Research Paper

A Study of Social Maturity of Upper Primary Students

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at assessing the social maturity level of upper primary students in Delhi. Utilizing a survey method, a sample of 100 Class VIII students was randomly selected. The analysis employed statistical methods including mean, mean percentage, standard deviation, p-value, and t-test. To gauge students' social maturity, the Social Maturity Scale by Nalini Rao was utilized. Findings indicated an average level of social maturity among these students, with no significant differences identified in social maturity based on gender.

Keywords: *Social Maturity, Upper Primary Students*

M***ost*** upper primary students fall into the adolescent category, typically aged between 10 to 15 years. This developmental stage is critical, marked by significant biological changes as well as cognitive, physical and psychological growth. Many children in this age group struggle to cope with these changes, often failing to meet societal behavioral expectations, which can lead to challenges in schools, families and broader society. These difficulties may be heightened by the rapid pace of technological advancements, family fragmentation and weakening social ties.

Against this backdrop, the study seeks to explore the social maturity of upper primary students, with particular attention to gender differences.

Social maturity is defined as age-appropriate behavior that aligns with societal expectations. It includes interpersonal relationships, appropriate conduct, personal communication, and a sense of responsibility. Crow and Crow describes social maturity as "a process of learning to conform to the values and norms of society." According to Freeman and Havighurst, "A socially mature person is one who progressively acquires the ability to understand others and behave in a manner that is acceptable and responsible within society." Essentially, social maturity reflects an individual's capacity to manage social responsibilities, comprehend others' emotions and viewpoints, and engage appropriately in various social contexts.

Features of Social Maturity:
1. Interpersonal Skills: The ability to cultivate and sustain healthy relationships while respecting the opinions and perspectives of others.
2. Empathy and Understanding: A sensitivity to the emotions and needs of those around us, coupled with a willingness to provide support and assistance.

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3. Responsibility and Accountability: Taking ownership of one's actions and decisions, fulfilling social roles such as those of a student, employee, or family member.
4. Adaptability and Tolerance: Adjusting to various social contexts and embracing diversity in opinions, cultures, and behaviors.
5. Communication Skills: Proficient verbal and non-verbal communication, along with active listening and appropriate responses.
6. Self-Control and Patience: The ability to manage impulses in social interactions and to approach conflicts with calmness and rationality.
7. Ethical and Moral Behavior: Acting in alignment with social values and ethics, while demonstrating honesty, fairness, and respect.
8. Civic Responsibility: Recognizing one's duties as a citizen and actively engaging in community and societal activities.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Singh and Thukral (2012) sought to assess variations of social maturity among high school students with regard to gender and used Rao's scale to measure social maturity. They found no significant differences between the genders in their social maturity level.

Kumar and Ritu (2013) tried to study the social maturity of senior school students. They employed a survey method and random sampling, with a total of 100 students (50 male and 50 female) from class 12 in the Yamuna Nagar district of Haryana. The results also showed that there was no notable difference in the social maturity levels between male and female students.

Singh et al. (2013) attempted a study on the influence of gender on social maturity among adolescents in Pantnagar district, Uttarakhand. Their study involved a random sample of 277 students and similarly found no observable gender differences in social maturity levels.

Kumar and Pazhanivelu (2014) explored the intersection of value conflict and mental health among B.Ed. student teachers, focusing on their social maturity. Their findings indicated significant differences in social maturity between male and female B.Ed. students, as well as between those studying arts and sciences. Additionally, the study highlighted a positive correlation between mental health and social maturity.

Pan (2014) investigated social maturity among secondary students with the aim of assessing the influence of gender. A random sampling technique was employed to gather data from 200 students in secondary schools of West Bengal. The results disclosed a significant gender disparity in social maturity levels.

Gupta (2014) examined social maturity of M.Ed. students in terms of gender, specifically looking at differences across academic streams (arts and science). The survey method was employed, with a total sample of 100 M.Ed. students from Himachal Pradesh. For measuring social maturity, the comprehensive scale developed by Roma Pal was utilized. The study concluded that all M.Ed. students demonstrated social maturity, with no significant differences observed between male and female students or between arts and science backgrounds.

Bhagat (2016) conducted research regarding social adjustment among secondary school students, involving a sample of 200 ninth-grade students from both government and private

schools. The study found that boys demonstrated higher levels of social adjustment compared to girls.

Manju (2016) in her study focused on the social maturity of B.Ed pupil teachers, aiming to identify differences between male and female participants. Employing a survey method and stratified random sampling, she again utilized Nalini Rao's social maturity scale. The research revealed a significant difference, with female B.Ed students exhibiting higher social maturity than male B.Ed students. Additionally, no noticeable difference was observed in social maturity between Arts and Science B. Ed student teachers.

Need and Significance of the Study
Studying social maturity is crucial for understanding how individuals can effectively manage relationships, express their emotions in appropriate ways, and make informed, responsible choices. This knowledge is key to personal growth and self-awareness. People who exhibit social maturity tend to communicate clearly, show empathy towards others, and resolve conflicts in a constructive manner. These abilities are essential for fostering healthy friendships, family dynamics, and productive interactions in the workplace.

In both school and college environments, students displaying higher levels of social maturity often demonstrate improved cooperation, leadership skills, and classroom behavior, all of which contribute to better academic outcomes and a stronger sense of social integration. Moreover, those with advanced social maturity are typically more adept at handling emotional stress, minimizing anxiety during social interactions, and sustaining balanced mental health. This understanding of social maturity enables educators, counselors, and psychologists to create tailored interventions for both children and adults who may face challenges with social adaptation.

Objectives of the Study
- To assess the social maturity levels among upper primary students.
- To examine the differences in social maturity levels between male and female upper primary students.

Hypothesis of the Study
- The level of social maturity among upper primary students is high.
- There is no significant difference in the social maturity level of male and female upper primary students.

METHODOLOGY
The research conducted employs a descriptive survey method, focusing on the measurement, classification, analysis, comparison, and interpretation of data. The study's sample includes 100 eighth-grade students, evenly split between 50 males and 50 females. All participants are within the age range of 10 to 15 years. Random sampling was utilized to select participants from government schools in Delhi.

To assess the social maturity of the students, Nalini Rao's scale was utilized. The scale features 90 items. Each item offers four response options: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree, with scores assigned as follows: 4, 3, 2, and 1 for positive items, and 1, 2, 3, and 4 for negative items. The scale was administered in a regular classroom setting,

with clear instructions provided on the first page of the scale booklet, making it self-explanatory. Scoring followed the guidelines outlined in the manual.

For data analysis, various statistical techniques were employed, including mean calculations, mean percentages, standard deviation, p-values, and t-tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis I: The level of social maturity among upper primary students is high.

Table 1: Social Maturity Level of Upper Primary Students

Variable	Group (Upper Primary)	N	Mean Score	Average Mean %
Social Maturity	Upper primary students	100	233.23	64.79

According to the data presented in Table 1, the average social maturity score for upper primary students is 233.23, with a Z-Score of +0.47. This indicates average level of social maturity as per norms for interpretation given in Nalini Rao's scale.Therefore, the study's first hypothesis—that "The level of social maturity among upper primary students is high"—is not supported by the findings.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant difference in the social maturity level of male and female upper primary students.

Table 2: Social Maturity Level of Upper of Primary Students by Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean score	Average Mean %	SD	p-Value	t-Value	Level of Significance
Social maturity	Male	50	233.24	64.79	14.36			No significant difference
	Female	50	233.22	64.78	20.30	0.9955	0.0057	

The data presented in Table 2 reveals a p-value of 0.9955, which is notably high (greater than 0.05). This suggests that there is no statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups. Consequently, the second hypothesis of this study—asserting that "There is no significant difference in the social maturity level of male and female upper primary students"—is supported. This finding is consistent with previous research conducted by Singh and Thukral (2012), Kumar and Ritu (2013), Singh et al. (2013), Gupta (2014), all of whom reported similar results. However, other studies, including those by Kumar and Pazhanivelu (2014), Pan (2014), Bhagat (2016) and Manju (2016) found a significant difference in social maturity levels between males and females, which contrasts the findings.

Research Findings:
- The social maturity level of upper primary students is average.
- There is no difference in the social maturity level of students in terms of gender.

Delimitation of the Study:
- This study focuses exclusively on Delhi.
- It is limited to government schools.
- The research pertains only to upper primary students.

Educational Implications:
- It is crucial for educational institutions to pay special attention to the social maturity factor in learners. The curriculum should be enhanced or adjusted to provide comprehensive training aimed at improving social maturity, ultimately leading to better academic performance.
- Social maturity should be considered as a significant criterion for admission into various professional courses.
- Parents, teachers, and principals must cultivate strong relationships with adolescents to guide their energies positively. By offering security, affection, counseling, and opportunities for decision-making, they can help students achieve better social-emotional adjustment in society.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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