



Research Article

# Social Skills Among Senior Secondary School Students with Respect to Vocational Aspiration and Academic Achievement

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## Abstract

The present research work was specifically undertaken to study the social skills among senior secondary school students with respect to vocational aspiration and academic achievement. Survey technique under descriptive method of research was adopted in this present investigation total sample of 881 senior secondary school students was selected from four districts of Himachal Pradesh by employing an incidental sampling technique. Data were collected with the help of the Social Skills Rating Scale (SSRS-SVAKS) developed by Sood, Anand, and Kumar. The collected data were analyzed by employing Analysis of Variance (Two-way). The major findings of the study revealed that the senior secondary school students possessing different levels of vocational aspiration differed significantly from each other with regard to their social skills. On the other hand, there was no significant difference in social skills among senior secondary school students with regard to their academic achievement. Therefore, it may be concluded that senior secondary school students did not differ significantly in terms of their social skills with respect to academic achievement. In addition to this, the vocational aspiration and academic achievement in the previous class taken together did not affect the social skills of senior secondary school students significantly. The end of the paper discusses the results and implications of the findings of the investigation have been discussed in detail.

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**KEYWORDS:** Social Skills, Vocational aspiration, Academic Achievement.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Social skills are the essential abilities that enable individuals to interact effectively, communicate appropriately, and build positive relationships with others in different social contexts. They involve verbal and non-verbal communication, active listening, empathy, cooperation, problem-solving, and conflict resolution, all of which are necessary for successful

participation in society. Social skills are not innate but are gradually learned and refined through family interactions, peer relationships, schooling, and broader social experiences. For adolescents in particular, these skills are crucial for personal growth, social adjustment, and academic success. In today's rapidly changing and interconnected world, social skills have become as important as cognitive and technical abilities. They

help individuals manage emotions, express themselves confidently, and work collaboratively, which are competencies highly valued in educational, professional, and personal spheres. A strong foundation in social skills contributes to psychological well-being, reduces behavioral problems, and enhances resilience in coping with stress and challenges. Conversely, deficits in social competence may lead to issues such as low self-esteem, academic underperformance, peer rejection, and difficulties in adapting to social and occupational environments. The significance of social skills is particularly evident during adolescence, a developmental phase marked by identity formation, increased peer influence, and preparation for future responsibilities. For senior secondary school students, who are at the threshold of higher education and career decision-making, well-developed social skills support both academic achievement and vocational readiness. They not only strengthen classroom engagement and learning outcomes but also guide students in making informed career choices and in adapting to new roles and expectations. Thus, the study of social skills is an important area of educational and psychological research. It offers valuable insights into how adolescents interact with their surroundings, manage relationships, and shape their futures. By emphasizing the development of social competencies through school programs, teacher interventions, and parental support, students can be prepared for holistic development, enabling them to succeed academically, pursue meaningful careers, and contribute responsibly to society.

The relationship between social skills, vocational aspiration, and academic achievement among senior secondary school students can be understood within a holistic developmental framework. Social skills serve as the foundation for effective interpersonal interactions, decision-making, and adaptability, which are essential for both academic and career-related pursuits. Students with higher levels of social competence are more likely to communicate confidently, collaborate with peers, and engage actively in learning processes, thereby enhancing their academic performance. At the same time, social skills provide students with the confidence and awareness to explore career opportunities, set realistic vocational aspirations, and pursue them with determination. Academic achievement, in turn, acts as a reinforcing factor, enabling students to align their vocational goals with their scholastic abilities. Thus, social skills not only directly impact academic outcomes but also indirectly shape vocational aspirations by fostering self-efficacy, career awareness, and goal-setting. The interplay of these three variables highlights the need for schools to emphasize the development of social competencies alongside academic instruction and career guidance, ensuring that students are equipped for both immediate academic success and long-term vocational fulfillment. Laksmiwati et al. (2022) aimed to determine the influence of social skills among students who take part in collaborative learning and discussion. The results of the study showed that there were significant differences between groups that were taught with collaborative learning and groups that were taught by discussion learning. It

viewed from the results of the study, it can be seen that the test results on group students who were taught by collaborative learning obtained a higher average value of social skills than the group without being taught by collaborative learning, namely by regular discussion. The average acquisition value of social skills is far adrift between the two groups. Bala Anju and Monika (2022) examined the relationship between social skills and self-efficacy of secondary school students. The results of the study indicated that there was a positive relationship between social skills and self-efficacy. Boys were found to be higher in five dimensions of social skills than girls in secondary school. But girls found higher than that of boys of secondary school with respect to their self-efficacy. Bade Saba (2023) examined a study on social skills among adolescents in relation to certain demographic variables. The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant difference in the social skills of adolescents in relation to gender. Girls have higher social skills as compared to boys. The result of the study also revealed that there was a significant difference in the social skills of adolescents in relation to the type of school. Students in private schools have better social skills than students in public schools. Yuting and Kway (2023) explored a study entitled, "Relationship between parenting stress and social skills of pre-school children. The results of the study indicated that pre-school students' social skills were at a medium level, and parents' parenting stress was at a medium to low level. Hence, it may be concluded that there was a significant and negative correlation between children's social skills and parents' parenting stress, and parents' parenting stress was predictive of children's social skills. Tahir and Maryam Javed (2023) conducted a study on social skills of students at higher education level: A cross-sectional survey of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The results found that teachers perceive group discussions as an excellent technique for enriching student learning, providing equal opportunities for participation. Furthermore, teachers guide students for small group discussions that help students improve their communication skills. Huttunen and Upadhyay (2025) examined the adolescents' social-emotional skills profiles before the educational transition to upper secondary education. The findings revealed that adolescents with high social and emotional skills generally reported higher educational aspirations, lower school anxiety, and perceived their relationships at school more positively. However, adolescents with an empathic-stressed profile reported similarly high educational aspirations and high school anxiety. Girls were more likely to belong to the empathic-stressed and low-empathic-tolerant profiles, and adolescents with lower SES to low-empathic-tolerant or average profiles.

A thorough review of the research literature revealed that social competence influences both learning outcomes and career goals. Hence, the present study was designed with the following objective:

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the difference in social skills among senior secondary school students regarding their vocational aspirations.
2. To study the difference in social skills among senior secondary school students about their academic achievement.
3. To study the interactional effect between vocational aspiration and academic achievement with respect to social skills among senior secondary school students.

## HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There will be no significant difference in social skills among senior secondary school students with respect to their vocational aspirations.
2. There will be no significant difference among senior secondary school students with respect to their academic achievement.
3. There will be no significant interactional effect between vocational aspiration and academic achievement with respect to social skills among senior secondary school students.

## METHODOLOGY

In the present study, the survey technique under the descriptive method was employed to achieve the objectives of the study.

## SAMPLING

The data were gathered from the four districts of Himachal Pradesh, i.e., Shimla, Bilaspur, Hamirpur, and Kangra. A total sample of 881 B.E. was comprised in the present study.

## RESEARCH TOOLS USED

The data were collected with the help of the Social Skills Rating Scale developed by Sood, Anand, and Kumar. The collected data were analyzed by using the statistical method of 'Analysis of Variance' (Two-Way).

## ANALYSIS OF DATA

For finding out the main effects of significant difference in the mean social skills of senior secondary school students with different level of vocational aspiration variable was considered at three levels i.e. high vocational aspiration, moderate vocational aspiration and less vocational aspiration including three levels of academic achievement in previous class i.e. low scores (1<sup>st</sup> division), moderate scores (2<sup>nd</sup> division) and high scores (1<sup>st</sup> division). The mean social skills scores of senior secondary school students with respect to educational aspiration and academic achievement in the previous class are given in Table 1

Table 1. Means And Standard Deviations of Social Skills Scores About Vocational Aspiration and Academic Achievement

Sr. No.	Academic Achievement Vocational Aspiration		Mean Social Skill Score			
			High Level	Moderate level	Low Level	Total
I	High Level	Mean	313.20	370.17	331.40	316.21
		S.D.	58.352	25.585	64.810	58.498
		N	133	6	5	144
II	Moderate Level	Mean	302.86	317.26	304.29	303.95
		S.D.	52.567	48.871	54.742	52.408
		N	583	47	14	644
III	Low Level	Mean	306.83	300.22	312.33	306.37
		S.D.	55.344	33.830	50.332	53.133
		N	81	9	3	93
IV	Total	Mean	304.99	319.90	311.55	306.21
		S.D.	53.924	48.124	55.005	53.649
		N	797	62	22	881

For finding out the main effects of educational aspiration and academic achievement in the previous class on social skills among senior secondary school students, along with their interactional effects, two-way 'Analysis of Variance' (3X3

factor design) was applied. The summary of the results of the analysis of variance of senior secondary school students about educational aspiration and academic achievement in the previous class is given in Table 2

**Table 2:** Summary Of Results of Analysis of Variance for Social Skills of Senior Secondary School Students With Respect to Vocational Aspiration and Academic Achievement

Sr. No.	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square (Variance)	F-Ratio
1.	Vocational Aspiration	18439.508	2	9219.754	3.234*
2.	Academic Achievement	13765.783	2	6882.892	2.414 <sup>(NS)</sup>
3.	Vocational Aspiration × Academic Achievement	14685.190	4	3671.298	1.288 <sup>(NS)</sup>
4.	Error Variance	2485847.443	872	2850.742	
5.	Total	85136969.00	881		

NS..... Not Significant

\*significant at 0.05 level of significance

**Main Effects****(a) Vocational Aspiration (A)**

The calculated value of 'F' for finding the main effect of vocational aspiration on social skills of senior secondary school students, for degrees of freedom 2 and 872, came out to be 3.234, which is greater than the F-table value (3.00) at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, Hypothesis no. 1, "There will be no significant difference in social skills among senior secondary school students about their vocational aspiration," was not retained. So, it was inferred that the senior. Secondary school

students possessing different levels of vocational aspiration differed significantly from each other in their social skills.

Further, to find out the significance of the difference in mean social skills scores of senior secondary school students possessing different levels of vocational aspiration in different combinations (considering two groups at a time), the Tukey-Kramer test (used in case of unequal groups with homogeneous variance on the dependent variable) was applied. The computed and critical values of 'q' (studentized range statistic) and respective mean differences are given in Table 3

**TABLE 3:** Computed and Critical Values of 'q' (Studentized Range Statistic) and Weighted Mean Differences in Social Skills of Senior Secondary School Students with Different Levels of Vocational Aspiration

Sr. No	Vocational Aspiration	Overall Mean Social Skills Score	Pair of Comparison	Mean Difference	Computed Values of 'q'
A <sub>1</sub>	High	316.21	A1-A2	12.26	2.86 <sup>NS</sup>
A <sub>2</sub>	Moderate	303.95	A2-A3	2.42	0.57 <sup>NS</sup>
A <sub>3</sub>	Low	306.37	A1-A3	9.84	2.30 <sup>NS</sup>

NS -----Not Significant

Critical Values of 'q' = 3.314 (at 0.05 level) and 4.12 (at 0.01 level), (for df 878, Number of groups compared=3).

The computed values of 'q' (Studentized Range Statistic) for social skills scores were compared with the critical value (Table value of 'q') for three groups of senior secondary school students classified based on their vocational aspiration. It was observed that senior secondary school students possessing high level of vocational aspiration, moderate level of vocational aspiration and low level of vocational aspiration because computed 'q' value i.e. 2.86 (High Vs. Moderate), 0.57 (Moderate Vs Low) and 2.30 (High Vs Low) were less than the critical value of 'q' (3.314) at the 0.05 significance level with 878 degrees of freedom. This means that although small differences exist in the group means (316.21, 303.95, and 306.37), respectively. These differences are not large enough to conclude that they represent true population differences rather than chance variations. In other words, the Tukey test indicates that the three groups are statistically similar with respect to their mean scores.

**(b) Academic Achievement (B)**

The calculated value of 'F' for finding out the main effect on mean social skills scores among senior secondary school students with different levels of vocational aspiration came out

to be 2.414, which is less than the table value (3.00) at the 0.05 level.

Of significance, for degrees of freedom 2 and 872. Hence, Hypothesis No. 2, "There will be no significant difference in social skills among senior secondary school students about their academic achievement," was retained. Therefore, it may be inferred that senior secondary school students did not differ significantly in terms of their social skills with respect to academic achievement.

**(c) Interactional Effects (AXB)**

The computed value of 'F-Ratio' for the interactional effect of vocational aspiration and academic achievement on social skills among senior secondary school students, for degrees of freedom 4 and 872, came out to be 1.288, which is less than the table value (2.38) at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, Hypothesis No. 3, "There will be no significant interaction between educational aspiration and academic achievement in the previous class about social skills among senior secondary school students," was retained. It means that vocational aspiration and academic achievement in the previous class did not interact significantly with respect to the social skills of senior secondary school students. Therefore, it may be interpreted that the vocational aspiration and academic achievement in the previous class taken together did not affect

the social skills of senior secondary school students significantly.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study offer important insights for educators, parents, and policymakers in understanding the role of social skills in relation to vocational aspiration and academic achievement among senior secondary school students. The results revealed that students with different levels of vocational aspiration significantly differed in their social skills, indicating that career-related goals and ambitions have a meaningful impact on the development of social competence. This suggests that when students are motivated and aspire toward particular vocations, they tend to display stronger communication, decision-making, and interpersonal skills that help them pursue their goals effectively. Therefore, schools should integrate career guidance and counseling programs that not only support students in exploring vocational choices but also provide structured opportunities to develop essential social skills needed for future professional success. On the other hand, the study found no significant difference in social skills among students with varying levels of academic achievement. This implies that academic performance alone may not determine an adolescent's social competence. Consequently, educators must not assume that high-achieving students automatically possess strong social skills, nor should they underestimate the potential of average or low-achieving students in this area. Instead, equal emphasis should be placed on life skills education, cooperative learning, peer interaction, and extracurricular activities to foster social competence among all students, regardless of academic standing. Additionally, the results indicated that vocational aspiration and academic achievement taken together did not significantly influence social skills. This highlights the importance of treating social skills as an independent developmental domain that requires focused attention in the school curriculum. Structured programs such as role plays, group projects, community service, and value-based education can serve as effective tools to enhance social competence. Moreover, collaboration between parents and teachers is essential in providing a supportive environment that nurtures both vocational clarity and interpersonal growth. In conclusion, the educational implications of this study emphasize that social skills should be developed purposefully and inclusively among senior secondary school students. By aligning career counseling with social skills training and by ensuring equal opportunities for students of all academic levels, schools can contribute to the holistic development of adolescents, preparing them not only for academic success but also for responsible careers and active participation in society.

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