

## Effect of School Environment on Social Maturity of Higher Secondary Students

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**How to cite this article:** Dinesh Kashyap, Prof. Dr. Sangeeta Shroff. (2023) Effect of School Environment on Social Maturity of Higher Secondary Students. *Library Progress International*, 43(2), 3082-3086

**RECEIVED:** Received on 19th Oct-2023 | Revised on 23th Nov-2023 | Accepted on 08th Dec-2023 | Published on 18th -2023

### 1.1 Abstract

The objective of the present study is to ascertain the association of school environment with social maturity in higher secondary students. To conduct the study, 600 higher secondary school students from the Janjgir-Champa district of Chhattisgarh were chosen. The sample includes 300 students from government schools and 300 students from private schools. Stratified sampling was used for the selection of subjects. The perception of students towards the school environment was assessed by an inventory prepared by Mishra (1983). The social maturity scale validated by Nalini Rao (2005) was used to assess social maturity among higher secondary students. A significant positive correlation between school environment and social maturity of higher secondary students. It shows that as higher secondary students perceive their school environment more favourably, their social maturity also enhances, i.e. social maturity gets enhanced with a good school environment. Results are consistent across government and private schools. It was concluded that the school environment paves the way to boost social maturity in higher secondary students. It is suggested that an inclusive and facilitative school environment needs to be created to enhance social maturity so that students can successfully participate in society.

**Keywords:** School environment, social maturity, govt. and private higher secondary schools

### INTRODUCTION

India's National Education Policy 2020 emphasizes the need for the holistic development of students, ensuring not only academic growth but also the development of essential life skills. It is widely believed that the school environment plays a significant role in the overall development of students, a fact that has been supported by numerous studies. Among prominent variables that may have an effect of school environment, social maturity is considered crucial for continuous progress in life. In this context, it is extremely important for teachers, policymakers, and researchers to understand the impact of the school environment on students' social maturity.

The term school environment broadly refers to the physical, social, psychological, and cultural surroundings in which teaching and learning take place. The school environment plays a vital role in shaping students' academic, social, and emotional development. Schools are often regarded as a miniature form of society, and their environment reflects broader social values, norms, and challenges.

A positive school environment not only promotes academic achievement but also nurtures students' social, emotional, and physical well-being, thereby fostering their overall development.

The term social maturity is composed of two words, i.e. 1. social and 2. maturity. Social refers to living in a community and adjusting to the social world, while maturity indicates the stage at which the process of full development in an individual is completed. Thus, maturity in social relationships is termed social maturity. In this way, social maturity provides a broader understanding of the social environment and leads to the development of a stable pattern of social behaviour.

Social maturity influences students' future lives; therefore, understanding its relationship with the school environment will provide important data in this context. The findings of this study will offer valuable insights to policymakers and teachers regarding the significant role of the school environment in influencing students' social maturity.

Hence, the present study examines the effect of the school environment of government and non-government higher secondary schools on the social maturity of students.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objective of the present study is to find out the effect of the school environment on the social maturity of students in higher secondary classes.

### **HYPOTHESIS**

**H<sub>01</sub>** No significant association will be observed between the environment in higher secondary school and the social maturity of students.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

Rathore, Kusum and Kapoor (2024) investigated social maturity in students based on their age and family income. It was found that social maturity in students of high-income families was significantly higher than that of students of low-income families. A positive association of age was found with social maturity in students. It was concluded that age and income have a meaningful influence on social maturity in students.

Ibrahim and Mohammed (2023) in their study reported a significant relationship between academic stress and self-concept in students with their school environment. It was concluded that a better school environment is needed to reduce academic stress and enhance self-concept in students.

Kaur and Kaur (2023) reported a meaningful impact of personality on social maturity in senior secondary school students.

Savita (2022) found that boys from senior secondary schools perceive the school environment as more conducive than girls.

Tharagi and Stephen (2022) in their study evaluated the perception of higher secondary school students towards the school environment. The analysis revealed that students perceive their school environment as moderately conducive, and the results are also influenced by gender, place of residence and parental educational status, respectively.

Kaur (2020) in their study reported a difference in perception of students towards the school environment based on the nature of the school.

Sharma and Patidar (2018) reported a meaningful influence of school environment on students' personality development.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Sample**

To conduct the study, 600 higher secondary school students from the Janjgir-Champa district of Chhattisgarh were chosen. The sample includes 300 students from government schools and 300 students from private schools. Stratified sampling was used for the selection of subjects.

**Tools:**

**School Environment Inventory :**

The perception of students towards the school environment was assessed by an inventory prepared by Mishra (1983). It consists of 70 items. Higher scores indicate a better perception of the school environment. This inventory is highly reliable and valid.

**Social Maturity Scale**

The social maturity scale validated by Nalini Rao (2005) was used to assess social maturity among higher secondary students. It consists of 90 statements, and higher scores indicate better social maturity. This scale is highly reliable and valid.

**Procedure:**

600 higher secondary school students were chosen from various government and private schools of Janjgir-Champa district of Chhattisgarh. The school environment inventory and social maturity scale were administered. The responses were tabulated and put to further statistical analysis. Results are given in Tables 1, 2 and 3, respectively.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Table 1**  
**Calculation of Pearson Correlation Coefficient between School Environment and Social Maturity in Higher Secondary Students (N=600)**

	'r'	<b>Social Maturity</b>
<b>School Environment</b>		0.463

$r(df=598) .08 (p<.05)$

A perusal of Table 1 indicates a significant positive correlation between school environment and social maturity ( $r=0.463, p<0.05$ ). It shows that as higher secondary students perceive their school environment more favourably, their social maturity also enhances, i.e. social maturity gets enhanced with a good school environment.

**Table 2**  
**Calculation of Pearson Correlation Coefficient between School Environment and Social Maturity in Students enrolled in Govt Higher Secondary School (N=300)**

	'r'	<b>Social Maturity</b>
<b>School Environment</b>		0.475

$r(df=298)$  at .05 level 0.113

A perusal of Table 2 indicates a significant positive correlation between school environment and social maturity in students enrolled in government schools ( $r=0.475, p<0.05$ ). It shows that as higher secondary students of government schools perceive their school environment more favourably, their social maturity also enhances, i.e. social maturity gets enhanced with a good environment in government schools.

**Table 3**  
**Calculation of Pearson Correlation Coefficient between School Environment and Social Maturity in Students of Private Higher Secondary School (N=300)**

		<b>Social Maturity</b>
<b>School Environment</b>	'r'	0.460

r(df=298) at .05 level 0.113

A perusal of Table 3 indicates a significant positive correlation between school environment and social maturity in students enrolled in private schools ( $r=0.460$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). It shows that as higher secondary students of private schools perceive their school environment more favourably, their social maturity also enhances.

The finding of the study regarding a positive association between school environment and social maturity has a support of some psychological and educational theories. In schools, students not only learn academic subjects but also interact with fellow students and teachers. Interacting with them teaches students about socially accepted behavioural norms, tolerance and giving respect to others' ideas and thoughts, and all these are part of social maturity. Through group work, sports, cultural programs, and classroom discussions, students learn to share ideas, accept differences, resolve conflicts, and work collaboratively. Such experiences gradually develop their ability to adjust to different social situations and strengthen their sense of social responsibility.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on results and discussion, it was concluded that the school environment paves the way to boost social maturity in higher secondary students. It is suggested that an inclusive and facilitative school environment needs to be created to enhance social maturity so that students can successfully participate in society.

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