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STUDENT'S OPINIONS OF KUWAIT UNIVERSITY'S ROLE IN THE DISSEMINATE OF SOCIETAL CULTURE

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Abstract: Values and beliefs of any society are considered as ones of the important issues for the identification of the society, and it is one of the main roles of higher education institutes to develop and enhance these values and beliefs among students. Kuwait University is regarded as one of the important institutes of higher education in Kuwait. Therefore, it is responsible to enhance the societal values and beliefs of the society among students.

There were two aims of this study. The first aim was that, according to the students' opinions to what extent that Kuwait University has disseminated the societal culture among the students. The second aim was that to what extent that there are significant differences between students of the sample regarding their sex and their field of study. The researchers built a questionnaire for this purpose. The questionnaire was divided to three parts; part one for the role of community courses that Kuwait University teaches them for the dissemination of societal culture, part two for the role of faculties in the dissemination of societal culture and part three for the role of students' activities in the dissemination of societal culture.

The results indicated that the university students learned societal culture more significantly than they learned from the role of faculties and from students' activities. In the other hand, there was no significant difference between the role of faculties and students' activities in the dissemination of societal culture among students. The results also indicated that there were no significant differences between boys and girls in learning societal culture from students' activities or from faculties. Both indicated close level of affect in developing societal culture among boys and girls. On the other hand, girls showed significant differences than boys in learning societal culture regarding community courses. But there was no significant differences between boys and girls in learning societal culture regarding students' activities and faculties, Finally, the results showed that there was no significant differences between students in their opinions about the university's role in disseminations the societal culture regarding the students' fields.

Keywords: *Culture, Societal, Kuwait, University, Students*

Introduction

Societal culture is the basic elements that help people of any society to interact among themselves. When we talk about societal culture, we actually talk about the culture itself of the particular society. Therefore, societal culture is an instrument that making people represent a particular society. In other words, societal culture forming the way of living of the society with the customs, values, beliefs (Al-Rumaidhi, 2004). Moreover, the societal cultural symbolizes the framework of the whole customs, values, beliefs and behaviours of the society.

The values of any society are the main element that categorizes the identity of that society. According to the Kalish and Collier (1981), in order to understand the individual's behaviour, we need to understand first his or her society's values. The interaction between values and behaviours is a social and psychological process; each of them is related to the other and reflects it.

Many studies indicated that values affect mostly on youth more than any other people, so youth are mainly responsible to take care of their society's values and applied them to every day of their life (Al-Sahel and Al-Asousi, 1994, and Al-Soliman, 1998). Hameed (2006) found that the university plays an important role in educating students with the society values and beliefs. The results of Hameed' study indicates that students mostly learn religious values, then economic values, then political values. On the other hand, Al-Ansari (2007) found that university students mostly learn social values then work values (e.g. sincerity, faithfulness, commitment).

One of the main goals of the establishing the university around the world is to develop the youth's attitudes towards their society's values. Al-Sawi (2000) indicates that the main goals of establishing Arabic universities in the Gulf Area servicing and fulfilling the society' needs. Moreover, he specifies that there are social and cultural goals are needed to be achieved by the graduated students. According the director of Kuwait University (Al-Jallal, 2002), the basic mission of the Kuwait University is to develop the human wealth and help students to be able to take care of their society's values and customs as well as to understanding their problems' age and competences. Therefore, the university is not only a place for knowledge, but also for learning society values, beliefs and customs. These results are supported by (Hamada, 1989, Al-Soliman, 1998, Al-Sawi, 2000, Al-Ansari, 2007).

Many studies indicated that teaching societal culture is an important goal for students of higher education such as universities and colleges (Hamada, 1989, and Abdulghafour, 1994). These kinds of courses are vital issues for the future people because they are related and represent their society. However, it is important to the faculties to make their effort in order to encourage students to learn these kinds of courses. Ibrahim (1997) found that the content of the course and encouragement of the faculties are the most important issue that make student select societal courses.

There are many resources that help university students learn and develop values and beliefs of their society such as societal culture courses, faculties and students' activities. According to Al-Duaij

(2002), indicated that in spite of the importance of the students' activities in the Kuwait University, these activities failed to encourage students participating and to be involved with them.

Kuwait University like many other institutes are trying to teach their students many kinds of values, beliefs, customs and behaviours that represent the identity of Kuwait society. Therefore, the university placed some procedures to achieve this kind of goals. One of these procedures is called communities courses. According to Student University Guide (2009), community courses are academic courses that contents of knowledge about the social expectations and consisting of moral values, scientific and cultural concepts. Most of these courses are compulsory courses, all students must take them. Other procedure is called students' activities. These activities cover groups of programmes are presented to the university students in order to practice them outside the classrooms during their free time. These activities consist of a wide range of programmes such as culture, education, sports, science, and politics and so on. Other way that the Kuwait University disseminate the societal culture is through its faculties staff.

From the point of view, the present study was trying to find answers to the following four questions:

1. To what extent that Kuwait University has disseminated the societal culture among students through the community courses.
2. To what extent that Kuwait University has disseminated the societal culture among students through faculties staff.
3. To what extent that Kuwait University has disseminated the societal culture among students through student's activities.
4. To what extent that there are significant differences between students of the sample according their sex and their field of study.

Method

Participants:

A sample of 346 students from all the fourteenth Kuwait University colleges (colleges of Education, Art, Social Sciences, Law, Science, medicine, Engineering, Allied Health Science, Sharia and Islamic Studies, Business Administration, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Woman and Graduate Studies) were participated in this study. However, for easier category of the students' majors, these colleges were divided to tow main majors; science and Art. There were 129 males and 217 females, 211 arts major and 135 science major.

Measures:

The two researchers have developed a questionnaire called Students’ Opinions of Societal Culture (SOSC). The questionnaire consists of three parts; each part consists of 12 items. The first parts covered items measuring the role of Kuwait University in dissemination the societal culture through community courses between students. The second part covered items measuring the role of Kuwait University for disseminating the societal culture between students through faculties staff. The third part covered items measuring the role of Kuwait University for disseminating the societal culture between students through student’s activities.

Procedure:

The researchers asked cooperation of faculties who teach communities courses at the College of Education, and have students from other colleges. These students came from other university colleges such as College of Arts, College of Science, and College of Law...etc. A total of 400 SOSC copies were sent out and 346 questionnaires were completed. The participants were randomly selected to be included in this study.

Results:

Regarding the first two questions about the Kuwait University’ role in the dissemination the societal culture between students, table 1 shows that

Table 1 Means and Standard Deviations by questionnaire parts

Questionnaire Part Number	Title of the Part	M	SD
Part One	the Role of community courses in the Disseminations of societal culture	3.944	.5634
Part Two	the Role of Faculties in the Disseminations of societal culture	3.765	.7980
Part Three	the Role of Student’s Activities in the Disseminations of societal culture	3.753	.7373
Total Questionnaire Grades		3.821	.5573

Table 2: Paired Samples Test for Each Two Parts of the Questionnaire

Questionnaire Pairs Parts	M	SD	t	df
Pair1 part 1 x 2	.17943	.69131	4.828*	345
Pair 2 part 1 x 3	.19171	.71279	5.003*	345
Pair 3 Part 2 x 3	.01228	.84401	.271	345

*P < .001 level

Answering questions 1, 2 and 3, table 1 and 2 show that the part one (community courses) get higher mean than parts 2 (role of faculties) and part 3 (students' activities). Table 1 also shows that SOSOC part 2 (role of faculties) get higher mean than SOSOC part 3 (students' activities). Table 2 shows statistically significant differences between SOSOC part 1 and SOSOC part 2. Back to table 1, we can understand that university students have learned about societal culture from community courses (part 1) more significantly than they have learned from role of faculties (part 2). Moreover, table 1 and table 2 show that university students also have learned about societal culture from community courses (part 1) more significantly than they have learned from students' activities (part 3). In the other hand, there was no significant differences between part 2 (role of faculties) and part 3 (students' activities).

2. Question 3, it was found

Table3: T-test for the Students' sex by the Parts of the Questionnaire

Questionnaire Part	Sex	N	M	SD	T
Part 1	m	129	3.82	.557	3.266*
	f	217	4.02	.555	
Part 2	m	129	3.75	.768	.338
	f	217	3.78	.817	
Part 3	m	129	3.66	.707	1.906
	f	217	3.81	.750	
Total	m	129	3.74	.518	2.094*
	f	217	3.87	.575	

*P < .005 level

Table 2 shows that there was no significant difference were found regarding sex in parts 2 and 3. In the other words, there were no significant differences between the boys and the girls in learning societal culture from students' activities or from faculties. Both indicated close level of affecting in developing societal culture with boys as well as girls. On the other hand, table 3 shows that there was a significant difference between the boys and the girls in learning societal culture depending on community courses (part 1), girls (M= 4.02, SD= .555) showed significantly higher than boys (M=3.82, SD=.557) that community courses were much valuable in learning societal culture. Moreover, table 3 shows that there was significant difference regarding sex in the total scores. Girls (M= 3.87, SD= .575) show significantly higher than the boys (M=3.74, SD=.518) that community courses were much valuable in learning societal culture at the university.

Table4: T-test for the Students' fields by the Parts of the Questionnaire

Questionnaire Part	Field	N	M	SD	T
Part 1	Art	211	3.93	.594	.705
	Science	135	3.97	.513	
Part 2	Art	211	3.75	.805	.481
	Science	135	3.79	.790	
Part 3	Art	211	3.71	.800	1.284
	Science	135	3.81	.625	
Total	Art	211	3.80	.587	1.003
	Science	135	3.86	.507	

*P < .005 level

Table 4 shows that there was no significant difference between students in their opinions about the university's role in dissemination the societal culture regarding the students' fields.

Discussion

In compression between the three parts (community courses, faculties, and students' activities) of the SOSOC, it is clear that the results show that Kuwait University has achieved one of the important goals

that related to its mission. The results show that there were significant differences between the three parts. Kuwait University students indicated that they have developed most of their society values and beliefs through the community courses ($M=3.944$, $SD=.5634$), then through the faculties ($M=3.765$, $SD=.7980$) and lastly through the students' activities ($M= 3.753$, $SD=.7373$). Our explanation for these results is that in comparison between these three parts of the questionnaire (community courses, faculties, and students' activities), we can notice that through community courses, students must learn societal culture in order to get grades, but with faculties and students' activities the situation is different, if the students are interested and like their professors or/and activities in the university, they might work harder to learn societal culture. Another important issue related to this result is that many students are not interested with the students' activities, and this result was approved with Al-Duaij (2002) who found that there were many deficiencies in the students' activities that make the students not to join these kinds of university's activities. In addition, many of university students do not have time to join these activities; they want only concentrate on their studying. On the other hand, it might be logical that students learn societal culture from community courses more than they learn from faculties because of that the faculties concern only with teaching their curriculum, they do not give enough concerns to the societal culture while they are teaching, and this result comes in agreement with Ibrahim (1997) who indicated that it is important for the faculties to help students get better interaction with their curriculum as well as with their society.

For the third study question 4, table 3 shows that there are significant differences were found in the part 1 of the questionnaire and the total of the questionnaire parts regarding sex. University students Girls ($M=4.02$, $D=.555$) indicated significantly more than boys in learning society and beliefs values than boys ($M=3.82$, $SD= .557$). This result means that girls think that Kuwait University with its different procedures plays an important role in dissemination the societal culture among university students. Hameed (2006) supports the pervious result, she found that girls more than boys tend to learn their society values, beliefs and customs. Moreover, we as researchers believe that this result became more acceptable in the Arabic and Islamic society where the values and beliefs (e.g. generosity, kindness, compassion) are very important in the people' life and quite related to the girls 'natural.

On the other hand, the results in the table 3 shows that there are no significant differences were found between girls and boys regarding questionnaire parts 2 and 3 (role of faculties and student's activities in the dissemination of societal culture). Our explanation of this result is that it comes in harmony with consequences that we found in tables 1 and 2. In other words, the role of faculties and students' activities in dissemination of societal culture are very poor. It can be said that university girls and boys are both not having enough opportunities and serious concern in order to develop their societal culture from of faculties and student's activities.

Finally, table 4 show that there is no significant difference between university students regarding the fields study of the students. This result indicates that neither of the students 'field (Arts or sciences) has effecting significantly on the students' opinions to be changed than the other one. This consequence

comes in the agreement with Alraished (2000) study when he found that there is no significant difference between university students in their opinions about their educational values. Moreover, the researchers believe that the other rationalization of this result is that people learn their society values and beliefs from their families, peers, media and many other resources that not related to the individual's work or field of study. This interpretation is mainly supported by Nasser (2004) who insisted that the social customs (values and beliefs) are the main rule which control our social behaviours. By the end, according to the Kuwait University' major sheet, all students must take at least 27% community courses in order to be graduated. In other the words, arts and sciences students must both take very similar community courses, and that might made no significant differences between them.

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