

Social Skills and Behavior of School Children In Dharwad District

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Abstract: Social skills are skills used to communicate with others, both verbally and non-verbally and behavior is a response of an individual to external or internal stimuli. Social skills and behavior play a pivot role in influencing the overall development of children from early years and more so during the formative years of school. Hence the present study aimed to assess the social skills and behavior among school children from Dharwad district of Karnataka State. The sample for the present study consisted of 72 school children in the age bracket of 6-12 years and attending Government schools. The self structured questionnaire was used to collect the data. Random sampling method was used for selecting the samples. The statistical analysis was carried out through Students 't' test and correlation coefficient. Further the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the social skills and behavior of both male and female respondents. The study revealed that there was no significant difference between the social skills and behavior of the respondents. The finding of the study highlights that the two aspects namely social skills and behavior are independent and does not influence the other. Also the study highlighted the need for enhancing the social skills and behavior of school going children for better peer acceptance and adjustment through an intervention program.

Keywords: External Stimuli, Internal Stimuli, Social skills and Behavior

I. Introduction

School age has been perceived as one of the most important transitions in child's life and a major challenge of early childhood (Burrell 2000). It is critical factor in determining children's adjustment to the demands of the school environment and future progress (Pascal, 1989). Since school is not only a place where children learn to read, write and do math but also a place where the children learn to interact with their peers, develop social skills and learn to refine their behavior through interpersonal relationships. Social skills and behavior are not always learned easily. It requires repeated instruction, practice and reinforcement while learning, which can help children develop and master these skills better. However, while many social skills and behavior may be learned implicitly, children can also benefit from being taught explicitly also. It is also possible for children to have well-developed social skills. This in turn will help them to work co-operatively in a group, improve their self-confidence to approach a group of peers, initiate conversation and to be an interactive child. Since social skills and behavior are required to enhance the social competence of children in the areas of social and interpersonal behavior; it is therefore very important to mould and shape them from school years.

Social skills and socially skilled behaviors are interrelated and goal oriented. It helps the individual to judge how skilled he/she is. It can be learnt, practiced and refined during the schools years, since school years lay a foundation for good personality development.

Once the children are aware of the social skills which they learn, master and refine, they need to adapt it in to their day to day life which influences their behavior as behavior is the building block of one's total personality development. Hence an attempt has been made in the present study to assess the social skills and behavior of school children.

NEED FOR SOCIAL SKILLS

Social Skills are the foundation for children's personality development. A lack of social skills can lead to behavioral difficulties in school, delinquency, inattentiveness, peer rejection, emotional difficulties, bullying, difficulty in making friends, aggressiveness, problems in interpersonal relationships, poor self-concept, academic failures, concentration difficulties, isolation from peers, and depression.

There are three basic elements of social skills:

1. **Social intake** — noticing and understanding other individual's speech, vocal inflection, body language, eye contact, and even cultural behaviors. 2. **Internal process** — interpreting what others communicate to you as well as recognizing and managing one's own emotions and reactions. 3. **Social output** — how a person communicates with and reacts to others, through speech, gestures, and body language.

BEHAVIOR:

Behavior is actions or reactions of an individual or group to an action, environment, person and stimulus. This is referred to the crucial stage in development because it is at this time that the basic social attitudes and patterns of social behaviors are established. Behavior of children has been a perennial source of fascination for adults from time memorial and the focus of scientific investigation for many decades (Moore and Cooper 1982). This period occupies a place of paramount importance in this life of an individual's personality.

Since social and unsocial patterns of behavior are mainly established during the formative childhood year, early social experiences largely determine what sort of adults children will become. Thus school is the seat for learning social skills. Only when children have satisfactory peer, friend, parent –child and teacher – child relationship, the social relationships with others outside the home as well as school can be developed and they can learn to function successfully not only in their peer group but also in the society.

II. Materials and methods

The samples for the present study consisted of 72 school children (48 girls and 24 boys) in the age bracket of 6-12years, attending Government schools in Dharwad district of Karnataka State. The Random sampling method was used to collect the samples. The samples were selected from Dharwad district of both rural and urban areas. The subjects were also receiving the "Nalikali" system of education which was coordinated through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme.

A self –structured tool was used to assess the social skills and behavior of school children. The **social skills** aspect consisted about 18 items on social skills of the children in the class room - accepting, sharing, following teachers directions, making friends easily etc. **Behavior** aspect consisted of 25 items on the behavior of the child in the school both covering positive and negative aspects such as fighting, temper tantrum, arguing, asking questions to gain information, control over his /her anger, following rules etc. The responses of each subject were scored with the help of scoring key and the individual scores on each aspect were obtained. The data was interpreted with frequency, percentage, student't' test and correlation analysis.

III. Results and Discussion

It is discerned from the table 1 that there is no significant difference in the social skills and behavior of male and female respondents with the't' value being [$t=1.6377^{NS}$] for social skills and behavior [$t=0.4279^{NS}$], which could be attributed to the fact that both male and female respondents are oriented and have a better exposure to social skills and behavior through the "Nalikali" system of education.

The findings of the present study is supported by the research work carried out by Jennifer (2009) which highlights that, female respondents retain an advantage of social skills and behavior because they begin school with more advanced social skills and behavior and their skill advantage grows over time. The acquisition of social skills and behavior enhances good learning as well it has more advantage for both male and female respondents to confer for their academic and later success.

Analysis of table 2 reveals that there is a significant difference between correlation coefficient of social skills and behavior of the female respondents with the't' value being [$t= 2.1011^*$]. Further there is a non significant difference between the social skills and behavior of the male respondents with the't' value being non- significant [$t= 0.6550^{NS}$].

The findings of the present study is in line with the research work carried out by Azpíroz (2010), which highlights that, there is reflecting patterns of behavior at different levels of sociability and it has a significance of correlation coefficient between social skills and behavior in both male and female respondents during late childhood period. A study by Merydith (2000) also highlights that there is a significant association between social skills and behavior in both male and female respondents.

It depicted from the table 3 that there is a non significant difference in the correlation coefficient of social skills and behavior of the school children with the't' value being [$t= 1.8348^{NS}$]. Social skills and behavior are two different aspects and both are not interrelated to each other. French (2008) emphasized that, social skills and behavior does not have any significant difference in the correlation coefficient. The finding of the present study also reveals that the relationship between the social skills and behavior of school children is found to be statistically non- significant.

IV. Conclusion

Good social skills and behavior are critical to successful functioning in life. These skills enable one to know what to do, say, to make good choices and to behave in diverse situations. The extent to which children possess good social skills and behavior can influence their academic performance, social and family relationships, and involvement in extracurricular activities.

While most children pick up positive skills through their everyday interactions with adults and peers, it is important that educators and parents reinforce this casual learning with direct and indirect instruction. One

must also recognize when and where children pick up behaviors that might be detrimental to their development or safety.

Thus schools and home must partner to teach children important interpersonal and conflict resolution skills to facilitate the social learning process.

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Table-1. Social skills and behavior of male and female respondents

Skills	Males (n = 24)		Females (n = 48)		Significance of t value
	Mean score	SD	Mean score	SD	
Social skills	75.95	6.69	78.25	5.01	1.6377 ^{NS}
Behavior	94.83	7.14	94.04	7.50	0.4279 ^{NS}

NS Not Significant

Table-2. Significance of correlation coefficient between social skills and behavior among male and female respondents

Skills	Males			Females		
	Correlation coefficient	Standard error	Significance of t value	Correlation coefficient	Standard error	Significance of t value
Social skills	0.1383	0.2111	0.6550 ^{NS}	0.2902	0.1381	2.1011*
Behavior						

* Significant at 5% level NS Not significant

Table-3. Significance of correlation coefficient between social skills and behavior

Skills	Correlation coefficient	Standard error	Significance of t value
Social skills	0.2142	0.1167	1.8348 ^{NS}
Behavior			

NS Not Significant