

SOCIAL SKILLS AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO GENDER AND FAMILY TYPE

Vandana Kapoor

Ph.D. Research Scholar (Education), School of Education, Abhilashi University
Chail Chowk, Mandi (H.P.)

Suman Kumari

Assistant Professor, School of Education, Abhilashi University Chail Chowk, Distt.
Mandi (H.P.)

ABSTRACT

The present research work was specifically undertaken to study the social skills among senior secondary school students with respect to gender and family type. Survey technique under descriptive method of research was adopted in this present investigation. By incidental sampling technique, total sample of 881 senior secondary school students were selected from four districts of Himachal Pradesh. For data collection Social Skills Rating Scale (SSRS-SVAKS) developed by Sood, Anand and Kumar was used. The collected data were analyzed by employing Analysis of Variance (Two way). The major findings of the study revealed that male and female senior secondary school students possessed similar level of social skills. The senior secondary school students belonging to different family type differs significantly from each other with regard to their social skills. In addition to this, the results of the study also revealed that gender and family type (in combination with each other) did not influence social skills among senior secondary school students significantly. The end of the paper discussion on the results and implications of the findings of the investigation have been discussed in detail.

Keywords: Social Skills, Gender, Family Type, Senior Secondary School Students

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical period of growth and development in which individuals undergo significant physical, emotional, cognitive, and social changes. Senior secondary school students, who are mostly in the late adolescent stage, face diverse academic and personal challenges that require them to interact effectively with peers, teachers, parents, and society at large. In this context, social skills play a pivotal role in shaping their personality, adjustment, and overall well-being. Social skills can be broadly defined as the set of abilities that enable individuals to initiate and maintain positive interpersonal relationships, communicate effectively, resolve conflicts, and adapt to various social situations in a constructive manner. For senior secondary school students, social skills are not only essential for building friendships and maintaining peer relationships, but they also contribute significantly to academic success, classroom participation, and future career readiness. Students with well-developed social skills often demonstrate greater self-confidence, better teamwork, empathy, and cooperation, which are highly valued in today's competitive and collaborative world. On the other hand, lack of social competence may lead to problems such as social isolation, poor self-esteem, academic underperformance, and even mental health issues like stress and anxiety. The development of social skills at this stage is influenced by various factors, including family environment, school climate, peer interactions, personality traits, and exposure to digital technologies. With the rise of social media and changing modes

of communication, adolescents today face new opportunities as well as challenges in their social interactions. Therefore, equipping students with adequate social skills has become an important concern for educators, parents, and policymakers. Schools, in particular, serve as key platforms where students not only acquire knowledge but also learn to collaborate, share, and build meaningful social relationships. Given the importance of social skills in academic, personal, and professional domains, it becomes necessary to study and understand their nature among senior secondary school students. Such an understanding can help educators design appropriate interventions and programs to strengthen students' social competence, thereby fostering holistic development and preparing them for the responsibilities of adult life. Family is where children first begin to build the social skills necessary to succeed in later life. Family plays very important role in the development of social skills among the adolescents. The importance of social skills for students must be emphasized and praised. To argue that no two humans are same in terms of personality would be an understatement. People might vary greatly in their sociability and extroversion; some may thrive on constant social interaction, while others would rather keep to themselves. Social skills help us every day whether it is about communication, establishing one's identity or interacting with the society members where we are living. It includes verbal and non-verbal communication, such as speech, gestures, facial expression and body language etc. Out of so many members of the society only that person will be considered having strong social skills if they have the knowledge of how to behave in social situations and understand both written and implied rules while communicating with individuals. Social skills is an essential part of adolescent development and if teenagers have effective social skills, then they can adjust in any situation or anywhere but if the skills are not developed then they cannot work smoothly in day to day life activities and it can also create hurdles among the path of adolescents. Social skills are defined as social behavior classes offered by the individual to act appropriately in interpersonal relationships. The development of social skills is an important and vital step in individuals' own and professional development because it helps them build their relationships in far or much better way.

There are so many basic skills which is required for an individual to become an active member of the society and to become socialized so that they can create healthy and positive interactions with one another such as Eye contact, Facial expression, social distance, Quality of voice, greeting others, making conversations, working with others and playing with others. There are an enormous factor that affects the social skills of an individual such as family type, socio-economic status, educational status, occupational status, personal and demographic factors. In the evolving landscape of 21st century it is essential to develop the social skills among adolescents. **Nayak (2014)** studied on the influence of culture linked gender and age on social competence of higher secondary school adolescents. The findings of the study show high scores of female adolescents than male adolescents on social capability of the same age group and within the same cultural setting. Regardless of gender and age, a significant difference was found between the adolescents of urban and rural secondary schools in social capability. Adolescents from secondary school of urban and rural background found significantly different in social capability. **Sharma and Sood (2016)** examined a study on assertion and cooperation social skills among elementary school students with respect to their level. The results of the study revealed that elementary school students possessing high and moderate level of overall cognitive abilities significantly possessed more assertion and cooperation social skills as compared to the students with low level of overall cognitive abilities. Similarly, students belonging to good and moderate home environment have significantly shown higher cooperation social skill as compared to students belonging to poor

home environment. **Dalal Suman and Sarika (2022)** conducted a study on social skill in relation to social adjustment of secondary school students. The results of the study showed that there was positive relationship between social skill and social adjustment of secondary school students. **Preety and Rani(2023)** carried out a study on the relationship between social skills, parental involvement and academic achievement of adolescent students. The results of the study revealed that there is positive and low but significant relationship between social skills and parental involvement of adolescent students. Similarly, the study also revealed that there is positive and low but significant relationship between social skills and academic achievement of adolescent students. **Monika (2023)** investigated a study entitled “comparative and relation study of social skills among secondary school students in relation to demographical variables”. The results of the study have indicated that there was no significant difference between Social Skills among rural and urban students. **Sarkar and Banerjee (2024)** explored a research study to investigate the social and communication skills of adolescents in West Bengal, India, examining various demographic factors' influence. Results revealed that notable variations based on mother tongue and medium of instruction, highlighting the nuanced nature of skill development. Correlation analysis indicated a significant positive relationship between communication and social skills, with social skills predicting communication abilities among adolescents. This study contributes valuable insights into factors shaping adolescent skills in an academic context. **Kaur and Preety (2025)** aimed to study social skills among adolescent students in relation to parental involvement and academic achievement. The results revealed that (i) adolescent students belonging to high, average and low parental involvement were found different on their social skills. Students having high parental involvement were found to have better social skills as compared to students with average and low parental involvement. (ii) adolescent students having high and low academic achievement were not found different on social skills. (iii) there was no significant interaction effect of parental involvement and academic achievement on the scores of social skills.

In the lines of these efforts, the present investigation is an attempt to study social skills among senior secondary school students with respect to gender and family type.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the difference in social skills among senior secondary school students with regard to their gender.
2. To study the difference in social skills among senior secondary school students with regard to their family type.
3. To study the interactional effect between gender and family type with respect to social skills among senior secondary school students.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- 1 There will be no significant difference in social skills among senior secondary school students with regard to their gender.
- 2 There will be no significant difference in social skills among senior secondary school students with regard to their family type.
- 3 There will be no significant interactional effect between gender and family type with respect to social skills among senior secondary school students.

METHODOLOGY

In the present study, survey technique under descriptive method was employed for achieving the objectives of the study.

SAMPLING

The data were gathered from the four districts of Himachal Pradesh i.e. Shimla, Bilaspur, Hamirpur and Kangra. Total sample of 881 senior secondary school students were comprised in the present study.

RESEARCH TOOLS USED

For the data collection research instruments i.e. Social Skills Rating Scale developed by **Sood, Anand and Kumar** was used. The collected data were analyzed by using the statistical method of analysis of variance (Two Way).

ANALYSIS OF DATA

In order to study the main effect of level of gender and family type on social skills among senior secondary school students with their interactional effect, two-way analysis of variance (2x3 factor design) involving two types of gender i.e. male and female and two types of families (nuclear and joint) was applied on the mean scores of social skills among senior secondary school students. The means and standard deviations of social skills scores with respect to gender and level of teaching experience are given Table 1.

TABLE 1
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF SOCIAL SKILLS SCORES WITH REGARD TO GENDER AND FAMILY TYPE

Sr. No.	Family Type Gender		Mean Social Skills Score		
			Nuclear	Joint	Total
I	Male	Mean	298.43	313.07	305.35
		S.D.	52.505	53.154	53.257
		N	229	205	434
II	Female	Mean	305.13	309.74	307.04
		S.D.	54.302	53.779	54.074
		N	262	185	447
III	Total	Mean	302.01	311.49	306.21
		S.D.	53.522	53.409	53.649
		N	491	390	881

From the mean scores of social skills among senior secondary school students with regard to gender and family type, 'F- ratios' were calculated. The complete summary of result is given in Table 2 as follows:

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF SOCIAL SKILLS
AMONG SENIORSECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO
GENDER AND FAMILY TYPE

Sr. No.	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square (Variance)	F-Ratio
1.	Gender	616.081	1	616.081	0.216 ^(NS)
2.	Family type	20070.670	1	20070.670	7.022**
3.	Gender × Family type	5456.574	1	5456.574	1.909 ^(NS)
4.	Error Variance	2506709.834	877	2858.278	
5.	Total	85136969.00	881		

NS..... Not significant **Significant at 0.01 level of significance

Main Effects

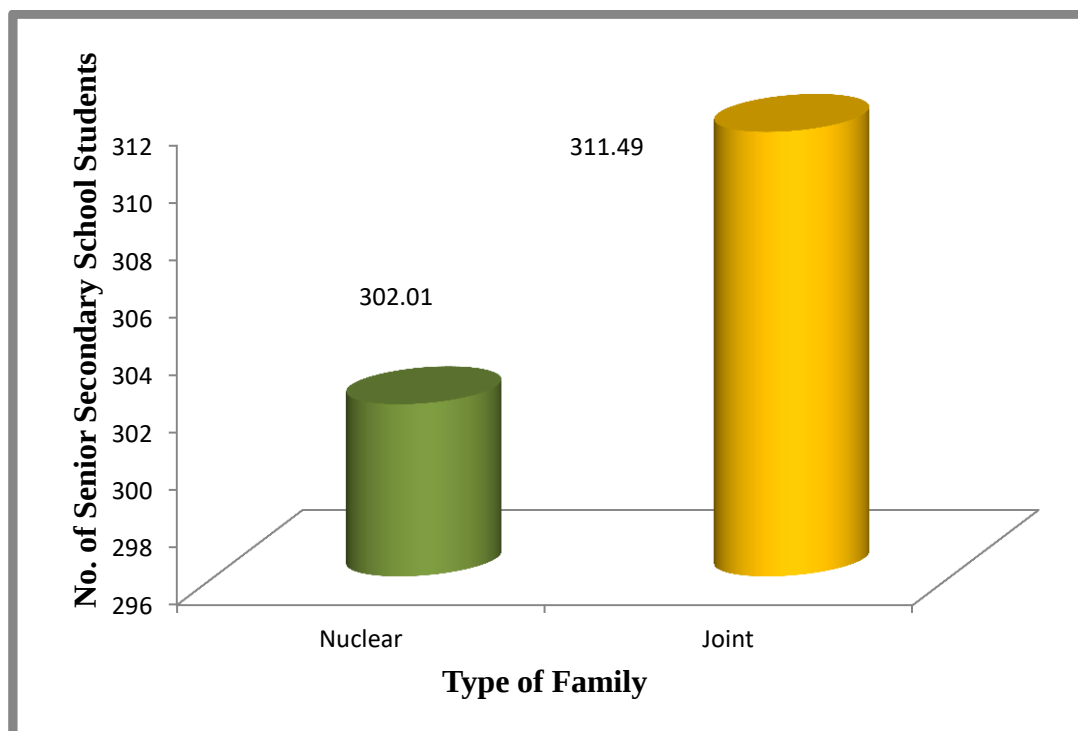
(a) Gender (A)

From the above Table 1 it is evident that the calculated value of 'F-Ratio' for the main effect of gender on social skills among senior secondary school students for a degree of freedom 1 and 877, was found to be 0.216 which is much below the F-table value (3.85) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the Hypothesis no. 1 (i) that, "There will be no significant difference in social skills among senior secondary school students with respect to gender" was accepted. Therefore, it may be interpreted that male and female senior secondary school students possessed nearly similar level of social skills. The female senior secondary school students have shown mean score of 307.04 and male senior secondary school students have shown mean social skill score of 305.35 respectively. On the basis of mean scores, it can be concluded that female senior secondary school students have reflected somewhat better social skills as compared to male senior secondary school students.

(b) Family Type (B)

The calculated value of 'F' for finding the main effects of family type on social skills among senior secondary school students, irrespective of their gender came out to be 7.022 which is greater than the table value (6.66) at 0.01 level of significance, for df_1 1 and 877. Hence, the Hypothesis no. 2 that, "There will be no significant difference among senior secondary school students in respect to family type" was not retained. So, it was inferred that senior secondary school students belonging to different family type differs significantly from each other with regard to their social skills. Although, on the basis of mean scores it may be said that senior secondary school students belonging to joint family (311.49) had shown better social skills as compared to senior secondary school students belonging to nuclear type of family (302.01). The weighted mean social skills scores of senior secondary school students with respect to their family type is pictorially shown in Figure 4.2

FIGURE 4.4
MEAN SOCIAL SKILL SCORES OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS
WITH RESPECT TO THEIR FAMILY TYPE



(c) Interactional Effect (AXB)

The obtained value of 'F-Ratio' for the interactional effect of gender and family type on social skills among senior secondary school students, for degree of freedom 1 and 877, came out to be 1.909 which is less than the table value (3.85) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the Hypothesis no. 3 that, "There will be no significant interaction between gender and family type with respect to social skills among senior secondary school students" was retained. This shows that gender and family type (in combination with each other) did not influence social skills among senior secondary school students significantly.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The present investigation was undertaken to study the social skills among senior secondary school students with respect to gender and family type. After analyzing the study's findings, the findings of the present study provide valuable insights into the development of social skills among senior secondary school students. Since the results indicate that male and female students possess a similar level of social skills, it can be inferred that gender does not play a determining role in shaping social competence. This suggests that both boys and girls have equal potential to acquire and enhance social skills when provided with supportive environments and opportunities. Therefore, teachers, parents, and school administrators should design and implement social skill building activities without assuming gender-based differences. Equal participation in collaborative learning, group discussions, debates, and extracurricular activities should be encouraged for both male and female students to nurture their interpersonal competencies. The study further revealed that students from different family types differ significantly in their social skills. This finding highlights the crucial influence of family environment in shaping adolescents' social behavior and interactions.

Educators need to recognize that students coming from diverse family backgrounds may require different kinds of support to develop and strengthen their social skills. For instance, children from nuclear families may have fewer opportunities for extended social interactions compared to those from joint families, and hence schools can act as supplementary environments to provide them with more avenues for peer engagement and cooperative learning. Counseling sessions, life skills education, and value-based programs may also help students from varied family contexts to overcome social skill gaps. Interestingly, the results showed that the interaction between gender and family type did not significantly influence social skills. This indicates that the influence of family environment on social skill development is more pronounced than gender-related factors. Therefore, schools and teachers should focus more on understanding students' familial and socio-cultural backgrounds when planning interventions. Programs aimed at parent-teacher collaboration can be useful in creating a consistent support system for students to enhance their social competence both at home and school.

In conclusion, the educational implications of this study point toward the need for creating inclusive, supportive, and family-sensitive approaches within the school system. By integrating social skill-building strategies into classroom practices, co-curricular activities, and counseling programs, schools can contribute significantly to the holistic development of adolescents. Strengthening students' social competence at this stage will not only improve their academic performance but also prepare them for responsible citizenship and future professional success.

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