



## *Effects of Social Skills Development on Student's Resilience at Secondary Level*

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### Abstract

This study investigates the impact of social skills development on students' resilience at the secondary level in the Skardu district. The research aims to explore how various factors, including gender, class, age and parents' education levels, influence students' perceptions of their social skills and resilience. The study population comprises 4,930 male and female secondary students enrolled in public sector schools in Skardu. A sample of 370 students was selected using a multistage sampling method to ensure diverse representation. To gather data, the researcher developed a comprehensive questionnaire, consisting of the Social Skills Development Questionnaire (SSDQ) and the Resilience Questionnaire (SRQ), which were administered in accordance with rigorous scientific protocols. The analysis employed both descriptive and inferential statistics to address the research questions effectively. Findings reveal that a significant majority of students demonstrate good levels of social skills development and resilience. Interestingly, the data indicates that a considerable number of mothers in the study were illiterate, which may influence their children's educational experiences and outcomes. Furthermore, the study found a significant predictive relationship between social skills development and students' resilience, highlighting the importance of fostering social competencies to enhance resilience among students. Based on these findings, the study recommends the initiation of adult education programs aimed at improving maternal literacy and education. Additionally, it advocates for the implementation of group- and team-based learning approaches in schools to promote cooperation and social interaction among students, thereby strengthening their social skills and resilience. This research contributes valuable insights into the interplay between social skills and resilience, offering practical implications for educators and policymakers in the Skardu district and similar contexts.



## Introduction

The social skills development is essential for fostering positive peer relationships, promoting resilience, and enhancing the overall well-being of students (Gural, Sezer, Guven, & Azkeskin, 2013). Social competence plays a crucial role in recognizing and shaping behaviors valued within children's social networks. This study aims to investigate the effects of social skill development on students' resilience at the secondary level, further analyzing demographic factors influencing this relationship.

Social skills have been defined in various ways by researchers, often distinguishing between social competence and social skills. Social skills associate to specific behaviors and actions that enable a person's to engage effectively with others, and the process of acquiring these skills is termed social skill development (Sheridan & Walker, 1999). In contrast, social ability relates to how well a person's social interactions are perceived by others (Gresham, 1986; McFall, 1982). For children to develop social skills, they must learn essential social behaviors and use them in a manner that is accepted by those around them (Sheridan & Walker, 1999). In this study, "social skill development" is describe as the combination of procedure that enrich to an individual's social skills, encompassing factors such as engagement and individual preferences.

The social studies curriculum includes crucial social skills, yet it lacks detailed explanations. These skills include problem-solving, understanding societal rights and responsibilities, recognizing individual differences, cooperating with others, open to critique, collaborating in group discussions, showing appreciation, honor , and sharing tasks. Education policymakers have acknowledged that the current educational system does not sufficiently foster these skills, which are vital for the social development of schoolchildren (National Curriculum of Social Studies, 2002).

Resilience is a fundamental quality for students in today's rapidly evolving world. As schools strive to prepare students for success beyond academics, building resilience has become a focal point. Social skill development, a critical aspect of secondary education, significantly influences students' ability to manage stress, form relationships, and adapt to adversity.

## Problem Statement

Social skills are crucial for an individual's personal, social, and professional development. Research has shown that individuals with better communication skills are more effective in forming friendships and collaborating in professional environments. Socially skilled individuals demonstrate greater flexibility and adaptability compared to others. One of the key characteristics of resilient individuals is the positive social engagement they exhibit towards others (Werner, 2001). These individuals possess strong social skills, thrive in social contexts, and generally create a positive impression.

The influence of social skills development (SSD) and students' resilience (SR) needs to be examined and understood to provide practical recommendations for improvement in this area. Given the established connection between social skills and resilience, it is important to explore this relationship within the educational and local context, particularly for its implications on student growth. While several studies have explored the affinity between resilience and social skills in different contexts, no relevant evidence has been found regarding the effect of SSD on SR at the secondary level in Skardu, a region with its unique culture, practices, and perspectives. Therefore, this study seeks to search the effects



of social skills development on students' resilience in Skardu. The study is mentored by the following objectives.

### Literature Review

In scientific literature, social skills are multifaceted in conception. Margerita et al. (2012) highlight their range from personal sovereignty to adaptability, expression, conflict resolution, and developing relationships. They are part and parcel for peaceful group existence, effective social interaction, and successful socialization (Gedvilienė & Baužienė, 2008). These skills develop social preferences, engagement quality, and enable effective communication, requires fulfillment, and interaction in different contexts.

Social skills are basic and fundamental to social competence. According to Gresham, Sugai, and Horner (2001), social skills comprises of five dimensions: (a) self-management, (b) peer relations (c) compliance, (d) academic ability, and (e) confidence. They define social skill as ability of students to establish and maintain, gain peer acceptance, form friendships, positive interpersonal relationships and end negative relationships.

Humans are often referred to as social animals owing to these skills. Praiseworthy social skills not only assist in academic achievement but also enhance students' learning outcomes (Malecki & Elliot, 2002; Parke et al., 2001). Gifted social skills make students able to navigate various social situations perfectly, including managing expressions, body gestures, and interactions while disagreements (Gresham & Elliott, 2008). Conversely, students lacking in social skills might face educational difficulties and encounter challenges in social adjustment, potentially leading to psychosocial issues for example anxiety, depression, aggression, and suicidal tendencies (Langeveld et al., 2012; Tantam, 2000).

Social skills are the capabilities that enable successful engagement and communication with others these competencies are applied daily through verbal and non-verbal methods, such as body language, gestures, and physical appearance. Essentially, social skills are the tools Utilized to engage and communicate with others effectively, ensuring interactions are predictable and clear. For teachers, students, and parents alike, these skills are crucial for promoting effective communication and building relationships. According to Hoban and Shelton (1998), social skills represent an individual's degree of personal and social engagement knowledge and their capability to handle social interactions. These skills are linked to one's capacity to start or commence interactions and react suitably to others behaviors. The quality of social skills is a key element of overall social competence and is significant in all aspects of human practices (Dalal & Sarika, 2022).

Social skills are crucial for effective social interaction, encompassing behaviors that permit persons to interact successfully with others in different environments (Sheridan & Walker, 1999). These skills are essential for children's development, impacting their relationships with peers, teachers, and family members. Social skills deficits are linked to externalizing and internalizing disorders, influencing academic and social outcomes (Mash & Barkley, 1996).

Social relations are a crucial part of daily life, influencing both individual and societal well-being. Good quality social relations hinge on having adequate social skills. These skills contain behaviors like expressing oneself, understanding others, and responding to feedback, which are essential for effective communication and building healthy relationships. In essence, social skills are behaviors that pave the way towards positive interactions and avoid behaviors that are deviant (Gökel & Dağlı, 2017).



Resilience can be seen both as an individual characteristic and as an evolving process. As a characteristic, it indicates to individuals' capacity to endure the hardships (Pan & Chan, 2007), while as a process, it signifies the ability of a system for successful adaptation to disruptions (Masten & Reed, 2002). In practical terms, resilience enables individuals to maintain or enhance their mental and physical health following stressful experiences (Noble & McGrath, 2014). In this research, resilience is described as attaining favorable outcomes in the face of difficult situations, effectively managing trauma, and utilizing productive problem-solving techniques during profound grief (Zolkoski & Bullock, 2012). Resilience is the capability to bounce back from difficult situations, challenges, or setbacks. Recent conceptualizations focus on resilience as a socio-ecological construct, combining individual processes with contextual factors such as personal relationships and community belonging. Demographic factors like increasing female gender and age are linked with higher resilience, though women can also face greater risks of poor mental health due to continuous stress from stressful life events. Contextual influences, like socioeconomic status and neighborhood environment at both individual and community levels, play vital roles in Forming cohesion and social capital, which in turn affect physical and mental health outcomes. Personal characteristics, such as cognitive coping style, can act as a shield against the negative impact of challenging experiences, fostering mental resilience and overall well-being. Physical health is linked to better resilience and overall health, particularly among older adults (Yang & Wang, 2022).

#### Objectives of the Study

1. To identify students' perception about social skills (Individual preferences & social engagement) development activities at Secondary level in District Skardu.
2. ii) To identify students' resilience (attitude & behavior) at Secondary level in District Skardu.
3. iii) To investigate the effects of social skills development on student's resilience at Secondary Level in District Skardu.
4. iv) To find the difference of social skills development and students' resilience based on different variables in terms of demography.

#### Research Questions

1. What is the level of students' perception about' social skills (Individual preferences & social engagement) development activities at Secondary level in District Skardu?
2. ii) What is the level of students' resilience (attitude & behavior) at Secondary level in District Skardu?
3. iii) What is the effects of social skills development on student's resilience at Secondary Level in District Skardu?
4. iv) What is the difference of social skills development and students' resilience based on different demographic variables?

#### Significance of the Study

The study arises from the fact that it is the only study which investigated the effects of social skills development on student's resilience at Secondary Level in district Skardu. The identification of SSD and SR will be helpful for administrators and policy makers while taking relevant decisions. Educators can get insights on the ways and activities associated with SSD for informed lesson planning and contextualized treatments/interventions. Parents will be informed through studying the thesis about their child's SSD and resilience. Students can get the information on their performance and prepare themselves





to get the desired level of competence by enforcing corrective and alternate measures against the identified gaps. Overall, this study has a significant impact on the overall literature world by adding new knowledge regarding the context of secondary schools of Skardu.

### Research Design

This positivist quantitative study was conducted by adopting the cross-sectional approach as per the specifications mentioned in the book “Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Application” by Gay (2012).

#### 1.1 Population of the Study

The population of the study was consisted of 2152 Boys and 2778 Girls, total= 4930 secondary students who were studying in government sectors secondary and higher secondary in Grade9 and 10. The Gender based split is given below table.

**Table 3.1: Population of the Study**

Breaks	Girls	Boys	Total
Schools	13	19	32
Students	2778	2152	4930

The population of the study was consisted of government secondary schools students of District Skardu. According to the the GB Directorate of Education 31 December (2022), there were 32 Government Secondary Schools in district Skardu.

### Sample And Sampling Technique

Multi-stage stratified sampling method was used. The sample size was calculated by using Yamane Formula (Yamane, 1967) and calculated at 370 with the margin of error 0.05. Initially the population was categorized based on gender (strata: Male & Female) and then through quota sampling a quota of 50% each was allocated based on factor of convenience to the sample, finally the representatives were identified by simple random sampling. The break down are given table below.

Breaks	Girls	Boys	Total
Sample	185	185	370

### Research Instruments

One self-develop instrument was used in this study namely Student Social Skills Development Questionnaire (SSDQ) and Student's Resilience Questionnaire (SRQ), to capture the student's perceptions of social skills development and students resilience. 42 items of SSDQ & SRQ were validated from 3 experts, placed on a Likert scale with five points. Each sentence on the five-point Likert scale included the following possible answers: SA = 5, A = 4, N = 3, SDA = 2, and DA 1. Students' perceptions of their own social skill improvement increased with the composite score of their responses. The items were divided into four subcategories in order to get data from students on the questions, which assessed resilience and general development of social skills. Validity and Reliability were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale with the options being Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree.

### Validity and Reliability

Validity means correctness of measurement Clark, (2014). The validity of this study was checked with the help of 3 experts in the relevant field. Then according to their suggestions and recommendations, necessary minor changes were incorporated into the instrument. While for reliability the instruments provide strong reliability through Cronbach's alpha



coefficient and the internal consistency of the instruments was calculated as 0.68 for SSD and 0.75 for SR and 0.79 for SSD and SR.

#### Data Analysis

The data was analyzed with the help of statistical software. Different descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to analyze the data which were; means, SD, %age, T-test, ANOVA, and Multiple Regression.

#### Data Interpretation

Descriptive Analysis of Individual Items of SSD: Objective No.1

**Table 4.3: Students' responses on "I respect others' point of views".**

Scale	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D.
Strongly Disagree	26	7.2	3.98	1.143
Disagree	7	1.9		
Neutral	62	17.2		
Agree	120	33.3		
Strongly Agree	145	40.3		

The table 4.3 reveals that 7.2% respondent strongly disagreed, 1.9% disagreed, 17.2% remained neutral, 33.3% agreed and 40.3% strongly agreed. Majority of respondents show positive response about their respecting others' point of views and the mean score is 3.98 while the standard deviation is 1.143.

#### Descriptive Analysis of Individual Items of SSD: Objective No.2:

**Table 4.23: Students' responses on "I learn from my mistakes".**

Scale	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D.
Strongly Disagree	17	4.7	4.37	1.156
Disagree	27	7.5		
Neutral	15	4.2		
Agree	49	13.6		
Strongly Agree	252	70.0		

The table 4.23 reflects that 70.0% respondent strongly agreed, 13.6% agreed, 4.2% remained neutral, 7.5% disagreed and 4.7% strongly disagreed. Majority of respondents show positive response that they learn from their mistakes and the mean score is 4.37 and standard deviation is 1.156.

#### Inferential Statistics of Social Skills Development and Students Resilience

This section contains inferential analysis of SSD and SR via T-test, ANOVA based on different demographic belongings.

*Analysis of Social Skills Development based on Gender: Ho1: There is no significant difference in scores of Students' Social Skills Development (Social Engagement & Individual preference) and Resilience (Attitude & Behavior) scores based on gender.*

**Table 4.45: Difference between Students' Social Skills Development on the basis of Gender (Male and Female)**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	177	73.096	6.971	1.504	308.024	.134
Female	177	71.69	10.373			



The table 4.45 shows that an independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the Social Skills Development scores of male and female. The analysis shows the t-value is 1.504 and sig value is .134 is greater than  $p = .05$ . So there is no significant difference in scores for males ( $M=73.096$ ,  $SD= 6.97$ ) and females ( $M=71.68$ ,  $SD=10.37$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 4.46**

*Analysis of SSD and SR based on Class: Ho1: There is no significant difference in scores of Students' Social Skills Development (Social Engagement & Individual preference) and Resilience (Attitude & Behavior) scores based on Class.*

**Table 4.51: Difference between Students' Social Skills Development on the basis of Class (9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>).**

Class Name	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Class 9	175	72.9429	8.86211	1.163	351.768	.246
Class 10	179	71.8492	8.83524			

The table 4.51 shows that an independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the scores of class 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. The analysis shows the t-value is. 1.163 And sig value is .246 and sig value is greater to the  $p = 0.05$ . So there is no significant difference in scores for class 9<sup>th</sup> ( $M=72.94$ ,  $SD=8.86$ ) and class 10<sup>th</sup> ( $M=71.85$ ,  $SD=8.84$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

*Regression Analysis of SR with SSD and SSD with SR: Ho6: There is a significant contribution of factors of Students' Resilience (Attitude & Behavior) on Students' Social Skills Development (Social Engagement & Individual preference).*

**Table 4.75: Effect of SR on SSD**

Variables	B	SEB	Beta	Zero Order	Partial	Part	Sig
AR	.422	.074	.277	.276	.568	.374	.000
BR	.479	.066	.355	.350	.608	.431	.000

Multiple regressions were carried out to investigate whether predictor variables namely students' attitude and students' behavior could significantly predict research students SSD. The result indicated that this model explained 25.6% of the variance and it was a significant predictor of SSD at  $F(2,340) = 58.67$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $r^2 = .256$ . All predictor variables of SR (students' attitude & students' behavior) contributed significantly in prediction of SSD at  $p = .000$ . The contribution of every individual predictor were examined where students' behavior made the strongest contribution in the prediction ( $Beta = .355$ ,  $p = .000$ ).

### Findings

1. The inferential statistical analysis on Social Skills Development (SSD) and Students' Resilience (SR) revealed several insights into the impact of gender, class, parental education, and age on these variables. Gender differences showed no significant variation in SSD, social engagement, or individual preferences between male and female students (sig value of SSD = 0.134, SE=074, IP=872).

2. However, males scored significantly higher in resilience, attitude, and behavior compared to females. Class comparisons indicated no substantial differences in SSD, individual preferences, resilience, or behavior between 9th and 10th grade students, though 9th graders showed marginally higher social engagement. Parental education levels



demonstrated significant differences in SSD, resilience, attitude, and behavior, with variations linked to the mother's education level.

3. Regression analysis highlighted that students' behavior and attitude significantly predicted SSD, explaining 25.6% of the variance, with behavior being the strongest predictor. Conversely, social engagement and individual preferences were significant predictors of SR, accounting for 52.0% of the variance, with social engagement being the strongest predictor.

4. . Age groups did not exhibit significant differences in SSD, social engagement, resilience, attitude, or behavior, (sig. value of SSD=268, SE=.546, SR=.447, AR=.084, BR=742), although there were notable differences in individual preferences.

5. 31.1% of respondents (majority) agreed that they participate in various social activities.

6. 35.0% of respondents (majority) strongly agreed that they pay attention to others' point of views.

7. There is no significant difference exists between Students Social skills development scores for males and females at .134.

8. There is a significant difference exists between Students Resilience scores for males and females at 0.000.

### Conclusion

The population is predominant by adolescents. Most of the students' fathers have secondary certificates and same proportion of fathers is illiterate. The educational profile of mothers exhibits a diverse range of attainment levels. Majority of respondents shows respect towards and listen to other's point of views. They are also seems to be interacting with their peers during the break but they prefer to be alone when they're free in their classrooms. They participate in group work with those peers both inside and outside the classroom. They are helping their students in studies. They take care of their fellow's feelings. They are participating in activities within and outside of the classroom that promote empathy and cultural understanding. The students seek feedback and guidance from their peers about their social relations, interactions and skills. These activities are mostly associated with the break time.

They learn from mistakes and struggle to recover when they feel discourage and do not give up due to fear of failure and don't avoid difficult tasks due to fear of failure they face problematic situations with confidence and don't find it difficult to cope whenever they feel stressed don't may feel defensive whenever they encounter a problematic situation. Students are facing challenges like; maintaining a positive attitude in problematic situations, time management and feeling discouraged. But it is concluded that they try to adjust in new situations and enjoy learning new things. Students face problematic situation by seeking help from teachers and peers. They see mistakes and problems as growth opportunities students believe in their abilities and remain flexible while facing new situations.

Students experience same social skill development practices but they are different in terms of resilience in terms of gender. The students of class 9 and 10 are equally developing their social skills and have same level of resilience. Mother's education is not affecting on SE but IP are affected by level of mother's education. Father's education is also not affecting the SSD and SR of secondary students. SR predicts the SSD with higher





prediction power of BR compared to AR. SSD predicts the SR with higher prediction power of SE compared to IP.

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