

Social Attitude of Secondary School Students in Relation to Social Adjustment

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Abstract:

The development of social attitudes and social adjustment are vital goals of secondary school education. Social attitudes, encompassing beliefs, emotions, and behaviours towards others, significantly influence adolescents' ability to navigate social contexts effectively. The concept of social attitude pertains to an individual's perception of others within the context of society. Group interactions deeply shape individual attitudes, leading to standardised and consistent behaviour within the group (Ansary, 2023). This study aims to explore how social attitude is associated with the social adjustment of students at the secondary level. The correlational research method was employed to examine the relationship between the social attitude of secondary school students and their social adjustment. Secondary school students in Kerala were considered the population, and the sample constituted a random sampling of 90 students studying in 9th standard. The Social Attitude and Social Adjustment Scales were used in the study to collect data. Pearson's Product-moment Correlation analysis was used to consolidate and analyse the data. The findings of this research provide vital insights into the substantial impact of social views on the social adjustment outcomes of adolescents. The study's results underscored the impact of social attitudes among secondary pupils on their ability to navigate and adapt to their social surroundings successfully. Additionally, it has been uncovered that there exists a notable disparity in attitudes toward society and social adjustment between girls and boys. The results indicate a statistically significant association between Social Attitude and Social Adjustment, with persons demonstrating higher levels of adjustment being more prone to experiencing personal growth and development in their lives.

Key Words : Social Attitude & Social Adjustment

Introduction

Adolescence is a pivotal phase characterised by significant social and emotional development. During this developmental period, secondary school children engage with a wide range of peers and are exposed to a variety of social settings that affect their social adjustment. Social attitudes refer to the subjective evaluations that individuals hold towards social objects, whereas collective attitudes are formed through group dynamics and tend to become standardized and consistent within the group (Adhikari, 2023). The importance of social attitudes, which encompass individuals' predispositions and orientations towards many social contexts and individuals, holds great significance during this period of transformation. Based on developmental and neurological evidence, it can be argued that there exists an inherent inclination within individuals to seek support, respect, and acknowledgement, which serves as a driving force behind the establishment and maintenance of enduring interpersonal connections throughout the lifespan (Ferguson-Johnson et al., 2021; Eisenberger et al., 2003; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Maslow, 1958). Ansary et al. (2022) claims that individuals within social structures are inclined to pursue acceptance and recognition by conforming to the established norms and values of their respective societies. Individuals who possess the ability to adapt to social situations can successfully adhere to established norms, thereby enabling them to accommodate others and uphold their standing within the community.

Secondary school students' social attitudes significantly impact their academic outcomes and classroom experiences. These attitudes, including beliefs, emotions, and behaviors, influence their ability to adapt and integrate in various social contexts. High peer acceptance and friendships improve school adjustment (Johnson et al., 2000) while positive social attitudes like empathy, kindness, and inclusion foster favorable interpersonal connections. Leadership style also plays a role in adapting, with more flexible leaders guiding teams and achieving psychological adjustment (Kar et al., 2016); Adhikari, 2023).

Need and Significance of the Study

Social growth is essential for personal development, involving interactions with parents, peers, and teachers. Emotional intelligence significantly impacts adjustment in higher secondary students (Kar et al., 2016). Secondary school students face psychological challenges, leading to behavioral disorders and negatively impacting academic performance (Kar et al., 2016). Staffing strategies should enhance coping mechanisms for secondary school students (Paramanik et al., 2014) to address psychological challenges like anxiety, frustration, and depression. Adjustment involves cognitive problem-solving skills, including perception, learning, memory, thinking (Chitra, 2022). Adjustment aims to balance one's desires and social

expectations, impacting all aspects of life, enabling individuals to respond effectively to environmental stimuli, obtaining favorable stimuli and reinforcement(Yengimolki et al., 2015).Cognitive therapy training, based on mindfulness, can improve academic and social adjustment in college students with high behavioral and cognitive enthusiasm, potentially reducing social anxiety(Salmani et al., 2023).(Shure & Spivack, 1980) suggests that enhanced social adjustment is linked to a greater capacity to generate alternative solutions to interpersonal issues.

Attitudes are cognitive evaluations of individuals, influencing behavior and social networksKiecolt(1988)like empathy, tolerance, and respect, which impact students' interactions and facilitate social adjustment in schools(Fishbein, 1980).Socialization leads to high standardization, making it crucial to recognize alternative viewpoints and adapt to social adjustment(Mohanta, 2023).

Positive social attitudes in early adolescents enhance peer relationships, emotional support, stress mitigation, and social adaptation(Berndt, 2002).Stable friendships and a larger school network contribute to perceived social adjustment(Ferguson-Johnson et al., 2021). These attitudes improve communication, collaboration, relationships, academic involvement, well-being, and academic achievement(Wentzel & Caldwell, 1997).Educational interventions promoting positive social attitudes improve students' social adjustment, emotional regulation, empathy, and constructive interactions(Durlak et al., 2011).Affluent children have better prosocial behavior, fewer problems, and more resources(Parker et al., 2022).Cultural norms influence students' social attitudes(Markus & Kitayama, 1991), and active regulation negatively impacts shyness, leading to prosocial behavior and withdrawal(Hipson et al., 2019).Having sufficient psychological and social adjustment can produce optimistic anticipations in adolescents(Verdugo & Sánchez-Sandoval, 2022).

Objectives of the Study

1. To find the correlation between the social attitude and social adjustment of secondary school students.
2. To study there exist anysignificant difference in the Social Attitude of secondary school students with respect to gender of the students.
3. To there exist any significant difference in Social Adjustment of secondary school students with respect to gender of the students.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is significant relationship between Social Attitude and Social Adjustment among secondary school students
2. There is no significant difference in Social Attitude of secondary school students with respect to gender.
3. There is nosignificant difference in Social Adjustment of secondary school students with respect to gender.

Population and Sample

The population comprises of Secondary School pupils in Kerala.A sample of 90 ninth-grade studentsselected through random samplingtechniques were comprised the participants of the study.

Tools used

The following tools used were used to collect data

- Social Attitude Scale(Rahmath & Muhammed, 2023).
- Social Adjustment Scale (Rahmath & Muhammed, 2023).

Procedure of data collection

A survey method was adopted and administered the Social Attitude Scale and Social Adjustment Scaleamong secondary school students which were assessed their social attitudes and social adjustment, respectively.

Results

The data were analysed using Pearson's Product-moment Correlation analysis. The result of the analysis is given follows.

Table 1

Correlation between Social Adjustment and Social Attitude among Secondary School Students

		Social Attitude
Social Adjustment	Pearson Correlation	0.356**

Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
N	90

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 depicts comprehensive data regarding Carl Pearson's product-moment correlation between social adjustment and social attitude. The correlation coefficient value (0.356) suggests a moderate positive correlation between these two variables, which means the social attitude of students increases with their social adjustment.

Table 2

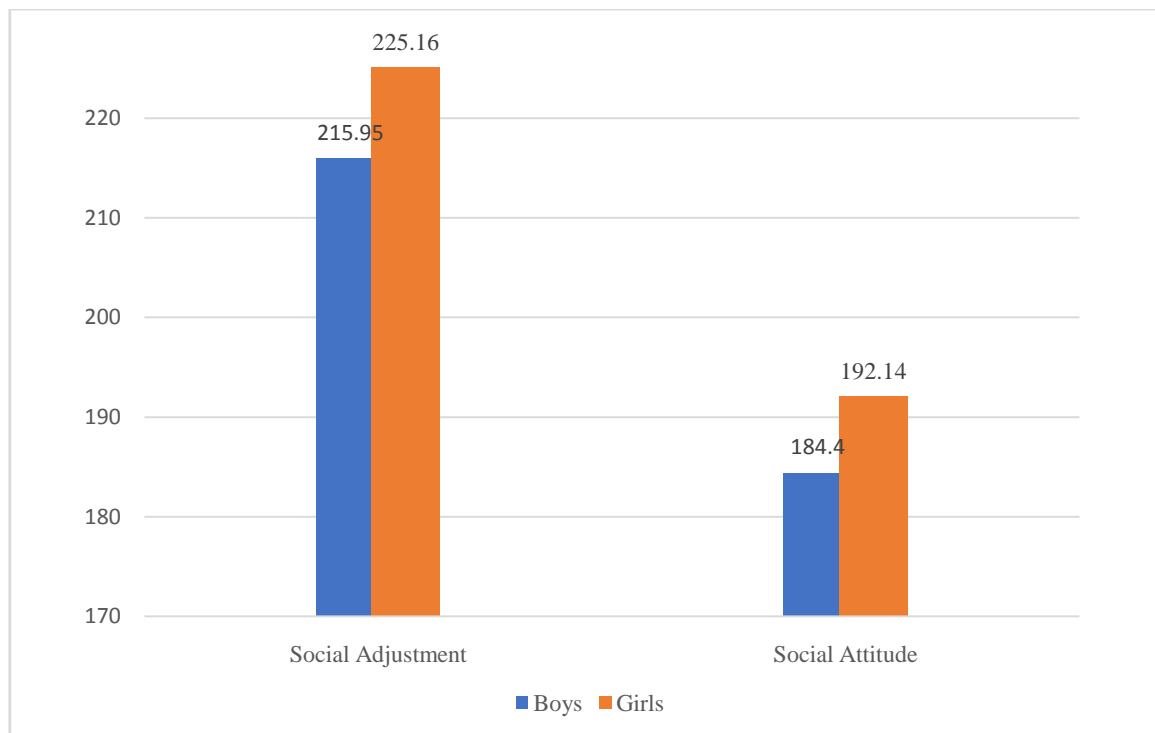
Comparison of Social Adjustment and Social Attitude Between Boys and Girls Secondary School Students

Variable Name	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t	df	Sig
Social Adjustment	Girls	50	225.16	15.82	2.354	88	0.021
	Boys	40	215.95	21.28			
Social Attitude	Girls	50	192.14	14.409	2.049	88	0.043
	Boys	40	184.40	21.319			

Table 3 shows that, the t-value of 2.354 is associated with 88 degrees of freedom (df), resulting in a p-value of 0.021. This p-value is below the conventional significance level of 0.05, indicating statistical significance. Hence, there exists conclusive evidence to state that the social adjustment of boys and girls differed significantly. Similarly, the t value of social attitude (2.049) exceeds the corresponding table value of 't' at 88 degrees of freedom. Also, the significant value (0.43) is less than 0.05, which indicates a considerable difference in the social attitude scores of boys and girls.

Figure 1

Comparison of Social Adjustment and Social Attitude Levels of Boys and Girls



Findings

This study highlights the significance of social attitudes in predicting social adjustment outcomes among secondary school students. Positive attitudes, encompassing qualities such as empathy, inclusion, and good interactions, have been found to enhance peer acceptability, facilitate dispute resolution, and promote overall well-being.

The study found a significant association between social attitude and social adjustment, with a moderate positive correlation (0.356). Consequently, pupils with positive attitudes tend to demonstrate greater social adjustment. This study emphasizes the significance of investigating the relationship between social attitudes among secondary school students and their social adjustment, as it impacts their well-being, academic achievements, and future societal contributions. This analysis provides guidance for interventions promoting positive attitudes, inclusive environments, and essential social skills for long-term success.

The study found a significant difference in social adjustment between boys and girls, with a t-statistic value of 2.354 and 88 degrees of freedom (df). This indicates a significant difference in social adjustment, with a p-value below the 0.05 significance level. Research indicates that lower peer acceptance leads to social performance challenges, influencing behavior, emotional, educational, and social outcomes in young individuals. Adjustment

plays a role in addressing these issues. The research findings suggest that there are notable disparities in the social adjustment between boys and girls, with girls generally displaying greater levels of social adjustment across various settings. One key factor contributing to these differences lies in the way children are socialized from a young age. Society often encourages girls to develop strong communication and interpersonal skills, fostering cooperative and empathetic behaviors. This emphasis on communication and emotional expression enables girls to form close-knit friendships and navigate social situations with greater ease. Additionally, girls are frequently encouraged to engage in activities that promote social interaction, such as group play and cooperative games, which further enhances their social adjustment. While these tendencies exist on average, it is crucial to remember that individual variations abound, and many boys also excel socially, defying traditional gender norms. Encouraging healthy social development in all children, regardless of gender, remains paramount for fostering inclusive and well-adjusted communities. Research conducted by (Lehmann et al., 2013) found gender differences in extroversion and agreeability, with girls showing higher levels and being more sociable and collaborative.

The study also found a significant difference in social attitude between boys and girls, with a t-statistic value of 2.049 and 88 degrees of freedom (df) which indicates a considerable difference in the social attitude scores of boys and girls. The findings of this study demonstrate a notable disparity in social attitude scores between boys and girls, suggesting that gender exerts a substantial influence on the manner in which individuals perceive and participate in social interactions. This distinction is unlikely to be random and could be attributed to a complex interplay of social and cultural factors, including societal expectations, peer influences, and gender-specific socialization. Boys and girls often grow up in environments that foster distinct social norms and behaviors, leading to differences in their attitudes toward social situations. The influence of peer groups and the varying ways in which boys and girls are encouraged to interact with others can further amplify these disparities.

Educational Implications

This correlational research study reveals the relationship between social attitude in secondary school students and their social adjustment. The results of this study emphasize the significant role that social attitudes play in forecasting social adjustment outcomes among secondary school pupils. To build a friendly, inclusive environment, the study suggests that

interventions should emphasize empathy, communication skills, and conflict resolution tactics. The findings emphasize the significance of teacher professional development in promoting positive attitudes and resolving disagreements. The research reveals a significant and moderate positive correlation coefficient of 0.356, indicating a meaningful relationship between social attitude and social adjustment. This correlation underscores that students with more positive social attitudes tend to exhibit better social adjustment, emphasizing the critical role of these attitudes in shaping their social experiences.

Furthermore, the study sheds light on an additional significant dimension by highlighting differences in social attitudes and social adjustment between boys and girls. Such disparities suggest that gender plays a role in how students develop and manifest their social attitudes, with girls often displaying a more pronounced emphasis on social orientation. This study highlighting the need for educators to address these differences in teaching approaches. It emphasizes the importance of challenging traditional gender stereotypes and fostering inclusive environments. However, it is vital to recognize that individual variations exist within gender groups, and these findings should serve as a foundation for further research into understanding the nuanced interplay between gender, social attitudes, and social adjustment. The study suggests that schools should prioritize the development of social skills in order to equip students with the tools necessary to navigate social situations effectively. The research indicates that recognizing and addressing these gender-related differences can help students prepare for a more equitable future.

The study highlights the importance of fostering positive social attitudes in educational settings to improve social adjustment outcomes. It emphasizes the role of teacher professional development in promoting positive attitudes and resolving disagreements. Additionally, it can be inferred that acknowledging the diversity among students and fostering inclusion within educational institutions might contribute to the establishment of a nurturing and supportive school climate.

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