

# SOCIAL BEHAVIOR AND STUDENTS ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

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## ABSTRACT

*The research was designed to study the social behavior of college students of 11<sup>th</sup> class and to find out as to what extent the social behavior correlates to the academic achievement? The study also analysed how well 11<sup>th</sup> class students behave in various social set ups of their lives and how well they are keeping up their academic achievements. The study was descriptive in nature. A self report "Social Behavior Inventory (SBI)" validated in a pilot test on fifty students, was used as a measure of social behavior of students. The information on academic achievements was taken from the Gazette of Part I Examination, 2007.*

*The results indicated that most of the time students' social behavior was according to the norms of the society but sometimes they showed anger and aggressiveness. High academic achievement was negatively correlated to the acceptable type of social behavior while unacceptable behavior had no correlation with academic achievement.*

*The findings suggest that emphasis should be given on the understanding of 1<sup>st</sup> year students' deviant behavior to channelize the youth energies towards more productive and useful aspects of their lives which, at the moment are ignored in our colleges. Future research may focus on studying the effects of social behavior on subject wise performance and development of pro-social behavior and improvements in deviant behavior of the students at college level.*

**Keywords:** Social Behavior, Academic Achievement

## Introduction

The move from school to college can present young people with difficult challenges. Becoming familiar with a new environment, new

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teachers and many different expectations often leads school leavers and their parents to worry at this time. After completing Secondary School Education when students enter in colleges for further study i.e. intermediate (11<sup>th</sup> class) they go through new experiences of life. The transition phase becomes a source of new challenges that the students have to face. Both the social environment and academic life of college is remarkably different from high school. The students need to develop both academic and social abilities in order to cope with the new challenges of learning as well as of social environment of college life. College life is considered as a stage where adolescents assess and reassess their wants, goals, or desires in life (Masten & Coatworth, 1998).

Among a wide range of social behaviors, the unacceptable or negative behavior interrupts learning process and creates difficulties for both the teachers and the peers. Generally peer group influences the nature of interest and activities of the adolescent and their feeling of being unacceptable may lead the adolescent toward withdrawal, depression or deviant behavior. As a result the adolescent may begin to remain absent from the academic activities and sometimes may begin to dislike the social activities. On the other hand positive or acceptable social behavior as defined by Epps, Park, Huston, & Ripke, (2003) represents important skills for dealing with peers and adults. So people accept other's behavior by evaluating them in relation to the social norms. The present study used the transition from school to college as the context for examining the relationship between social behavior and academic achievement of 11<sup>th</sup> class students.

Adolescents at the middle and high school or college are particularly vulnerable socially, emotionally and academically. The reason may be that as Pollock (2001) writes, the rapid physical transformation may produce insecurity, self-criticism and self-consciousness so their relationships with others become more important. Students at adolescent's age face challenges relating to social, emotional and academic pressures. They become serious about the issues that affect them and their own world. If adolescents do not have much success in social and academic matters they may become discouraged, and ultimately decide to leave the school or college. Brockman & Russell (2007) cited that academically successful adolescents are less likely to abuse alcohol and to exhibit socially deviant behavior. Similarly the self-regulated learners have usually been found exhibiting greater academic performance. Lee (2007) suggests the reason that well adjusted students



at schools build confident learning and exhibit appropriate school behavior.

The school and college teachers have the responsibility to protect the adolescents from the influences of the environment and help them in achieving their life goals.

Persons having social skills such as being kind to others, respect others, care for the other's view point and being helpful in solving the difficulties, are given respect in the society. According to Goldstein (1981) appropriate social skills reflect how able the person is in organizing his cognitions and behaviors into socially acceptable actions and how well he assesses and reassesses himself in reaching particular goals.

In a research Hawley (2003) studied that the "self- and other-reported characteristics of children who varied in their use of coercive (aggressive) and pro-social (cooperative) strategies of resource control. The children were categorized as bi-strategic controllers (Machiavellians), coercive controllers, pro-social controllers, non-controllers, or typical. The self-reported positive characteristics are agreeableness and negative characteristics are hostility" (p.1). Aggressive behavior of persons is not accepted by the society. In one way or another society accepts and appraises only well mannered personalities. Socially competent personalities can be identified in our surroundings from their behavior. In this respect Scott (n.d.) says that social behavior and its effectiveness can only be determined within the context of a particular social environment including communities, peer groups, families and cultures. Peer, family and community members judge the individual behavior by keeping interaction with them.

Studies indicate that aggressive behavior may develop particularly from peer rejection, low educational achievement, and unemployment (Hawley, 2003). Studies on the association between family variables and violent behavior at school have pointed out that if negative family environment is paired with the problems of communication between parents and children it results in behavioral problems in adolescents. This point is supported by the recent researches on adolescent's behavior which reveals that the quality of communication with parents is closely related to adolescents' behavior and psychological adjustment (Liu, 2003). Angry and aggressive adolescents create discipline and management problems. They show their aggression usually against the

institutional authority and property. Therefore the relationship between attitude toward institutional authority and violent behavior in adolescence has been frequently reported. In this respect Hall-Lande (2007) reflects that the students having close and supportive friendships achieve higher levels of peer acceptance, increased social competence, lower levels of behavioral problems and improved school performance.

## **Objectives**

The study was focused on the following objectives:

1. To identify the social behavior of 11<sup>th</sup> class college students with family, with peer, within group and with college by using the Social Behavior Inventory.
2. To explore the inter-correlations of components and sub components of the Social Behavior Inventory with the main scale.
3. To find out the relationship between high and low academic achievements levels and social behavior of 11<sup>th</sup> class students.
4. To find out the gender differences in social behavior with family, with peer, within group and in college.
5. To find out the differences in social behavior of 11<sup>th</sup> class students living in different geographic locations with family, with peer, within group and in college.

## **Hypotheses**

The study was descriptive in nature and was predominantly quantitative, with the following hypotheses tested to establish the information "as to what extent the social behavior correlates to the academic achievement" that students face.

- Ho 1 There is no significant gender difference in social behavior of students.
- Ho2 Social behavior of students living at different geographic locations is not significantly different.
- Ho 3 There is no significant relationship between social behavior scores of students and the academic achievements in Part I examination.
- Ho 4 There is no significant difference in social behavior of students having different levels of academic achievements.

## **Method**

The design of the study was descriptive as it described the relationship of social behavior with academic achievements of students studying in urban and rural colleges of the Punjab.

## **Sample**

Participants were 819 first year college students both boys and girls enrolled after passing their matriculation examination. These participants were selected from 25 colleges situated in both urban and rural areas of districts Rawalpindi and Attock.

## **Measures**

### **Social Behavior Inventory (SBI)**

A self report measure (SBI) was developed that initially contained 127 test items on social behavior of the students with family, with peer, within group and in college; behavior with college authority, with teachers and with curriculum. Pilot testing was carried out (and the reliability of the tool was determined through item analysis and factor analysis) through a number of steps; item analysis, factor analysis, to make the measure reliable and valid. The final version of SBI contained 51 items and showed 0.90 alpha reliability.

### **Demographic Information Sheet**

The information regarding Students' age, gender and geographic location was gathered through demographic sheet.

### **Annual Result of Part I Examination**

Academic achievements of the students were taken from the Gazette of Part I examination, 2007 of Rawalpindi Board. Academic achievement was measured on the basis of percentage of marks. 40% and above marks were taken as high academic achievement while marks below 40% were taken as low academic achievement.

## **Findings**

The study examined the nature of social behavior of the students. The results showed that students always behave respectfully with family,

