

## A STUDY OF SOCIAL SKILLS: CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES ON GENDER & STREAMS AT HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL

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### ABSTRACT

*The study was carried out to study the Social Skills among students. The objectives of study were: (i) to study the Social Skills among students. (ii) To compare the Social Skills in relation to gender (iii) to compare the Social Skills among students of science and commerce streams. The descriptive survey method was followed. 200 students of higher secondary schools were selected by Simple random Sampling method. An equal number of male and females students of Science and Commerce streams were selected. Social Skills Problem behavior Check list Scale by Mathur & Aurora (2005) was used to measure the level of Social Skills. The mean value of Social Skills scores of students was found 109.04, the mean values of male and female students on 0.866 scale were found 105.38 and 112.71 respectively and the t-test value was found 0.0056 which is not significant at .05 level significance. The mean value of students of science and Commerce streams on Social Skills scale were found 108.82 and 109.27 respectively and t-test was found to be 0.866 which was not significant at .05 level of significance. The results showed that there is no significance difference between students of Science and Commerce streams and also between male and female students on Social Skills ground.*

### INTRODUCTION

Social skills are arguably the most important set of abilities we can have. Having great social skills help you meet interesting people, get that job you want, progress further in your career and relationships. But lack of good social skills can make life lonely, causing anxiety and depression. We get depressed and anxious when we do not meet our fundamental human needs. We all need to be socialize, to connect with others and need social contacts. But it is a trap to assume that you either have social skills or you do not. Some people find it easier to naturally relax around people, talk and listen confidently. But like any set of skills, social skills can be learned, honed and developed by anyone. Social skills training is a vital part of building

confidence and these are major factors to play a successful character in life.

**Social skills** are specific behaviors such as smiling, making eye contact, asking and responding to questions, and giving and acknowledging compliments during a social exchange. These behaviors have resulted in positive social interactions and have been linked to positive developmental outcomes, including peer acceptance. Few core components of Social Skills are: 1. Influence: (wielding effective tactics for persuasion) 2. Communication: (listening openly and sending clear, convincing messages to others) 3. Conflict Management: (dissolving disagreements), 4. Leadership: (inspiring and guiding individuals and groups regardless of position), 5. Change Catalyst:

(initiating and/or managing change) 6. Building Bonds (nurturing instrumental relationships for building strong connections) 7. Collaboration and Cooperation: (working with others toward shared goals) 8. Team Capabilities: (creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals).

Social skills include both verbal and nonverbal forms of communication. They often are the way others determine our status, consider us as potential friends or mates, and consider us for employment or promotions in the workplace. The opposite of social skills (which imply skill), is social ineptitude, which is an inability to use the defined set of social skills that would make one a good communicator.

Adolescents' social relationships with their peers, whether platonic or romantic, can promote social skills. Through their friendships, teens can develop constructive interpersonal skills, autonomy, positive mental health, self-confidence, and satisfaction with social support. In addition, interacting with friends helps teens learn to make joint decisions, express empathy, and deepen their perspectives. Positive peer relationships also appear to discourage aggression, emotional distress, and antisocial behaviors. Frequent dating among teens has been linked with poor academic performance and depression, but not with a decline in any particular social skills.

The teenagers who are never alone and those who are alone a lot may have problems and we know that balance personality or harmonious development is not complete in the absence of controlled emotions and social skills. Adolescents who have social confidence – that is, those who are socially assertive and take the initiative in social situations feel more accepted socially, less lonely, and less socially uncomfortable than their peers. The several experimentally evaluated studies of programs designed to improve adolescents' social skills show that programs that teach adolescents the behaviors and skills that promote communication and problem solving seem to foster social confidence.

Social skills are strongly connected to each other and affect the personality of adolescents because the rapid changes in physical, social, emotional and psychological aspects of life create a chain to play different roles in life. These factors are always helpful to find new areas of problem of researches.

### **Objectives:**

- (i) To study the Social Skills among students.
- (ii) To compare the Social Skills in relation to gender.
- (iii) To compare the Social Skills among students of science and commerce streams.

### **Hypothesis:**

1. There will be no significant difference between Social Skills of male and female students.
2. There will be no significant difference between Social Skills of students of commerce and science stream.

## **METHOD OF STUDY**

The descriptive survey method was followed.

## **SAMPLE OF THE STUDY**

200 students of higher secondary schools were selected by Simple random Sampling method. An equal number of male and females students of Commerce and science stream were selected.

## **TOOL USED IN THE STUDY**

Social Skills Problem behavior Check list Scale by Mathur & Aurora (2005) was used to measure the level of Social Skills. The social skills checklist assesses negative social behavior on 6 dimensions like Presentation skill, Interaction skills, Conversation, Social integration, Attitude towards

other children and Attitude towards adults. Initially 150 items were listed out and given to 10 psychologists for internal consistency and content validity.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The first objective of the study was to study the Social Skills among students. To achieve the above objective the mean value of students is 109.04, SD is 18.83 respectively. It may be a cause of common

interaction towards the day today situations and problems in their life. It shows the interaction skills like making social contact which is common to all adolescents in their school and family and neighborhood, conversational skills develop at each movement of life, it reveals the verbal communication formally and informally and the presentation skills always have to work because of human beings have to present ourselves in front of society, school, social institutions and agencies etc.

**Table No.1 Showing Mean, Standard Deviation of Social Skills among adolescents:**

| Variable      | N   | M      | S.D.  |
|---------------|-----|--------|-------|
| Social Skills | 200 | 109.04 | 18.83 |

The second objective of study was to compare the Social Skills in relation to gender. To study the Social Skills in relation to gender difference it is necessary to know the mean value of girls & boys which are 112.71 and 105.38 respectively, it indicates that the girls have the higher mean value as compare to the mean value of the boys. The standard deviation of

the girls and boys are 19.08 and 17.93. The calculated value of the t test is 0.0056 which is lesser than the tabulated value at .05 levels shows the insignificant difference between the Social Skills of girls and boys that may be attributed to chance factor.

**Table No.2 Showing mean, SD and t- value of Social Skills in relation to gender difference:**

| S.No | Gender | N   | M      | S.D.  | t      | P    |
|------|--------|-----|--------|-------|--------|------|
| 1.   | Girls  | 100 | 112.71 | 19.08 | 0.0056 | <.05 |
| 2.   | Boys   | 100 | 105.38 | 17.93 |        |      |

It may be said that the girls and boys are trained differently in their family; the interaction skills of girls like facial expression, power to convey the message are different to boys. Boys get more external exposure in society, as compare to the girls and it may be assumed that in male dominating society boys are more pampered in their family, social set up and environment.

The third objective of the study was to compare the Social skills among students of science

and commerce streams. It is evident from the above table that the mean values of Science and Commerce streams are 108.82 and 109.27, SD values are 17.20 and 20.41 respectively, the calculated t value of the science and Commerce group is found 0.866 at .05 level of confidence interval. Hence, it can be considered that there is insignificant difference between the Social Skills of Science and Commerce groups' adolescents.

**Table No.3 Showing mean, SD and t- value of Social Skills in relation to different streams of studies:**

| S.No | Streams  | N   | M      | S.D.  | t     | P    |
|------|----------|-----|--------|-------|-------|------|
| 1.   | Science  | 100 | 108.82 | 17.20 | 0.866 | <.05 |
| 2.   | Commerce | 100 | 109.27 | 20.41 |       |      |

It may be said that adolescents of Science and Commerce groups have different areas to perform their work and it depends upon their social setup, environment and the way to solve the problems related to their particular field. It can be attributed to the difficulties of the first impression that adolescents make on others and show how people react to each other. Their individual mode to carry out the peer group activities, family life, school friends etc may affect the Social Skills streams to streams.

## CONCLUSION

Social Skills of Science and Commerce streams' adolescents is insignificant because each stream has its own field to explore specific skills and Science is more systematic, experimental, observational, objective, result oriented, predictable, detailed and formal way to study as compare to the Commerce and adolescents of science stream have to go deeply to know the facts and perform the experiments which is based on the systematic process. The Commerce stream may be more practical, based on human relations, organization, social support and society etc. It is just opposite to Science.

Social Skills like presentation of ideas to others, interaction, conversation, social Integration and social contacts are enhancing the performance of adolescents in school environment, student- teacher relationship, family atmosphere, peer group relationships, friend circle etc. If the adolescents have the balance and greater power to handle the emotions to improve the Social Skills which are used in day today life may lead to live a successful life.

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