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Impact of Social Skills on High School Students' Academic Performance

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ABSTRACT:

This research explores the relationship between social skills and academic performance among students of high schools in District Jhang. Social skills, encompassing communication, empathy, interpersonal abilities, and problem solving play a crucial role in an individual's success in various life aspects. The study aims to assess the correlation of social skills and academic achievement, and propose measures for enhancing social skills and academic performance. The study used a descriptive survey design with sample of 300 students from public and private high schools. A self-constructed questionnaire with 34 items was used. The study establishes a positive correlation between collaboration and self-regulation with academic achievement. However, no significant relationships are found for engagement with others, open-mindedness, compound skills, task performance, emotional regulation, ambiguity tolerance, and hierarchical relationship management. The study concludes that social skills are positively correlated with academic achievement, emphasizing the importance of fostering these skills in educational settings. The study recommends the integration of social skills instruction into the curriculum, providing teacher training, and implementing prevention and intervention programs to enhance social skills and academic progress. This research contributes valuable insights into the intricate interplay between social skills and academic achievement, providing a foundation for educational stakeholders to create effective strategies that promote holistic student development.

Key words: Social Skills, Academic Achievement, High School Students

Introduction

Social skills are the abilities we employ to interact and convey messages to one another through appearance, gestures, and body language—both verbally and nonverbally. Since humans are social animals, we have created a variety of means of expressing our ideas, feelings, and messages to other people. Academic achievement, often known as academic performance, describes the extent to which a teacher, student, or organization has achieved its long-or-short term learning goals. A student's overall GPA and the accomplishment of majors like bachelor's and secondary school diplomas are used to gauge their academic success. According to Schmidt (2021), behavior and social skills are two different things. Instead, they are behavioral elements that support an individual's comprehension and flexibility in a range of social contexts. a group of skills that allow someone to: a) create and preserve healthy social connections; b) support peer acceptance and a successful transition to school; and c) empower someone to manage the greater social environment (McCay & Keyes, 2002) is what Walker (1983) defines as social skills. Even though the idea of social skills is not new, many academics have just recently come to understand how important they are in life and have started researching how they affect a person's various facets. Social and emotional learning can also be used to define social skills. These include identifying and controlling our emotions, growing in empathy and concern for others, building strong bonds with others, making morally and constructive decisions, and dealing with difficult circumstances in a positive and responsible manner." "Managing day-to-day interactions, such as exchanging information, having conversations, making and maintaining relationships, asking for help from others, and providing instructions, is made easier when one possesses social skills. According to Bredekamp and Copple (1997), social skills include the ability to establish and maintain healthy relationships, interact and behave in a way that is socially acceptable, make responsible judgements, and handle challenging situations with calm and composure. A person with strong social skills may make decisions in social situations that improve their relationships with others and help them succeed in life. A person needs social skills in order to act in a way that is appropriate for their culture and society. To successfully navigate a life, a person must develop a wide range of social skills to more easily understand by categorizing them into specific domains. (Kostelnik & associates, 2002).

Education is a social process that occurs in society. In the end, learning is a social activity (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1916; Bandura, 1986). After learning something on their own for a while, people eventually interact with others to modify what they have learned. A child's ability to engage with members of society and learn in a meaningful way depends heavily on their social skills. According to Ten Dam and Volman (2007), social skills are crucial for training children and young adults to grow up and succeed in their required roles in the home, business, and community. A young person with strong social skills can behave well, build and sustain relationships with others, and attain academic success more successfully in school. He can confidently handle any problem since he can ask for others' assistance. Social skills enable an individual to be a responsible member of society as well as assist a youngster in achieving his educational goals. Social skills improve one's capacity for learning, growth on a personal level, comprehension, productivity, employability, and career success. According to earlier research, girls outperform boys academically in the majority of areas taught in schools. Teachers tend to evaluate students' social skills more highly than their knowledge when grading their academic accomplishment, and they tend to give girls higher grades than boys for social skills do. The main goal of this research was to determine, after adjusting for cultural background, age, and prior academic accomplishment, the extent to which over a two-year period, social skills predicted by teacher teacher-rated academic progress in Norwegian, math's, and English. This was done by multilevel analysis. Investigating potential gender disparities was another task. There have not been many studies on students' academic achievement across many grades; however, this one included students in grades 1–8 at time point 1 (TI) and 3–10 at time point two (T2). Information on 2,266 students in Norway was collected in the autumn of 2012 and 2014. The findings demonstrated that, although the fixed effect differed by subject, Academic attainment of both boys and girls was significantly impacted by teacher-rated social skills at T1 two years later. After adjusting for prior academic achievement, social skills appeared to explain the variance in Norwegian and mathematics but not in English. The social skills impact on academic performance did not change based on gender. Social skills focus on achieving goals. The way that many social skills are related is that an individual can employ multiple social skills simultaneously to achieve an objective. Social skills ought to be suitable for the communication context (Wudu, 2018).

Communication in both the personal and professional spheres will require different social skills. Social skills are characterized by specific behavioral patterns that allow one to assess a person's level of social competence. Social

skills are learnt and can be practiced. Individuals should be able to cognitively control their social skills; this includes knowing when and how to use specific behaviors in addition to knowing what behaviors to use.

Objectives

1. To find the relation between socials skills and academic performance.
2. To suggest measures for improvement of social skills or to better academic performance.

Method

Research methodology was included the research design, population, sampling and sampling techniques, instrumentation, data collection and analysis. The design of research is descriptive and a survey was used for collecting the data. The population comprised of all school students of district Jhang. The sample consisted of 400 students .initial sample was 400 but the data collection, various problems were observed e.g. some questionnaires were not returned, and out of the returned questionnaires, various items were found un-responded. Such cases were excluded from the final data analysis, which reduced the sample size. Therefore, the final sample was 300. Main study variables were social skills and academic achievements. Perspective ability, emotional regulation, self-restrains, task performance, engagement with others and collaboration component of social skills were taken as sub variables. Taking these components and the study design Likert-scale questionnaire was considered as enough research tool for the study (LR GAY), therefore the self-constructed questionnaire was prepared. It consisted of 34 items. The questionnaire was consisted two parts. One part of the questionnaire contains demographic information and second part consists of items related to the social skills and academic performance.

Results and Findings

Self-prepared questionnaire was used for data collection. Five point Likert scale was used as a research tool. The tool was duly translated in Urdu for the ease of comprehension of the users or students. The data gathered through the questionnaire, and using Statistical Package for Social Science SPSS for analyzed. Both inferential and descriptive statics was used to analyze the data. In inferential statics T-Test and ANOVA was used.

Table 1

Gender Wise Distribution of Exam Scores among Students

		Last Exam			Total
		0-49	50-59	60-100	
GENDER	Male	38	45	54	137
	Female	46	46	71	163
Total		84	91	125	300

The above table show that in exam 38 male and 46 female score 0-49 , 45 male 46 female score 50-59 and 54 male and 71 female score 60-100.

Table 2

Gender wise Distribution of Sample

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	137	40.7	45.7	45.7
Female	163	48.4	54.3	54.3
Total	300	89.0	100.0	100.0

The table shows gender wise original distribution of the sample. This table shows there are 45percentage male and 54% female students in this research. It reveals that the male and female respondents were almost equal in the study, which will show clear effect of gender difference.

Table 3

School wise Distribution of Sample

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Private	134	39.8	44.7	44.7
Public	166	49.3	55.3	55.3
Total	300	89.0	100.0	

This table showed there were 49% student from public school and 39% from private school.

Table 4

ANOVA Results for Test between Subjects

Dependent Variable: Last Exam					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	75.302[a]	104	.724	1.102	.279
Intercept	40.977	1	40.977	62.380	.000
MEAN Engagement with Others	8.338	9	.926	1.410	.186
MEAN Open Minded	11.512	11	1.047	1.593	.103
MEAN Compound Skills	5.330	11	.485	.738	.701
MEAN Task Performance	9.896	13	.761	1.159	.313
MEAN Emotional Regulation	3.504	11	.319	.485	.911
MEAN Collaboration	14.832	12	1.236	1.882	.039
MEAN self-regulation	16.075	13	1.237	1.882	.034
MEAN Ambiguity Tolerance	7.932	13	.610	.929	.524
MEAN Hierarchical Relationship Management	8.397	11	.763	1.162	.316
Error	128.095	195	.657		
Total	1573.000	300			
Corrected Total	203.397	299			

The ANOVA test results shows that there was found significant difference among the collaboration (p=.039), and self-regulation (p=.034). Similarly, the overall effect of the social skill with that of academic achievement was found also highly significant (p=.000). However was found no significant among Engagement with others (p=.186), Open Minded (p=.103), Compound Skills (p=.701), Task Performance (p=.313Emotional Regulation (p=.911) Ambiguity Tolerance (p=.524) Hierarchical Relationship Management (p=.316).

Table 5

T-test Results for Gender Difference

		Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					Confidence Interval	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Last Exam	Equal variances assumed	.785	.376	-.382	298	.703	-.037	.096	-.225	.152
	Equal variances not assumed			-.383	291.587	.702	-.037	.096	-.225	.151
sUM_EO	Equal variances assumed	.007	.932	-2.694	298	.007	-.64538	.23957	-1.11684	-.17392
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.690	287.486	.008	-.64538	.23992	-1.11759	-.17317
sUM_OM	Equal variances assumed	1.715	.191	-1.069	298	.286	-.27751	.25953	-.78825	.23323
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.076	294.645	.283	-.27751	.25800	-.78527	.23026
sUM_CS	Equal variances assumed	.531	.467	-2.417	298	.016	-.65734	.27201	-1.19264	-.12204
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.413	287.300	.016	-.65734	.27245	-1.19358	-.12110
sUM_TP	Equal variances assumed	.613	.434	-.540	298	.590	-.18763	.34779	-.87206	.49680
	Equal variances not assumed			-.541	291.451	.589	-.18763	.34704	-.87065	.49539
sUM_ER	Equal variances assumed	.629	.428	-1.586	298	.114	-.41731	.26310	-.93508	.10046
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.576	280.503	.116	-.41731	.26484	-.93864	.10402
sUM_C1	Equal variances assumed	4.788	.029	.760	298	.448	.22426	.29492	-.35614	.80466
	Equal variances not assumed			.743	250.739	.458	.22426	.30184	-.37021	.81873
sUM_SR	Equal variances assumed	.029	.866	.827	298	.409	.30764	.37214	-.42471	1.04000

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
sUM_PA	Equal variances not assumed			.835	296.832	.448	.30764	.36856	-.41767	1.03296
	Equal variances assumed	4.295	.039	1.949	298	.448	.49787	.25552	-.00497	1.00072
	Equal variances not assumed			1.919	266.361	.448	.49787	.25939	-.01285	1.00860
sUM_AT	Equal variances assumed	2.430	.120	.124	298	.448	.04026	.32362	-.59661	.67713
	Equal variances not assumed			.123	271.080	.448	.04026	.32766	-.60483	.68535
sUM_HRM	Equal variances assumed	1.206	.273	.944	298	.448	.26000	.27554	-.28226	.80225
	Equal variances not assumed			.936	278.398	.448	.26000	.27775	-.28676	.80676

Different social skills were comparing with academic achievements. The t value found was found to be significant for engagement with other (P<.007) compound skill (P<.016) similarly, the overall effect of the social skill with that of academic achievement was found also highly significant (p<.000). However Task Performance. (P<.589)   Emotional Regulation (P<.114), Open Minded (P<.286), Collaboration (P<.448), self-regulation (P<.448), Perceptive ability (P<.448), Ambiguity Tolerance (P<.448), Hierarchical Relationship Management (P<.448) was found no significant with academic achievements.

Table 6

Independent Samples Test

		For Equality of Variances Levine's Test		Means of t-test for Equality	
		F	Sig.	t	df
GENDER	Equal variances assumed	.790	.375	.555	173
	Equal variances not assumed			.555	171.993
School	Equal variances assumed	2.993	.085	-.870	173
	Equal variances not assumed			-.871	172.722
Class	Equal variances assumed	1.576	.211	-.626	173
	Equal variances not assumed			-.627	172.707
Age	Equal variances assumed	1.300	.256	-1.566	173
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.565	171.542

The results of T test shows that there was found to independent sample gender significant (p=.375) school (p=.085) class (p=.211) age (p= .256).

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of the study was to find out the relationship between social skills and academic performance among students of high school, focusing on various components such as perspective ability, emotional regulation, self-restraint, task performance, engagement with others, and collaboration. The research employed a Likert-scale questionnaire consisting of 34 items, divided into two parts – one gathering demographic information and the other focusing on social skills and academic performance. The demographic analysis revealed a nearly equal distribution of male (45.7%) and female (54.3%) students, indicating a balanced gender representation. Additionally, the study included students from both public (55.3%) and private (44.7%) schools, reflecting a diverse sample. The inferential statistics, specifically ANOVA, demonstrated significant differences in collaboration (p=.039) and self-regulation (p=.034), indicating that these social skills had an impact on academic achievement. However, no significant differences were observed in engagement with others, open-mindedness, compound skills, task performance, emotional regulation, ambiguity tolerance, and hierarchical relationship management.

Further analysis using T-tests showed that engagement with others and compound skills had a significant relationship with academic achievement (p<.007 and p<.016, respectively). The overall effect of social skills on academic achievement was highly significant (p<.000). However, task performance, emotional regulation, open-mindedness, collaboration, self-regulation, perceptive ability, ambiguity tolerance, and hierarchical relationship management did not show significant associations with academic achievements. The gender-based analysis revealed no significant differences between male and female students, with a p-value of .375. Similarly, there were no significant differences based on school type (public or private), class, or age. This study provides us valuable insights in conclusion into the relationship between specific social skills and academic achievement among school students. Collaboration and self-regulation emerged as significant contributors to academic success, highlighting the importance of fostering these skills in educational settings. The findings suggest that targeted interventions to enhance collaboration and self-regulation may positively affect academic performance. However, the study also emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach to address various social skills for a holistic impact on students' academic outcomes. These insights contribute to the ongoing discourse on the intersection of social skills and academic success, providing implications for educational practices and interventions.

Recommendations

1. Social skills instruction should be required in all K–12 classrooms, as mandated by educational leaders and administrators.
2. Social skills teaching should be included into lesson plans and teachers should be required to give it to their pupils in the classroom.
3. Enhancing a student's social skills raises their performance and mastery levels in the classroom as well as their level of appropriate and proper social behavior.
4. Enhancing the pupil's social abilities enhances students' mastery and performance skills in the classroom and their development of appropriate and socially acceptable behavior
5. It is crucial to focus on enhancing a positive self-concept since it encourages students to succeed academically and in their future lives.
6. The student's social skills enhance their capacity to concentrate in class, foster peer relationships, and promote bonding, all of which are likely to boost academic achievement.
7. Social skills should be taken into consideration as a possible target to be addressed by educators, administrators, and school psychologists looking to design prevention and intervention programs to promote academic, self-concept, and social behavior adjustment.
8. Instructors should acquaint pupils with the outside social environment so they can learn to perceive it.
9. When learning occurs both within and outside of the classroom, teachers ought to take on a more facilitator role.
10. Teachers should encourage group learning and create a collaborative and team-oriented environment in the classroom.
11. Teachers and parents work to instill confidence in timid students.

12. Parents need to have a great respect for learning, intelligence, and the abilities that go along with it. They also need to respect goal-setting and focused labor.
13. Our kids need to be involved in the school system and have excellent study habits in addition to hard effort and dedication.
14. Instructors need to be able to inspire their pupils and inculcate a willingness to make sacrifices for the group.

Declaration of Interest: The author declares that there is no clash of interests.

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