



## SOCIAL SKILLS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SECONDARY LEVEL STUDENTS: A LOCALITY AND GENDER-WISE CORRELATION STUDY

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### Abstract

Communication with others is facilitated through social skills. For the around development of a child social skills play very important role. Hence, teachers, peers, parents—all help in the process of developing social competency among the students. The present paper wants to see if there is any correlation between social skills and academic achievement of the secondary level students on the basis of their locality and gender. The sample size was 300, and the tool was self-constructed and standardized. The method was a descriptive survey method. As per the findings, there is no significant relationship between social skills and academic achievement of secondary level students.

**Key Words :** Social skills, academic achievement, secondary schools, students, correlation.



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### 01. Introduction

Social skills are a facilitation of interaction or communication with others. They play a very important role in a child's emotional health and well-being and academic arena. Without friendship, child will be very unhappy and alone which condition a child wants to avoid. A child is born with innate social competencies, innate strengths and weaknesses in abilities such as attention, memory, language and motor skills. Weaknesses can negatively affect a child's social competency and academic performance. Social skills are ways of dealing with others and creating a healthy and positive interaction. Children want to communicate with others, and they show consideration for the feeling and interest of their peers. Social skills are learned through peer contact and guidance from parents, teachers, and other adults.

### 02. Review of Related Literature

The following reviews were made in connection with the present study---

**Frostade and Pijlb, (2007)** emphasized that pupils with special needs could have difficulties in building relationships with peers in inclusive education. An important condition for developing positive relationships with peers was having the age group appropriate social skills. In inclusive classrooms, it appears that students with a limited set of social skills

required and associated them to their social status. In total, 989 students from grades 4 through 7 took part in the data gathering. The analyses were based on three different indexes for social inclusion : peer acceptance, friendships and membership of a cohesive subgroup. The result showed that 20% to 25% of the pupils with special needs were not socially included in their peer group. In general, there were modest associations between social position and social skills, but this was not the case for students with behavioural issues. Their social position strongly related to their social skills. For this particular group, social skills training could support them in maintaining contacts, relationships and friendships with their peers.

**Elliott, Christine, Demaray (2011)** were of the opinion that social skills were important to the successful social and academic functioning of all students and play a significant role in avoiding or preventing negative responses. In this article the authors emphasized the assessment and intervention of the academic side of social skills. That is, they examined the role of social skills in facilitating individual's learning and creation of a school environment where others can feel supported and motivated. To learn as a basis for this examination, they first reviewed several key studies documenting interrelations among social skills and academic competence. After that, current assessment practices were briefly reviewed by them focusing on rating scale methods for documenting students' social skills and perception of social support. Finally, they introduced an instructional approach called the responsive classroom that had been shown to advance the development of elementary and middle school students' social skill and academic achievement and result in supportive school environment for learners and teachers. They concluded with recommendations for researchers and practitioners to continue to consider the strong interrelations among social skills academic achievement and social support when working with all students in elementary and middle schools.

**Sing, Meenakshi (2012)** asserted that in teacher education curricula there was lack of development of the soft skills which were most essential for the profession. To be more specific, training in interpersonal communication skills and language proficiency was found wanting, for her. During an exercise syllabus reforms at the Faculty of Education, BHU, the problem was realized and an audit course of 1 credit on "Personal Development and Soft Skills for Teachers" was proposed which was applied on two groups of 40 students each in two consecutive semesters of the 2010-11 batch of B.A. The paper presents the designing of

the programme, its conduction, over 15 classes of 1.5 hours duration, modalities of interaction as well as training, and evaluation as well as outcome of the endeavour. On the basis of the results, it can be said that the exercise succeeded in transforming a group of youngsters and helped them overcome their anxieties and fears.

**Murugan & Manimehalai (2015)** sought to find if there was any significant difference between different sub-sample groups in life skills and academic achievement in terms of gender, locality and family type, and if there was any relationship between life skills and academic achievement of the elementary teacher education students. Survey method was used in the study. The investigator collected 270 sample from both sexes using simple random sampling technique from 11 institutions. Life Skills Inventory constructed by Thangathurai and Thamodharan (2012) was used for data collection. Marks of elementary teacher education students obtained in quarterly examination were taken for estimating their academic achievement. Correlation and 't' test were used for the analysis of data. Gender-wise significant differences were found in the dimensions of emotional skill and social skill; and locality-wise significant differences were found in the dimensions of emotional skill, social skill and communication skill. In respect of relationship between life skills and academic achievement, significant relationship was found in the dimension of personal skill. In all the three cases the other dimensions showed no significant differences and relationships.

### **03. Important Terms Defined**

The term 'Social Skills' and 'Academic Achievement' have been defined in the following manner-----

#### *(A) Social Skills*

Walker(1983) defines social skills as "a set of competencies that (a) allow an individual to initiate and maintain positive social relationship, (b) contribute to peer acceptance and to a satisfactory social adjustment, and (c) allow an individual to cope effectively with the large social environment."

Gresham, Sugar and Horner (2001) define social skills as "the degree to which students are able to establish and maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationship, gain peer acceptance, establish and maintain friendship, and terminal negative or pernicious interpersonal relationship."

They define five dimension of social skills-(i) peer relational skill, (ii) self management skill, (iii) academic skill, (iv) competence skill and (v) assertion skill.

*(B) Academic Achievement*

When the students pass through a formal system of education, the necessity of measuring their performance arises. This is done through a terminal examination. And the marks that are scored by the individual students are taken as the indicator of their academic performance in a particular class or level or grade. In the present case, the marks obtained by the students in the last annual examination were gathered.

**04. Rationale of the Present Study**

Social skills are a very important factor in one's life. We see in the present day the children are busy with video games, cartoons and burden of school and private tuition. So they have no time to spend with others. In the present day it is also found that there is lack of peer relationship, group discussion and sympathy with others. As a result, lack of social skills may be affecting academic achievement in students' life. Naturally, social skills and academic achievement in students are a major concern for the present day, because there may be positive correlation between the two. Social skills are a more important factor that influences the students' academic life and social life.

**05. Objectives of the Study**

The following were the objectives of the present study----

- (i) To measure the social skills of secondary level students in Malda district.
- (ii) To gather academic achievement data of secondary level students in Malda district
- (iii) To determine the locality and gender-wise relationship between social skills and academic achievement

**06. Hypotheses of the Study**

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study-----

$H_1$  : The urban students in Malda district will show no significant relationship between their score obtained in the test of social skills and their score of academic achievement.

$H_2$  : The rural students in Malda district will show no significant relationship between their score obtained in the test of social skills and their score of academic achievement.

$H_3$  : The boy students in Malda district will show no significant relationship between their score obtained in the test of social skills and their score of academic achievement.

$H_4$  : The girl students in Malda district will show no significant relationship between their score obtained in the test of social skills and their score of academic achievement.

## 07. Sample & Population

For the present study the researcher selected 300 secondary school students from both the sexes from high schools in Malda District. And all the secondary level students of Malda District were treated as the population of the study.

## 08. Variables of the Study

In this study, social skills and academic achievement were considered as the independent and dependent variables, respectively and the locality and gender of the students as the classificatory variables of the study.

## 09. Tool of the Study

A self-constructed tool was used for the study to measure the social skills of the secondary level students of Malda District.

## 10. Nature of the present study:

The present study was a descriptive survey in its nature.

## 11. Preparation and Standardization of the tool

The researcher prepared a questionnaire for measuring the social skills in eight dimensions--- communication, conflict resolution, team building, interpersonal basic interaction, adjustment, problem solving, group discussion, cooperation and empathy. Reliability of the tool was measured through the co-efficient of correlation .The result of test-retest was 0.67.

## 12. Scoring Key

In this study each item of the social skills was evaluated through the scoring key 3-2-1 or 1-2-3 according to the positive or negative items, respectively.

## 13. Application of the tool & Scoring

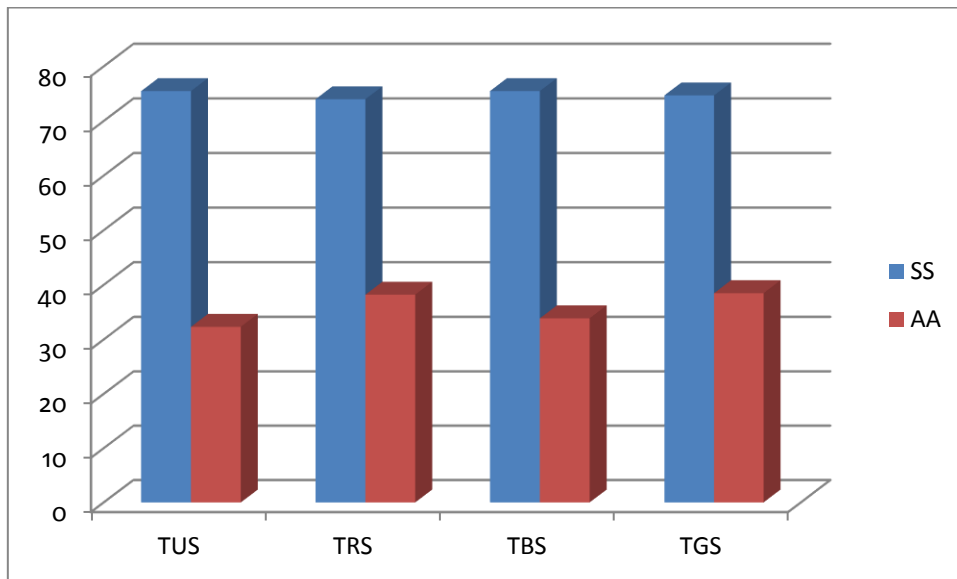
The researcher first applied the data-gathering tool, and then, the related data were gathered to organize statistical operations.

## 14. Descriptive Statistics of the Sample Groups

**Table No -1: M, Mdn, Mo & SD of Sample Groups' SS & AA**

| Sample Groups        | N   | Variables | Mean  | Median | Mode  | SD    |
|----------------------|-----|-----------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| Total Urban Students | 150 | SS        | 75.47 | 76.00  | 74.00 | 5.56  |
|                      |     | AA        | 32.31 | 29.00  | 26.00 | 13.16 |
| Total Rural Students | 150 | SS        | 73.98 | 74.00  | 75.00 | 5.17  |
|                      |     | AA        | 38.20 | 38.00  | 38.00 | 14.29 |
| Total Boy Students   | 150 | SS        | 75.47 | 76.00  | 74.00 | 5.56  |
|                      |     | AA        | 33.87 | 33.50  | 26.00 | 12.07 |
| Total Girl Students  | 150 | SS        | 74.68 | 75.00  | 72.00 | 4.77  |
|                      |     | AA        | 38.47 | 34.50  | 40.00 | 26.65 |

The highest mean score of social skills belongs to both total urban students and total boy students, while the lowest mean score of that score category belongs to total rural students. The highest mean score of academic achievement belongs to total girl students, while the lowest mean score of that score category also belongs to the total girl students who bears the lowest as well as the highest standard deviation in social skills and academic achievement, respectively.



**Figure-1: Comparison of Mean Scores of SS & AA**

### 15. Analysis and Interpretation

$H_1$  : The urban students in Msalda district will show no significant relationship between their score obtained in the test of social skills and their score of academic achievement

**Table No-2: Testing of Hypotheses No.1**

| Samle Group          | Score Category | N   | r     | df  | Levels of Significane | of Interpretation |
|----------------------|----------------|-----|-------|-----|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Total urban students | Test Score     | 150 | 0.049 | 148 | 0.05                  | 0.01              |
|                      | Academic Score |     |       |     | 0.159                 | 0.208             |

Here the computed value of r is 0.049 and the df is 148. The table value at 0.05 level is 0.159 and at 0.01 level is 0.208. The value is not significant in both levels. So the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

$H_2$  : The rural students in Malda district will show no significant relationship between their score obtained in the test of social skills and their score of academic achievement.

**Table No.3 : Testing of Hypotheses No.2**

| Sample Group                | Score category | N   | r     | df  | Level of significance | of Interpretation |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----|-------|-----|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Total rural students</b> | Test score     |     |       |     | 0.05                  | 0.01              |
|                             | Academic Score | 150 | 0.038 | 148 | 0.159                 | 0.208             |

Here the computed value of r is 0.038 and the df is 148. The table value at 0.05 level is 0.159 and at 0.01 level is 0.208. The value is not significant in both levels. So the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

$H_3$  : The boy students in Malda district will show no significant relationship between their score obtained in the test of social skill and their score of academic achievement.

**Table No.4: Testing of Hypothesis No.3**

| Category                  | Score category | N   | r     | df  | Levels of significance | of Interpretation |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----|-------|-----|------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Total boy students</b> | Test score     |     |       |     | 0.05                   | 0.01              |
|                           | Academic score | 150 | 0.002 | 148 | 0.113                  | 0.148             |

Here the computed value of r is 0.002 and the df is 148. The table value at 0.05 level is 0.159 and at 0.01 level is 0.208 . The value is not significant in both levels. So the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

$H_4$  : The girl students in Malda district will show no significant relationship between their score obtained in the test of social skill and their score of academic achievement.

**Table No.5 : Testing of Hypothesis No.4**

| Category                   | Score category | N   | r      | df  | Levels of Significance | of Interpretation |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----|--------|-----|------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Total girl students</b> | Test score     | 150 |        |     | 0.05                   | 0.01              |
|                            | Academic score | 150 | -0.064 | 148 | 0.159                  | 0.208             |

Here the computed value of  $r$  is -0.064 and the  $df$  is 148. The table value at 0.05 level is 0.159 and at 0.01 level is 0.208. The value is not significant in both levels. So the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

### **16. Findings of the Study**

- The urban students in Malda district showed no significant relationship between their score obtained in the test of social skills and their score of academic achievement.
- The rural students in Malda district showed no significant relationship between their score obtained in the test of social skills and their score of academic achievement.
- The boy students in Malda district showed no significant relationship between their score obtained in the test of social skills and their score of academic achievement.
- The girl students in Malda district will showed no significant relationship between their scores obtained in the test of social skills and their score of academic achievement

### **17. Educational Implications of the Study**

Development of required social skills is very important in the students' life. School is a place where the child learns reading, writing, arithmetic and also learns to get along with other people and develop social skills. These increase social skills of students, they successfully interact with other pupils, successfully adapt to cultural environment and child's emotional health well-being. This is important for both the teachers and the policy-makers.

### **18. Conclusion**

From the observed findings of the study, it is concluded that there are no significant relationships between social skills academic achievement of the sample groups in respect of their locality and gender. According to the findings of this research there exists relationships between social skills and academic achievement of the strata, but the relationships are not significant. However, the Mean scores of the total sample groups indicate that the scores of the students in social skills are not good and almost same, and their academic achievements are also not good but vary to a great extent. So the teachers of the secondary level must be aware of that and should take some initiatives to improve the same.

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