



SOCIAL MATURITY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

U. Siva Lakshmi

*Researcher, Department of Education, Sri Padmavathi Mahila Visvavidyalayam
Tirupati –517502*

Ragam Venkata Rao

Research Scholar, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Nagarjuna Nagar-522510

Abstract

The present study examined the social maturity of secondary school students in Guntur City of Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh. The study investigated differences in social maturity with respect to gender, locality, type of management, and medium of instruction. A sample of 300 secondary school students was selected using the stratified sampling technique. Data were collected using the Social Maturity Scale developed by Dr. Nalini Rao (2011). The findings revealed a significant difference in social maturity with respect to gender, whereas no significant differences were observed with respect to locality, type of management, and medium of instruction. The study highlights the importance of fostering social maturity among secondary school students to promote their effective social adjustment, interpersonal relationships, and overall personality development.

Keywords: *Social Maturity, Secondary School Students, Gender, Locality, Management, Medium of Instruction.*

Introduction

Social maturity is an important dimension of personality development that enables individuals to function effectively within society. It refers to the ability to understand social situations, establish healthy interpersonal relationships, accept social responsibilities, and behave in accordance with societal norms and values. A socially mature individual demonstrates qualities such as cooperation, self-control, empathy, tolerance, adaptability, and respect for others. The development of social maturity is particularly significant during adolescence, a period marked by rapid physical, emotional, intellectual, and social changes. Secondary school students are at a crucial stage of life where they interact extensively with peers, teachers, family members, and the larger community. These interactions contribute significantly to the formation of social attitudes, values, and behaviors. The extent to which students develop social maturity influences their adjustment, academic performance, leadership qualities, and overall well-being.

In today's rapidly changing world, adolescents face numerous challenges arising from technological advancements, social media influences, changing family structures, and increasing academic competition. These factors have altered the nature of social relationships and created new demands on students' social competence. Therefore, developing social maturity has become essential for helping students cope with social pressures and become responsible citizens. Educational institutions play a vital role in promoting social maturity by providing opportunities for social interaction, collaborative learning, leadership experiences, and value-oriented activities. Understanding the level of social maturity among secondary school students can help educators and parents design appropriate interventions to foster positive social development. Hence, the study of social maturity among secondary school students is of considerable importance as it contributes to their holistic development and prepares them to meet the social demands of contemporary society effectively.

Need and Significance of the Study

Social maturity is an essential component of the overall development of adolescents. It enables individuals to interact effectively with others, assume social responsibilities, and adjust successfully to the demands of society. The secondary school stage is a critical period in which students develop attitudes, values, social skills, and behavioral patterns that influence their future personal and social lives. Therefore, understanding the level of social maturity among secondary school students is of great importance. In the present era, rapid social changes, technological advancements, increased use of social media, changing family structures, and academic pressures have significantly influenced the social behavior of adolescents. These changes have created new challenges in interpersonal relationships, emotional regulation, and social adjustment. As a result, there is a growing need to assess the social maturity of students and identify factors that may affect its development.

The findings of the study will help teachers understand the social competencies and behavioral characteristics of students. It will enable schools to design appropriate educational programmes, co-curricular activities, and guidance services aimed at promoting healthy social development. The study will also assist parents in recognizing their role in fostering socially responsible behavior among adolescents. Furthermore, the study will contribute to the existing body of educational research by providing empirical evidence regarding the social maturity of secondary school students. It may serve as a reference for future researchers, educational planners, curriculum developers, and policymakers in formulating strategies to enhance students' social skills, leadership qualities, cooperation, and social

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responsibility. Thus, the present study is significant as it seeks to understand the social maturity of secondary school students and provides valuable insights for promoting their balanced personality development and effective participation in society.

Review Of Related Literature

Sharma (2013) examined the social maturity of secondary school students with respect to gender and locality. The findings revealed significant differences in social maturity based on locality, while gender differences were found to be minimal. Urban students exhibited higher levels of social maturity than rural students.

Patel and Mehta (2014) conducted a study on social maturity and academic achievement among secondary school students. The results indicated a positive correlation between social maturity and academic achievement, suggesting that socially mature students tend to perform better academically.

Kumar and Singh (2015) explored the relationship between social maturity and adjustment among secondary school students. The study reported a significant positive relationship between the two variables and concluded that social maturity contributes substantially to better personal, social, and educational adjustment.

Statement of the problem

The title of the present study is “*Social Maturity of Secondary School Students.*”

Objectives of the study

- To study the difference in social maturity of Secondary School Students based on gender.
- To study the difference in social maturity of Secondary School Students based on locality.
- To study the difference in social maturity of Secondary School Students based on the management.
- To study the difference in social maturity of Secondary School Students based on the medium of instruction.

Hypotheses

- There is no significant difference in the social maturity of Secondary School Students based on gender.
- There is no significant difference in the social maturity of Secondary School Students based on locality.

- There is no significant difference in the social maturity of Secondary School Students based on management.
- There is no significant difference in the social maturity of Secondary School Students based on the medium of instruction.

Methodology

A stratified sampling technique was employed for the present study. The sample comprised 300 secondary school students selected from ten schools, including five government schools and five private schools, located in Guntur City of Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh. To measure the social maturity of the students, the researcher used the Social Maturity Scale developed by Dr. Nalini Rao (2011). The scale is a standardized instrument designed to assess various dimensions of social maturity among adolescents. The reliability of the scale was established using the test-retest method, and the reliability coefficient was found to be 0.98, indicating a high degree of reliability. The scale consists of 90 items, each with four response categories: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. For positive statements, scores of 4, 3, 2, and 1 are assigned respectively, whereas for negative statements, the scoring pattern is reversed, with scores of 1, 2, 3, and 4 assigned respectively.

Statistical Techniques Used

The data collected for the present investigation were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques, namely Mean, Standard Deviation, and Critical Ratio .

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 1: Gender-wise Social Maturity of Secondary School Students

Variable	Sample	N	Mean	S.D.	C.R.
Gender	Male	150	228.32	16.21	2.11*
	Female	150	232.56	18.44	

* Significant at 0.01 level

The C.R. value (2.11) is greater than the critical value of 1.96 at the 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that gender makes a significant difference in the social maturity of Secondary School Students.

Table 2: Locality-wise Social Maturity of Secondary School Students

Variable	Sample	N	Mean	S.D.	C.R.
Locality	Rural	150	226.18	17.62	0.16 #
	Urban	150	225.84	18.72	

Not Significant at 0.05 level

The C.R. value (0.16) is lower than the critical value of 1.96 at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that the locality of residence of Secondary School Students does not make a significant difference in their social maturity.

Table 3: Management-wise Social Maturity of Secondary School Students

Variable	Sample	N	Mean	S.D.	C.R.
Management	Govt.	150	228.63	17.97	0.41 #
	Private	150	227.96	18.54	

Not Significant at 0.05 level

The C.R. value (0.41) is lower than the critical value of 1.96 at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that the type of management of Secondary School Students does not make a significant difference in their social maturity.

Table 4: Medium-wise social Maturity of Secondary School Students

Variable	Sample	Sample size (N)	Mean	S.D.	C.R.
Medium	Telugu	150	227.28	16.71	0.366 #
	English	150	226.54	18.24	

Not Significant at 0.05 level

The C.R. value (0.366) is lower than the critical value of 1.96 at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that the medium of instruction of Secondary School Students does not make a significant difference in their social maturity.

Major findings of the study

- There is a significant difference in the social maturity of Secondary School Students with respect to gender.
- There is no significant difference in the social maturity of Secondary School Students with respect to locality of residence.
- There is no significant difference in the social maturity of Secondary School Students with respect to type of management.

- There is no significant difference in the social maturity of Secondary School Students with respect to medium of instruction.

Educational Implications

The findings of the present study on social maturity of secondary school students have important implications for the educational system. Since a significant difference is found with respect to gender, teachers need to give special attention to the social development of both boys and girls by providing equal opportunities for participation in group activities, classroom discussions, leadership roles, and co-curricular programmes. As no significant differences are observed with respect to locality of residence, type of management, and medium of instruction, it can be inferred that students across these categories are receiving similar opportunities for social development. Therefore, schools irrespective of location, management, or instructional medium should continue to strengthen students' social skills through interactive teaching methods, cooperative learning, and value-based education.

The study highlights the importance of promoting social maturity through holistic educational practices. Schools should focus on organizing activities such as group projects, community service programmes, life skills training, and counseling services to enhance students' social competence. Teachers and school administrators should create a supportive and inclusive environment that encourages empathy, cooperation, and responsible behavior among students. Parents also play a crucial role in reinforcing socially desirable behaviors at home. A coordinated effort among teachers, parents, and the school system will help in improving the social maturity of secondary school students and preparing them to become responsible and well-adjusted members of society.

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