

# Study of Social Competence of Secondary School Students in Relation to their Parental Encouragement

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## Abstract

The present investigation was undertaken with an aim to study social competence of secondary school students in relation to their parental encouragement. For this purpose, 50 secondary school students from Amritsar district of Punjab state were taken as a sample. The tools used were Social Competence Scale by Sharma, Shukla and Shukla (1998) and Parental Encouragement Scale by Sharma (1998). Results showed that there exists significant difference in the mean scores of social competence of boys and girls of secondary school. Significant difference in the mean scores of parental encouragement of boys and girls of secondary school students was found. Further, it was found that there exists no significant relationship between social competence and parental encouragement of secondary school students. The study also indicates that there existed no significant difference in the mean scores of social competence of secondary school students in relation to their parental encouragement.

**Keywords:** Social Competence, Parental Encouragement, Secondary School Students, Gender

## 1. Introduction

Family plays an important role in the holistic development of children. Now-a-days due to the influence of western culture, urbanization and break-down of joint family system into nuclear families, the healthy environment of our families have been disturbed. Adolescents in this era, potentially develop negative skills at younger ages than ever before. There are number of factors and agencies which play an important role in the development of personality of a child such as home, school, parents, friends etc. but out of these factors home especially the parents, the first teachers of a child, play a prominent role in the well adjustment of the child in the society by making child well versed with societal norms.

The child idealize his parents as models for his adjustment to life and fundamental pattern once established at home, cannot be eradicated completely yet modified or changed as the child grows up. Thus, relationship between parents and the child happens to be a central factor in the social adjustment of the individual. Parents are supposed to create a most congenial, happy, democratic, lucid and warm atmosphere where a child can blossom his own hidden potentialities and may also develop social competence skills.

### 1.1. Social Competence

Social competence has become so important today because of the profound influence it has on the perso-

nal, professional and social lives of the individuals. It is the ability on the part of the individual to establish and maintain good socio-emotional skills, self-efficacy and adaptive behavior. Bierman (2004) defined social competence as the capacity to coordinate adaptive response 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.

Social competence is the broader term used to describe a child's social effectiveness. It defines a child's ability to establish and maintain high quality and mutually satisfying relationships and to avoid negative treatment or victimization from others. In addition to social skills and emotional intelligence, factors such as the child's self-confidence or social anxiety can affect his or her social competence. According to Waters & Sroufe (1983) social competence is the ability to make use of environmental and personal resources to achieve a good developmental outcome. Oppenheim (1989) defined social competence as "the ability to engage effectively in complex interpersonal interaction and to use and understand people effectively". He further proposed a comprehensive definition of social competence as the ability to achieve personal goals in social interaction while simultaneously maintaining positive relationships with others over time and according to situations.

Parks (1985) defined social competence as the degree to which individuals have satisfied their goals in a given social situation without jeopardizing their opportunity to pursue other subjectively more important goals. Schneider (1993) argues social competence as the ability to implement developmentally appropriate social behaviors that enhance one's interpersonal relationships without causing harm to anyone. Ford (1982) defined social competence as the attainment of relevant social goals in specified social contexts, using appropriate means and resulting in positive developmental outcomes.

Thus, social competence is the possession of the capability to generate skilled behavior. It is an organism's capacity to interact effectively with its environment. It can be conceptualized as the effectiveness or adequacy which with an individual is capable of responding to various problematic situations which confront him. It can also be defined as an individual's everyday effectiveness in dealing with his environment.

## **1.2. Parental Encouragement**

Parental encouragement is of great significance in developing psychological as well as academic behaviour of the child. Present day society is based on competition in which everyone has the tendency to perform perfectly as possible, so encouragement, involvement and support of parents make him more confident and optimistic. Parents often don't realize how much power they have to influence their children by giving them positive attention for their behaviour. Parental encouragement and support for learning activities at home, combined with parental involvement in schooling, is critical to children's learning. When school and families work together in partnership, children are more likely to perform better academically.

Laurence Steinberg (1992) stated that the parental encouragement is much more likely to promote adolescents school success when it occurs in the context of an authoritative home environment. Kathleen & Dempsey et. al. (2001) examined the parents activities that take many forms from, establishing structures for homework performance to teaching for understanding and developing students learning strategies. Operating largely through modeling reinforcement, and instruction, parents involvement appears to influence student success in attributes related to achievement and social adjustment.

It is apparent that family plays an important role in the development of the child. If the child is deprived from healthy family environment his / her development may get hampered. If guidance is given them to

learn to take pleasure in thinking and behaving well, they will have the best chance to lead good lives as an individual and as citizens in the community. Parental encouragement enhances social competence among the children. It increases when parents are involved in their children's activities, the more intensive involvement of parents in education the greater positive impact on academic achievement and social activities. Research confirms that students have an advantage in school when their parents encourage and support their school activities.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

Thakur (1991) observed that residential area, particularly urban setting, age and sex have significant effects on social competence. The higher age group and high SES had displayed greater social competence than their counterparts in the lower SES strata. Education of parents contributed substantially to social competence of pre-school children.

Shukla (1992) studied social competence of children as a function of parental behavior and peer interaction among different cultural groups. The major findings of the study were parental authority, peer interaction and SES have a significant effect on the social competence of children. Parental acceptance has been estimated to be the most significant predicting factor of social competence in the multiple regression analysis.

McNeal (1994) investigated the relations among parental education, occupational status, parental acceptance and social competence along with other variables. He found that parental acceptance was associated positively with prosocial competent behavior in children; parental education and occupational status was directly associated with children competent behavior and the family psychological resources were positively related to competent behavior.

Singh (1995) investigated the effect of different components of parental involvement on the achievement of eight class students. The results revealed that parental involvement in school activities had positive effect on achievement while family structure had a slight negative association. Parental involvement in the form of parent child discussions had a moderate impact. Parental aspiration found to have powerful influence on academic achievement.

Muni, Rath and Choudhury (1997) explored relationship between family resources and social competence of 300 adolescents and found that parental education, occupation and family income were related to positive peer and teacher related social competence among advantaged adolescents. Negative responses and outside family support were positively related to disadvantaged adolescent's higher self-related competence.

Aggarwal (1997) conducted a comparative study on the effect of parental encouragement upon the educational development of students on the basis of gender. The sample consisted of 100 male and female students of Pauri district. The findings indicated that the parents showed more encouragement to their daughters in comparison to their sons. Parental encouragement was also found to be positively related with educational development of the students.

Jain (1998) assessed the social competence among tribal and non tribal pupils on account of their sex, locale and grade. Non tribal pupils were significantly higher on social competition, social leadership and social competence.

Okpala (2001) explored the relationship between parental involvement in terms of hours of volunteering in school help, school spend in terms of dollar per child, spends on instructional supplies, parental social economic status and school achievement. Mathematics test scores were taken as the measure of

attainment. The results revealed that parental involvement in the school was not related to pupil achievement.

Bruce, Simon and Davis (2002) examined the role of parental encouragement in educational achievement and psychological adjustment throughout the childhood. The results indicated that parental involvement had a small but significantly positive relationship with academic achievement. The results also revealed that social and physical environment in which the children were raised effect their educational achievement.

Renk and Phares (2007) studied the maternal and paternal perceptions of social competence in children and adolescents. Results showed that the amount of time parents spend with their children was related to maternal and paternal ratings, whereas affectivity was related to paternal ratings. There was an interaction between parent gender and the level of social competence depicted in the situations they rated, suggesting that there were differences in maternal and paternal ratings.

Sahaya (2009) had studied the influence of social competence on attitude towards teaching of student teachers in Salem districts and revealed that there is a significant difference between qualification and social competence. There is no significant difference between gender, subject, community, previous teaching experience and social competence of the student teacher's. There is significant relationship between social competence and attitude towards teaching profession of student teachers.

Singh (2010) studied to compare the social competence and attitude towards computer among graduate students. For this purpose, descriptive survey was used. Data was collected from randomly selected 320 students of the rural and urban areas. The results showed that social competence of under graduate male students was more than that of under graduate female students.. Significant difference was found in attitude towards computer between undergraduate urban and rural students but there was no significant difference between male and female students.

Vasanth (2011) worked on demographic factors of social competence of pupils at secondary school level in Tamilnadu. This study revealed the impact of socio demographic factors such as gender, locality, family size and parental education on social competence of 125 students of two secondary schools. It was observed that there is no significant difference in social competence due to family size.

Schirvar (2013) conducted a study on social competence in students with high intelligence. Subjects included 30 females and 49 males, between the ages of 7 and 10 and Grades 1-5. The findings indicated that the correlation between the measure of pragmatic language and the measure of social competence was not significant.

Sharma and Khajuria (2014) examined parental encouragement as determinant of academic achievement of senior secondary school students. The study was conducted through descriptive survey method. The sample consist of 300 (both male and female) senior secondary school students of Uttar Pradesh. The results revealed that there exists significant and positive relationship between parental encouragement and academic achievement of senior secondary school students. The study also indicates that there is significant difference between male and female students with regard to parental encouragement. The female students show greater parental encouragement than male students.

Bindu and Aruna (2014) studied relationship between parental encouragement and process skills in social studies of secondary school students. The sample comprised of 1000 secondary school students of Kalra. The study revealed that parental encouragement is positively related to process skills of adolescent students. Urban adolescent students show more parental encouragement than rural students.

Jaidka (2015) conducted a study on value pattern among students as related to parental encouragement. The present study analysis the relationship between value pattern and parental encouragement among 10th class students. The major findings of the study revealed the significant positive correlation between the value pattern and parental encouragement of X class students with respect to sex and locale.

Sharma, Mangal and Manisha (2016) examined the effects of high and low parental encouragement group of students on academic achievement of secondary school students. The study revealed that their exists significant difference in mean achievement scores of high parental encouragement group and low parental encouragement group of boys, girls and total events.

Sultan and Ahmad (2018) found that parental encouragement is one of the important factors responsible for the success of the student. It has a great impact on the outcome of the students learning process. The study aimed to study the levels of parental encouragement among first generation and non first generation high school students of Kashmir. The sample of the study consisted of 200 high school students. The finding of the study also revealed that non first generation high school students had better academic achievement than first generation high school students.

Lawrence and Barathi (2019) studied the relationship between parental encouragement and academic achievement of higher secondary school students. The results showed that their is significant relationship between parental encouragement and academic achievement of higher secondary school students.

Chowdhury (2020) examined the relationship between academic achievement and parental encouragement. The findings revealed that their existed a significant difference in the parental encouragement as well as academic achievement of secondary school students in terms of their gender and location of the school. Another major finding of this study was that there exists significant relationship between the academic achievement and parental encouragement of secondary school students.

From the review of related studies it has been seen that there are many factors which effect the social competence of adolescents but from all those factors parental encouragement seems to be the major factor. Moreover, it has seen that very less studies has been conducted related to these two variables. So the investigator thought it important to conduct research in this area so that more information and related important factors can be explored and relationship between these two factors can be studied in detail. Hence due to paucity of research and greater concern for the future generations, offering them a better quality of life and to cope up with 21<sup>st</sup> century needs and the challenges, inspired the investigator to undertake present study. Further the results of the present investigation will provide deeper insight in to the relationship of these two variables and will help the teachers to devise their teaching methods and strategies accordingly.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To study the level of social competence of girls and boys of secondary schools.
2. To study the parental encouragement of boys and girls of secondary schools.
3. To study the relationship between social competence and parental encouragement of secondary school students.
4. To study the social competence of secondary school students in relation to their parental encouragement

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

1. There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of level of social competence of boys and girls of secondary schools.

2. There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of parental encouragement of boys and girls of secondary schools.
3. There exists no significant relationship between social competence and parental encouragement of secondary school students.
4. There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of social competence of secondary school students in relation to their parental encouragement.

### 3. Method and Procedure

The research design, sample, tools and statistical techniques employed are described comprehensively.

#### 3.1 Research Design

The present study falls under the domain of ' Descriptive Research' within the survey method as it intends to explore the relationship between social competence and parental encouragement of secondary school students.

#### 3.2 Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of students of Grade Ninth of secondary schools situated in Amritsar district of Punjab state. A sample of 50 students was selected through random method of sampling.

#### 3.3 Tools Used for Data Collection

- Social Competence Scale by Sharma, Shukla and Shukla (1998)
- Parental Encouragement Scale by Sharma (1998)

#### 3.4 Statistical Techniques Employed

- Descriptive statistical techniques namely mean, standard deviation and skewness were computed to summarize the data and to describe central tendency and variability of different variables.
- Coefficient of correlation was employed to explore the relationship between the variables.
- t-test was employed to find out the significant difference between the mean scores.

#### 3.5 Delimitations of the Study

- The study was confined to secondary schools in Amritsar city only.
- Students of only Grade 9 were included in the study.
- A limited sample was drawn due to COVID-19 related constraints and challenges restricting school access and interaction.

### 4. Analysis and Interpretation

**Hypothesis 1: There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of level of social competence of boys and girls of secondary schools.**

To find out the significant difference between boys and girls as regard to social competence, mean, standard deviation and t values were calculated. On the basis of data, following inferences were drawn.

**Table 1 : Comparison of Social Competence between Boys and Girls**

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	df	SE <sub>D</sub>	t- ratio	Level of Significance
Social Competence	Boys	25	134.28	36.936	48	8.256	2.398	0.05
	Girls	25	154.08	18.437				

The above table reveals that mean scores of social competence for boys and girls are 134.28 and 154.08 and standard deviation comes out to be 36.936 and 18.437 respectively. Since the obtained t-value (2.398) is significant at 0.05 level of significance, it indicates that significant difference exists between social competence for boys and girls. Therefore, hypothesis 1 which states that "There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of level of social competence of boys and girls of secondary schools" stands rejected.

The result is quite in conformity with the study reported by Sahaya (2009) who studied the influence of social competence on attitude towards teaching of student- teachers. This study revealed that there exists no significant difference between gender, teaching experience and social competence of the student teachers.

The similar results had been reported by Singh (2010) who compared the social competence and attitude towards computer among graduate students. The result showed that social competence of under graduate male students was more than that of under graduate female students. The result revealed that there was no significant difference between male and female students.

**Hypothesis 2: There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of parental encouragement of boys and girls of secondary schools.**

To find out the difference between parental encouragement of boys and girls of secondary schools, mean, standard deviation and 't' values were calculated and same has been entered in Table 2.

**Table 2: Comparison of Parental Encouragement between Boys and Girls**

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	SE <sub>D</sub>	t- ratio	Level of Significance
Parental Encouragement	Boys	25	43.28	10.438	48	2.485	3.590	.01
	Girls	25	52.20	6.739				

The mean value of boys is 43.28 and the mean value of girls is 52.20. The standard deviation values of boys and girls are found to be 10.438 and 6.739 respectively. It is observed that the t-value is 3.590 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. In the light of this result, it can be interpreted that there is significant difference in parental encouragement between boys and girls. Thus, the null hypothesis, "There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of parental encouragement of boys and girls of secondary schools" is rejected.

The present study is in conformity with Sharma , Anuradha et al. (2014) who found that there exists significant and positive relationship between parental encouragement and academic achievement of secondary school students. This study also indicates that there is significant difference between male and female students with regard to parental encouragement.

The result is also in close conformity with the results of Aggarwal (1997) who conducted a study on the effect of parental encouragement upon the education development of students on the basis of gender. He found that the parents showed more encouragement to their daughters in comparison to their sons. Parental encouragement was also found to be positively related with educational development of the students.

**Hypothesis3: There exists no significant relationship between social competence and parental encouragement of secondary school students.**

This hypothesis was framed to find out the correlation between social competence and parental encouragement of secondary school students and was tested by applying 'Pearson Coefficient of Correlation'. The outcomes of this analysis has been reported in table 3.

**Table 3 : Coefficient of Correlation between Social Competence and Parental Encouragement**

Variable	N	Coefficient of Correlation (r)	Inference
Social Competence	50	.116	Insignificant
Parental Encouragement	50		

**A close scrutiny of the results entered in table 3 indicates that :**

Coefficient of correlation (r) between social competence and parental encouragement for both the variables found to be .116. The value of coefficient of correlation is found to be not significant. Comparison between calculated value and tabulated value shows that there exists positive and insignificant correlation between social competence and parental encouragement. Therefore, the hypothesis "There exists no significant relationship between social competence and parental encouragement of secondary school students." stands accepted.

The result is quite in conformity with the results of the study by Shukla (1992) who investigated the effect of social competence and parental acceptability. Parental acceptance has been estimated to be the most significant predicting factor of social competence in the multiple regression analysis.

The similar results had been reported by Vasanth (2011) who examined the impact of social demographic factors such as gender, locality, family size and parental education on social competence of 125 students. It was observed that there exists no significant difference in social competence due to family size.

**Hypothesis 4:There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of social competence of secondary school students in relation to their parental encouragement.**

This hypothesis was framed to analyze the difference between the social competence of secondary school students w.r.t various levels of parental encouragement. The hypothesis was tested by calculating F- value and the results are being reported in table 4.

**Table 4 : Mean Scores of Social Competence of Secondary School Students in Relation to their Parental Encouragement**

Parental Encouragement	Social Competence		N	F- value	Level of Significance
	Mean	SD			
High Parental Encouragement	143.29	14.599	14	.061	0.05
Average Parental Encouragement	143.18	39.952	22		

Low Parental Encouragement	146.64	26.880	14		
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The above table reveals that mean scores of social competence of students with high parental encouragement is 143.29, with average parental encouragement is 143.18 and with low parental encouragement is 146.64 and their respective S.D's are 14.599, 39.952 and 26.880. The obtained F-value is .061 which is insignificant at 0.05 level of confidence. It indicates that there exists no significant difference in the mean scores of social competence of secondary school students in relation to their parental encouragement. Thus, the hypothesis 4 which states that "There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of social competence of secondary school students in relation to their parental encouragement" stands accepted.

Sharma, Mangal and Manisha (2016) examined the effects of high and low parental encouragement group of students on academic achievement of secondary school students. The study revealed that there exists significant difference in the mean achievement scores of high parental encouragement group and low parental encouragement of boys, girls and total events.

### 5. Findings and Conclusions

- Significant difference was found in the mean scores of social competence of boys and girls of class IX. Girl students displayed higher mean scores.
- Significant difference exists in the mean scores of parental encouragement of boys and girls of secondary schools. Girl students exhibited higher mean scores on parental encouragement scale than boys' students, contradicting the second hypothesis.
- No significant relationship exists between social competence and parental encouragement of secondary school students.
- No significant difference exists in the mean scores of social competence of secondary school students in relation to their parental encouragement.

### 6. Implications of the Study

After knowing the social competence and parental encouragement of secondary school students, teachers can help them in the following manner:

- The present study point out that parental encouragement plays vital role in holistic development of children. It is recommended that parents should take interest in the educational activities of their children. By implicating this, the social competence of the students can be enhanced.
- This study is helpful for both parents as well as school administrators to create congenial atmosphere at home and also in the education institutions to develop confidence and social skills among the students.
- At home as well as in the school atmosphere, both parents and teachers should encourage the children, especially female children, to take part in social activities that will increase their social competence level which in turn improve their social competence skills.
- The results of the present study will help the parents, counsellors, teachers, administrators and educationists to increase awareness regarding the need of parental encouragement and social competence skills.
- Since parental encouragement and social competence are positively correlated teachers should

make efforts to improve these two traits in adolescents.

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