

Civic Sense in India: A Study of Behavioural Gaps, Social Impact, and Pathways to Reform

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Abstract:

Civic sense plays a vital role in ensuring the smooth running of society, and its distribution is not uniform throughout the community and demographics. The given paper is a review of the existing literature and case analyses on civic consciousness, providing the factors that impact civic behavior and engagement in society. The conclusions indicate that civic awareness has to be intrinsically combined with the policies in the country, socialization, and shared responsibility. Comprising the results of several studies and on-the-ground experience, the current paper reveals critical problems, some root causes, and effective practices that can enhance civic engagement and suggests possible actions to be taken in order to make the population more responsible and conscious.

Keywords: Civic, Civic Sense, Civic Behavior, Public Involvement, Social Relativism.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is imperative to have an understanding of the elemental aspects upon which civic sense builds to understand the concept itself and its implications at large. Civic is related to issues formally related to a city or town, whereas civics is the science of the rights and obligations that are related to citizenship. Sense in this case refers to the capacity to think or even act in a sensible and thoughtful way. Civic sense may be defined by combining the two definitions where the ability to act responsibly in a social context may be inclusive of awareness and the consideration of the well-being of fellow humans (Kumar, 2025). Civic consciousness is not merely a virtue upon individual but it is also a societal need as every activity of an individual individual can affect those around him or her. It is the awareness of the fact that every citizen belongs to the societal fabric and that overall interests of the society are always naturally connected with personal liabilities. The principle of civic sense in a society is also essential in ensuring harmony, cleanliness and order in the society and thus its absence or existence may have a great impact on the quality of life (Shibili, 2025). The purpose of the paper is to explore the modern day civic sense in India and to analyze whether civic sense is being manifested or not in India and how, otherwise, the fault lies. As a fast growing country, India will benefit greatly out of establishing a civil consciousness not only in its internal development and health of its population but also in its world image and reputation (Nagrika, 2025).

2. NEED FOR THE STUDY

Due to the pace of urbanization and socio-economic development in India, the achievements of these factors have not been similarly accompanied by civic consciousness, which is evident in the mass ill-treatment of the surrounding environment, lack of respect towards the common good and social incompetence. Although there are legal regulations and clean up exercises, the uncivil behavior is actually more entrenched in the civil blindness (LocalCircles, 2024). This study is required to critically analyze the real reason as to why civic sense is actually wanting in India and in formulating the real causal reasons, whether infrastructural,

educational and cultural and outlining the efforts which can be taken to insurgent behavior to come up with a more responsible and respectful and socially involved citizenry.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study has a qualitative methodology where the investigator attempts to explain the current level of civic sense in India, especially the behavioral patterns, infrastructural factors and the engagement of communities. The research design will use three main elements:

3.1 Literature Review

An in-depth examination of the academic literature, government sources, and media articles was done to get a grasp of the theoretical framework of civic sense and its application in the India context. This contributed towards finding pre-existing loopholes in civic practices, policy practice, and the knowledge of the population. The research incorporated environmental works, urban planning, research on behavioral psychology as well as articles in reputable national dailies and journals.

3.2 Case Studies

The selection of observational case studies was of two local communities in Agra, including Bhagwan Nagar and Anjani Vihar. These locations were selected because of their experienced contrasts in relation to civic infrastructure especially waste management. The field visits were also made to record the practices of people in terms of cleanliness and behavior and the contribution of the municipal services. The comparison of these colonies offered information in regards to the effect of infrastructure and community initiative on civic behavior (Bangar, 2025).

3.3 Field Survey

It was done as a door to door survey in 50 households within the selected regions. The survey concerned itself with the waste segregation practices, knowledge of the civic responsibility, and the attitudes to the cleanliness of the population. It was requested of respondents to segregate waste, use common bins and engage in cleanliness drives in the local areas. The responses were examined in order to establish the behavioral patterns and obstacles to civic participation.

4. INTERPRETATION AND OBSERVATIONS

4.1 Literating and Waste Management.

Each day about 25,000 tonnes of plastic waste is produced in India and one-fourth of it goes undisposed. This has been caused by the irregular schedules by the garbage trucks in Bhagwan Nagar which forces the residents to dispose waste in empty plots. Conversely, Anjani Vihar has become better since residents demanded frequent due collection of garbage. This brings out infrastructural deficiencies and lack of civic consciousness. A survey on 50 households showed that only 8 household practiced special segregation of waste. Most of the residents litter openly in roadsides or open plots, as they consider spaces in the open areas as their dumping areas. This is a tendency that is acted out of habit and without the civic awareness.

4.2 Screeching and Curse Word in the Street.

Cases of high-volume abusive interactions in open areas including buses and parks interfere with the comfort of others. A case of Supreme Court discussed the possibility of such behavior being criminal in case it creates discomfort among the population. The original cause is still a lack of respect to other people, which is caused by low civic awareness.

4.3 Urinating in the streets and spitting.

It has been found that even the governmental officers have urinated against the walls regardless of the drive towards cleanliness in the nation. These practices lead to hygiene problems and transmission of diseases. It is not only an infrastructural challenge but also behavioral.

4.4 Abusive Writing on Walls

Vulgar graffiti and messages on the public walls cause unsafe environment and this affects women and tourists. This shows disrespect towards common space and it leads to a negative social environment.

4.5 Neglect of Public Property

The survey and field visits indicated that there was frequent abuse of the public property like broken benches, broken streetlights, and among others abusing the public facilities. A large number of the respondents perceived maintenance to be the sole responsibility of the local authorities. Such perception undermines the sense of collective responsibility and contributes to the accelerated decay of the common resources.

4.6 The lack of involvement in Cleanliness Motives.

The government led cleanliness campaigns were relatively well known, however there was weak participation. Major causes were cited as time, low motivation and poor mobilization of the community. It means that it cannot be only aware but needs to have organized incentives, and local leaders to get the community engaged.

4.7 Attitudinal Disagreement between the private and the public space.

There was a significant difference that was noticed between the neatness inside household and laxity in the exterior environment. The answers also indicated that the respondents were more concerned with personal cleanliness than with communal cleanliness, which implied that they had a poor perception of belonging to the space of community. This attitude gap is still one of the greatest obstacles to sustainable civic behaviour.

5. PROBLEMS ARISING FROM LACK OF CIVIC SENSE

Civic Diligence is not applied, and as a result, a large number of social and environmental difficulties are observed that do not allow living normal life and maintaining harmony in society. It compromises the welfare of the community, destroys the infrastructures and the international image of the country of our society (TMLabs India, 2026).

- **Poor environmental conditions:** Extensive littering and misdeposition of waste contaminate the soil and water bodies endangering ecology and human safety.
- **Social Restlessness and Relyration:** Rudeness in common areas such as speaking loudly, spit, jumping queues etc. evokes stress and destroys harmony in social contexts.
- **Health risks:** The general bad hygiene brought about by open defecation habits and the open-air urination spreads the diseases and increases the poor living standards.
- **Poor environment to the vulnerable populations:** Women, children, and tourists do not feel safe in an environment that is not well maintained, or in places that disrespect them.
- **This will hurt the image of India,** Civic disobedience in the streets ruins the image of the country and dissenters international tourism and investment.

6. REASONS FOR THE DEFICIENCY

- Civic sense in India is deficient because of the systematic, cultural, and behavioral factors, which have prevailed over time. These are root causes that discourage development of responsible citizen behavior and collective responsibility.
- **Deficiency of Education and Enlightenment:** School curriculums do not postulate civic values in most cases and people are ignorant of their social accountability. The civic behavior is not turned into natural way of life without the early exposure.
- **Lack of proper Infrastructure:** the bad public facilities and haphazard waste disposal systems will convey anti-responsibility. In the absence of facilities, or reliance on unreliable ones, individuals turn to unhygienic statements.
- **Social Conditioning:** Indiscipline in the community becomes the normal practice of generations and this is not accompanied by civic responsibility. These tendencies are inculcated and may seldom be challenged or corrected.
- **Weak Enforcement:** There are laws that enforce civic order but they are not enforced in a constant manner. Absence of punishment in the case of breaches decreases the incentive of the people to obey laws.

7. MAJOR GOVERNMENT POLICIES TO IMPROVE CIVIC SENSE

7.1 Clean India Mission

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was inaugurated in 2014 and its role is to eradicate open defecation, enhance solid waste management and also encourage popular cleanliness in India. It has resulted in over millions of toilets being constructed in the country with the assistance of the behavior change programs such as a campaign called Darwaza band which advocates toilet use. The program focuses on civil attention to hygiene and sanitation and community responsibility to build a clean society (Malhotra, 2025).

7.2 Smart Cities Mission

Launched in 2015, the Smart Cities Mission aims to create 100 smart cities with infrastructure that is citizen-friendly. It facilitates responsible city living with digital governance and participatory planning, allowing the city residents to participate in the development of their cities. This strategy brings out responsible and technological civic actions.

7.3 Viksit Bharat @2047

Viksit Bharat @2047 is a vision project of Prime Minister Modi that will see India become a developed country by 2047. Behavioral reform is one of the pillars, which emphasizes on civic duty, lawfulness and respect of the general areas. It envisages a culture change towards becoming more responsibility in society.

7.4 School Curriculum Reforms

The suggested reforms have incorporated civic education into the elementary schools in order to inculcate such moral values as observing rules, cleanliness, and empathy since childhood. Such a behavioral change in the long-term plan is achieved with the help of foundational learning, which means that future generations will focus on sustainable behavior towards ethical civic system.

7.5 Enforcement Tech Community Policing.

Such efforts use CCTV, cell phone applications to report civic contraventions, and tougher penalties to make some people follow them. They could be punishments on littering, spitting, and road offending and publicly shaming habitual violators. The emphasis is laid on both accountability and deterrence in order to maintain the order in the community.

7.6 World Policy Adoptions to the Indian Policy.

India is getting inspiration based on the approach by Singapore of high fines, civic education and no corruption; Japan of voluntary clean up of their surroundings and collective ownership and responsibility, and the approach of Vision Zero of Sweden that focuses on safe infrastructure, and paired with civic education and open enforcement. These factors empower the Indian civic policy (International Journal of Scientific Development and Research, 2021).

8. SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Reform of Education:** Civic sense is the aspect that needs to be incorporated into school curriculums at a young age to give people the responsibility early in life. Education in the early life has the power to build a habit throughout life and to create a socially conscientious individual.
- **Public Campaigns:** Civic awareness should be distributed using the mass media and digitally. Follow-up campaigns have the ability to manipulate the actions of people and habitualize healthy behavior.
- **Infrastructure Development:** There should be reliable waste collection systems and clean facilities used by the people. The wonder about good infrastructure is to enhance citizens by making them responsible and hygienic.
- **Local communities:** Community should be motivated to take part in clean up and civic activities. The engagement of the grassroot increases ownership and enhances collective responsibility.
- **Strict Enforcement:** Penalties should be ensured steadily on civic violation to discourage malpractices. It is good law enforcement that makes people be accountable and obedient to the norms of the society.
- **Role Models:** These are influential persons who should be seen as behaving civically in front to lead others. Leaders should be the first to set an excellent example, and this would be demonstrated as a precedent to be followed by the society.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Civic sense can be enhanced which will result in:

- **Cleaner and healthier cities:** This is because when littering is curtailed and hygiene is enhanced by well behaved people, they result to safer and more habitable cities. It also reduces the pressure of municipal systems and healthcare services.
- **Improved civic peace:** When people treat each other with respect and care, then the friction in the society will be reduced and cooperation will prevail. This creates a more acceptable and non-violent life in the community (NIUA, 2024).

- **Straight growth in tourism and international respect:** Clean and well-organized image of the population will attract numerous tourists and make India well-known on the international arena. Tourists will have a higher likelihood to revisit and refer to the tourism sites that portray civic discipline.
- **Increased democratic processes:** Civic awareness makes the citizens active participants in the governance processes, both to vote as well as neighbourhood activities. This enhances accountability and democratic institutions.
- **Sustainable development:** Civic sense assists in long term environmental sustainability and social sustainability through promoting wise consumption, handling of waste and community custodianship (Kshitij, 2026).

CONCLUSION

The civic sense of India is still wanting in most aspects as it can be seen in daily habits and institution-level problems. Nevertheless, it can be changed by educating, providing infrastructures, enforcing and involving the community. The reason is that civic consciousness should be promoted as a common value, only in this case, India can really move in the direction of becoming a clean, cooperative, and respectful society in the eyes of the nations all over the world.

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