

PROFICIENCY IN SOCIAL SKILLS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN UNDER ACTIVITY BASED LEARNING (ABL) APPROACH

Research
Paper

ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to find out whether proficiency in social skills is related to academic achievement among primary school students or not. The study also makes a comparison between boys and girls, government and aided school children in their social skills. Proficiency in social skills will help in managing relationships and building networks. It is the ability to find common ground and build rapport with others. The sample of the study consists of 180 primary school students. The tool used in the study is the social skills rating scale developed and standardized by the investigator. The results show that proficiency in social skills has high positive relationship with academic achievement among primary school children. Gender and type of school management has no influence on social skills and academic achievement among primary school children.

INTRODUCTION

Today's students are tomorrow's pillars of the nation. The objective of education is to create a self sufficient human being. Human beings are social animals. Social skills are a set of skills that people use to interact and communicate with one another. Social skills are defined as those social, interpersonal and task-related behaviors that produce positive consequences in life situations. Proficiency in social skills gives the ability to exhibit behaviors that are positively reinforced. In the classroom setting, success in developing interrelationships with least friction and unpleasantness will depend on the student's willingness to get along with others and his insight into their needs and requirements. If a child has a reasonable well accepted outlook on interpersonal relationship, it has obviously developed group awareness and is alive to the importance of maintaining a good relationship with its friends. It has, so to say, acquired an increasing understanding both of itself and those around it.

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

Bharatiya (2002) studied family relationship and social skills as related to absenteeism. The major findings of the study were (i) the absentee boys were higher in concentration, avoidance aspects of family relationship whereas absentee girls were lower on concentration scores (ii) the absentee boys were found to be deficient on some social skill factors.

Julie Kiggins (2004) studied the design, implementation and evaluation of a school-based social skills and anger management program. The program was based on research which indicated that a prime cause of repeated episodes of violence, bullying and anger in primary school children was "poor social skills".

Samanci, Osman (2010) studied the teacher views on social skills development in primary school students. The aim of the study is to survey the views of teachers regarding social skills development in primary school students. The research was carried out using the qualitative research technique. A questionnaire prepared by the researcher was used to collect data. The results show that there are four main factors that play an important role in the development of primary school students' social skills: school, family, environment and the personal characteristics of individual students. The results of the research are presented in the form of tables together with the frequency and percentage distributions related to the themes and sub-themes.

R. Jeyanthi

*Assistant Professor, Dept. of Education,
Gandhigram Rural Institute, Gandhigram.*

Dr. S. Subbiah,

*Professor & Head,
Dept. of English & Foreign Languages,
Alagappa University, Karaikudi.*

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The child acquires knowledge as a result of education. Education plays a major role in the development of character building, personality development and preparation for adult life. It also increases the consciousness of other cultures, improves emotional unity and develops interpersonal relationship. A person is said to be educated when he acquires knowledge, skills, attitudes etc. In Tamil Nadu, Activity Based Learning (ABL) approach is implemented in all Government and aided primary schools. The students have to sit in a group and learn not only from the teacher but also from peers. In this context, they need social skills. The children have to feel free to mingle with others with their good social skills, which will lead to their academic achievement. Hence, the investigator has selected the topic entitled, "social skills and academic achievement of primary school children under Activity Based Learning (ABL) approach".

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the level of social skills of primary school children.
2. To compare the social skills scores of boys and girls.
3. To compare the social skills scores of government and aided school children.
4. To find out the relationship between proficiency in social skills and academic achievement.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is a significant difference between the mean scores of boys and girls in their social skills.
2. There is a significant difference between the mean scores of government and aided school children in their social skills.
3. Academic achievement was substantial positive relationship with the social skills of the sample as a whole as well as in each of the sub-groups classified for the study.

METHODOLOGY

The survey method was followed in this fact finding investigation.

SAMPLE

The investigator selected 180 students of III and IV standard primary school students in the rural areas of Dindigul district by using the stratified random sampling technique.

TOOL

1. Social skill rating scale (SSRS) developed and standardized by the investigator consisting of 62 items, with five responses.
2. Source for academic achievement: each from school records.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUE USED

Mean, Standard deviation, t test and correlation co-efficient - r

SCORING PROCEDURE

The score is 4 for always, 3 for often, 2 for sometimes, 1 for rarely, and 0 for never in positive items and reverse for negative items. The maximum possible score is 248 and the minimum is zero.

DATA ANALYSIS AND TABULATION

Table 1

LEVEL OF SOCIAL SKILLS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

Variables	Mean	Level of social skill
Boys	171.29	High
Girls	174.91	High
Government	173.43	High
Aided	171.53	High
Whole sample	172.29	High

From table 1, it is found that all the sub-groups - boys, girls, government school, and aided school and whole sample have high level of social skills.

Hypothesis 1

There is a significant difference between the mean scores of boys and girls in their social skills.

Table 2

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MEAN SCORES OF BOYS AND GIRLS IN THEIR SOCIAL SKILLS

Sl. No	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
1	boys	90	171.29	16.89		
	Girls	90	174.91	19.58	1.328	NS

Table 2 reveals that the calculated t-value of social skills is less than the table value 1.96. So, there is no significant difference between boys and girls in their social skills.

Hypothesis 2

There is a significant difference between the mean scores of government and aided school children in their social skills.

Table 3

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MEAN SCORES OF GOVERNMENT AND AIDED SCHOOL CHILDREN IN THEIR SOCIAL SKILLS

Sl.No	Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
1	Govt	90	173.43	24.96		
	Aided	90	171.53	24.95	0.51	NS

Table 3 reveals that the calculated t value of social skills is less than the table value 1.96. So, there is no significant difference between the government and aided school children in their social skills.

Hypothesis 3

Academic achievement is in substantial positive relationship with the social skills of the sample as a whole as well as in each of the sub-groups classified for the study.

Table 4

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND SOCIAL SKILLS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS



Sl. No.	Group	Variables	N	r	Relationship
1	Boys	Social Skills vs Academic Achievement	90	0.66	High Positive
2	Girls	Social Skills vs Academic Achievement	90	0.81	Very High Positive
3	Govt.	Social Skills vs Academic Achievement	90	0.659	High Positive
4	Aided	Social Skills vs Academic Achievement	90	0.815	Very High Positive
5	Whole Sample	Social Skills vs Academic Achievement	90	0.748	High Positive

Table 4 reveals that proficiency in social skill of both boys and government school children has high positive relationship with academic achievement. Proficiency in social skills of both girls and aided school children has very high positive relationship with academic achievement. As for the whole sample, proficiency in social skills has positive relationship with academic achievement.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Boys, girls, government, aided and whole sample have high level of proficiency in social skills.
2. There is no significant difference between boys and girls in their social skills. Gender has no influence on the level of their social skills.
3. There is no significant difference between government and aided school children in their social skills. Type of school management has no influence on the level of their social skills.
4. Proficiency in social skills of both boys and government school children has high positive relationship with academic achievement.

Proficiency in social skills of both girls and aided school children has very high positive relationship with academic achievement. As for the whole sample, proficiency in social skills has positive relationship with academic achievement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Festivals and functions which are celebrated more commonly in the society have to be celebrated in the school campus also.
2. Library should be well equipped with necessary books on social skills.
3. Child centered education and peer tutoring should be at all levels.
4. Parents should be trained to develop social skills in their children.
5. Seminars, workshops and training programmes on social skills should be frequently conducted for the benefit of primary school teachers.

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Continuation of page 4

CENTRAL AUDITORY...

- Ø Directions and instructions to the child should be reduced in length and the length should be in keeping with the upper limit of the child's syllable recall ability.

- Ø The teacher may assign a 'friend' to help the child on directions.

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- Ø If the child cannot read, then home and school directions can be modified by lists of key drawings or sketches to help the child to keep the outline in correct order.

- Ø Commercially available programmes will help the child strengthen his sequential memory skills.

CONCLUSION

The efforts to overcome this problem should be an interdisciplinary approach. Parents, teachers, educationists and other professionals should be involved in the development of the child.

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Continuation of page 4

ATTITUDE OF SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

6. Teachers' attitude towards ICT can be made positive by conducting seminars, workshops and practical sessions.
7. The teachers may be trained to use LCD projectors, white boards and multimedia computers.

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