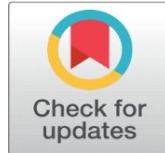
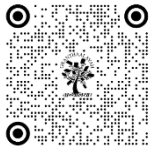


THE STATUS OF SOCIAL COMPETENCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NAGAON AND KAMRUP (METRO) DISTRICT OF ASSAM

Tarali Devi ¹✉, Dr. Minati Choudhury ²

¹ Research Scholar, Department of Education, Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva Viswavidyalaya, Nagaon (Assam) & Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Nonoi College, Nagaon, Assam, India

² S Research Supervisor, Department of Education, Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva Viswavidyalaya, Nagaon (Assam), India



Corresponding Author

Tarali Devi, devitarali@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Social competence is a crucial component of contemporary society. The degree to which an individual has developed the depth and strength of social competence necessary for his self-actualization, development, and growth determines how successful he will be in society. In the present study an attempt was made to find out the status of Social Competence of Secondary School students in Nagaon and Kamrup (Metro) District of Assam. The Social competence tool developed by V.P.Sharma, Prabha Shukla & Kiran Shukla was used in the study. The results revealed that no significant difference was found between Nagaon and Kamrup (Metro) district of Assam in relation to the social competence of students. However, small differences were found in the mean scores of the students, it is not large enough to be considered statistically significant. It may be due to random chance.

Keywords: Social Competence, Secondary School Students, Social Relations

1. INTRODUCTION

The capacity to effectively accomplish social goals in an efficient manner is referred to as social competence. These social accomplishments include making friends, being well-liked by peers or other kids, and having fruitful interactions with peers. Social competency, a more general term, encompasses a child's social efficacy. It describes a child's capacity to create and maintain strong, gratifying bonds with others while fending off abuse or victimization at the hands of others. Hurlock (1974) defined social competence as "the capacity to act in a manner aligned with social expectations" or as "the process of maturing to take one's full place in society."

Social competence is the ability of a person to respond appropriately or effectively to the different challenging situations that he encounters (Goldfriend and D'Zurilla, 1963). Sharma, Shukla, and Shukla (1992), stated that an individual's success in society largely rests on the degree to which he or she has developed the depth and strength of social competence necessary for self-actualization, growth, and development. Good peer interactions and other

interpersonal connections, such as parent-child connections, are important for the learning and continued growth of social skills (Smart & Sanson, 2003). The social competency of children is also impacted by parental rejection, children's temperament, gender, etc. (Sweta, 2010).

According to Rani (2010), social competence entails being able to create, maintain, and grow positive relationships with others, understanding others' perspectives when they differ from one's own, understanding how to interpret others' emotional reactions in favor of more carefully considered responses in social situations, and having the flexibility to change one's behavior to make it pleasing or rewarding to others. A child with social competency is better able to handle social situations, form wholesome relationships, and flourish in their social environment. Social competence is essential for secondary school students to build social leadership abilities. It includes the capacity for constructive interpersonal interactions, connection building, and social situational awareness—all of which are critical for effective leadership. Due to its significant impact on people's personal and professional life, social competence has grown in importance in the modern world.

Social Competence comprises of a holistic idea comprising a variety of social abilities, social competencies, and social problem-solving skills. The ability to combine thinking, feeling, and conduct to complete social tasks and produce social outcomes valued in the host culture and context is referred to as social competence. In a learning environment, these activities and outcomes would involve effectively navigating the curriculum and surroundings, empowering the students to address their personal, social, and emotional needs, and develop transferable skills and attitudes applicable beyond the classroom. So far, social skills have been the only way to define social competence. Problem solving behavior, perspective taking, and self perception are social competency qualities that are crucial for socially competent functioning.

2. IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL COMPETENCE

According to Kurian and Prakasha (2016), adolescents must possess a diverse range of social skills to enhance their success and adaptability in social interactions. These skills encompass various abilities such as assertiveness, understanding others' perspectives, connecting with individuals from diverse backgrounds, interpreting social cues, demonstrating empathy, managing emotions, following social norms, and respecting differing viewpoints. Additionally, they include attributes like self-monitoring, academic diligence, self-esteem, compassion, self-determination, creative thinking, effective communication, interpersonal proficiency, and self-awareness (Bhat, 2014). Children and teenagers encounter numerous challenging social situations daily. As they navigate the demands of teachers, peers, and other individuals in their social environment, developing social competence becomes a crucial task (Anthony et al., 2005). The ability of young individuals to transition smoothly into adulthood is significantly influenced by their social competency. Cultivating ideal social skills within the cultural context is essential for both children and adults to foster relationships that support their independence and success.

Secondary school students with high levels of social competence are better equipped to successfully connect with others (Sharma, Shukla, and Shukla, 1992). Socially competent children are believed to possess greater resilience against adversities and are less prone to experiencing significant emotional and behavioral issues later in life (Garmezy, 1991). According to Bates et al. (2003), social competence is a crucial asset that facilitates a smooth transition to school, fostering self-esteem, confidence, and peer acceptance in social settings (Lund & Merrell, 2001). Moreover, a child's or adolescent's level of social competence is positively associated with their self-efficacy, self-esteem, and social values (Hair et al., 2001), (Amandeep, 2016).

Secondary school students commonly confront challenges arising from both physical and psychological changes, as well as the demands of developmental tasks they must navigate. These challenges often extend beyond personal experiences to encompass issues within their homes, schools, and communities. The difficulties are just a small portion of the numerous obstacles that secondary school students must overcome. Addiction to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, truancy, and compulsive sexual conduct are among the more serious problems that are also prevalent.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To find out the difference in Social Competence of the students on the basis of selected districts.

3.1. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

Ho: There is no significant difference in Social Competence of the students between Nagaon and Kamrup (Metro) district of Assam.

4. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Social Competence: In this study social competence refers to the social sensitivity, social maturity, social skills, social relations, social interactions, social commitment, social appreciation ability, socio-emotional integrity, social involvement, social respectability, social leadership, social cooperation and compliance, social acceptability, social tolerance, social competition, social authority, Adult resource exploitability, social participation and pro-social attitude among secondary school students of Nagaon and Kamrup (Metro) district of Assam.

Secondary school students: In this present study, Secondary school students refer to those students studying in IXth standard in secondary schools ages between 14years to 15 years.

4.1. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The present study is delimited to the following points-

The study is limited to government secondary schools affiliated with SEBA (Board of Secondary Education of Assam) in Nagaon and Kamrup (Metro) districts.

Only the students in class IX are considered for the study (Age between 14 years to 15th years).

5. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Sanwal (2013) conducted a study on "Comparative study on Social Competence in Adolescents". The Social Competence of adolescents IXth and Xth class were investigated with social Competence Scale by Prof. V.P. Sharma, Dr. Kiran Shukla and Dr. Prabha Shukla. The major findings of the study revealed that 93.33% percentages of 120 adolescents fell in low and very low category of social competence level. Syiem and Lapdianghun (2014) investigated "Social Competence of Secondary School Students in Shillong Town". They looked at how social skills might differ based on gender, community, age, and the type of school (government, private, or underprivileged). They also examined whether social skills were linked to academic achievement. Social Competence Scale developed by V.P.Sharma, Prabha Shukla & Kiran Shukla was utilized by the researcher. Interestingly, the study found no significant differences in social skills based on gender, community, or age. However, there was a difference between students from underprivileged schools and private schools, as well as between students in government schools and private schools. Finally, the study did not find a clear connection between social skills and academic achievement. Kurian and Prakasha (2016) conducted a study to publish a paper on the topic "social competence for next generation secondary school students" The researcher has prepared this paper based on few research reviews This paper examines the importance of social competence for future generations of secondary school students. It draws on existing research to identify various social skills that are crucial for success and navigating social situations in high school. By mastering these skills, students will be better equipped to thrive in their social lives.

Kaur (2018) conducted a study titled "Social Competence among Adolescents in relation to their Emotional Maturity." A sample of 100 students was randomly chosen from both government and private senior secondary schools in Mohali. The study employed the Social Competence Scale (SCS) developed by Dr. V. P. Sharma and Dr. (Mrs.) Prabha Shukla, in addition to the Emotional Maturity Scale (EMS) developed by Dr. Yashvir Singh and Dr. Mahesh Bhargava for data collection. The findings revealed that adolescents with higher levels of emotional maturity typically demonstrate greater social competence, and vice versa. Moreover, the study found no significant differences in social competence and emotional maturity among adolescents based on gender (male and female) or type of school (government and private). Overall, the study highlighted the interplay between emotional development and social skills among adolescents.

6. METHODOLOGY

1) Sample:

The present sample comprise of 200 students randomly selected from ten schools of Nagaon and Kamrup (Metro) District.

Table 1 Showing total number of sample students in the sample districts

Gender	District					
	Nagaon		Kamrup (Metro)		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Male	53	40.8%	22	31.4%	75	37.5%
Female	77	59.2%	48	68.6%	125	62.5%
Total	130	100.0	70	100.0	200	100.0

Source Primary data collection

Tool:

The tool used for the study comprised of Social Competence Scale developed by V.P.Sharma, Prabha Shukla & Kiran Shukla. The scale consists of 50 items and is meant for school going children of 14 to 15th years.

Data Collection

The researcher delivered the aforementioned scale and gathered responses from the participants after obtaining prior consent from the school administration.

Statistical Technique Used

SPSS (Version- 17.0) has been applied for data analysis. The study's objectives were met by analyzing collected data using suitable statistical methods. The methods are used for analysis the data for the present study were-frequency tables, cross tables, descriptive statistics, t-test, Pearson correlation. Diagrammatic representation and SPSS techniques has been done for better understanding of analysis and interpretations.

7. RESULTS

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 2 Difference in Social Competence of students on the basis of sample district

Variable	District	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Social Competence	Nagaon	130	190.50	22.885	1.209	198	.228
	Kamrup-M	70	186.50	21.212	1.237	150.890	.218

Sources 1 Primary data collection 2. Calculated in SPSS 17.0 version

From the table-2, it was found that students from Nagaon have a slightly higher mean social competence score (190.50) compared to students from Kamrup-M (186.50). The standard deviations are similar for both districts (22.885 for Nagaon and 21.212 for Kamrup-M), suggesting comparable levels of variability in social competence scores within each group. For Nagaon, the p-value is 0.228 and for Kamrup-M, the p-value is 0.218. In both cases, the p-values (0.228 and 0.218) are greater than the conventional significance level of 0.05.

Since the p-values (0.228 and 0.218) are greater than 0.05, the researcher of the present study fail to reject the null hypothesis. This means that there is no statistically significant difference in the social competence of students from

Nagaon and Kamrup-M districts based on this data. So, the null hypothesis is accepted. Although there is a small observed difference in the mean scores, it is not large enough to be considered statistically significant, suggesting that this difference could likely be due to random chance rather than a true underlying difference between the two populations.

8. DISCUSSION

Table-2 shows that secondary school students have possessed similar social competence in Nagaon and Kamrup (Metro) district. Nagaon and Kamrup (Metro) districts are both under the jurisdiction of the same state education board, which is known as the Board of Secondary Education, Assam (SEBA) or, for certain schools, the CBSE. The curriculum, instructional strategies, and overall academic atmosphere are therefore probably going to be the same in both areas. School schedules that incorporate social-emotional learning, group activities, and extracurricular activities might have an impact on students' social competency. These factors may result in similar social competence development if they are generally similar.

Although there may be a few little regional differences, Nagaon and Kamrup (Metro) districts are both in Assam and share a large percentage of the Assamese customs, culture, and social mores. These common cultural ideals frequently influences how people behave, speak, and grow as social beings. Adolescents' social competence development should follow comparable patterns if the underlying sociocultural fabric is identical.

Today's secondary school students are heavily exposed to similar media, online content, and social media platforms in both urban (Kamrup Metro) and comparatively less urban (Nagaon) locations. Young people's social interactions, communication preferences, and even their perceptions of social standards are greatly influenced by these platforms. Regardless of location within the same state, this extensive exposure may cause some social competency traits to converge.

During the stage of secondary school students, peer pressure is very powerful. Although particular peer groups vary, secondary school students frequently encounter similar social obstacles throughout districts, as do the overall dynamics of peer interactions, the value of friendships, and other factors. Similar learning experiences in social situational navigation and social competence development may result from this.

Also it may be said that despite the existence of individual family diversity, Assamese parenting styles and the most popular family structures (such as nuclear versus joint households) may have some traits in common. The social development of a child is greatly influenced by these early childhood and adolescent household situations. Similar levels of social competence could result from these fundamental factors if there aren't any significant disparities between the two districts.

The general similarities in the educational system, sociocultural setting, exposure to technology, and developmental stage of secondary school children in the state of Assam may be the reason for the similarity in social competence.

9. CONCLUSION

The present study, "The Status of Social Competence of Secondary School Students in Nagaon and Kamrup (Metro) District of Assam," reveals that secondary school students in both Nagaon and Kamrup (Metro) districts demonstrate largely similar levels of social competence. The fundamental social skills and abilities necessary for productive interaction and functioning seem to be similarly developed in these two Assamese regions, despite differences in their socio-geographical contexts and demographic representation within the sample (as shown in Table 1, which reveals varying student numbers and gender ratios between the districts).

This finding suggests a foundational consistency in the social development of adolescents within the state's educational landscape, potentially influenced by a common curriculum, shared cultural milieu, and widespread exposure to modern communication and media. Future studies could examine the precise causes of this observed resemblance as well as any minute details that would distinguish social competence among the various student subgroups in these districts.

The findings of the present study have great implications for the parents, teachers and guardians on the process of proper understanding of the level of social competence. The study will give the better insight to parents in dealing with their children. The present study will help the teachers and educators in tailoring the curriculum for inculcating desirable values and attitude in students in order to achieve desirable social competence. The study will be helpful for preparing

and implementing policies regarding education system for giving valuable and fruitful education to foster holistic development of children.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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