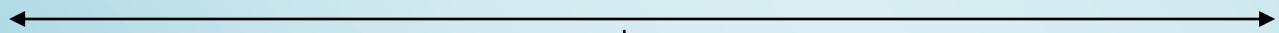


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SOCIAL COMPETENCY OF ADOLESCENTS IN NALBARI AREA OF ASSAM, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Social competency is a broad concept of reflecting adjustment of individual in the family, school, and work and in society at large. It can be broadly defined as the capabilities of enabling individuals 'to live together in the world' comprising aspects of interpersonal, intercultural, social and civic competencies. A person possessing good socio- emotional skills, self-efficacy and adaptive behaviour is referred to as socially competent. In the present study an attempt has been undertaken to study the social competence level of adolescent students and it has also been tried to examine is there any gender difference in social competence of secondary school students. The Social competence tool developed by V.P.Sharma, Prabha Shukla & Kiran Shukla (1992) has been used in the present study. Findings of the study reveal that the mean score of female adolescents (172.22) is greater than the male adolescents (163.12) of secondary schools. It shows that female students of secondary school are socially more competent than male students which gives firm foothold to the researchers, parents and teachers for re-conceptualizing the aim of school education, redesigning the curriculum for school going boys students to make them socially competent in near future.

Key Word: Social competence, Adolescents, Nalbari.

INTRODUCTION

Social Competence is a society related concept of individual that includes all the necessary attributes for effective interpersonal functioning such as adjustment behavior, social skills, and peer acceptance. Social competence is an important ingredient of modern civilization and essential attribute of the member of a progressive and onward going society. (Sharma, Shukla and Shukla, 1992). It is a complex, multidimensional concept which refers to the social, emotional and cognitive skills and behaviors that children need for successful social adaptation. Bier man (2004) defined social competence as the “capacity to coordinate adaptive responses

flexibly to various interpersonal demands and to organize social behavior in different social contexts in a manner beneficial to oneself and consistent with social conventions and morals". The success of an individual in the society depends largely upon the extent to which he has acquired the richness and potency of social competence desirable for his self actualization, growth and development. For a successful interpersonal interaction, a high order social competence is an essential disposition of an individual. Social competence is ability on the part of the individual to establish and maintain good socio-emotional skills, self-efficacy, adaptive behaviour and the most important determinant of maintaining a sound mental health. That is why, present study carried out on social competence of secondary school students of Nalbari area is a humble effort of the investigator to sensitize the school going adolescents about the importance of maintaining a good social efficiency.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Social competence is a dominating factor in everyone's personality development. It has profound influence on the personal and professional lives of all individuals and for this reason today in all over the world, social competence is becoming such an important area of research. Therefore special attention must be devoted to this domain so that individuals can grow and can develop a balanced and matured personality who can live together with his fellow men and contribute immensely to society.

Nalbari is one of the highest populous districts of Assam and people of this district are also very much educationally conscious. Educational opportunities in Nalbari are of high quality. It boasts of producing most number of toppers in School level. Nalbari is famous for Sanskrit education and known as "Nabadeep" for presence of various Sanskrit education institutions. First School was set up in Nalbari in the year 1887, which later known as Nalbari Govt. Gurdon H.S School. Nalbari College, Nalbari; Nalbari Sanskrit College, Nalbari; Nalbari Commerce College, Nalbari; MNC Balika College, Nalbari; Barbhag College, Kamarkuchi; Baska College, Mashalpur; Barkhetri College, Mukalmua; Tihu College, Tihu; Barama College, Barama; Kamrup College, Chamata; Dhamdhama Anchalik Mahavidyalaya, Dhamdhama; Gyanpeeth Mahavidyalaya; Nalbari Law College, Nalbari; D.S.R.Academy, nalbari are some premier colleges of Nalbari. Along with 28 Higher Secondary Schools, 145 High Schools, and 276 ME and MV Schools, Nalbari have massive educational infrastructure. "Kumar Bhaskar Varma Sanskrit and Ancient Studies University" is a new addition to the higher education scenario of Nalbari, which was established in 15th November, 2015. Actual Population of Nalbari district as per the Census report 2011 is 771,639 among which Male population comprises of 396,006 and Female comprises to 375,633. Population Growth is 11.99%. Proportion to Assam Population of Nalbari district is 2.47%.

Sex Ratio is per 1000: 949 and Child Sex Ratio is (0-6 Age) 967. Average Literacy of Nalbari is 78.6% among which Male Literacy stands for 84.36 and Female Literacy stands for 72.57% . .

This socio- educational background of Nalbari district gives ample scope to the investigator to conduct a study on Social competency among the adolescents of this greater area and the problem has been stated as “Social Competence of Adolescents in Nalbari Area of Assam, India”

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

It is often complained that modern inventions of science and technology like T.V., 3G internet services, Video-game, Android mobile have made the new generation children machine-friendly taking them far away from human society. Basically man is a social animal and the existence of human being without social set up can hardly be realized. A man is born in a society, develops in a society, works and progresses in a society. So, he is obviously expected to be a socially efficient person. There are various factors behind the social maturity of an individual. His parents, family members, neighbors, peer group, society, etc. expect him to behave in the way acceptable to the society. Adolescents are expected more by the society in which they live. They learn to be in a group, share and care for others, respect the norms and values of the society. The present teaching –learning process gives little scope for developing such qualities. It is only cognition-oriented. But Social competence is an important indicator of positive development as they help to promote and maintain mental health. Question to be addressed by researchers is whether gender difference exists or not in the expression or manifestation of social competencies. Therefore, the study has been taken in the class IX and X students of Nalbari district intending to examine their social competence level with the problem entitled “Social Competence of Adolescents in Nalbari Area of Assam, India”.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Present study has been carried out on the basis of following objectives-

- (i) To study the social competence level of Adolescent students
- (ii) To compare the level of social competence of male and female students of secondary schools
- (iii) To study the mean difference in social competence of male and female secondary school students

HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis formulated for objective no. iii is –

- There is no significant gender difference in social competency of Adolescent students in Nalbari district of Assam.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE TERMS

- **Social Competence:** It is defined as the capacity to coordinate adaptive responses flexibly to various interpersonal demands and to organize social behavior in different social contexts in a manner beneficial to oneself and consistent with social conventions and morals.
- **Adolescents:** Teen-agers are called adolescents who study at the secondary education level.

METHODOLOGY FOLLOWED IN THE PRESENT STUDY

- **Method Used:** Descriptive survey method has been applied in the present study.
- **Population of the Study:** The population of the study comprises of all the class IX and Class X (14+) students of Nalbari district.
- **Sample Selected:** Total 100 questionnaires were distributed by the investigator to collect necessary data on social competency. But after a stipulated time period, only 64 questionnaires were came back and therefore, sample of the present study comprises of 64 students selected randomly from four English Medium schools of Nalbari District. Among these 64 students, 33 were male and 31 were female respondents.
- **Tool Used:** In order to measure the Social Competence of the sampled adolescents, a Social Competence Scale (SCS) constructed and standardized by Sharma, Shukla and Shukla (1992) was used. The scale comprised of 50 items measuring 18 factors of social skills and behavior of Indian adolescents of both the sexes. It is a five point scale ranging from ‘very high’, ‘high’, ‘average’, ‘low’ and ‘very low’ respectively. The scoring was done as per directions in the manual. The highest score on the scale can be obtained 250 and lowest can be 50. The coefficient of temporal stability employing test-retest method has been estimated to be $r_{tt}=0.56$ whereas the coefficient of inter-rater reliability was found to be $r_{tt}=0.67$ and validity was found to be 0.84. All the components of the SCS have been found positively correlated with the composite social competence ranging from $r = +.701$ to $r = +.142$ which indicates that all the 18

components of the social competence scale measure broadly the same attribute of social competence through these components what the composite social competence scale is measuring.

- **Statistical Techniques Applied:** The collected data was analyzed with the help of Descriptive and inferential statistics such as Means and Standard Deviations and t-test were worked out to describe the nature of data.
- **Delimitation Of The Study:** Present study has been delimited to only the 14+ students studying in English Medium schools.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION

In order to realize the objective no. i that is, to study the social competence level of secondary school students, data have presented with the help of table no. 1 which is given below.

Table No. 1. Showing the overall Social Competence Level of Secondary School Students

Sl. No	Categories of Social Competence	Range of Scores	No of Students	Percentage as per category
1	High	176-198	17	26.56
2	Medium	152-175	38	59.38
2	Low	129-151	09	14.06
	Total		64	100.00%

From the above table, it has been revealed that majority of the students that is 59.38% have “Medium” level Social Competence, 26.56% have High and 14.06% have low Social Competence. It may be concluded that majority of the students have average Social Competence.

In order to achieve the objective no. ii that is, to compare the level of social competence of male and female students of secondary schools, data have been presented with the help of table no. 2 as given below.

Table no.2 showing the Gender wise Social Competence level of Secondary school students

Sl. No	Categories of Social Competence	Range of Scores	No. & % of Male Students	No. & % of Female Students
1	High	176-198	6 (35.29)	11 (64.71)
2	Medium	152-175	18 (47.37)	20 (52.63)
2	Low	129-151	9 (100)	0 (0)
	Total		33	31

Figures within parenthesis in table no. 2 indicate %

From the above table it is evident that Female students are showing high level social competency comprising of 64.71% (11nos. from the total 17 numbers of “High” level category) than their male counterparts which is only 35.29%.

In “Medium” category also Female (52.63%) students are found more than their male (47.37%) counterparts.

Not a single female student was found having “Low” level social competence in this study.

For the purpose of getting objective no. iii, data are presented with the help of table no 3.

Table no. 3 showing the significance of Mean Difference between Male and Female Students in Social Competence

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	SE _D	t	critical ratio	Result
Male	33	163.12	15.44	61	3.04	2.99	2.58 at 0.01 level	(**) Significant
Female	31	172.225	7.87					

- Significant Mean difference **between Male and Female Students** has been observed in possessing Social competence as the t value is found to be greater than table value at both the level of Critical ratio. Hence null hypothesis is safely rejected and it can be concluded that there exists a significant difference in social competence of male and female students of secondary schools.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following findings are observed from the present study-

- Majority of the students have average level Social Competence.
- Total 26.56% students have “High” level social competency
- Only 14.06% are of “Low” level Social Competence among which not a single female student was found in this category.
- The mean score of female students (172.225) is greater than the male students (163.12) of secondary schools. It shows that female students of secondary school are socially more competent than male students.
- There exists a significant Mean difference in social competence of male and female students of secondary schools of Nalbari area.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Present study has implications for researchers, parents and school teachers for re-conceptualizing the aim of school education, re-designing the curriculum for school going male students to make them socially more sensitive and competent in near future.

Present study has educational implications for all the people dealing with education of children. Teachers, parents, curriculum designer and policy-making people should deeply think over it so that children can become socially efficient or competent at all the developmental stages along with getting proper knowledge.

Schools should put a lot of emphasis on upholding social skills, social communication in the students more particularly during the period of adolescence as it will help them for attaining a sound personality along with the effective use of leisure time inside and outside the school.

CONCLUSION

It may be concluded that Social competence is an important asset which is required for every human being to have a successful and happy life. Taking the findings into consideration it can be stated that parents and teachers can play a big role in promoting and enhancing social competency. Parents can communicate more with their children instead of encouraging for playing video-game, mobile game, Internet game etc.

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