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### Study of Social Awareness among School Students in Purba Medinipur District of West Bengal

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#### Abstract:

The fundamental concept of social awareness is the ability to evaluate the perspectives of other individuals, groups, or communities and to use that information in interactions with them. The current study aims to investigate the significant differences in higher secondary school students' social awareness levels according to gender, family type, and stream. This study uses the normative survey research approach to achieve its goals. The research is quantitative and descriptive. A sample of 100 upper secondary students from West Bengal's Purba Medinipur area was used in the current research. The researcher created self-administered, standardized social awareness instruments. Five life skills—problem solving, decision-making, empathy, effective communication, and dealing with stress, grief, and loss—were the subject of a social awareness questionnaire created for upper secondary school pupils. "Twenty questions on a five-point Likert scale with the options "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Neutral," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree" made up the questionnaire". The statistical methods employed in this investigation were the mean, standard deviation, and t-test. The study's conclusions show that there are no significant differences in social awareness amongst upper secondary school pupils in terms of gender, family structure, and stream.

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## INTRODUCTION:

Awareness is the realization of issues which is based scientifically on intellectual background, so it is a state of mind according to (Slaiha, 2014). But this study will focus on social awareness. (Goleman, 2006) describes social awareness as "a spectrum that runs from instantaneously sensing another's inner state, to understanding feelings and thoughts, to "getting" complicated social situations". It includes:

*"Primal empathy: feeling with others; sensing non-verbal emotional signals; Attunement-listening with full receptivity; attuning to a person; Empathic accuracy- understanding another person's thoughts, feelings and intentions; Social cognition- knowing how social world works."*

"The ability to empathize with others of diverse backgrounds and cultures, comprehend social and ethical norms for conduct, and be aware of the resources and supports available via family, school, and the community are all examples of social awareness". A conducive learning environment is supported by excellent classroom conduct, which is a crucial component of social awareness. It is also widely known that social awareness is essential for success in the job. According to a recent business survey by the Partnership for 21st Century Talents, social awareness is related to four of the top five skills for high school graduates entering the workforce: professionalism, teamwork, communication, and social responsibility.

The ability to empathize with others, comprehend broad historical and social standards of behaviour in many contexts, and recognize family, school, and community resources and supports all fall under the category of social awareness. If students can adopt various viewpoints, value diversity, recognize others' feelings, exhibit empathy, respect others, and be able to interpret common body language and facial expressions, they will be better able to negotiate relationships. "Students are often helped by role-playing or "walking a mile in someone else's shoes" to comprehend other viewpoints and life experiences".

Sociological challenges and human behavioural changes are increasingly closely related in everyday life. Every action a person does have a set of behavioural inputs. Elders shape human conduct via their lifestyle, education, and the greater social context, including their homes, schools, and workplaces. Human conduct influences how attitudes are formed. One has to be conscious of society to have a better mindset. A variety of elements, such as physical location, social conventions, and personal interests, may be categorized as society. To live a happy life and help others live happy lives, one should be aware of what is going on in and around them. Alertness in general, awareness of our surroundings, what's going on, and the capacity to effectively read the emotions of others we engage with.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Ms. A. Smitha, (2018)** Life skills based teaching learning process will help strengthen and promote the quality of the educational system. Life skills techniques in teaching and learning process as well as in socially oriented activities will create a good relationship between teachers and students. At present, most of the educational institutions are focussing on life skills for the overall development of students from primary to the higher education level. Sensitization on the relevance and importance of life skills among students will inculcate good qualities in them. Bringing up positive modification in behaviour, knowledge, attitudes, skills and values. Through this research paper, an attempt is made to study life skills awareness among post graduate students. Hence, more researches need to be conducted in life skills area so that we can design effective strategies for building life skills in learners to transform them into globally competent, tolerant and responsible citizens of our country.

**Gregson, Hill and Blagden (2015)** pointed out that awareness of each other will determine the way people relate and interact.

**Augoustin, Walker & Donaghue (2014)** stated that it would be very difficult for a person to function if he/she went about his/her everyday life without prior knowledge or expectation about the people and events around him/her. Likewise, Tsui (2000) believed that social awareness has to be understood well because it is an essential feature in student development that influences social change and development of critical thinking skills. Therefore, educational institutions should think of the ways and means to address this concern. Supporting each other is what makes a community stronger and can make life simpler and better for the individual members.

**Goleman (2006)** social awareness is defined as "a continuum that spans from instantly sense another's inner condition, to comprehending emotions and ideas, to "getting" intricate social circumstances. It contains: Basic empathy-sharing feelings with others and recognizing nonverbal emotional cues; Attunement is the ability to listen intently and to tune into another person. Understanding another person's thoughts, emotions, and intentions with precision; Social cognition is the understanding of how society operates.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:** The literature and studies obtained for this study have made clear the importance of social awareness in students' lives since it will aid in their academic achievement and help them develop into better people. Each component of social awareness explains how it has a favourable effect on how social and emotional competence in people develops. Therefore the researcher stated the problem as **“Study of Social Awareness among School students in Purba Medinipur district of West Bengal”**

**SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:** Students play a crucial role in the preparation of communities or societies to explore innovative horizons and to gain higher progress level and development and this is possible to the fullest extent only if they are well equipped with life skills. And to be well equipped with life skills first one needs to be aware of life skills and its significance in one's personal, social and professional life. The collaboration of life skills with the teaching skills or techniques will surely find a solution for the development of desired behaviour, attitudes, knowledge, values and skills of the students. The social awareness will reduce bullying, violence, crime, antisocial behaviour, sexual abuse, alcoholic consumption, drug abuse, smoking, premarital pregnancy, peer conflicts, suicidal attempts, stress, trauma etc. and allow students to face the challenges and meet the demands in their life. There is a necessity of social awareness to improve the quality of life. Social awareness will enhance the ability and positive attitude to search for and acquire more knowledge on life skills. This awareness will help the students to transit their knowledge from the classroom to the real world. The present paper is a step made in this regard.

**OBJECTIVES:** The following goals have been chosen by the researcher taking into account the issue indicated for the current study:

- To investigate the gender-based differences in the upper secondary students' degree of social awareness.
- To investigate the major variation in upper secondary school pupils' social awareness levels according to family type
- To investigate the substantial stream-based differences in upper secondary students' social awareness.

## HYPOTHESIS:

**Hp1-** There is no discernible difference between male and female upper secondary school pupils in terms of social awareness.

**Hp2-** There is no discernible difference between upper secondary school children from nuclear and joint families in terms of their degree of social awareness?

**Hp3-** The degree of social consciousness among students in the arts and sciences streams of higher secondary schools does not significantly vary.

## METHODOLOGY:

This study employs a normative survey research methodology. The research is quantitative and descriptive. A sample of 100 upper secondary students from West Bengal's Purba Medinipur area was used in the current research. The researcher used a stratified random sampling technique.

## SAMPLE:

Out of 100 pupils, 50 male students (25 in the arts and 25 in the sciences) and 50 female students (25 in the arts and 25 in the sciences) were found at the various schools in West Bengal's Purba Medinipur district.

## TOOLS:

“The researcher created self-administered, standardized social awareness instruments”.

Five life skills—problem solving, decision-making, empathy, effective communication, and dealing with stress, grief, and loss—were the subject of a social awareness questionnaire created for upper secondary school pupils. Twenty questions on a five-point Likert scale with the options "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Neutral," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree" made up the questionnaire.

## STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES:

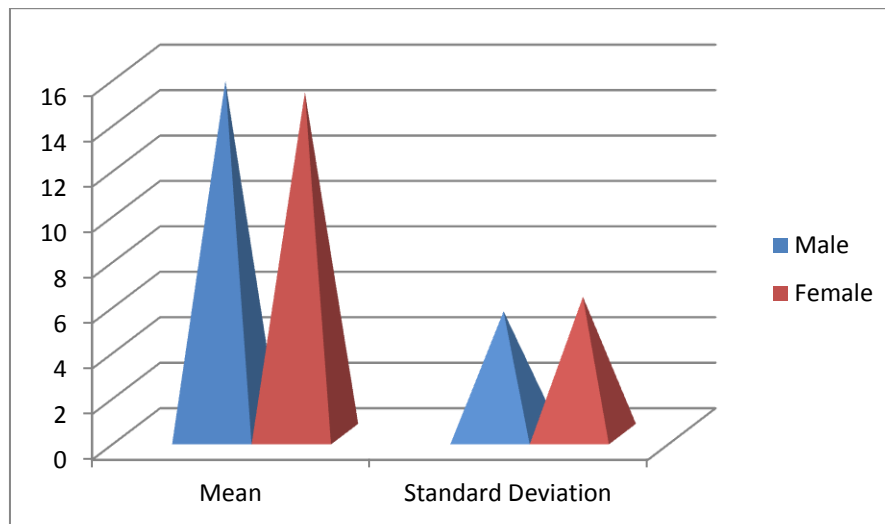
“Mean, Standard deviation and t-test are the statistical techniques used in this study”

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

**Table 1: Mean difference of social awareness among Higher Secondary school students with respect to gender**

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean	t	Remarks
Male	50	15.54	5.39	0.76	0.44	Not significant at 0.05 level
Female	50	15.04	6.03	0.85		

From the above table it is evident that the mean score for Male students' social awareness is 15.54 and for female school students is 15.04. There is a little bit difference in the SD between the male students and female students. The t-value testing the significance of mean difference in social awareness of male and female school students has come out to be 0.44 which is less than the critical value and not significant at 0.05 levels. This shows that there is no significant mean difference in life skills among higher secondary school students with respect to gender.

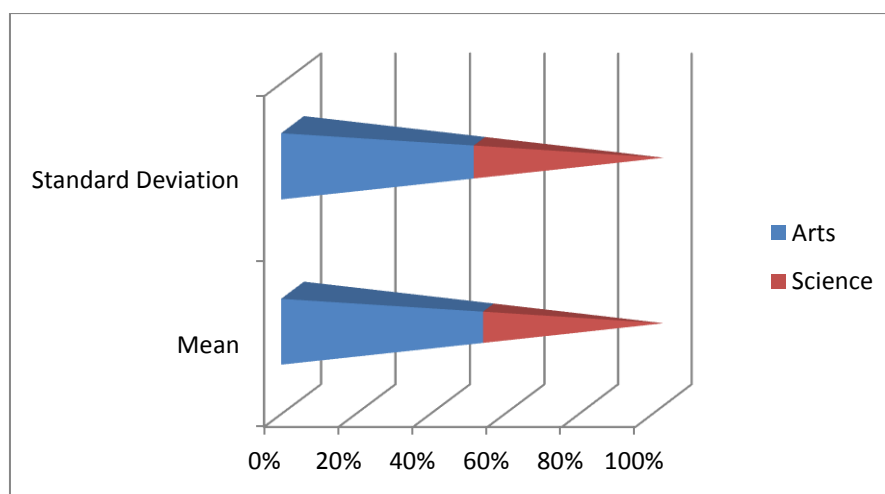


*Fig showing Mean and SD of social awareness in respect of Gender*

**Table 2: Mean difference in social awareness among school students with respect to family type**

Family type	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean	t	Remarks
Nuclear	78	15.56	5.84	0.66	0.97	Not significant at 0.05 level
Joint	22	14.32	5.14	1.10		

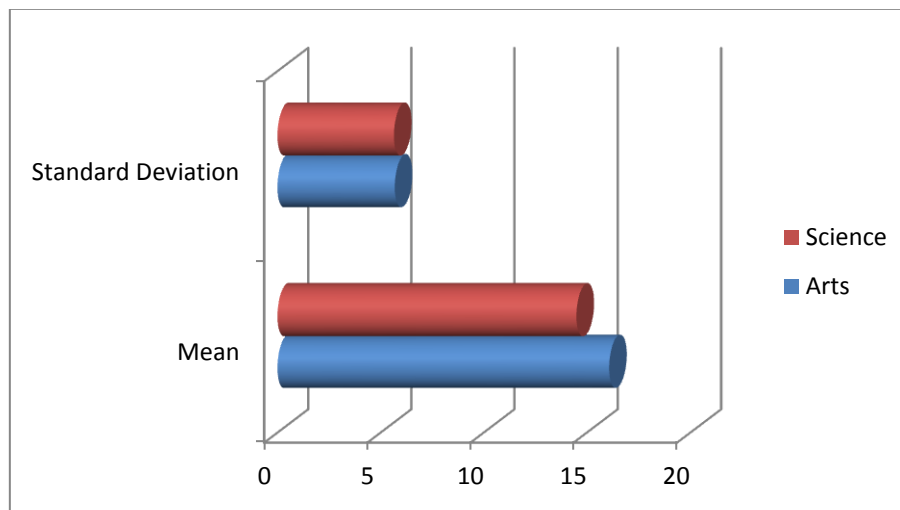
It is clear from the above table that mean score of social awareness among the students belonging to the nuclear family (15.56) is higher than the students belonging to the joint family (14.32). The t-value, which was used to examine the significance of the mean difference in social awareness between students from nuclear and joint families in upper secondary schools, turned out to be 0.13, which is below the critical threshold and not significant at the 0.05 level. This demonstrates that there is no discernible variation in higher secondary pupils' mean social awareness with regard to family type.



*Fig showing Mean and SD of social awareness in respect of Family*

Subjects/Streams	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean	t	Remarks
Arts	50	16.08	5.69	0.80	1.39	Not significant at 0.05 level
Science	50	14.50	5.65	0.80		

The t-value, which measures the significance of the mean difference in social awareness between upper secondary pupils in the arts and sciences, was 1.39, which is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This demonstrates that there is no discernible difference in upper secondary pupils' mean levels of social awareness across the arts and science streams.



*Fig showing Mean and SD of social awareness in respect of Stream*

**MAJOR FINDINGS:** The main findings of the present study are as follows-

- ✓ In West Bengal's Purba Medinipur district, students in the Arts stream had better levels of social awareness than students in the Science stream at the upper secondary level.
- ✓ Higher secondary school students belonging to joint family have lower level of social awareness than that of the students belonging to the nuclear family.
- ✓ There is no discernible gender difference in the social awareness of pupils in upper secondary schools.

**CONCLUSION:** Students who actively participate in school activities, dealing with others belonging to different culture, race and sexual orientation may become overwhelmed by the stress of competition and maladjustment. Promoting social awareness that focuses on understanding diversity would make students become socially responsible and may avoid creating conflicts. They will know how to regulate emotion which could positively reflect healthy relationship wherein respect for others is present and may prevent risky behaviors among students.

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