



Measurement of Awareness of Citizenship Rights (Case Study: North Khorasan Province)

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Received: 01.02.2015; Accepted: 05.05.2015

Abstract. Current work was conducted aiming at measuring public awareness of the citizenship rights in North Khorasan Province. Research design is descriptive survey of correlation type in terms of data collection conducted on a sample (n = 384) in North Khorasan Province in 2013. Expensiveness and lack of citizens' willingness to answer a legal questionnaire were limitations of the work. The research tested 8 hypotheses. According to findings and correlation test results, there is positive relationship between awareness of citizenship rights and attitudes, media use, participation in public life, social status, education and age; however it is a weak relationship. Considering t-test results, there is relationship between citizenship rights and gender. Considering F-test, there is no relationship between awareness of citizenship rights and ethnicity. Considering regression test results, attitude, media use, presence in the public arena, education and age components affect awareness of citizenship rights. Considering results for regression test, social status, gender, and ethnicity do not affect citizenship rights. It is concluded awareness of citizenship rights is in average level in the province and majority of citizens have low social status, thus governmental and non-governmental organizations should attempt in a more planned manner in this area.

Keywords: citizen, citizenship rights, attitude to citizenship rights, Ethnicities, social status

1. INTRODUCTION

The term Citizenship Rights (in new meaning) was originally introduced in Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, on 26 August 1789 in French. Following being passed, it was put at the top of constitution in 1791. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), signed in 1948 in UN General Assembly, was inspired by Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen Content in many cases. In order to evaluate democracy in the states, firstly their civil procedure, criminal procedure and observing citizenship rights in their courts are examined, since acceptance, preservation and observation of citizenship rights are salient marks of democracy. In fact, the more progress is achieved in this regard, democracy is appreciated more.

Following power transfer from tribes to an centralized institution known as government, one if the main tasks of the states is providing personal freedoms and passing appropriate regulations prevents from invasion others to personal rights and freedoms. One important matter is passing regulations is the term Citizenship and its application in the community.

Related questions in this regards include: To whom the term citizen refers? Are there different classes for it? What are citizenship rights? Where do these rights come from? Do these

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rights are formally separate from other rights? How does citizenship rights differ from other rights, including civil, criminal, administrative, business and... etc.? Does it have any warranty? These rights shall be exercised by which institution? Is there need for training the right to people? What type of rules or laws of the state can be passed so that citizenship rights are promote in the best way? And like that. Firstly, the term Citizen should be defined and it should be clarified to whom it refers.

It is interesting to note that most people who were questioned about lexical meaning and social meaning of the word citizen didn't known its meaning and they often provided a vague and unclear and largely political definition! This is investigable [1]. Considering human happiness in all societies is the ideal of Islamic Republic of Iran and it deserves independence, freedom, and sovereignty of truth and justice for all peoples of the world and believes in exalted dignity and value of man and his freedom coupled with responsibility before God (Paragraph 6, Article II (2) in Constitution), the government should provide such conditions so that rights of the people are met. To this end, some instances are proposed in regulations known as citizenship rights. Different theorists have discussed about awareness of citizenship rights. Current work investigates about awareness of citizenship in Constitution and Iran's 20-year vision plan and some other regulations including Fourth Development Plan. Such rights can be classified as follows: citizenship and political rights and freedoms, legal rights and economic, social and cultural rights [1]. According to Hezarjaribi, such variables as attitude to citizenship rights, use of mass media, presence in public arena and the social status are related with citizenship awareness [2].

Citizenship rights concept is one of the main concepts in policy making and social planning. Active citizenship refers to formation of active and enabled communities. Active citizenship results from enabling people and communities where participation process is regarded as valuable. Active citizenship demands purposeful participation. The citizen who is aware of citizenship rights demands purposeful participation, i.e. citizens participate for better living place, and i.e. people are actively participated in decision making process in urban affairs and their living place. Thus, citizens are allows to participate in planning and provision of public services. Such citizenship awareness requires people to not only demand for their rights, but they should take broader personal and social responsibilities. It is believed that in 21th century power traditional structures such has governments, large and private companies, schools and like that cannot solve all urban life problems and solving all problems is not possible without active participation of the citizens [3].

Anyway the common point is that without mobilization and stimulation of people and communities for participation it is hard to find appropriate solution for above mentioned socioeconomic issues. Distinct feature of current policy is that realization of active citizenship rights is regarded as the prerequisite for community progress in 21th century and thus fairer and more appropriate living can be provided for citizens [3].

There are various indices for describing level of development in today planning literature. Such indices had originally economic nature, but they turned into a combination of material and nonmaterial indices over the time. Public knowledge is in a special place among indices constituting main development structure [4]. So that increasing public knowledge and awareness in all areas including personal rights and urban regulations is one of the main tasks

and responsibilities of the government toward the society currently in different communities. It should be considered awareness of the citizens is not obtained per se only through their gathering; rather urban institutions should take responsibility for its establishment. On the other hand, merely having right and responsibility and awareness of it doesn't suffice, rather if these rights are not demanded and are not truly run, they would be vain. It is clear awareness is the first and most basic step in this way, however, no considerable progress is observed in this regard in developing states (including Iran). According to a study, general information of Americans in San Francisco was relatively higher to ten times than general information of residents of Jakarta in Indonesia, which is directly related to educational level [5]. Thus, it can be found policies, plans and legal regulations would have no outcome in such conditions without public awareness, and in addition to disturbance in management of cities, citizens would also face different problems. In other words, having appropriate life with others and enjoyment of urban benefits is not realized without awareness of related rights, tasks, and responsibilities [6]. The main problem in this work is investigating and understanding public awareness of citizenship rights in citizens of North Khorasan Province and identifying its effective factors, so that deficiencies can be overcome.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research design is descriptive survey and correlation type run on a sample (n = 384) taken from North Khorasan Province in 2013. Research tool was an author-made questionnaire, reliability and validity of questionnaire was confirmed by Cronbach's alpha and expert ideas. Cluster sampling was used and questionnaires were distributed in 8 districts of North Khorasan Province relative to the population.

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Citizenship rights form an integral part of civil society and are the basis for it because it provides voluntary participation of all people in all social arenas.

Citizenship has become an important concept for description, understanding, and explaining different ways of participation or deprivation of citizenship in development process. In fact, there is no other concept or idea than citizenship that integrates ideals of human need to equality and his demands for freedom in such extent.

Ahmadi in his book, Foundations of Iran's National Identity, refers to challenges for Iranian identity and classifies today community's needs as follows: 1. Need for political, social, cultural freedoms and influence of civil society in political decision-making and power, 2. Need to socioeconomic justice in public arena and equal access to public opportunity and advantages, 3. Need for equality and equitable distribution of national wealth among the various parts of the country, 4. need for gender equality and equal rights for men and women, 5. ethnic and religious groups need to equal access to national privileges [7]. Considering novel needs of the Iran's community according to Ahmadi and the insight obtained from this research, measurement of awareness of citizens in North Khorasan Province is necessary. Significance of citizenship rights awareness is recognized well when it is clear that low awareness concerning citizenship rights means increasing the belief in citizens that inequality in the society is obvious, there is no problem in inquisition and it is legal, enjoyment of social security is not a public right for all citizens, i.e. any kind of torture is not prohibited to extract confessions or information, it means

ignoring family unit which is clearly observable in western communities claiming for observing human rights, and many other problems which may result from lack of awareness in citizens concerning their rights [8].

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Main objective of the current research is measuring and understanding public awareness of citizenship rights and its effective factors in North Khorasan Province.

Minor objectives of the study include:

- Investigation of relationship between attitude toward citizenship rights and awareness of citizenship rights,
- Investigation of relationship between use of mass media and awareness of citizenship rights,
- Investigation of relationship between social status and awareness of citizenship rights,
- Investigation of relationship between ethnicity and awareness of citizenship rights,
- Investigation of relationship between age and awareness of citizenship rights,
- Investigation of relationship between gender and awareness of citizenship rights,
- Investigation of relationship between education and awareness of citizenship rights.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Parsons maintains that emergence of citizenship rights is result of industrial capitalism society emergence and argues all changes occurring in industrial society including urbanisms and rationality provided a good ground for this phenomenon. Based on universality pattern variables, value objectivity and the civic contracts based community; he provides an image of the citizenship as a type of social action referring to social membership and coherence. Special emphasis on citizenship rights by Parsons is because he assumes citizenship would transform into the main criterion of National Solidarity in democratic communities. In the past, religion, ethnicity or land based differences were so important that they determine members of the society or deprivation of some people from membership in the society, while shared citizenship rights now provide an adequate basis for National Solidarity. According to Parsons, a perfect citizenship free from any social discrimination means enjoyment of all social classes and groups from citizenship rights and commitments and their awareness of their rights. Hence, awareness of citizenship rights requires provision of different sources and creation of appropriate opportunities and recreation of public values in one hand, and proper attitude toward these rights, on the other hand. In the current research, following hypothesis is tested using Parsons View: attitude of people toward citizenship rights affects awareness of citizenship rights [2].

Turner regards citizenship rights as a series of legal and formal rights defined for a given society, and in which the citizen claims national resources, citizen has major economic resources such as housing, income, political resources, freedom of expression and cultural resources such as education and training. Turner pays attention to the role of social, economic, and cultural condition of the society, and he argues awareness of rights varies by different ethnicities. Role of mass media should be particularly considered among social conditions, since

it influences social awareness of the people like an intermediate. Thus, using Turner's theory, following hypothesis is tested: use of mass media as a source for citizens' awareness [2].

From the perspective of Habermas, public sphere is an arena, where people come together to participate in open and public discussions. Principles of equity and access are non-removable principles in such sphere. According to Habermas, it is in public sphere and civil society where people find citizenship role and one becomes committed to his society as a member in the role of citizenship and he has special legal status and enjoys citizenship rights. Thus, he considers participation and presence in public arena as the main citizenship representative, and analyzes it in different ways. Therefore, he considers equal access to participatory rights more. Considering the ability for changing social life in public arena and civil society, society members will play citizenship role. Using Habermas's view, following hypothesis is tested: presence and participation in public arena affects awareness of citizenship rights [2].

Marx believes economic status and inequality in a society directs people to compete, fight and struggle with each other. In fact, legal equality is a cover for the economic inequalities, and equal participation for all people in social and political affairs is not possible with such inequalities. He calls for the liberation of all human beings, which is at odds with capitalism. According to Marx, citizenship is economic, social and practical subjugation of deprived people which must be corrected. To this end, people with low economic status have lower awareness of their rights, and on the other hand, they do not enjoy citizenship rights. Hence, for creation of non-hierarchical society steps should be taken by training citizens and making them aware of their rights. Citizens in bourgeois society are not free and equal, economic status and inequalities direct the people in the community to competition, strife and struggle together. Hence, considering Marx's theory, following hypothesis is tested: social and economic status affect awareness of citizenship rights [2].

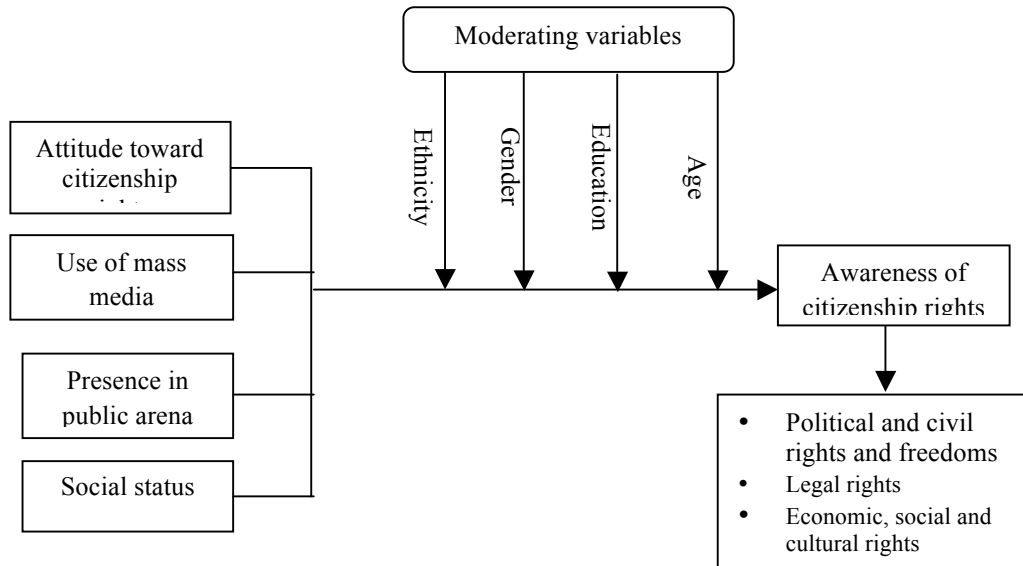


Figure 1. Research conceptual model

6. FINDINGS

6.1. Awareness of citizenship rights in terms of citizens' awareness

Basis for awareness measurement was 20 items with scores 0-10 (low awareness), 11-16 (average awareness), and 17-20 (high awareness). Considering Table 1 and Fig. 2, most people on North Khorasan Province are averagely aware of citizenship rights.

Table 1. Frequency distribution of statistical units in terms of awareness of citizenship rights.

Awareness	Frequency percentage	Frequency
low awareness	20.6	79
average awareness	56.2	216
high awareness	23.2	89
sum	100	384

6.2. Awareness of citizenship rights in terms of constitution's chapters

Awareness of citizenship rights means what is in people mind about citizenship rights and to what extent their knowledge is compatible to the reality mentioned in the constitutions, which include three parts: political and civil rights and freedoms, legal rights, and economic, social and cultural rights. Comparison of the means indicate awareness of the citizens about economic, social and cultural rights in the constitution is more than two other types of rights (Table 2 and Fig 3).

Table 2. Mode and average of statistical units in terms of awareness of citizenship rights

	Mean	Mode
political and civil rights and freedoms	4.5156	4
legal rights	4.0521	5
economic, social and cultural rights	5.0130	6

6.3. Awareness of citizenship rights in terms of regulations

Descriptive statistics of correct and incorrect answers of the respondents to questions for citizenship rights awareness are shown in Table 3 and Fig. 4.

Table 3. Frequency of correct and incorrect answers of the respondents to questions for citizenship rights.

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Items	Correct	Incorrect
All the affairs of the country, either through direct vote or indirectly, depend on the will of the nation and his right in this case is not an exception (Article 6, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran)	191	193
People of Iran from every ethnicity and tribe shall enjoy equal rights, and race, color, language, etc. will not be cause for privilege (Article 19, constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran).	227	157
is personal property that is legitimately obtained respected (Article 47, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran).	300	84
Not delivery and inspection of letters, recording and disclosure of telephone conversations, disclosure of telegraphic and telex communications, censorship, or the willful failure to transmit them, eavesdropping and research is forbidden except by law (Article 25, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran).	300	84
No authority is allowed to withdraw legitimate freedoms even through laws and regulations in the name of independence and territorial integrity (Article 9, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran).	207	177
Publications and the press have freedom of expression except when it is detrimental to the fundamental principles of Islam or public rights (Article 24, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran).	233	151
Iranian citizenship is inalienable right of every Iranian and the government cannot withdraw citizenship from any Iranian unless he himself requests it or if they become citizens of another country (Article 41, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran).	276	108
If someone loses his will on drinking alcohol, and it is proved drinking alcohol was not for committing crime and he committed murder, in this case he is not guilty for the offense of murder (Article 224, Islamic Penal Code).	118	266
Government is bound to ensure the rights of women and men in all aspects and provide legal security and equality in law for public (Section 14, Article 3, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran).	322	62
no one has the right to punish criminals except the competent judicial authority assigned by the law (Article 36, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran)	230	154
The principle is that no one has committed a sin and a crime (Article 37, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran)	118	266
Dignity, life, rights, residence and occupation of the individual are inviolate, except in cases prescribed by law (Article 22, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran)	219	165
In all courts, the parties have the right to choose their own lawyer, and if he doesn't afford choosing a lawyer does, facilities should be provided for them to choose one (Article 35, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran).	321	63
Any torture to extract confessions or acquiring information are forbidden, forcing individuals to testify, confess, or take an oath is not permitted and such testimony and confession is null and lack of credit (Article 38, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran)	228	156
Government is bound to "plan for fair and proper economy according to Islamic regulations for creating welfare and eliminating poverty and solving any deprivation in nutrition and housing and labor and health and insurance areas" (Article 12, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran)	309	75
Government is bound to develop employment possibility and equal conditions for obtaining job considering need of the society (Article 28, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran)	332	52
To possess housing appropriate to their needs is the right of every Iranian individual and family, and the government is obliged to provide the implementation of this right according to the priority for those who are more needy especially in rural people and workers (Article 31, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran)	331	53
Government is bound to improve the (physical and mental) health of people and improve their quality of life (Articles 84, 86, 90, Citizenship Rights in Fourth Development Plan)	338	46
Every Iranian person shall be entitled to national welfare, such as health, welfare,...as well as favorable environment in 1404 (Iran's 20-year vision plan)	297	87
Official language and writing script of Iran is Persian and formal documents and correspondences and textbooks should be in this language and script (Article 15, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Iran)	318	66

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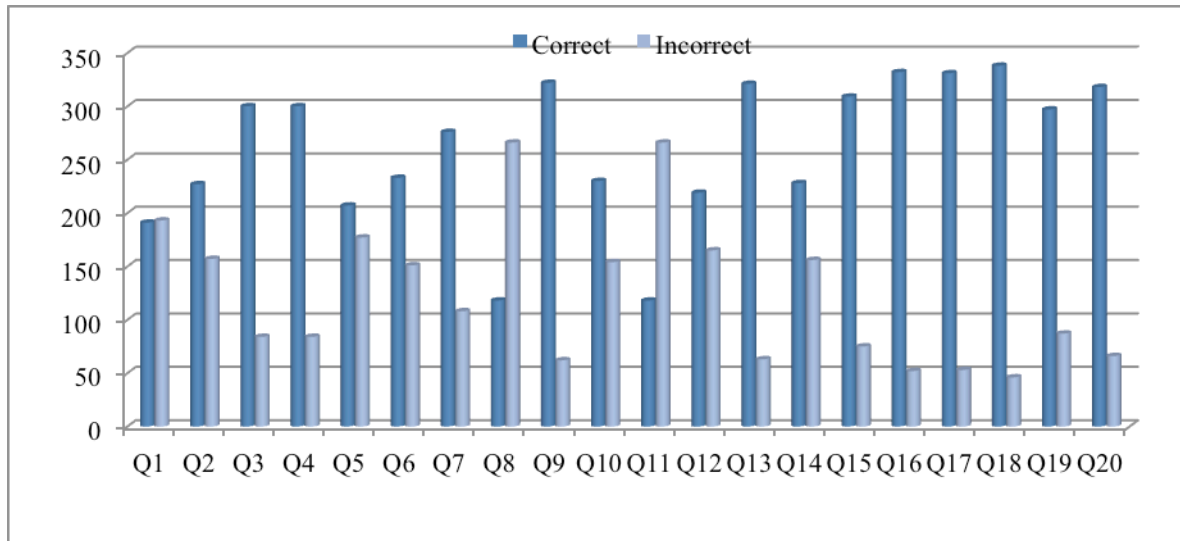


Figure 2. Frequency of correct and incorrect answers of the respondents to questions for citizenship rights awareness.

6.4. Comparison of citizenship rights in terms of ethnicity

Considering Table 4, comparison of awareness of citizenship rights in different ethnicities of the province, the highest awareness is among Turks and lowest awareness is for Turkmen (see fig. 5).

Table 4. Comparing awareness of different ethnicities in North Khorasan Province concerning citizenship rights

Ethnicity	Turk	Tat	Kurd	Fars	Other	Turkmen
Average	14.3	13.8929	13.5378	13.4114	13	12.625

6.5. Comparison of awareness of citizenship rights in terms of gender

Considering Table 5 and fig. 6, awareness of men was higher than women in citizenship rights.

Table 5. Comparing awareness of citizenship rights in terms of gender.

Gender	Male	Female
Average	14.1531	12.8971

6.6. Attitude to citizenship rights

10 items were used for measuring attitude of citizens. Table 6 suggests most citizens have positive attitude toward citizenship rights (see fig. 7).

Table 6. Frequency distribution of statistical units in terms of attitude toward citizenship rights.

	Frequency	Frequency percentage
Negative attitude	3	0.8
Neither positive nor negative attitude	100	26
Positive attitude	281	73.2
Sum	384	100

6.7. Use of mass media

5 items were used for measuring use of mass media. Table 7 suggests most citizens use mass media in average level (see fig. 8).

Table 7. Frequency distribution of statistical units in terms of mass media use

	Frequency	Frequency percentage
Low	73	19
Average	244	63.5
High	67	17.5
Sum	384	100

6.8. Presence in public arena

5 items were used for measuring use of presence in public arena. Table 8 suggests most citizens are averagely present in public arena (see fig. 9).

Table 8. Frequency distribution of statistical units in terms of presence in public arena

	Frequency	Frequency percentage
Low	67	17.4
Average	223	58.1
High	94	24.5
Sum	384	100

6.9. Social status

4 items were designed for measuring social status. According to Table 9, most citizens have low social status (see fig. 10).

Table 10. Frequency distribution of statistical units in terms of social status.

	Frequency	Frequency percentage
Low	217	56.5
Average	158	41.1
High	9	2.3
Sum	384	100

6.10. Correlation coefficient

Correlation coefficient is a statistics for measurement of strength or degree of a linear relationship between two variables. Pearson correlation or r is the most known correlation coefficient. It is defined in such a way that some values are taken between -1 and +1. The larger is r (regardless of its sign), the relationship is stronger. Considering correlation test results it is clear since p -value is zero, there is relationship between citizenship rights and attitude, use of media, public arena, social status, education, and age at level $\alpha = 0.05$ (Table 10). In other words, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is supported. Thus, increased use of media, attitude, public arena presence, social status, education, and age leads to increased awareness of citizenship rights and $H_1, H_2, H_3, H_4, H_5, H_6,$ and H_7 are supported.

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Table 10. Pearson correlation in research hypotheses.

		Attitude	Use of media	Public arena	Social status	Education	Age
awareness of citizenship rights	Pearson Correlation (r)	0.403	0.210	0.288	0.204	0.162	0.190
	Sig	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Relationship percent	41%	21%	29%	20%	16%	19%

T-Test: Significance level was obtained for H5 considering t-test which is smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$, thus H_0 is rejected and H_1 is supported and there is relationship between gender and awareness of citizenship rights.

F-Test: Significance level was obtained as 0.667 for H8 considering F-test which is smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$, thus H_1 is rejected and H_0 is supported and there is relationship between ethnicity and awareness of citizenship rights.

Regression test: In order to investigate effects of variables on each other, regression method was used. Summary of results obtained from SPSS Software is given in Table 11. Beta is Beta weight which represents change in the response variable per change in one SD in independent variable. T test for is for testing regression coefficient and Sig is p-value for t. in H1, H2, H3, H6, and H7, since their values are smaller than 0.05, it shows t for the weight variable is significant at level beyond 0.01, and these hypotheses are supported. However, H4, H5, and H8 which measure relationship between social status, gender, and ethnicity with awareness of citizenship rights are rejected.

Table 11. Testing research hypotheses based on regression mode.

Hypothesis		Sig.	t-value
1	Attitude to citizenship rights and awareness of citizenship rights	0.000	6.634
2	Media use and awareness of citizenship rights	0.004	2.921
3	Presence in public arena and awareness of citizenship rights	0.005	2.794
4	Social status and awareness of citizenship rights	0.427	-0.796
5	Gender and awareness of citizenship rights	0.137	1.491
6	Education and awareness of citizenship rights	0.004	2.858
7	Age and awareness of citizenship rights	0.002	3.14
8	Ethnicity and awareness of citizenship rights	0.800	-0.254

6.11. Recommendations

1. Clarification on some of the wording in the law that makes difference and misunderstanding,
2. Clarification of possible contradiction among rules,
3. Detailed implementation of rules and dealing with offenders, without exception and case negligible,
4. Social status of most citizens in the province is low, i.e. citizens are in a low level in terms of income, education, job, and type of travelling asked in this research. As it is clear, poverty and unemployment are origin for many illegalities, corruption and lack of concern for the community's awareness of their natural rights. Thus, it is necessary that practitioners, authorities and managers take steps in this regard.

5. Introducing associations, NGOs, communities, etc. in different areas to citizens and different ethnicities of the province and describing their activities may increase presence in the public arenas.
6. Conducting various researches and polls on the reasons for non-participation in elections and voluntary social, cultural, art associations as well as deep interview with citizens may clarify reasons for such unwillingness. By recognizing and identifying its reasons it is possible to solve the problem and smooth way for higher participation in political, cultural, and social arenas.
7. Positive attitude toward regulations leads to observation and attempt for awareness of the regulations and enhancing attitude of citizens toward observation of regulations and justice in higher levels and governmental organizations leads to more observation and awareness of the regulations.
8. If citizens have positive attitude about observation of their rights, they value more their citizenship tasks.
9. There is significant difference in awareness of different ethnicities about their citizenship rights and media and involved bodies should fill the gap.
10. Information of the citizens about totality of the regulations and law is in average level and most of them were incorrect in answering to questions about some regulations. Thus they should be informed more about details of the regulations.
11. Field studies in legal area have been low in North Khorasan Province, thus researchers are recommended to attempt more on field studies considering commonality of the law for citizens.

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