

**Journal of Social Sciences Research & Policy (JSSRP)****Youth Attitude Towards Volunteerism and Its Association with their Civic Engagement****Suhail Khan<sup>1</sup>, Saddam Khan<sup>1</sup>, Bakht Sani<sup>1</sup>, Jalal Khan<sup>1</sup> & Nizar Ahmad<sup>2</sup>**

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ISSN: 3006-6557 (Online)

ISSN: 3006-6549 (Print)

Vol. 3, No. 1 (2025)

Pages: 7 – 28

**Key Words:**Volunteerism, Youth attitude,  
Civic Engagement,  
Community Engagement**Corresponding Author:**

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**Abstract:** Volunteerism is the corner stone of civic engagement, however, little has known about the attitude of youth towards volunteerism and its impact on their civic engagement. This study is conducted with the aim to ascertain the association between youth attitude towards volunteerism and their level of civic engagement at District Charsadda. A survey was conducted using structured questionnaire to collect data from students of Bacha Khan University Charsadda and its affiliated colleges. Data was analyzed using chi square statistics to measure the association between youth attitude towards volunteerism and their civic engagement. A highly significant association was found between various aspects of youth attitude towards volunteerism and the level of civic engagement. It is concluded that attitude towards volunteerism have a strong impact on the youth civic engagement in society. In order to develop positive attitude among youth in Pakistan, awareness rising on the spirit of volunteerism and youth involvement in volunteer activities are need to make then positively engaged in social sphere.

**Introduction**

Volunteerism is often recognized as an essential component of civic engagement, with many governments and organizations framing it as a cornerstone of a healthy democracy. National governments, as well as international bodies, tend to emphasize volunteerism as a means of addressing national challenges, fostering social cohesion, and reinforcing democratic values. So, young volunteers who know how to lead initiatives, take initiative, and handle a variety of social situations have improved levels of confidence and social competency. Participation in voluntary activities by young people enables the development of vital life skills like problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and leadership. Youth who participate in community service acquire important skills that improve their employability and professional chances (Kaufman et al., 2023). According to a research by Cameron et al. (2021) youth-led initiatives frequently unite people from various backgrounds, fostering opportunities for tolerance and understanding across cultural boundaries. Additionally, community work by young people aids in bridging generational divides.

Young volunteers frequently work alongside senior citizens, promoting intergenerational communication and information sharing. When community members collaborate to solve common problems, this leads to an increase in social capital. The communities that young people serve benefit directly from their involvement in volunteer work. From planning charity events to supporting neighborhood environmental or social justice efforts, studies continuously show that young volunteers are crucial in tackling community concerns (Johnson et al. (2023)). Furthermore, community service can produce a psychological buffer that protects against life's stresses. When people give back to their community, their attention is diverted to positively influencing others, which makes them feel more resilient and less overwhelmed by personal struggles (Baker and Roberts 2024).

People who support neighborhood projects are more inclined to collaborate with local authorities and groups to solve more general concerns including environmental sustainability, public health, and educational reform. A more knowledgeable and involved populace is encouraged by this active involvement, which also fortifies democratic processes. Helping others, especially through volunteer work, is associated with improved psychological and emotional well-being, Volunteers have been reported in better physical health, increased life satisfaction, and decreased levels of worry and sadness (Thompson & Harris 2023).

Pakistan's National Human Development Report states that 27% of the population are between 15 and 29, while 68% of people are under the age of 30. This "youth bulge" presents unique opportunities for the nation's social and economic glory, allowing for the utilization of young people's latent potential by providing opportunities for growth and personal development. Regrettably, a lack of youth-focused development has left young people more susceptible to violence and conflict, which is exacerbated by the country's unstable security situation (Nissen, 2021). Similarly, in the absence of proper channels for civic education and community engagement, no wonder the youth in Pakistan have landed in the arms of extremist outfits (Haider & Anwar, 2014). It is crucial to involve young people in civic affairs if we want to develop and strengthen our democratic culture and values. Globally, citizenship education is considered vital for individual to develop their values, skills and knowledge. Which make individual a responsible citizen and keep them away from the hands of extremists and their ideologies (Goren & Yemini, 2017).

The role of citizenship education and community engagement is vital for channelizing youth's energies in positive way. For instance, research shows that those societies where low level of community engagement and the lack of trust between citizens and officials, have often not been effectively adopted the appropriate strategies and tools for citizenship education. Therefore, the significance of citizenship education cannot be ignored for a country like Pakistan. Citizenship education includes a variety of civic courses in the curriculum, as well as opportunities to volunteer with civil society organizations, that encourages youth to be responsible citizens (Haider & Anwar, 2014). This could be the reason that

universities in Pakistan has recently introduced a subject with the name of citizenship education and community engagement. The purpose of the subject is to impart knowledge and skills necessary for citizens to play their active role as responsible citizen of the country. Citizenship education and community engagement are integral for the development of moral and responsible citizens. Responsible public leads society towards socio-economic, political, and cultural development which is essential for social harmony. Additionally, it is also considered as a key for the development of a democratic society where rights of every individuals are ensured (Veugelers & Groot, 2019). Individual learn the knowledge and skills necessary to prosper in an inclusive society through the promotion of peace (Ahmad & Muhammad, 2019), diversity, and citizenship education, youth in the public sector, and religious education institutions. The youth participation in civic activities and community engagement including poetry concerts helps to promote diversity, co-existence, tolerance and social cohesion (Ahmad et al., 2013; Rafique & Khoo, 2018; Ahmad et al., 2022). Civic engagement is an important part of democratic process. It refers to improving the quality of life in a community through political and non-political activities. It can take place in various forms such as individual volunteerism, organizational involvement, participation in electoral process (Ahmad et al., 2020; Mellet, 2022). Various activities of civic engagement can be carried out in educational institution to generate set of skills that young students can utilize in their communities. In political context, these can be skills for example, organizing and persuading other citizen for taking actions, navigating political system, building consensus for common goal, engaging diverse opinion and taking stance on issues of public concern (Hatcher, 2011).

### **Objective of the study**

- ✓ To assess the link between attitude towards volunteerism and the level of civic engagement.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Pakistan is a democratic country but there is a need of promoting democratic values that poster patriotism, self accountability and volunteerism. In contrast, socio-economic condition of Pakistan is miserable such as, terrorism which has impacted the society especially the youth population are at the high risk of extremism and intolerance (Ahmad et al., 2024; Ullah et al., 2021). Identically, Pakistan has a youth bulge where 60 percent of the population is under the age of 30, which needs to engage its youth actively in constructive activities (UNDP, 2021). In order to positively channelize youth energies the youth are being taught the subject of citizenship education and community engagement. Globally, this course has been considered an effective mechanism for active citizens however, within the context of Pakistan there is a need of collecting evidence to know about the impact of such courses on the youth's community engagement.

### **Significance of the Study**

Teaching civic values and community engagement to citizens play a crucial role in shaping democratic societies by empowering individuals to actively participate in their communities and the political process. For youth, civic education is particularly significant as it cultivates a sense of responsibility, agency, and understanding of democratic principles. Civic education encourages youth to become active citizens who are informed about societal issues and take proactive steps to address them. Civic and community engagement comprise of activities such as activism, volunteering, community services and advocacy where young person get experience for meaningful contribution towards betterment of society. This research will provide insight on how civic education is related social responsibility and engaging youth in the societal issues. Such studies are important for a country like Pakistan which is currently passing through a critical stage where youth bulge is out of job and can become easy prey in the hands of anti-social forces. The study is of vital significant to the education department and other relevant organization in the education sector to understand how they can make a significant difference in society through engaging youth via civic education. The study will also provide a valuable insight for youth policy formulation to relevant departments such as social welfare department and directorate of youth affairs and other relevant stakeholders who advocating for changes in school policies to address environmental issues, or promoting social justice through youth voices.

### **Literature review**

Literatures on civic involvement at the global level from teaching civic virtues through practical applications to develop cognitive civic abilities with the aim of advancing and upholding the common good (Rafique & Khoo, 2018). Little has been done related to the present topic especially in Pakistan in order to address the various elements that contribute to the current state of affairs such as, a multi-level involvement is required for youth engagement programs with the theme of peace and harmony. Moreover, it indicates that efforts are essential to promote peace and harmony and eliminate the extremism from our nation (Arslan et al., 2022). Participation in voluntary activities by young people enables the development of vital life skills like problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and leadership. Young people can gain practical experience through volunteering, which advances both their career and personal growth. Youth who participate in community service acquire important skills that improve their employability and professional chances (Kaufman et al., 2023). Furthermore, Jones and Smith (2022) stress that volunteering fosters in young people a sense of accountability and self-control. Young people gain time management and responsibility skills that they may use in both their academic and professional careers as they take on positions in event planning, resource management, or liaising with other volunteers. Youth can engage with their peers and other community members through

voluntary activities, which promotes social cohesion. In addition to strengthening their social networks, young people who volunteer help to build a more cohesive and inclusive community. Wang et al. (2022) claim that youth-led projects have significantly improved community wellbeing, especially in fields like social services, health promotion, and environmental sustainability. Youth volunteers frequently address long-standing community issues with new insights, vitality, and creative ideas. Social problem is one of the most direct ways that volunteer labor tackles social issues. Volunteers frequently collaborate with groups that offer vulnerable communities food, shelter, and support services. Volunteer-driven projects are crucial in filling up the gaps in social safety nets by offering necessary services in areas where government funding is scarce or nonexistent, claim Thompson and Richards (2023). According to the study, volunteers at food banks and shelters frequently act as the first responders in urban areas, offering people in need quick assistance and reducing the impact of homelessness and poverty. According to Evans and Thompson (2022), volunteering gives young people a feeling of direction and a way to hone their interpersonal and leadership abilities. Young individuals who participate in this activity are better able to create good identities, which can lower their chance of participating in harmful behaviors like substance misuse or delinquency. Thus, by empowering young people, volunteer activity not only fills in current educational gaps but also contributes to the prevention of future social issues. One of the most vulnerable populations in need of volunteer support is the elderly, particularly those who live alone or in underserved areas. According to research, volunteers are essential in assisting senior citizens with everyday duties, providing company, and avoiding social isolation. Volunteers who work with senior citizens frequently help with household chores, grocery shopping, and transportation, allowing them to remain independently for longer (Sullivan and Bennett, 2023). According to Parker et al., (2022) volunteers who interact with people with disabilities enable them to engage more completely in society, which lessens their feelings of loneliness and increases their level of independence. Furthermore, volunteer-led projects centered on inclusive programming for people with disabilities have not only offered necessary care but also pushed for laws that support equality and accessibility. Build social capital—the networks of connections, trust, and conventions that allow communities to collaborate successfully—is one of the most significant ways that volunteering improves communal resources. A community's resilience and capacity to resolve issues as a group depend heavily on its social capital. By building relationships between various groups, encouraging trust, and promoting collaboration within the community, volunteers help to build social capital. Volunteering strengthens the social fabric of communities by bringing together individuals from all backgrounds, including long-term residents, vulnerable groups, and immigrants (Putnam et al.,2023). Volunteers contribute the growth a feeling of a society and solidarity, which is mostly beneficial for tackling social issues like poverty, marginalization, and loneliness. High social capital communities are better able to organize resources, deal with neighborhood problems, and handle emergencies. Additionally, Walker et al. (2023)

showed that volunteering fosters relationships between people and organizations, increasing community trust and fostering better cooperation across different sectors (e.g., education, healthcare, and local governance). Volunteer-created social networks frequently improve community members' access to resources and services. Volunteer-run clinics and health initiatives greatly improve access to healthcare in low-income communities. Different research continuously emphasizes that how volunteers promote social capital, trust, and cohesiveness, all of which improve community well-being. By fostering relationships between people, organizations, and groups, volunteers help to develop stronger, more resilient communities. Volunteers help create social networks that protect disadvantaged groups, advocate for common causes, and assist communities in navigating crises (Putnam, 2023). In addition to providing immediate assistance through their deeds, volunteers also help organizations provide more services, which benefits the community in the long run. Furthermore, volunteer work in community-driven initiatives, including neighborhood clean-ups or local events, has been shown by Walker et al. (2023) to boost social participation, which is connected to better mental health outcomes, increased community engagement, and lower crime rates. Communities become more resilient and cohesive when volunteers foster a sense of possession and belonging. The ethical notion that people have an innate obligation to aid those in need lies at the heart of the view that it is each person's duty to serve others. This idea is frequently linked to moral philosophy, where ideas like empathy and compassion are important. It has been demonstrated that altruism, which is defined as acting in the best interests of others without anticipating personal gain, is a potent motivator for pro-social action. People frequently feel a moral obligation to assist others, especially when they believe that others are in great need (Batson et al., 2023). The idea of moral responsibility is consistent with research by Schwartz et al. (2023) and Dutta et al., (2019) which showed that when people feel personally accountable for the welfare of others, they are more likely to act to assist others. Social conventions, religious convictions, and cultural expectations—all of which frequently call for deeds of kindness and compassion—can all have an impact on this sense of obligation. Community service has been repeatedly associated with improved emotional and mental health. People who regularly participate in volunteer work or community service report higher levels of enjoyment, lower levels of stress, and improved emotional stability, according to a number of studies. Giving to others can give people a sense of purpose, lessen loneliness, and give them a sense of achievement and community. For instance, volunteers report higher life satisfaction and fewer depression symptoms. Additionally, Jones and Lee (2022) discovered that people who participate in community-focused activities are more likely to report feeling that their lives have purpose, which is strongly related to psychological well-being. According to Chavez and Martinez (2024), volunteers save communities a great deal of money by performing necessary tasks without expecting payment, which boosts the economy. Additionally, as volunteer work frequently results in more business creation, social enterprise activity, and better local

markets. The moral, emotional, and social dimensions of helping others are the subject of several studies, which highlight the fact that helping is not only a selfless deed but also an essential part of a healthy society. Empathy, moral principles, and social duty all play a part in people's belief that others should be helped, according to research in this field. Strong pro social beliefs, such as compassion and universalism, lead people to feel that others should be helped (Schwartz and Bilsky.,2023). Batson et al. (2023) contend that when individuals believe that those in need have a right to assistance, they are more inclined to provide a helping hand. Helping is not just a discretionary act of compassion; it is a socially responsible activity because of this sense of moral deservingness. Furthermore, Dunn and DeSteno (2024) discovered that when determining whether someone else is deserving of assistance, people frequently use moral heuristics. People are more likely to assist others they perceive to have been ostracized or to have had unjust treatment, and these heuristics are frequently impacted by an individual's sense of justice and fairness. The majority of respondents felt that all communities must have good volunteers, and this finding shows a highly substantial association between civic involvement and attitude toward volunteering. By encouraging relationships between locals, volunteers help to enhance the social fabric of their communities. Research has indicated that volunteering fosters a sense of trust and camaraderie among participants. Communities are considered to be more robust during times of crises because of this social capital. Volunteer networks foster local collaboration and offer the social support people need to succeed, according to a new study by Wilson and Musick (2023). According to a recent study done during the COVID-19 epidemic, volunteer organizations played a crucial role in helping vulnerable individuals, supplying food, and offering healthcare services. Additionally, volunteers support the preservation of optimism and normalcy during trying times. Volunteers contribute a wealth of knowledge, abilities, and viewpoints that improve the caliber and variety of services offered in a community. Smith et al. (2022) found that varied volunteerism—which includes young people, the elderly, and individuals from different backgrounds—improves community activities by bringing in new ideas, cultural perspectives, and skill sets. Communities become more inclusive as a result of this diversity. Effective volunteers are change agents as well. They raise awareness, support social causes, and frequently lead community development projects. The networks, trust, and social ties that are essential to the fabric of every community are built through volunteering. Communities become more robust to adversities like social crises or economic problems thanks to these networks. Volunteers facilitate the development of connections, cooperative activities for mutual gain, and supportive surroundings. Volunteering improves social capital by fostering relationships across various groups, building trust, and boosting community involvement, according to a 2019 study published in *American Behavioral Scientist* (Helliwell et al., 2019). Another study published in the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* (2020) emphasizes how volunteering fosters a feeling of community, which in turn improves relationships and encourages group action (Baker et al., 2020).



Volunteering fosters a sense of accountability and community connection, both of which are critical for democratic participation. Increased civic engagement among volunteers results in increased political engagement, including voting, town hall meetings, and joining political movements. According to a 2019 study by Wilson and Musick that was published in *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, volunteering raises the possibility that people may engage in political activities like voting or corresponding with elected authorities. Volunteers are more likely to participate in democratic processes and support democratic institutions because they have a strong feeling of civic duty (Wilson & Musick, 2019). The Harvard Kennedy School (2023) claims that by providing avenues for people to get more active in their communities, volunteering fosters an engaged citizenry. Because volunteers frequently assume leadership positions in their communities, which inspire others to become civically active, this type of engagement is associated with higher participation in democratic processes. According to research published in the *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* (2021). South et al. (2104) have demonstrated that volunteering serves a variety of purposes, such as delivering community goods, and giving volunteers the chance to obtain extra extrinsic rewards or to display underlying preferences and qualities (like extroversion or altruism). Volunteering is the perfect action for citizens who still wish to do something selfless for others but feel uneasy without shared objectives and tasks that must be completed in a time when usefulness is a prime criterion. However, it may take some more "social engineering" to get these volunteers to engage in the kind of voluntary association that supports civil society (Dekker 2002). Numerous psychological advantages of volunteering have been demonstrated, which enhances a person's wellbeing. Volunteering improves life happiness, fosters a feeling of purpose, and lowers stress (Musick & Wilson.,2008). Volunteers have a higher likelihood of being happier and feeling better about themselves, as well as having lower rates of depression. Studies indicate that older persons, in particular, benefit from the sense of purpose that volunteering offers, therefore long-term volunteering, as indicated by the commitment in the phrase, may also eventually lead to improved mental health (Gonzalez, 2019). Since volunteering gives people the chance to build relationships and interact meaningfully with others, it can act as an antidote to social isolation, which has been connected to a number of health issues. Additionally, volunteering throughout one's life promotes skill development and personal growth. Volunteering gives people the chance to challenge themselves, get leadership experience, and learn things they might not have otherwise. The importance of volunteering in skill development is highlighted by research by Cnaan et al. (2018), who point out that volunteers frequently acquire interpersonal, organizational, and leadership abilities that advance their personal and professional development. Regarding technology, there are some of the biggest disparities in how different generations view volunteering. According to a study by Prouteau & Wolff (2008), Baby Boomers are driven by a desire to give back to their communities and a sense of civic responsibility. Many people view volunteering for them as a moral obligation that is connected to the concept of



"giving back" to society. Lack of knowledge about the advantages volunteering has for oneself and the community is one of the primary causes of apathy toward it. According to studies, people are less inclined to volunteer if they are not aware of the benefits volunteering offers to their communities and to their personal well-being. This feeling of indifference can also be exacerbated by pragmatic obstacles including time restraints, a lack of knowledge about opportunities, and financial strains. Snyder & Omoto (2018) found that conflicting priorities, such employment, education, or family responsibilities, frequently deter people from volunteering, especially younger generations. When people see the real advantages of volunteering, they may become more enthusiastic instead of indifferent. Volunteering dramatically improves mental and physical health, lowers stress, and increases life happiness.

### **Methodology**

The aim of this study is to investigate students' perceptions and knowledge about citizenship and civic responsibility and its impact on their attitude towards volunteerism and democracy. Additionally, the study seeks to understand the relationship between respondents' knowledge of community engagement and the degree of active citizenship and community engagement. The existing study was carried out at affiliated colleges and Bacha Khan University Charsadda. Government Degree College Tangi and Government Postgraduate College Charsadda, two affiliated colleges, and Bacha Khan University was used for data collection. The sample size of 361 from the population was drawn through table given by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The data collection was taken from Bacha Khan University Charsadda, Post Graduate college Charsadda and Government Degree college Tangi which have different size of population. Therefore stratified sampling was used for allocation of sample size to be taken from each strata. Stratified sampling is a type of sampling method in which the total population is divided into smaller groups or strata to complete the sampling process (Pandey & Pandey 2021). The strata are formed based on some common characteristics in the population data. After dividing the population into strata, the proportionate sampling allocation was through the following formula. Proportionate allocation for a stratum = (sample size/population size) × stratum size (Hayes, 2023). A Self-constructed questionnaire was used for data collection purposes and study also was utilize survey method for data collection. Surveys were used to collect data or learn more in areas like demography and social research. The collected data was analyzed through a Statistical Software i.e. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, 15 Version) and the researcher was utilize descriptive statistic software (Frequencies and percentages). It was help to further know about student level of knowledge in relation to citizenship and civic responsibilities. The variations between cases within a single variable are examined via uni-variate analysis. Using a uni-variate analysis, the percentage proportion of the background, independent, and dependent variables was calculated.

Data class's percentage =  $f/N \times 100$

***Equation (ii)***

f= Data class frequency

N= Total observations

In Bi-variate analysis, the link between two variables is sought after (Dependent and Independent). As suggested by the (Tai, 1978) formula, the connection between the dependent and independent variables were evaluated using the Chi-square test.

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}} \longrightarrow \text{Equation(iii)}$$

$\chi^2$  = Chi square

$O_{ij}$  = Observed frequency in the i and j column

$C_{ij}$  = Expected frequency regarding i and j column

r = Number of rows

c = number of columns

Df = (r-1) (c-1)

**Chi-square result of the Association between Attitude towards volunteerism and civic engagement**

S. No	Statement	Response	Civic engagement					Chi Square & P Value
			Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree	
1	Youth should participate in voluntary activities for the benefits of the community.	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	17(6.5%)	40(15.3%)	35(13.40%)	80(30.6%)	40(15.3%)	$\chi^2 = 48.092^a$ $P = .000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	22(23.2%)	1(1.1%)	10(10.5%)	38(40.0%)	24(25.3%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	0(.0%)	2(100.0%)	0(.0%)	0(.0%)	0(.0%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	0(.0%)	0(.0%)	0(.0%)	1(33.3%)	2(66.7%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	5(1.1%)	7(2.6%)	10(3.8%)	14(5.3%)	15(5.7%)	
2	Volunteer work helps solve social problems	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	25(12.3%)	40(19.8%)	10(4.9%)	40(19.7%)	35(17.2%)	$\chi^2 = 85.291$ $P = .000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	9(6.2%)	2(1.4%)	37(25.5%)	68(46.9%)	29(20.0%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	0(.0%)	2(50.0%)	1(25.0%)	1(25.0%)	0(.0%)	

		<b>Agree</b>	1(11.1%)	0(0.0%)	5(55.6%)	1(11.1%)	2(22.2%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	7(3.5%)	6(2.9%)	2(0.9%)	23(11.3%)	15(7.3%)	
3	There are people in the community who need help of volunteers	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	13(8.6%)	6(3.9%)	9(5.9%)	61(40.1%)	63(41.4%)	$\chi^2=1.416E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	20(13.0%)	35(22.8%)	30(19.4%)	25(16.2%)	8(5.2%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	2(4.9%)	1(2.4%)	1(2.4%)	33(80.5%)	4(9.8%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	1(7.1%)	3(21.4%)	6(42.9%)	2(14.3%)	2(14.3%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	6(3.9%)	5(3.2%)	9(5.8%)	12(7.7%)	4(2.6%)	
4	Volunteering can greatly enhance the community's resources.	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	31(18.6%)	5(3.0%)	10(6.0%)	58(34.7%)	63(37.7%)	$\chi^2=2.927E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	6(12.0%)	2(4.0%)	13(26.0%)	16(32.0%)	13(26.0%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	0(0.0%)	40(56.3%)	4(5.6%)	27(38.0%)	0(0.0%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	4(8.5%)	2(4.3%)	6(12.8%)	31(66.0%)	4(8.5%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	1(3.8%)	1(3.8%)	22(84.6%)	1(3.8%)	1(3.8%)	
5	Being a volunteer I can make a difference in the community.	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	15(10.6%)	7(4.9%)	26(18.3%)	60(42.3%)	34(23.9%)	$\chi^2=2.300E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	3(4.3%)	2(2.9%)	11(15.7%)	44(62.9%)	10(14.3%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	1(12.5%)	0(0.0%)	5(62.5%)	2(25.0%)	0(0.0%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	3(3.6%)	41(49.4%)	9(10.8%)	26(31.3%)	4(4.8%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	20(34.5%)	0(0.0%)	4(6.9%)	1(1.7%)	33(56.9%)	
6	It is my responsibility to take some real steps to help others in need.	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	5(4.6%)	28(25.9%)	28(25.9%)	20(18.5%)	27(25.0%)	$\chi^2=2.948E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	6(6.0%)	2(2.0%)	5(5.0%)	70(70.0%)	17(17.0%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	1(2.8%)	1(2.8%)	3(8.3%)	31(86.1%)	0(0.0%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	10(14.3%)	2(2.9%)	18(25.7%)	3(4.3%)	37(52.9%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	20(50.0%)	17(42.5%)	1(2.5%)	2(5.0%)	0(0.0%)	
7	It is important to me to contribute to the	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	7(12.1%)	9(15.5%)	1(1.7%)	14(24.1%)	27(46.6%)	

	community.	<b>Disagree</b>	5(6.1%)	22(26.8%)	26(31.7%)	19(23.2%)	10(12.2%)	$\chi^2=2.325E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Not sure</b>	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	3(4.3%)	60(85.7%)	7(10.0%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	9(10.3%)	17(19.5%)	20(23.0%)	38(43.7%)	3(3.4%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	21(32.8%)	2(3.1%)	5(7.8%)	2(3.1%)	34(53.1%)	
8	Other people deserve my help.	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	6(23.1%)	1(3.8%)	1(3.8%)	11(42.3%)	7(26.9%)	$\chi^2=2.156E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	5(5.6%)	1(1.1%)	4(4.4%)	40(44.4%)	40(44.4%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	2(2.1%)	40(41.7%)	23(24.0%)	31(32.3%)	0(0.0%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	9(8.6%)	1(1.0%)	17(16.2%)	44(41.9%)	34(32.4%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	20(45.5%)	7(15.9%)	10(22.7%)	7(15.9%)	0(0.0%)	
9	All communities need good volunteers.	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	6(18.2%)	0(0.0%)	1(3.0%)	19(57.6%)	7(21.2%)	$\chi^2=1.754E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	6(7.5%)	19(23.8%)	5(6.2%)	15(18.8%)	35(43.8%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	0(0.0%)	1(2.1%)	23(47.9%)	24(50.0%)	0(0.0%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	10(9.9%)	23(22.8%)	17(16.8%)	15(14.9%)	36(35.6%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	20(20.2%)	7(7.1%)	9(9.1%)	60(60.6%)	3(3.0%)	
10	Volunteering is necessary to make our communities better.	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	6(10.0%)	17(28.3%)	2(3.3%)	33(55.0%)	2(3.3%)	$\chi^2=2.424E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	4(7.8%)	2(3.9%)	6(11.8%)	1(2.0%)	38(74.5%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	2(3.6%)	2(3.6%)	21(38.2%)	24(43.6%)	6(10.9%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	8(6.8%)	0(0.0%)	16(13.6%)	61(51.7%)	33(28.0%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	22(28.6%)	29(37.7%)	10(13.0%)	14(18.2%)	2(2.6%)	
11	Volunteerism can flourish democracy in society.	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	5(9.8%)	18(35.3%)	2(3.9%)	25(49.0%)	1(2.0%)	$\chi^2=2.604E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	7(8.2%)	1(1.2%)	8(9.4%)	30(35.3%)	39(45.9%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	20(26.0%)	56(72.7%)	1(1.3%)	

		<b>Agree</b>	9(11.5%)	2(2.6%)	14(17.9%)	14(17.9%)	39(50.0%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	21(30.0%)	29(41.4%)	11(15.7%)	8(11.4%)	1(1.4%)	
12	Society should pay high regard to volunteers.	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	5(5.7%)	19(21.6%)	5(5.7%)	55(62.5%)	4(4.5%)	$\chi^2=1.759E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	6(6.4%)	0(0.0%)	22(23.4%)	30(31.9%)	36(38.3%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	1(8.3%)	0(0.0%)	1(8.3%)	1(8.3%)	9(75.0%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	3(3.3%)	24(26.7%)	10(11.1%)	21(23.3%)	32(35.6%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	27(35.1%)	7(9.1%)	17(22.1%)	26(33.8%)	0(0.0%)	
13	I will continue to volunteer as long as I live.	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	9(12.3%)	0(0.0%)	4(5.5%)	56(76.7%)	4(5.5%)	$\chi^2=2.739E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	3(3.7%)	17(21.0%)	23(28.4%)	0(0.0%)	38(46.9%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	1(2.9%)	22(62.9%)	3(8.6%)	7(20.0%)	2(5.7%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	3(2.9%)	6(5.8%)	15(14.4%)	43(41.3%)	37(35.6%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	26(38.2%)	5(7.4%)	10(14.7%)	27(39.7%)	0(0.0%)	
14	How do attitudes towards volunteerism vary across different generations.	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	9(23.1%)	0(0.0%)	1(2.6%)	24(61.5%)	5(12.8%)	$\chi^2=1.561E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	3(2.5%)	39(32.8%)	8(6.7%)	32(26.9%)	37(31.1%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	0(0.0%)	3(7.1%)	3(7.1%)	29(69.0%)	7(16.7%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	23(18.9%)	8(6.6%)	36(29.5%)	23(18.9%)	32(26.2%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	7(17.9%)	0(0.0%)	7(17.9%)	25(64.1%)	0(0.0%)	
15	What initiatives can communities undertake to shift attitudes towards volunteerism from apathy to enthusiasm.	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	8(11.8%)	22(32.4%)	8(11.8%)	23(33.8%)	7(10.3%)	$\chi^2=1.377E2^a$ $P=.000$
		<b>Disagree</b>	3(4.0%)	0(0.0%)	6(8.0%)	33(44.0%)	33(44.0%)	
		<b>Not sure</b>	0(0.0%)	17(21.2%)	4(5.0%)	36(45.0%)	23(28.8%)	
		<b>Agree</b>	23(24.5%)	9(9.6%)	29(30.9%)	15(16.0%)	18(19.1%)	
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	8(18.2%)	2(4.5%)	8(18.2%)	26(59.1%)	0(0.0%)	

#### **4.9.1 Explanation**

##### **Association Between Attitude towards volunteerism and civic engagement**

The above table shows an association of the Chi-square result between two variables i.e. Attitude towards volunteerism and civic engagement. It shows an association between the independent and dependent variable. These result revealed a highly significant association ( $X^2= 48.092^a$ ,  $P =.000$  ) was found between the Attitude towards volunteerism and the statement that whether respondents should participate voluntary for the benefits of the community'. Participation in voluntary activities by young people enables the development of vital life skills like problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and leadership. Young people can gain practical experience through volunteering, which advances both their career and personal growth. Youth who participate in community service acquire important skills that improve their employability and professional chances (Kaufman et al., 2023). Furthermore, Jones and Smith (2022) stress that volunteering fosters in young people a sense of accountability and self-control. Young people gain time management and responsibility skills that they may use in both their academic and professional careers as they take on positions in event planning, resource management, or liaising with other volunteers. Youth can engage with their peers and other community members through voluntary activities, which promotes social cohesion. In addition to strengthening their social networks, young people who volunteer help to build a more cohesive and inclusive community. Wang et al. (2022) claim that youth-led projects have significantly improved community wellbeing, especially in fields like social services, health promotion, and environmental sustainability. Youth volunteers frequently address long-standing community issues with new insights, vitality, and creative ideas.

Similarly, the statement that 'Volunteer work helps solve social problems was also found highly significant association ( $X^2= 85.291$ ,  $P=.000$ ) with level of civic engagement. Social problem is one of the most direct ways that volunteer labor tackles social issues. Volunteers frequently collaborate with groups that offer vulnerable communities food, shelter, and support services. Volunteer-driven projects are crucial in filling up the gaps in social safety nets by offering necessary services in areas where government funding is scarce or nonexistent, claim Thompson and Richards (2023). According to the study, volunteers at food banks and shelters frequently act as the first responders in urban areas, offering people in need quick assistance and reducing the impact of homelessness and poverty. According to Evans and Thompson (2022), volunteering gives young people a feeling of direction and a way to hone their interpersonal and leadership abilities. Young individuals who participate in this activity are better able to create good identities, which can lower their chance of participating in harmful behaviors like substance misuse or delinquency. Thus, by empowering young people, volunteer

activity not only fills in current educational gaps but also contributes to the prevention of future social issues.

Further, a strong relationship ( $\chi^2=1.416E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) was noted that, 'There are people in the community who need help of volunteers' and level of civic engagement. One of the most vulnerable populations in need of volunteer support is the elderly, particularly those who live alone or in underserved areas. According to research, volunteers are essential in assisting senior citizens with everyday duties, providing company, and avoiding social isolation. Volunteers who work with senior citizens frequently help with household chores, grocery shopping, and transportation, allowing them to remain independently for longer (Sullivan and Bennett, 2023). According to Parker et al., (2022) volunteers who interact with people with disabilities enable them to engage more completely in society, which lessens their feelings of loneliness and increases their level of independence. Furthermore, volunteer-led projects centered on inclusive programming for people with disabilities have not only offered necessary care but also pushed for laws that support equality and accessibility.

Likewise, "Volunteering can greatly enhance the community's resources" was found highly significant relationships ( $\chi^2=2.927E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) with level of civic engagement. Build social capital—the networks of connections, trust, and conventions that allow communities to collaborate successfully—is one of the most significant ways that volunteering improves communal resources. A community's resilience and capacity to resolve issues as a group depend heavily on its social capital. By building relationships between various groups, encouraging trust, and promoting collaboration within the community, volunteers help to build social capital. Volunteering strengthens the social fabric of communities by bringing together individuals from all backgrounds, including long-term residents, vulnerable groups, and immigrants (Putnam et al., 2023). Volunteers contribute the growth a feeling of a society and solidarity, which is mostly beneficial for tackling social issues like poverty, marginalization, and loneliness. High social capital communities are better able to organize resources, deal with neighborhood problems, and handle emergencies. Additionally, Walker et al. (2023) showed that volunteering fosters relationships between people and organizations, increasing community trust and fostering better cooperation across different sectors (e.g., education, healthcare, and local governance). Volunteer-created social networks frequently improve community members' access to resources and services. Volunteer-run clinics and health initiatives greatly improve access to healthcare in low-income communities.

The statement that 'Being a volunteer I can make a difference in the community' had strong association ( $\chi^2=2.300E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) with level of civic engagement. Different research continuously emphasizes that how volunteers promote social capital, trust, and cohesiveness, all of which improve community well-being. By fostering relationships between people, organizations, and groups, volunteers help to develop



stronger, more resilient communities. Volunteers help create social networks that protect disadvantaged groups, advocate for common causes, and assist communities in navigating crises (Putnam, 2023). In addition to providing immediate assistance through their deeds, volunteers also help organizations provide more services, which benefits the community in the long run. Furthermore, volunteer work in community-driven initiatives, including neighborhood clean-ups or local events, has been shown by Walker et al. (2023) to boost social participation, which is connected to better mental health outcomes, increased community engagement, and lower crime rates. Communities become more resilient and cohesive when volunteers foster a sense of possession and belonging.

Further, the statement that “It is my responsibility to take some real steps to help others in need” was noted highly significantly related ( $X^2=2.948E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) to the level of civic engagement. The ethical notion that people have an innate obligation to aid those in need lies at the heart of the view that it is each person's duty to serve others. This idea is frequently linked to moral philosophy, where ideas like empathy and compassion are important. It has been demonstrated that altruism, which is defined as acting in the best interests of others without anticipating personal gain, is a potent motivator for pro-social action. People frequently feel a moral obligation to assist others, especially when they believe that others are in great need (Batson et al., 2023). The idea of moral responsibility is consistent with research by Schwartz et al. (2023), which showed that when people feel personally accountable for the welfare of others, they are more likely to act to assist others. Social conventions, religious convictions, and cultural expectations—all of which frequently call for deeds of kindness and compassion—can all have an impact on this sense of obligation.

Moreover a highly significant association ( $X^2=2.325E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) has been found between the Attitude towards volunteerism and civic engagement. Community service has been repeatedly associated with improved emotional and mental health. People who regularly participate in volunteer work or community service report higher levels of enjoyment, lower levels of stress, and improved emotional stability, according to a number of studies. Giving to others can give people a sense of purpose, lessen loneliness, and give them a sense of achievement and community. For instance, volunteers report higher life satisfaction and fewer depression symptoms. Additionally, Jones and Lee (2022) discovered that people who participate in community-focused activities are more likely to report feeling that their lives have purpose, which is strongly related to psychological well-being. According to Chavez and Martinez (2024), volunteers save communities a great deal of money by performing necessary tasks without expecting payment, which boosts the economy. Additionally, as volunteer work frequently results in more business creation, social enterprise activity, and better local markets.

Likewise, the statement that “Other people deserve my help” has been found having highly significant association ( $X^2=2.156E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) with the level of civic engagement. The moral, emotional, and social

dimensions of helping others are the subject of several studies, which highlight the fact that helping is not only a selfless deed but also an essential part of a healthy society. Empathy, moral principles, and social duty all play a part in people's belief that others should be helped, according to research in this field. Strong pro social beliefs, such as compassion and universalism, lead people to feel that others should be helped (Schwartz and Bilsky, 2023). Batson et al. (2023) contend that when individuals believe that those in need have a right to assistance, they are more inclined to provide a helping hand. Helping is not just a discretionary act of compassion; it is a socially responsible activity because of this sense of moral deservingness. Furthermore, Dunn and DeSteno (2024) discovered that when determining whether someone else is deserving of assistance, people frequently use moral heuristics. People are more likely to assist others they perceive to have been ostracized or to have had unjust treatment, and these heuristics are frequently impacted by an individual's sense of justice and fairness. Similarly, a highly significant relationship ( $\chi^2=1.754E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) was found between the statement that "All communities need good volunteers" and civic engagement. The majority of respondents felt that all communities must have good volunteers, and this finding shows a highly substantial association between civic involvement and attitude toward volunteering. By encouraging relationships between locals, volunteers help to enhance the social fabric of their communities. Research has indicated that volunteering fosters a sense of trust and camaraderie among participants. Communities are considered to be more robust during times of crises because of this social capital. Volunteer networks foster local collaboration and offer the social support people need to succeed, according to a new study by Wilson and Musick (2023). According to a recent study done during the COVID-19 epidemic, volunteer organizations played a crucial role in helping vulnerable individuals, supplying food, and offering healthcare services. Additionally, volunteers support the preservation of optimism and normalcy during trying times. Volunteers contribute a wealth of knowledge, abilities, and viewpoints that improve the caliber and variety of services offered in a community. Smith et al. (2022) found that varied volunteerism—which includes young people, the elderly, and individuals from different backgrounds—improves community activities by bringing in new ideas, cultural perspectives, and skill sets. Communities become more inclusive as a result of this diversity. Effective volunteers are change agents as well. They raise awareness, support social causes, and frequently lead community development projects.

Furthermore, the statement that "Volunteering is necessary to make our communities better" was noted highly significant ( $\chi^2=2.424E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) related with level of civic engagement. The networks, trust, and social ties that are essential to the fabric of every community are built through volunteering. Communities become more robust to adversities like social crises or economic problems thanks to these networks. Volunteers facilitate the development of connections, cooperative activities for mutual gain, and supportive surroundings. Volunteering improves social capital by fostering relationships across

various groups, building trust, and boosting community involvement, according to a 2019 study published in American Behavioral Scientist (Helliwell et al., 2019). Another study published in the Journal of Social and Personal Relationships (2020) emphasizes how volunteering fosters a feeling of community, which in turn improves relationships and encourages group action (Baker et al., 2020).

Moreover, a highly significant association ( $\chi^2=2.604E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) has been found between the statement that “Volunteerism can flourish democracy in society” and level of civic engagement. Volunteering fosters a sense of accountability and community connection, both of which are critical for democratic participation. Increased civic engagement among volunteers results in increased political engagement, including voting, town hall meetings, and joining political movements. According to a 2019 study by Wilson and Musick that was published in Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, volunteering raises the possibility that people may engage in political activities like voting or corresponding with elected authorities. Volunteers are more likely to participate in democratic processes and support democratic institutions because they have a strong feeling of civic duty (Wilson & Musick, 2019). The Harvard Kennedy School (2023) claims that by providing avenues for people to get more active in their communities, volunteering fosters an engaged citizenry. Because volunteers frequently assume leadership positions in their communities, which inspire others to become civically active, this type of engagement is associated with higher participation in democratic processes. According to research published in the International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society (2021),

Likewise, the statement that “Society should pay highly regard to volunteers” has been identified a highly significant ( $\chi^2=1.759E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) association with the level of civic engagement. South et al. (2104) have demonstrated that volunteering serves a variety of purposes, such as delivering community goods, and giving volunteers the chance to obtain extra extrinsic rewards or to display underlying preferences and qualities (like extroversion or altruism). Volunteering is the perfect action for citizens who still wish to do something selfless for others but feel uneasy without shared objectives and tasks that must be completed in a time when usefulness is a prime criterion. However, it may take some more "social engineering" to get these volunteers to engage in the kind of voluntary association that supports civil society (Dekker 2002). Similarly, the statement that “I will continue to volunteer as long as I live” has been found a highly significant ( $\chi^2=2.739E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) relationship with the level of civic engagement. Numerous psychological advantages of volunteering have been demonstrated, which enhances a person's wellbeing. Volunteering improves life happiness, fosters a feeling of purpose, and lowers stress (Musick & Wilson.,2008). Volunteers have a higher likelihood of being happier and feeling better about themselves, as well as having lower rates of depression. Studies indicate that older persons, in particular, benefit from the sense of purpose that volunteering offers, therefore long-term volunteering, as indicated by the commitment in the phrase, may also eventually lead to improved mental health (Gonzalez, 2019). Since volunteering gives people the chance to build relationships and interact

meaningfully with others, it can act as an antidote to social isolation, which has been connected to a number of health issues. Additionally, volunteering throughout one's life promotes skill development and personal growth. Volunteering gives people the chance to challenge themselves, get leadership experience, and learn things they might not have otherwise. The importance of volunteering in skill development is highlighted by research by Cnaan et al. (2018), who point out that volunteers frequently acquire interpersonal, organizational, and leadership abilities that advance their personal and professional development.

Furthermore, a highly significant association ( $\chi^2=1.561E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) was noted between the statement that “Attitudes towards volunteerism vary across different generations” with level of civic engagement. Regarding technology, there are some of the biggest disparities in how different generations view volunteering. According to a study by Prouteau & Wolff (2008), Baby Boomers are driven by a desire to give back to their communities and a sense of civic responsibility. Many people view volunteering for them as a moral obligation that is connected to the concept of "giving back" to society.

Finally, a highly significant association ( $\chi^2=1.377E2^a$ ,  $P=.000$ ) was found between the statement that “communities should undertake initiatives to shift attitudes towards volunteerism from apathy to enthusiasm” with level of civic engagement. Lack of knowledge about the advantages volunteering has for oneself and the community is one of the primary causes of apathy toward it. According to studies, people are less inclined to volunteer if they are not aware of the benefits volunteering offers to their communities and to their personal well-being. This feeling of indifference can also be exacerbated by pragmatic obstacles including time restraints, a lack of knowledge about opportunities, and financial strains. Snyder & Omoto (2018) found that conflicting priorities, such employment, education, or family responsibilities, frequently deter people from volunteering, especially younger generations. When people see the real advantages of volunteering, they may become more enthusiastic instead of indifferent. Volunteering dramatically improves mental and physical health, lowers stress, and increases life happiness.

## **Conclusion**

The aim of this study was to investigate students' perceptions and knowledge about citizenship and civic responsibility and its impact on their attitude towards volunteerism and democracy. Additionally, the study seeks to understand the relationship between respondents' knowledge of community engagement and the degree of active citizenship and community engagement in district Charsadda. It was concluded that the impact of learning civic and community engagement on youth levels of civic engagement is extremely important. Studies mean to educate youth regarding their roles in society, civic responsibilities, and to energetically participate in community life. It also help to show foster of a greater sense of civic responsibility and participation. Similarly, when youth be trained about their

rights, duties, and the impact of their actions, They are better ready to know the consequences of participating in the civic processes and this awareness can lead to higher rates of voting, volunteering, and engaging in local community activities. Further, civic education teaches crucial thinking, investigative, communication, and teamwork and these skills are necessary for youth to engage significantly with societal issues, whether through activism, voting, or community service. Civic and community engagement education a lot of influences on youth's level of civic engagement by raising awareness, encouragement of skills, creating a sense of responsibility, and encouraging long-term participation in society. As a result, research that focus on teaching youth about their roles as active citizens are very important for development, a more engaged and responsible for future generation.

### **Recommendations**

1. Integrate Civic Education into educational Curricula. Education should prioritize incorporating comprehensive civic education into their curricula.
2. Community organizations and local governments should create more opportunities for youth to participate in community developmental projects.
3. In today's world, using social media can be a significant tool to attract youth in civic education. By developing online courses, social media campaigns, and virtual forums that focus on civic issues, youth can be educated and motivated to participate in online and offline activism.

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