



Psychosocial Competence: Pathways to Flourish Adolescents' Development

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Psychosocial competency is the strength and ability to effectively manage the demands and challenges of daily life. It plays a vital role in the overall development of an individual. This paper is an attempt to analyze the psychosocial competence of higher secondary school students. Data were collected from 100 adolescents studying in XI standards in higher secondary school of Varanasi. Psychosocial competence was measured using the self-constructed 'Psychosocial Competence Scale' by the investigator. Quantitative method was applied for data analysis. Results revealed that 63% have average level of psychosocial competence and locality, nature of family and educational board are significantly influencing psychosocial competence while no significance difference found in respect to their gender and educational stream. The findings are followed by the discussion and conclusion of the study.

Keywords: Psychosocial Competence, Adolescents, Mental Health, Family Environment.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Competence is not merely knowledge and skills; It includes personal traits and qualities, abilities, work habits, and more. (Le Deist and Winterton, 2005; Gangani et al., 2006). "Psychosocial refers to the influence of social factors on an individual's mind or behavior and the interrelation of behavioral and social factors (Oxford English Dictionary, 2012)." The development of psychosocial competence can significantly contribute to a person's health, particularly in relation to behaviors such as the inability to effectively manage stress and life's pressures (Bardhan, 2016). Adolescence is characterized by fast physical and psychological

changes that extend beyond biological and cognitive functioning. It is a volatile and fragile transitional period of life marked by experiences that threaten well-being. Sometimes they are unable to cope with these challenges and deviated from their path. Including all the psychophysical and social challenges, it includes one major challenge that is identity formation. During this stage they started questioning about their identity- who they are and how are they different from others.

Adolescence, a particularly difficult period for young people, occurs as they mature. While many people get through this period without incident, others develop maladaptive responses,

such as conduct and adjustment issues, pubertal struggles, and life stress. It entails extending complex social roles and surroundings, exposing young people to a broader range of challenges and life-altering choices. Despite these difficulties, most adolescents pass through this period smoothly. However, some adolescents may have maladaptive responses as a result of physical, psychological, and social changes. These can result in behavior problems, adjustment concerns, pubertal obstacles, and life stress.

According to [Khalatbari et al., \(2011\)](#) Individuals with limited psychosocial and emotional skills are extremely vulnerable to difficulties and are likely to face social, mental and behavioral disorders. The family is the primary unit of socialization in a child's life. Every child requires a healthy family environment for normal development. Love and security, essential for their future resilience, are nurtured within the family. Maintaining good health is crucial for psychosocial development during childhood. The psychosocial development of children is closely linked to the quality of parent-child interactions. In families where parents do not engage positively with their children, variations are observed in language development, intelligence, and academic skills, which are often impaired. Additionally, children who are unwanted or who experience rejection, hostility, or serious family issues face a higher risk of mental health problems.

Several things can cause them to lose concentration, including personal relationships, family conflicts, tension, isolation, partying, family atmosphere, nature of family, and employment of parents. A child's growth, development, and personality grooming are heavily influenced by his or her family. Young individuals learn to maximize their potential within the family by maximising their thinking capacities to develop the potential required to deal in the world outside. They learn about family values and relationships by seeing their parents' experiences and interacting with other relatives. Furthermore, the structure and makeup of the family have a considerable influence on adolescents' mental and physical development. The joint family system has been replaced by new cultural patterns as a result of societal changes. It is often assumed that the combined family fosters and sustains higher psychosocial adjustment abilities across generations. [Kochukrishna, Geetha, & Prasanth](#)

[\(2016\)](#). In their study, [Susheelkumar, et al. \(2017\)](#) discovered that events such as family member death, marital dispute or separation, natural calamities, and economic deprivation can all have an impact on a child's mental health. Interventions may be required for children and adolescents to address the consequences of parental substance misuse, verbally or physically abuse, domestic violence or mental health concerns.

While using social media and smartphones might improve social ties, there are also a number of mental health problems associated with these platforms. Anxiety, despair, suicidality, self-harm, bad self-perception, unpleasant interactions, violent behavior, and exposure to damaging content that encourages suicidality or self-harm are some of these concerns. A dose-response pattern is frequently observed in this interaction. [Abi-Jaoude et al. \(2020\)](#) Nonetheless, there are growing worries about the extensive effects that problematic internet use has on young people [\(Throuvala et al., 2021\)](#).

Schools are important social institutions for children's psychosocial development, as they are believed to provide an environment that supports the social and emotional growth of children. Teaching psychosocial skills provides a strong support system for children at the community level. It has been demonstrated that promoting mental health in schools offers major practical benefits with small to moderate effect sizes. Teaching techniques, encouraging mental wellness, striking a balance between general and focused approaches, getting started early, and putting whole school approaches into practice are some of the most successful tactics. [\(Nind and Weare, 2011\)](#). Effectively acquiring and applying these social skills can shape how we perceive others, how we view ourselves, and how others perceive us. Enhancing children's psychological competencies is crucial for improving their mental health and developing their ability to cope with daily stress [\(Bharat & Kumar, 2010\)](#)

2. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

Psychosocial Competence: Psychosocial competence is the capacity of an individual to use and utilize psychosocial resources in certain situations in order to effectively respond to the demands of their environment. [\(Poonam, Singh, and Singh, 2016\)](#).

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Following are the objectives-

- To find out the level of psychosocial competence of adolescents.
- To study the difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents with respect to gender.
- To study the difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents with respect to locality.
- To study the difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents with respect to nature of family.
- To study the difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents with respect to educational board.
- To study the difference in psychosocial competence of adolescents with respect to educational stream.

4. HYPOTHESIS

- There is no significance difference between the mean score of psychosocial competence of male and female.
- There is no significance difference between the mean score of psychosocial competence of urban and rural.
- There is no significance difference between the mean score of psychosocial competence of joint and nuclear family.
- There is no significance difference between the mean score of psychosocial competence of UP and CBSE Board.
- There is no significance difference between the mean score of psychosocial competence of Arts, Commerce and science.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1. Procedure and participants

The researcher chose participants for the current study by using a random sample technique on the general population. In all, 100 teenage adolescents from the Varanasi district took part in this study. The age range covered the years 14–17.

5.2. Design of the study

In order to study the effect of psychosocial competence, descriptive survey method was used.

5.3. Statistical Analysis

Using accepted statistical techniques, the data from the aforementioned investigations was statistically examined. To test the hypothesis, an independent t-test and ANOVA was utilized.

5.4. Tools of the study

'Psychosocial Competence scale' was developed by the investigator herself. The validity of the scale was checked by the expert in the field of education, psychology and sociology. The Cronbach Alpha reliability of the tool was found to be .902

5.5. Procedure

Information gathered with the principals' prior consent. The study's significance and methodology were explained to the subjects. A great deal of rapport was built up before the instruments were really administered. They received assurances that their answers would be kept private and used exclusively for study. Each respondent received the questionnaire when the student gave permission. They received gratitude for their cooperation after the data collection.

6. RESULT

Table 1: Level of Psychosocial Competence of higher secondary school students

Level of PSC	Z-Value	Score Obtained	No. of Students
High	Above +1	> 198	21
Average	Between -1 to +1	155-197	63
Low	Below -1	< 154	16
Total			100

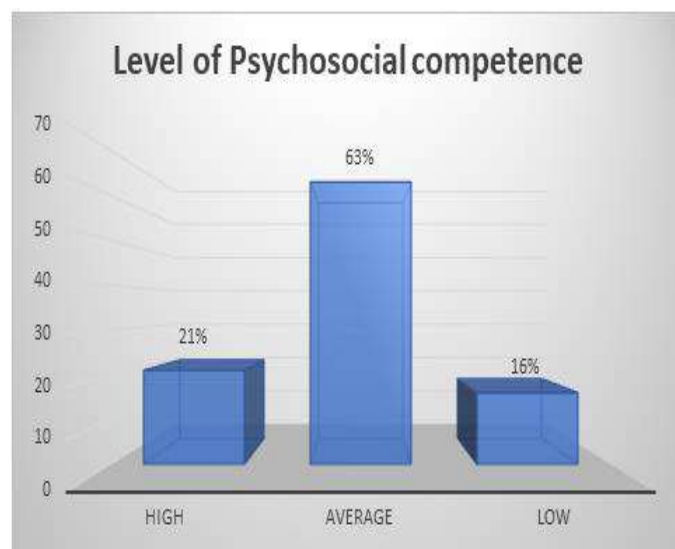


Fig-1: Bar diagram showing level of psychosocial competence among adolescents.

As shown in the table presented above that out of 100 adolescents 21% have high psychosocial competence 63% have Average level of psychosocial competence and 16% have low level of psychosocial of psychosocial competence.

Ho: There is no significance difference between the mean score of psychosocial competence of Adolescents on the basis of gender, locality, nature of family and educational board.

Table-2: Calculated t-value of gender, locality, nature of family and educational board

Factor	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Joint	Nuclear	UP	CBSE
N	53	47	76	24	36	64	53	47
Mean Score	182.69	179.42	180.56	160.12	161.69	182.07	166.50	185
Std	21.78	21.53	20.15	17.48	23.20	22.31	19.85	23.40
't' value	0.452		2.16		3.71		4.46	
Result	Not significant at .05 level significance		Significant at .05 level significance		Significant at .05 level significance		Significant at .05 level significance	

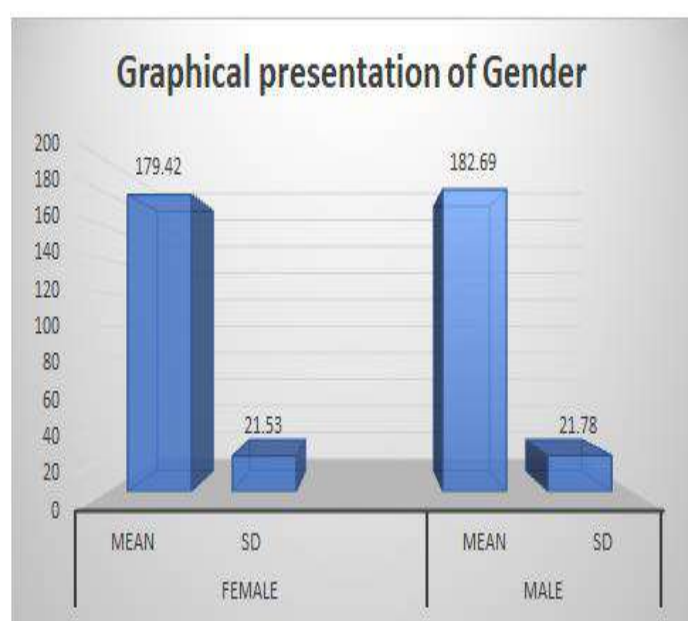


Fig-2: Bar diagram showing psychosocial competence among boys and girls

The mean scores and standard deviations for male and female teenagers are 182.69 & 179.42 and 21.78 & 21.53, respectively, according to Table 2. The hypothesis is accepted because the calculated t value of 0.452 is not significant at the 0.05 level of significance, indicating that there is not a significant difference between the psychosocial competence of male and female adolescents.

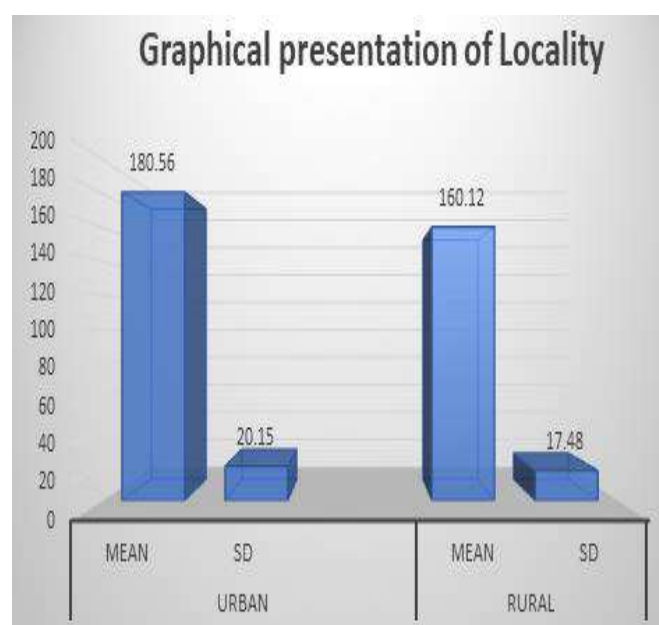


Fig-3: Bar diagram showing emotional psychosocial competence among urban and rural locality

Regarding locality, urban students' mean score is 180.56 with a standard deviation of 20.15, while rural students' mean score is 160.12 with a standard deviation of 17.48. As a result, the computed t value of 2.16 is higher than the 1.98 value in the table. At the 0.05 threshold of significance, the t ratio of 2.16 is significant. The findings showed that there is a noteworthy distinction between the psychosocial competence of teenagers living in rural and urban environments.

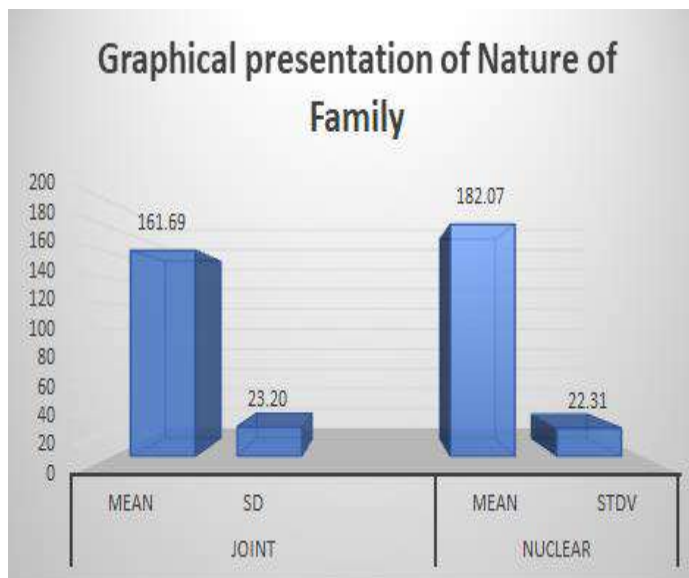


Fig-4: Bar diagram showing emotional psychosocial competence among joint and nuclear family

Adolescents from nuclear and combined families differ significantly in this regard; the t ratio of 3.71 is significant at the 0.05 level of significance. According to the data, teenagers who belong to nuclear families have mean scores of 182.07 and joint families have mean scores of 161.69, with standard deviations of 23.20 and 22.31, respectively. This indicates that adolescents from nuclear households possess a greater level of psychosocial competence than adolescents from joint homes.

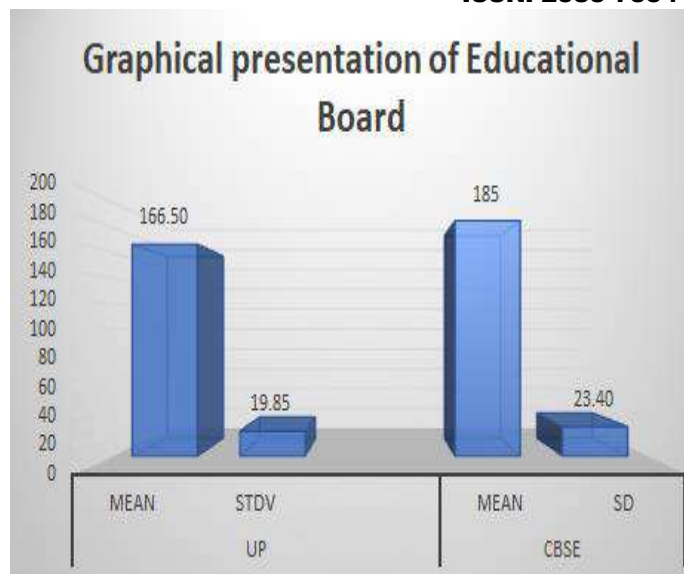


Fig-5: Bar diagram showing emotional psychosocial competence among UP and CBSE Board

In the case of adolescents from UP and CBSE Boards, a significant difference in psychosocial competence was found, as indicated by the t-ratio of 4.46, which is significant at the 0.05 level. The data shows that the mean score for adolescents in the UP Board is 166.50, while for those in the CBSE Board, it is 185. The standard deviations are 19.85 and 23.40, respectively. This suggests that adolescents from the CBSE Board exhibit a higher level of psychosocial competence compared to those from the UP Board.

Ho: There is no significance difference between the mean score of psychosocial competence of Adolescents on the basis educational stream.

Table- 3: ANOVA for PSC of higher Secondary School Students with respect to their Board i.e. Arts, Commerce and Science

Educational Stream	Mean	SSb	SSw	df	Calculated 'F' Value	Table Value	Remarks at 0.05 level of significance
Arts	188.89	2526.90	43754.54	2, 97	2.80	3.090	Not Significant
Commerce	180.85						
Science	177.11						

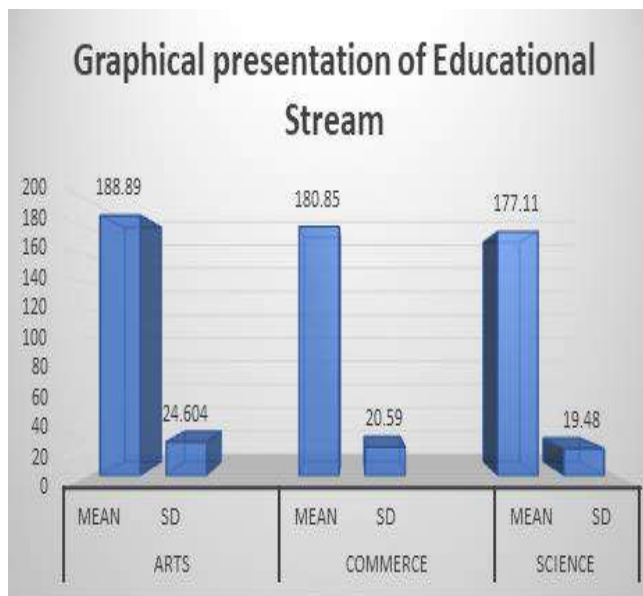


Fig-6: Bar diagram showing emotional psychosocial competence among Arts, Commerce and Science Stream

The result presented in the table 3 reveals that calculated F-value ($F= 2.80$) at $df (2, 97)$ for difference among mean score of psychosocial competence of Adolescents from different educational stream was not significant at 0.05 level of significance, so null hypothesis was accepted. It indicates that Adolescents having different educational stream do not differ significantly from each other in their psychosocial competence. The mean score of Arts Stream was ($M= 188.89$), Commerce stream was ($M= 180.85$) and Science Stream was ($M= 177.11$).

7. DISCUSSION

It is observed from the table 1 that Amongst 100 adolescents 63% have average level and 21% have high level of psychosocial competence whereas 16% have low level of psychosocial competence. This may be varied in large sample size.

In table 2 it is evident that gender has no effect on psychosocial competence of adolescents. Table 2 also reflected that locality, nature of family and educational board has significant effect on psychosocial competence. In the study of Kaur, R., & Kaur, G. (2022) Locality and nature of family also found to affect the psychosocial competence of adolescents. Table 3 shows that there is no contribution of educational stream towards the development of the psychosocial competence.

It is observed from the result that psychosocial competence of adolescents is affected

by some of the demographic variables which includes Adolescents locality, type of family and educational board. Whereas gender and educational stream did not find to affect adolescents' psychosocial competence.

8. CONCLUSION

To conclude, the study presents that gender and educational stream has no significant effect on psychosocial competence of adolescents. It is because of that the gender does not affect the psychosocial competence of the Adolescents and educational stream also has no contribution to the development of psychosocial competence. Also, there is significant relationship found in locality, nature of family and educational board. Locality of the adolescents involves the environment of the adolescents which has great effect on adolescents' psychological and social environment.

Nature of family also found significant as the values and morals of the family affect the adolescents' attributes and characteristics. This study highlights how the family environment can be a significant contributor to support for growing teenagers by modifying the home environment which can improve children's psychosocial competence by fostering close relationships, strong parental skills, effective communication, and positive behavior. Educational board also found to be significant as different school board has different activities, teaching learning procedure and facilities in the school which plays significant part in the development of adolescents' psychosocial competence.

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