tackle the faculty member role variable. Also, it shows that there were statistically significant differences at the level (0.05= α) due to study year variable, the value of calculated was (4.774), which was a statistically significant at (003). To detect the pair wise differences, which were statistically significant, between the arithmetic means, the researcher used the Post Hoc Comparisons according to Scheff'e test, as shown in Table (6)

Table (6) shows that there were statistically significant difference at level (0.05= α) between the first study year and the fourth one in favor of the fourth year. This may be attributed to the fact that the students of the fourth year are more capable of evaluating the faculty member roles such as developing political awareness among students as they have more contact with him compared to the students of other

Recommendations

In the light of the current study outcomes, the researcher recommended:

- Since the outcomes showed that the degree of faculty member role in developing political awareness was average, the researcher sees that it is necessary to held awareness seminars for the faculty members in order to promote and increase their abilities and roles in developing political awareness among students.
- Since the items : "Gives students the chance to participate and discuss the current political events freely and without fear, contributes to the introduction of the most important political parties at the Arab and international level", had the lowest degree, the researcher sees that it is important to support the faculty member by granted him enough space of freedom to practice effectively his roles in developing students' political awareness both inside and outside of the university.
- Conducting further studies because the foreign and Arab studies that have tackled the topic are few. Also, the future studies should take into account new variables which have not been tackled by the present study.

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