Impact of School Environment on Conflict Resolution Skills Development of Students

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ABSTRACT

The study concentrated on the relationship between school and social skills development of the students. Objectives of the study were to investigate the relationship between school and social skills development of students at secondary level, to investigate the effect of school on students' basic social skills, to analyze the effects of school on peace promoting skills and to ascertain the effect of school on students' conflict skills. None directional hypotheses were formulated to direct the study. All the students of class 10th and SSTs of secondary schools of district Mardan were the population of the study. Through random sampling techniques fifty two SSTs and one hundred and fifty six 10th class students constituted the sample of the study. Data were collected through two questionnaires, one for the teachers and the other for students. Both the research instruments were pilot tested on a sample of 15 students and 4 SSTs. Data were collected and were analyzed with the help of SPSS version 16. Mean, STD deviation, Pearson Co-relation and linear regression were applied to analyze and interpret the data. Findings of the study illustrated that school has significant effect on the social skills of students; a very insignificant effect was calculated on the problem solving, tolerance and appreciative skills of students. It was recommended that teachers and other responsible personnel should use all the means to ensure the development of students' social skills.

KEYWORDS; school environment, teachers, social skills, development, students

1. INTRODUCTION

School is a place where children are brought together every day for a greater part of their lives. They might have the same ages, same abilities, same attainments and same outlook. These similarities heighten the consciousness of mind and develop the fellowship bonds among children. But the real basic factors at work are the inner forces and the tendencies of social characters. These are called social skills that move the students powerfully and compel them for companionship and co-operation of fellows. School produces social characteristics like unity, continuity, docility, submissiveness, progress, development, changes- physical, emotional and mental and social adjustment. This adjustment is effected smoothly consciously or unconsciously in numerous cases, as child is by nature flexible, susceptible, easily persuaded, easily molded, and ready to receive impression [1].

Social skills are those which are learnt and adopted in the company of others. The best source for the development of social skills is interaction with others. Some of them are very simple and fundamental like greeting, smiling, making acquaintance and establishing social contacts. But some are complicated like negotiation in conflicts. The achievement and development of these skills are easy for some people while difficult for others. Popularity is gained through good social skills. Participation in social gathering to remove shyness, making friendship, being co-operative, showing sympathy in distress, good conversation with others.

The definition of social skills in social and emotional learning environment is appealing one. One can manage and recognize one's emotions. He also becomes very caring for others. He has concerns for others. He makes sound relationship with others. He becomes responsible for making good decisions. He gains good experience through them. He becomes able to properly handle the threatening and difficult situations positively, beneficially, decently and morally[2].

According to Rao and Murray Social skills in childhood connected to positive outcomes[3]. Those who do not have gregarious abilities, they have no developed attitudes and they cannot bring association with others culturally and traditionally and then different types development are severely affected. Kids can observe the social challenges of their peers who have social learning disabilities. Some of our students can have a strong

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awareness of their own social skills shortcomings. Challenges are not outgrown by our students, but they have these social skills throughout adulthood. Most social skill programs are planned for a broader application to diverse types of students; few are specially planned for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Now that more learners who come to school formally, they learn the techniques how to deal in social environment as school is one of the best social setting for the promotion of gregarious tendencies as compared to othersin cognitive and language development. Thus, in spite of the small literature base on this topic, a thoughtful examination of the effectiveness of social skills trainings is necessary at this stage, mainly for this higher functioning people. Studies do not control for poor motivation. Social skills are defined differently by different authors. It is the combination of diverse skills. Curriculum (salutation, commencement of dialogue) etc. seem unusual and often signify complex patterns of behavior like how to resolve the issue, how to control oneself and how to regulate oneself. The scarcity of experts on bunch of behaviors, measured in the circle of instructional system for social abilities creates competition for the systematic behavior**.** Few groups use plan to control for development in maturity over time. Most behavioral data do not show strong ability for our students to take a broad view what they are learning. Most social skills studies do not look at evaluation to see stability of skills learned over time, if they do explore generalization. The only way to study this is through exploring treatment efficacy through single subject design.

Some social skills have intricacies. They can be developed by different techniques. Some of them are much hidden and much care is required in teaching them. In my point of view the empathy, sympathy, helping others in difficulties, tolerance and endurance, silence before elders, respect for others, speaking gently with others, mercy on younger, sense of humor, decent talking, nice smiling, listening to others attentively, using good names, wait for turn, helping the old and widows, participating in activities, sharing of ideas with others in a peaceful manner, obedience to rules, adopting honesty, loving human beings and even animals, friendship formation, seeking co-operation in making good decisions, management during conflicting situations, adaptation of reconciliation attitude, avoidance of telling lies, speaking truth, respect for other religions, avoidance of sectarianism, fanaticism and extremism, avoidance of jealousy and narrow-mindedness, fighting in defense of truth and right, avoidance of dissembling and disputing, helping women and orphans, avoidance of hypocrisy, avoidance of excess, rash vows, drinking, gambling and superstition, adopting meekness and working in disciplined ranks to repel evil. Really speaking social skills bring unity of design, benevolence of purpose, glorious light to life, peace of mind, beauty in actions and heighten human glory[4].

To sum up the above views of different researchers, it is said that school has close relationship with the development of social skills of the students. It has powerful effects on the development of basic, conflict and peace building skills of students. It develops the capacity of students for readjustment to changing conditions. It has free scope for the development of individuality as well as the development of the whole personality. The social forces generated by school determine the development of physical, emotional, mental, moral, ethical, conflicting, peace promoting skills ofstudents. School brings like-mindedness with the rest of the people. It also gives protective bloom of a neutral respectability. It makes an individual a partner in the associated activity of the group. The adjustment of the student that the school has to bring about is the process that fits the whole man for his grand vocation as a member of society and a citizen of the world- along the lines of the True, the Beautiful and the Good. It is upon the school more than upon any other agency that society relies for the development of all types of social skills and for the preparation of its future members.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Social skills of students are the most important aspect of their lives. It helps them in their social adjustment and acceptance at a\society. Therefore the study targeted to investigate the relationships between school and social skills development of students.

1.2. Objectives of the study

Objectives of the study were to;
1. To investigate the relationships between school and conflict skills of students.
2. To find out the impact of school on conflict skills of students.

1.3 Significance of the study

The study was significant in explaining the role of school and teachers in the development of students' social skills. Social skills distinguish an educated man from a layman. If social skills are properly developed, then man can lead towards happy and prosperous life inside and outside the school. The study would motivate uneducated and illiterate people to send their children to school. The study was further significant in providing

information to the policy makers regarding school and administration policies and it enables teachers to realize the importance and development of social skills along with academic skills.

1.4 Hypotheses

Hypotheses were formulated for the attainment of objectives of the study;

1. There is a significant correlation between school and conflict resolution skills development of students.
2. There is significant effect of school on the conflict resolution skills of students.

1.5 Delimitation of the study

The study will be conducted in Government schools in Mardan district on account of time and financial issues**.** The study was further delimited to male schools only.

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

The skills how to adjust in environment are those which are adopted in the company of others. The best source for the development of social skills is interaction with others. Some of them are very simple and fundamental like greeting, smiling, making acquaintance and establishing social contacts. But some are complicated like negotiation in conflicts. The achievement and development of these skills are easy for some people while difficult for others [5].

Social skills are significant for the development of social adjustment in society**.** Those people who have developed their skills for social adjustment are considered better than those who have not developed themselves socially. Those who have got popularity once, they can face the difficult times in very good and peaceful way [6].

Social skills also deal with social and emotional learning. It is recognition and organization of sentiments. It is a care development and unease for others. It is strengthening encouraging contact. It helps in conscientious decisions making process and in tackling demanding situations profitably and decently [7]**.**

School is one of the most influential agencies for the development of social skills. It is a particular atmosphere where a certain quality of practices and activities are provided with the aim of achieving pupil's social skill development along desirable lines. It creates a direct contact between teacher and student. It makes the learners effective and productive members of society. It develops the student along a desirable path with the help of social skills activities and practices. It is a social place established by society for the development of social skills within the society. It progresses mental power, social values, moral values, religious values, spiritual values, promotes dynamic and adaptable mindedness, transmits social life, promotes social skills and social efficiency, changes student's behavior, values and moral thought. There are many theories of social change. Among them one is conflict theory. It highlights the forces that produce instability, struggle, and social disorganization. Social conflicts arise in society as well as in school and that are ubiquitous. Opposing interests are the major cause of social conflict. It has permanence in society because it has come into being when human beings became countless and it is also said that school and society or any other gathering of human beings is a story of conflict between the rich and poor, upper and lower class but how to deal positively these conflicts needs a lot of social skills and their proper development which is the responsibility of both parents and teachers as well as society. School is a fit place which enables the learner It is said that school and teacher play a pivotal role in the development of social skills because social change is not possible without the proper agencies of society like school and community etc. school must play its role skillfully and assiduously at peace and war, in peaceful situation and conflicting situation and bring about positive changes in point of views, thinking and standards [8].

Conflict skills are those which create hostilities and strong differences among individuals, they are always based on emotions. These are also called satanic activities because these conflicts spoil the whole society. These may be inner and outer [9].

When human being become larger and their number is increasing with passage of time, quarreling, hostility, jealousy and negative attitudes are created among them. Those who strong intelligence power, emotional stability and control over their anger, they can easily and effectively handle the situation and solve the issues. In this respect training of the workers of an organization is very necessary to develop the skills for handling the bad situation. When a conflict arises, it should be solved through dialogue, looking to the severity of the problem, the demand of each party. It should be born in mind what were the causes for creation of the problem, what sentimentalism is present there? Different techniques should be used. Different mediation skills should be adopted for the just solution of the issue. Think over the alternatives. Look at to the shared interests. Decision should be taken with full justice and do not try to favor any side. These rules can also be applied when there is a problem among children, same age people or among diverse age strata of society. Aggression should be ended first. Then try for truce between the groups according to established rules of society [10].

The study of Chan and Chen recognized the major causes of creation of conflicts in groups. These were weak communiqué, pitiable task management, inequitable work place, imbalanced behavior, inconsiderate attitude, diverse principles and irresponsibility[11].

Sodian & Frith identified how to smooth the progress of joint effort, how instructors did teach learners about cluster progress, phases of cluster progress and what steps should be adopted in confronting a problem in organization and then how to make a just and peaceful decision which is acceptable to all[12].

Adelowo have designed a framework of pedagogy in business education and showed that the learners should themselves assess contacts of groups and other aspects like management control, management direction and management of guidance, management of issues and suitable resolution of the problems[13].

Oakley et al.is of the view that the benefits of grouping are large but conflicts also arise in them. They should try to work in a peaceful environment and do not give way for the creation of problems. If conflicts create, they should be handled properly[14]. Oakley et al. and Felder and Brent (2001) suggested sound beginning in the organization is very fruitful and rules should be formulated in time for the creation of avoidance of conflicts[15].

When students face problems, the teachers should clean the minds of students from irrelevant thinking [16].

Davis and Oakley et al. illustrated that in case of conflicts among the members of a team, strict rules should be followed. He should be rusticated from the team or give permission to join the other team[17]. Sometimes exclusion of the person from group is beneficial for the team work.

Felder & Brent illustrated that during conflicts active listening to the problem is very necessary. Interruption should be disregarded. Satisfaction should be provided to every party. Opportunity should be given to everyone to defend himself/herself in a proper way and the solution should be accepted[18].

Self awareness is very essential for the solution of organizational problems. We can make strong our professional connections and can easily manage our problems through this technique. Discussion and dialogue are very imperative for the settlement of issues [19].

The skills how to settle issues and bring contentment, sound understanding, best coordination, and strong communication among the members of the organization are very necessary for the betterment of people in organizational environment? In a peaceful environment we can do better while in conflicting situation our performance becomes weak [20].

Children must have strong speaking skills if they want to develop their skills of social abilities they must be constructive and cooperative. They should propagate peace through their good conduct. The teacher should play their positive role in the development of social abilities of their students. They teach their students to overcome their emotions in time of quarrelling [21].

To put suitable questions, to give convenient reasons, to analyze the different responses, to evaluate those responses and to present remarks critically about the matter and make the most acceptable decision for the solution of problems is critical thinking and problem solving skills.It is the capability of analysis, interpretation, evaluation and synthesis of knowledge[22].

The child comes to school from the comparatively narrow life of the home and meets in the school other persons, big or small. He becomes a member of new groups of students and teachers, and enters into new relations. His interests are multiplies and widened. Mutual respect, sympathy, empathy and toleration take the place of narrow prejudices. Feeling in place of others and friendship, often of life-long duration, are formed and opportunities are afforded for the practice of the altruistic tendencies of self-sacrifice, charity and the like Schwebel is of the opinion that empathy is the name of understanding the minds of the antagonists and rivals. Empathy has two main parts; one is effective and cognitive [23].

Oswald is of the view that good responses to others and understanding of the conflicts are the efficient parameters of empathy [24].

Students were offered help in developing the skills necessary for constructive, peaceful and remedial conflict resolution of interpersonal conflicts. The training program included: active listening, I-messages, empathy, and self-expression, welcoming criticism, and respecting differences.

Anger Management Skills: Emotions are always present in interpersonal conflicts and disagreements. The most common emotion present in interpersonal conflicts and disagreements. The effects of conflict resolution and peer mediation education on students' empathy skills is anger, and Students were offered help in developing skills necessary to effectively manage the destructive emotions they have during the conflict process. Thus, students were expected to develop skills necessary to express their anger in a more constructive and peaceful way, and at the same time, manage the other person's feeling of anger. These skills include; recognizing one's emotions, expressing one's emotions, understanding the other person's emotions, self-control, anger manage ement, nature of anger, the kind of behavior that triggers interpersonal relationships, reactions to anger, how to manage our anger, and how to manage another person's anger [25].

3   METHODOLOGY

The study was descriptive in nature. A survey was conducted by the researcher to investigate the research Problem.

3.1 Population

To investigate the research problem the researcher selected secondary schools as the population of this research work. Further detail of the population is as follow;

1.   69 Male Secondary Schools of District Mardan.
2.   10th class students of these schools.
3.   765 Secondary School Teachers (SSTs) of these schools.

3.2 Sample of the Study

The researcher used convenient and random sampling techniques for the selection of schools and students and teachers respectively as per the following details;

1.   26 Boys Government Secondary Schools of District Mardan (38% of the population), both urban and rural.
2.   156 10th class students of the related schools.
3.   52 Secondary School Teachers (SSTs) of these schools.

3.3 Data Collection Tool

Data were collected through two self-developed questionnaires. One was for Secondary School Teachers and other for students of 10th class. The questionnaires were conducted of the items related to basic social skills, conflict social skills and peace promoting social skills.

2.4 Data Analysis Instrument

The data were collected personally by the researcher. Both the instruments of data collection were given to the participants of this research work. The gathered data were fed in SPSS 16. Mean, standard deviation and Pearson co-relation were applied on the collected data. The data were collected through two self-developed questionnaires, one for teachers and one for students. The collected data were fed into SPSS 16 and were analyzed through Mean, Standard deviation and Pearson correlation.

Important term used in this chapter and their explanation are as follows;

Std = standard deviation

r = Pearson correlation

sig = significant level

Table No. 3.1; Greetings in conflicting Social Skills

Respondents	Mean Score	Std	R	r^2	Sig
Teacher	4.32	1.266	.414	.171	.000
Students	4.50	.752			

The above table illustrates the mean score of teacher 4.32 with std deviation 1.266 and students mean score of 4.50 with std deviation of .752 which showed that majority of respondents were agreed school environment contribute to the students greeting in basic social skills.

The r value .414 showed significant co-relation between the school and greeting in the basic social skills of students. The r^2 value .171 explains that up to 17% school contributes in the promotion of greeting skills of students.

Table No. 3.2; Communication in conflicting Social Skills

Respondents	Mean Score	Std	R	r^2	Sig
Teacher	4.05	1.015	.393	.129	.002
Students	4.42	.770			

The above table illustrates the mean score of teacher 4.05 with std deviation 1.015 and students mean score of 4.42 with std deviation of .770 which showed that majority of respondents were agreed school environment contribute in the communicative skills of students.

The r value .393 showed significant co-relation between the school and communicative skills of students. The r^2 value .129 explains that up to 13% school contributes in the development students' of communicative skills.

Table No. 3.3; Co-operative Skills of Students

Respondents	Mean Score	Std	R	r^2	Sig
Teacher	4.50	.752	.403	.162	.000
Students	3.83	1.703			

The above table illustrates the mean score of teacher 4.50 with std deviation .752 and students mean score of 3.83 with std deviation of .1.703 which showed that majority of respondents were agreed school environment contribute in the development of co-operative skills of students.

The r value .403 showed significant co-relation between the school and co-operative skills of students. The r^2 value .162 explains that up to 16% school contributes in the development of co-operative skills of students.

Table No. 3.4; Conflict Management Skills

Respondents	Mean Score	Std	R	r^2	Sig
Teacher	3.95	1.999	.285	.081	.001
Students	4.16	1.011			

The above table illustrates the mean score of teacher 3.95 with std deviation 1.999 and students mean score of 4.16 with std deviation of 1.011 which showed that majority of respondents were agreed school environment contribute in the development of the conflict management skills in students.

The r value .285 showed significant co-relation between the school conflict management skills of students. The r^2 value .081 explains that up to 8% school contributes in the development of the conflict management skills in students.

Table No. 3.5; Problem Solving Skills

Respondents	Mean Score	Std	R	r^2	Sig
Teacher	3.95	1.999	.195	.038	.002
Students	3.60	1.011			

The above table illustrates the mean score of teacher 3.95 with std deviation 1.999 and students mean score of 3.60 with std deviation of 1.011 which showed that majority of respondents were undecided about the role of school environment, contributing in the development problem solving skills in students.

The r value .195 showed significant co-relation between the school and tolerance and appreciation in students. The r^2 value .038 explains only 4% school contribution in the development problem solving skills in students.

Table No. 3.6; Positive Competition among Students

Respondents	Mean Score	Std	R	r^2	Sig
Teacher	3.95	1.234	.241	.058	.001
Students	4.03	.946			

The above table illustrates the mean score of teacher 3.95 with std deviation 1.999 and students mean score of 4.03 with std deviation of .946 which showed that majority of respondents were agreed that school environment boost positive competition in students.

The r value .241 showed significant co-relation between the school and positive competition in students. The r^2 value .058 explains only 6% school contribution in the development of positive competition in students

4   RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Social skills of students are influenced by many factors. Schools and other social institutions contribute in the holistic development of students. The present research study concentrated on the effects of school on the social skills development of students at secondary level. The objectives of the study were to investigate the relationships between school and social skills of students, to find out the effects of school on basic social skills of students, to analyze the effects of school on conflict skills of students and to ascertain the effects of school on peace promoting skills of students.

5   All the 10th class students and Secondary School Teachers (SSTs) of male secondary schools of district Mardan were the population of the study. Through random sampling techniques 156 students and 52 SSTs were selected as the sample of the study.

6   The study was descriptive in nature. To probe the research problem the researcher developed two separate questionnaires, one for students of 10th class and the other for SSTs. The questionnaires concentrated on the investigation of the basic, peace promoting and conflict skills of teachers and students.

7   The collected data were fed to SPSS and were analyzed through Mean, Std deviation, Pearson r and linear regression. The results of the study illustrate the school (teachers) have significant effect on the social skills of the students. Students' basic skills including greetings, communication and emotional identification have high co-relation and significantly affected by the school environment. School environment also significantly contribute to peace promoting skills of the secondary school students including contacts with people/friends, co-operation and tolerance. School has also influenced students' conflict management skills including problem solving and positive competition.

8   The study recommended that school should make their contribution honestly in the development of students' social skills along with other educational goals using all possible means.

4. FINDINGS
Findings of the study were as follow:

1.   The r value .414 showed significant co-relation between the school and greeting in the basic social skills of students. The r^2 value .171 explains that up to 17% school contributes in the promotion of greeting skills of students.

2.   The r value .393 showed significant co-relation between the school and communicative skills of students. The r^2 value .129 explains that up to 13% school contributes in the development students' of communicative skills.

3.   The r value .403 showed significant co-relation between the school and co-operative skills of students. The r^2 value .162 explains that up to 16% school contributes in the development of co-operative skills of students.

4.   The r value .285 showed significant co-relation between the school conflict management skills of students. The r^2 value .081 explains that up to 8% school contributes in the development of the conflict management skills in students.

5.   The r value .195 showed significant co-relation between the school and tolerance and appreciation in students. The r^2 value .038 explains only 4% school contribution in the development problem solving skills in students.

6.   The r value .241 showed significant co-relation between the school and positive competition in students. The r^2 value .058 explains only 6% school contribution in the development of positive competition in students.

4.2.DISCUSSIONS

School as a social institution has a momentous role in the promotion and development of social norms, culture and traditions. Society makes school responsible for the inculcation of the social skills in the future generation. The findings of the study have consistency with the studies of Ravi, 2011 and Mohiyuddin, 2010, who concluded that school have strong and positive effects on the social skills development of students.

Students' basic skills are the core target of schools to distinct students from uneducated people. It concentrates on the development of greetings, emotional identification and social way of communication to others. The findings of (Sodian & Frith, 2008) and present study has also in same alignment.

Peace is the core concept of every education system. It is the basic and fundamental need of every society. In the present scenario there is continuous pressure on school to contribute in the peace promotion skills of the students. Findings of the current study are in conformity with (Elizabeth, Burns, Coleman and Kevin White, 2011).

Co-operation, appreciation and tolerance are the key areas of peace promoting skills. These are the areas where school need to contribute more and carefully. The study showed that students were not good in the area of appreciating other on their good performances and tolerance at numerous important situations.

It is to be concluded that the students' skills in conflict management were significantly affected by the school. School provides a plate forum for students where rapid interactions enhance the conflict management skills of the

students. Oakley et al. (2004) and Felder and Brent (2001) sensitized the role of school in concentrating on the conflict management skills in students.

Students were found weak in the area of problem solving and positive competition at school which reflects the inability of the school efforts. Positive competition is the core motive for students learning, and need to be properly addressed.

Respect is the core social value of the Pakhtoon society. It is expected from the school and other social institution like Hujra, Masjid and playground to make efforts for the promotion and development of this important social value. The school role was found admirable in this regard.

4.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings of the study following recommendations are presented here;

1. School is responsible on behalf of the society to prepare the future generation for their critical and important social, economical, political and education role. It is therefore important to place proper attention on the social development of students along with the intellectual, social and religious aspect.

2. Although curricular activities also concentrate on the inculcation of basic social skills such as; greetings, way of behaving and soft communication but there is intense need to be sensitized on behalf of teachers to focus on the development of student's basic social skills.

3. The present worse law and order situation reflects the inability of the schools and other social institutions of the country. Schools are candle homes and therefore responsible for development, promotion and dissemination of the light into the minds of the individuals of the society. Along with other numerous responsibilities of school, it should also have to concentrate on the promotion of peace through education, emotional, religious and cognitive satisfaction of students.

4. Co-operation, appreciation and tolerance are the key attributes of the 21st century students. Single students cannot do anything but with the co-operation of other peers and collaborative approach they can meet the challenges of the present and future. It is therefore strongly recommended that teachers' should contribute in the inculcation of these attributes in the students.

5. School as a miniature society, is the training center for the students. It provides opportunity for them to prepare themselves for their future social adult life. It is therefore important to promote conflict management skills in students through different co-curricular activities to live a harmonize life.

6. Problem solving is a research approach towards the crucial situation. It focuses on the analysis and suitable comeback to handle the situation in an appropriate way. Students lacking these skills often indulge in quarrels, and maladjustment at school and adult life. It is therefore strongly recommended to give attention to the development of problem solving skills of students through assigning leadership roles, responsibilities regarding managing different programs at school, interceding in friends' conflicts and through appreciating on good performances.

7. Respecting others guarantees your respect. It is the core social value to respect elders and show kindness on youngsters. It is therefore essential for schools to transmit the social values of the society to the future generation through, role play, narration of the historical events accordingly and other means which could enhance social skills of the learners.

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