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Study on social maturity of adolescent girls

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Abstract

Adolescent is the bridge between childhood and adulthood and it is totally based on social behavior. From an early age, humans show important physical growth. However, adolescence is the key period for mental, intellectual and emotional development. Growth and maturity always go together. The present study aimed to assess the level of social maturity among adolescent girls and examine its relationship with various sub factors. A total of 120 adolescent girls from both rural and urban areas of Kanpur district (Uttar Pradesh) were selected using a simple random sampling technique. The Rao's Social Maturity Scale (RSMS) was employed to measure social maturity across nine key sub-dimensions: Work Orientation, Self-Direction, Ability to Take Stress, Communication, Enlightened Trust, Cooperation, Social Commitment, Social Tolerance, and Openness to Change. Results indicated that the majority of the respondents exhibited average (35%) to above-average (31.67%) levels of social maturity, with a smaller percentage displaying high (20%) and low (4.17%) maturity levels. Correlation analysis revealed significant positive associations between rural and urban adolescence girls at all sub-dimensions of social maturity level. Comparative analysis between rural and urban girls showed no significant difference in their levels of social maturity. The findings suggest that strengthening core social-emotional competencies can positively influence the overall social development of adolescent girls, regardless of their socio-demographic background.

Keywords: Social maturity, adolescence girls, socio-demographic

Introduction

The word adolescence comes from 'adolescere' which is Latin for "to grow up". The process of maturing and growing from childhood to adulthood happens all the time for every human. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines the age range 10-19 as adolescence (1986). During this stage, the girl's body faces changes like ones in physical form, thoughts and feelings, relationships and hormones. Generally, adolescents are placed into three periods of development called early (10-13 years), mid (14-15 years) and late adolescence (16-19 years). About 1/5 of people around the world are adolescents and in India they account for 20.8% of everyone (UNICEF, 2010). Adolescents usually have a low mortality rate and their health is believed to be better than that of very young or very old persons which meant their health was often overlooked. Because they were felt to be at lower risk for diseases, their healthcare needs were not paid much attention for a few years. These days in India, we can notice more cases of childhood obesity because many families now watch TV, play video games and use computers more instead of going outside to socialize and play sports. People all over the world started focusing on adolescent health in the last decade as unfair disadvantages face adolescent girls in India due to things like son preference, early marriage, less school, having children early and being parents at an early age.

Adolescent girls in Uttar Pradesh face a range of socio-economic and health-related challenges that impact their development and well-being. While school enrollment has improved, many girls still drop out due to early marriage, financial constraints, and inadequate school infrastructure, particularly in rural areas. Health issues such as malnutrition, anemia, and poor menstrual hygiene are widespread, often worsened by limited access to healthcare services and social taboos. Child marriage and teenage pregnancies remain significant concerns, despite legal restrictions. Safety in public spaces and access to education and employment opportunities are also limited for many girls. Although government schemes like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Kanya Sumangala Yojana, and RKSK aim to support adolescent girls through health, education, and empowerment initiatives, implementation gaps persist. Addressing these issues requires a multi-pronged approach involving better policy enforcement, community awareness, improved healthcare and educational infrastructure, and focused skill development programs to ensure that adolescent girls in Uttar Pradesh can lead healthy, empowered, and productive lives.

Maturity is about being able to deal with situations correctly. Being mature means knowing where, when and how to act, depending on the culture and social circumstances around us. It cannot be easily explained in one brief statement. At first, maturity is about understanding

your own talents, abilities, qualities and potential. A mature person is able to sense the right action, the right manner and the proper plan, depending on what is happening around them. It also supports people in deciding what is true and false, proper and wrong, honest and dishonest. Age and physical changes are what determine if someone is mature. Going through life and obtaining experiences increase a person's maturity. It means being who you truly are and the way to become this involves examining your ideal, role models, life path, values, beliefs, morals, religions, self worth and so on. The ability to judge, decide and respond appropriately to problems shows social maturity. Working together helps one compete effectively in a supportive and fair way. Someone mature socially cooperates and is responsible for everything they do.

Development is always linked to maturity. Social development in a child goes along with different features of their growth. A child begins to change physically, mentally, emotionally and in attitude as he grows up. It also is important in society's development. You can see that child mental growth is closely related to their social skills. We can notice the early intellectual behavior of a child when he or she connects with others at home and in the community. Freud uses words that are associated with the mind. Talking and making gestures are the main ways people express their feelings and thoughts with others. So, social interaction sets in motion. As language grows, people build their social skills automatically. Social and emotional problems tend to be directly connected. Typically, the child's feeling describes most of their emotional well-being affect society and many social difficulties result in emotional problems. When the maturity ends, growth and development begin. Sometimes structure and function appear early in development, but often development comes later when a person matures and learns. Being socially mature does not happen quickly. Social development is based on someone becoming socially mature. A mature individual is able to receive, use and react to the events happening around him. Developing helpful qualities like group compatibility, kindness, sympathy, empathy, emotional adjustability, courtesy and politeness, self confidence, co-operation, leadership and cheerfulness is important within the society. A socially mature person can assess problems, decide on suitable steps and take the necessary actions. There are some components of social maturity.

1. **Personal adequacy:** Personal characterized by work orientation, to take stress.
2. **Interpersonal adequacy:** Interpersonally one who possesses good communication trust and cooperation with others.
3. **Socially adequacy:** Socially adequate be socially committed, socially change in the society.

Literature review

Shah (2012)^[8] conducted a study on 347 girls from classes IX to XII in a North Indian residential school to examine differences in social maturity, school adjustment, and academic performance. Using the Rao's Social Maturity Scale (RSMS) and the Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS), the study found a strong positive relationship between social maturity and school adjustment. Additionally, significant differences in school adjustment

were observed among students with low, average, and high academic achievement, indicating that both social maturity and academic success play a role in how well students adapt to the school environment.

Dhowal and Raghuvanshi (2014)^[2] studied on 440 girls to find out nutrient status and body compositions of adolescent girls in Udham Singh Nagar and the results shown that anthropometry and body consumption of adolescent girls were influenced by number of factors like age, family size, income etc. On the basis of BMI for age specific, 73.86% girls were found normal, 19.55% girls were underweight and only 4.78% girls were over-weighted

A study by Sevak (2016) was designed to see if there were major differences in social maturity between different groups. According to the analysis, there was a noticeable gap between those who studied in Gujarati and those in English, as well as between those who followed science or arts streams, mainly in the domains of work attitude, coping with stress, helping others, communication and accepting others. Moreover, gender differences were detected in the areas of work orientation, communication, cooperation and social commitment which means boys and girls differ substantially in these features of social maturity. But none of the other categories showed much variation between the different media and program types. It is notable that the study found a noticeable difference in social maturity levels based on the language used in learning and on gender which suggests that these factors play a role in how socially developed students are.

Mishra et. al. (2017)^[4] studied on adolescent students to examine their social maturity and find that maximum number (66.66%) boys and (70%) girl's respondent had high social maturity. Most of the (68.33%) respondent had high social maturity. The result also showed that majority level of urban boys (36.66%) and rural girls (33.33%) was found high.

Pratibha et al. (2018)^[6] have studied on 120 adolescent girls of Kanpur to assess the social maturity. They used correlation analysis to identify the inter relationship of sub factors of social maturity levels and concluded that the nine sub-dimension of social maturity were strongly inter associated in both cases of rural and urban adolescent girls.

Das (2019)^[1] conducted a study on 200 students in Assam to find out the level of social maturity between boys and girls. The findings of the study indicate that the majority of lower secondary school students in the Matia block of Goalpara district, Assam, possess an average level of social maturity. The distribution of social maturity scores shows a concentration in the average to high range, and the Normal Probability Curve is negatively skewed, suggesting that more students scored above the mean. Additionally, the study found no significant difference in social maturity between male and female students, highlighting that gender does not play a determining role in the social maturity levels of students in this context.

Pathan and Chothani (2019)^[5] found three main points about social development among adolescents. Initially, social maturity scores were not significantly different for internet-addicted and non-addicted adolescents which showed that using the internet did not impact social maturity much. There was also a big difference found between urban and rural adolescents, with rural adolescents proving to have

higher social maturity levels. Lastly, the results indicated that neither the type of adolescent (addict or non-addict) nor their residential area had a noticeable effect on social maturity.

Dubey et. al. (2025) [3] have conducted a study on 200 students from 5 different schools to assess the anthropometric parameters of adolescent girls bearing age group 13-17 years of district Kanpur. In Kanpur district, adolescent girls face challenges including high rates of underweight and anemia, and concerns regarding reproductive health. The results revealed that anthropometric measurements tend to increase with age among adolescent girls and on the basis of BMI, 11 percent adolescent girls were under weighted, 70.5 percent were healthy, 13 percent were overweight and 5.5 percent were in the condition of obesity.

Student life of adolescence is an important stage for assessing social maturity, because in this time, they begins to build their learning skills, understanding and abilities that help in choosing a career path in the future. It stands as an important bridge when they move from the stage of adolescence into adulthood which is viewed as the most critical time in human life. Thus, this part of the process needs special attention. With social maturity, students know how to make the right decisions and interact favorably with their peers, as well as parents, friends and community. Lacking social maturity could create problems. On the basis of these ground, a study on 120 adolescence girls was conducted to find out their social maturity level in Kanpur city of Uttar Pradesh.

Materials and Methods

Sample

The sample comprised of 120 respondents, 60 adolescent girls from the rural area and 60 adolescent girls from the urban area were selected for the study.

Research Design

Descriptive research design with questionnaire method was used in this research to study social maturity of rural and urban adolescent girls. Random sampling was used for selection of respondents from Kanpur City.

Statistical Tools

Nalini Rao's social maturity scale (RSMS) was used which consist 9 parts having 90 statements. The Nalini Rao Maturity Scale is a psychological tool designed to assess the emotional maturity of individuals, particularly adolescents and young adults. It evaluates key aspects such as emotional stability, emotional progression, social adjustment, personality integration, and independence. The scale typically uses a Likert-type questionnaire where higher scores indicate lower emotional maturity. This scale is valuable for counselors, educators, and researchers aiming to understand emotional development and design interventions for personal growth and mental well-being. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis along with z test were used to analyze the data.

Objectives of the Study

Following objectives are taken for the completion of the study

1. To study the demographic characters of adolescent girls

of Kanpur city

2. To study the level of social maturity of adolescent girls of Kanpur city
3. To study the correlation between rural and urban adolescent girls at different areas of three sub dimension of social maturity.

Hypothesis of the Study

Following hypothesis is taken for the present study:

There is no significant difference of social maturity of the rural and urban adolescent girls

Results and Discussion

Demographic Status

Table 1 reveals that most of the respondents (56.67%) studied at private centers, while 43.33% went to public institutions. The highest number came from the biology stream (35%), while the next largest groups were from humanities (19.17%), commerce (18.33%), vocational courses (14.17%) and mathematics (13.33%). Just under half the participants (47.50%) had families of 4-7 members, 22.50% had large families with 7-10 members, 20.83% had small families with 1-4 members and the smallest portion (9.17%) reported their families were made up of more than 10 members. Almost two out of three (65%) respondents grew up in nuclear families and the remaining 35% grew up in joint families. From the survey, 35% said their family income was between ₹40,000 and ₹60,000, another 30% reported earnings of family above ₹60,000, 23.33% respondent's family earned between ₹20,000 and ₹40,000 and just 11.67% said their family income fell below ₹20,000.

Table 1: Demographic Character

S. No.	Demographic Character		Number	Percentage
1.	Education Center	Public	52	43.33
		Private	68	56.67
2.	Study Area	Math	16	13.33
		Biology	42	35.00
		Commerce	22	18.33
		Humanities	23	19.17
		Vocational	17	14.17
3.	Family size	0-4	25	20.83
		4-7	57	47.50
		7-10	27	22.50
		10>	11	9.17
4.	Family Type	Nuclear	78	65.00
		Joint	42	35.00
5.	Family Income	0-20000	14	11.67
		20000-40000	28	23.33
		40000-60000	42	35.00
		60000>	36	30.00

Overall Social Maturity Level

Table 2 reveals that majority of respondents (68.33%) displayed average to advanced maturity levels, with 35% in the average group and 31.67% having higher average maturity. Twenty percent of the participants were found to be high level maturity, but none reached the very high maturity level. The most immature bank branches were those with 7.5% below average, 4.17% low and 1.67% very low maturity, that is to say, the lower end. Most participants in the study tend to have moderate or high social maturity and a minority fall into the category of very low social maturity.

Table 2: Percentage of Overall Social Maturity of Adolescent girls of Kanpur City

S. No.	Levels	Number	Percentage
1.	Very High Level Maturity	0	0.00
2.	High Level Maturity	24	20.00
3.	Above Average Level Maturity	38	31.67
4.	Average Level Maturity	42	35.00
5.	Below Average Level Maturity	8	7.50
6.	Low Level Maturity	5	4.17
7.	Very Low Level Maturity	2	1.67

Correlation coefficient

The correlation analysis (Table 3) shows correlation between rural and urban adolescent girls at all nine sub-dimensions which were positively and significantly associated. The strongest relationships were found with Work Oriented (0.61), Ability to Take Stress (0.56), Communication (0.55), and Self Direction (0.52), indicating these traits are key contributors to social maturity. Moderate correlations were observed for Enlightened Trust (0.51), Cooperation (0.46), and Openness to Change (0.43). Though lower, Social Commitment (0.32) and Social Tolerance (0.28) also showed significant positive correlations. These results suggest that improvements in any of these dimensions can positively influence an individual's overall social maturity.

Table 4: Difference of Social Maturity between Rural and Urban Adolescent Girls

Adolescent Girls	No. of samples	Mean Value	St. Deviation	Z	P value	Critical Value	Hypothesis
Rural	60	201.56	20.25	-0.165	0.434	1.96	Accepted
Urban	60	202.29	27.56				

Conclusion

The findings of the study provide important insights into the factors influencing social maturity among adolescents. The study concludes that social maturity among adolescents is largely moderate to above average, with the majority of respondents exhibiting satisfactory levels of social development. The absence of respondents in the "very high" category and the small proportion with low or very low maturity levels suggest that while most adolescents are socially competent, there remains room for growth and development. Correlation analysis further revealed that all nine sub-dimensions of social maturity are positively and significantly related to adolescent girls. Notably, Work Orientation, Ability to Take Stress, Communication, and Self Direction emerged as the most influential dimensions. These findings highlight the importance of cultivating these traits in adolescents to support their overall social development. The absence of a significant difference in social maturity between rural and urban adolescent girls suggested that it alone may not be a determining factor in shaping social behavior and interpersonal skills. In essence, the study emphasizes the value of targeted interventions and educational programs aimed at enhancing key aspects of social maturity, particularly in the areas with stronger correlations, to foster well-rounded, socially competent individuals.

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Table 3: Correlation coefficient between adolescent girls and the different areas of three sub dimension of social maturity

S. No.	Sub Dimensions	Correlation	P value
1.	Work Oriented	0.61	0.0000
2.	Self Direction	0.52	0.0000
3.	Ability to take Stress	0.56	0.0000
4.	Communication	0.55	0.0000
5.	Enlightened Trust	0.51	0.0000
6.	Cooperation	0.46	0.0000
7.	Social Commitment	0.32	0.0003
8.	Social Tolerance	0.28	0.0019
9.	Openness to Change	0.43	0.0000

Testing Hypothesis

In order to test the formulated null hypothesis the mean, standard deviation and z test for rural and urban adolescent girls' social maturity are calculated.

The comparative analysis of social maturity between rural and urban adolescent girls shows that the mean score for rural girls is 201.56 with a standard deviation of 20.25, while urban girls have a slightly higher mean of 202.29 with a standard deviation of 27.56. The Z-value is -0.165, and the p-value is 0.434, which is greater than the critical value of 1.96 at the 5% significance level. Since the P-value is not statistically significant, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating that there is no significant difference in the level of social maturity between rural and urban adolescent girls in this sample.

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