

## **ENHANCING SOCIAL SKILLS THROUGH CRAFT BASED PEDAGOGY AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL SCHOOL CHILDREN**

**(Blended Learning through Nai -Talim)**

**By**

**\*Nurcilin Asha, N., & \*\*Taj Aysha, A.**

*\*Lecturer, DIET, T.Kallupatti, Madurai district, Tami Nadu, India.*

*\*\*Lecturer, DIET, T.Kallupatti, Madurai district, Tami Nadu, India.*

### **Abstract**

*Social skill is an important aspect for every human being to succeed in life. This study examines the level of social skills of elementary school children of Madurai district. Building social skill among the children is necessary and it helps children to design their aim for themselves and build positive relationship with peers. This study analyse the five components of social skill among the elementary children. Social skill questionnaire was prepared under five dimensions such as communication, self-confidence, co-operation, active listening and empathy. Experimental method was adopted for the study. The sample consists of sixty elementary school children from two blocks of Madurai district. The investigator employed craft based and Nai- talim activities as a strategy for experimental group and conventional method for control group. Post test was conducted for both the groups. After a period of time delayed post test was conducted for both the groups. Experimental group children performed better than the control group students.*

**Keywords:** *social skill, craft, pedagogy, elementary, Scholl, children, nai-talim.*

### **Introduction**

Socialization is one of the most important process in the development of the individual. According to Gander & Gardiner, 1993 socialization is the process that individuals, especially children, become one of the functional members of the significant group and gain the values, behaviours and beliefs of the members of the group. The process of socialization begins very early in child life. It is the process by

which the child acquires the language, culture of his or her family and community into which he or she was born. Within this community, children learn the language, norms, values, behaviours, expectations and social skills that are appropriate for their "world". Social skills are behaviours enabling individuals to interact influentially and to abstain from undesirable responses (Rawles, 2016). These skills have their roots in cultural

and social foundations and include behaviours such as pioneering in the establishment of communications, requesting help, making suggestions to help others. One of the most important educational aims of childhood is to develop social skills and the level of children and adults enjoyment of these skills is influential in their personal, social and educational success.

The present study revolves around Gandhiji's Nai-Talim in which experiential learning is given importance. Nai-Talim is the education of humans into thinking and productively working and not training animals into writing and reading leading a dependent life. Nai-Talim is not alienated assumption based learning of a given reality but it is involved experiential learning evolving reality. In Gandhi's Nai-Talim, craft as a part of curriculum many activities are suggested to develop the cognitive competencies, social competencies and affective competencies for each stage of students. The investigator connected Nai-Talim with craft based pedagogy. All aspects of individual development – intellectual, physical, social and spiritual- are cultivated in a curriculum that integrates learning with hands-on work that prepares young people for their life in the world. Nai-Talim is a

beautiful blend of all the four and covers the whole education of the individual. Craft based pedagogy or learning through productive work is so closely related to the rest of the process of learning that it is almost inseparable from other pedagogies of learning. As crafts are closely related to community life, the learners also explore the scientific principles involved in the community practices or the process of various vocations. They seek to find out why and wherefore of these processes. The students when they become practitioners of these vocations in later stages may design different crafts involving various science concepts and develop indigenous strategies to deal with the problems of particular vocation and fulfill their requirements of personal and community life.

### **Craft based pedagogy**

Craft based pedagogy is a combination of craft education and art education. The craft and art education is considered to be a self-expression of an individual. The individual express his thoughts, emotions, feelings in their art and craft. It helps an individual for holistic development. The creativity of the children will develop and it is a proper medium for self-expression. It is not only a product of crafted items

but it inculcates social skills, intellectual skills, relational skills, cultural sensitivity and scientific attitudes among children. This pedagogy is a self-expressive process, children correlate the daily happenings of their lives and thus come to terms with its demand and situation. Achieving something in art and craft gives a sense of great success among children and creates a positive self-image, strengthens one's identity and a sense of uniqueness. Craft as self-expression can increase the self-esteem and joy of living (Pöllänen, 2011).

### **Need and Significance of the Study**

School is an important place to develop social skills and it is the main focus of social life for children who lack social skills and they hopefully learn to adjust with peers, obey the rules of the classroom, and try to solve the problems logically in a peaceful way and make friends. Children having social skills deficits show unacceptable behaviours which create disabling situations both academically and non-academically (Elksnin & Elksnin, 1998). Those who lack social skills have problems in adjusting to new situations, often exhibiting maladaptive behaviours (i.e. Poor self-control, anxiety, inattention, and

disruptive behaviour). These children also display social behaviours, such as weak social perception and a lack of judgment and empathy in the school environment, where students are always working as a part of a larger group. In this technological world, it is an indispensable need of each and every child to equip themselves in aspects such as language, academics, creativity, decision making, critical thinking etc. When a child reared through craft based pedagogy it brings out a holistic development in him and shines in his later period of life.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following are the objectives of the present study:

- To study the social skills of children at elementary level.
- To find out the level of social skill of elementary students before and after the intervention
- To develop the social skill of children through craft-based activities
- To implement craft-based activities at elementary level in schools.

### **Hypothesis of the study**

- There is no significant difference in the pre-test score of experimental and controlled group.

- There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post test score of controlled groups.
- There is no significant difference in the pre and post test score of experimental groups.
- There is no significant difference in the post test score of the experimental and controlled group.
- There is no significant difference in the post test and delayed post test score of the control group.
- There is no significant difference in the post test and delayed post test score of experimental groups.
- There is no significant difference in the delayed post test score of control and experimental group

### **Method, Sample and Sampling**

The investigator has selected an experimental method for the present study. The location of the present study is randomly selected Usilampatti and Alganallur blocks of Madurai district. The researcher adopted a simple random sampling technique for the selection of the sample. For the

present study a sample of 30 children of VIII were selected from each two blocks and totally the sample consists of 60 elementary level children for control and experimental group.

### **Tool used**

The following research tool along with background information has been used for the collection of data for the selected samples. Social skill questionnaire was prepared and standardized by the investigator. The tool was constructed under five dimensions such as communication skills, co-operation, active listening, empathy and self- confidence. The pilot study was conducted among 50 elementary level children to ensure the reliability and validity of the research tool. The final tool consists of 35 items. The reliability of the present tool was estimated through a split half method and the reliability of the tool was 0.743 and the validity was 0.785.

### **Analysis and Findings**

#### **Hypothesis 1**

There is no significant difference between the pre-test scores of the Control group and the Experimental group regarding social skills of children at elementary level.

**Table 1. Mean scores of control and experimental group in pre -test**

<b>Variables</b>				<b>Standard Error Mean</b>		<b>Remarks (0.01 level)</b>
<b>Pre-test</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S. D</b>		<b>t-value</b>	
Control	30	20.366	3.82	0.70	0.1399	Not Significant
Experimental	30	20.233	3.56	0.65		

The mean of pre-test scores of Control and Experimental group are 20.366 and 20.233 with standard deviation 3.82 and 3.56 respectively. The obtained value 0.1399 is less than the table value 2.392 at 0.01 level significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant difference between Control group (M=20.366) and Experimental group

(M=20.233) students in their pre-test level. Before treatment, both group students were almost equal in their social skills.

**Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the Control group regarding social skills at elementary level.

**Table 2. Mean score of control group in pre-test and post test**

<b>Variables</b>				<b>Standard Error Mean</b>		<b>Remarks (0.01 level)</b>
<b>Control group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S. D</b>		<b>t-value</b>	
Pre-test	30	20.366	3.82	0.70	3.2590	Significant
Post-test	30	23.433	3.46	0.63		

The above table shows the Mean, Standard Deviation, Standard error mean and t-value of pre-test and post-test of Control group regarding social

skills at elementary level. The mean pre-test and post-test scores of the Control group are 20.366 and 23.433 with standard deviation 3.82 and 3.46

respectively. The calculated t-value 3.2590 is greater than the table value 2.392 at 0.01 level of significance. So the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of Control group students in the level of social skills. The results found that the mean social skill scores of Control group students showed a difference in post-test (23.433) when

compared with pre-test (20.366) in their social skills through conventional methods.

**Hypothesis 3**

There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the Experimental group regarding level of social skills at elementary level.

**Table 3. Mean score of Pre- test and Post- test of Experimental group**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S. D</b>	<b>Standard Error Mean</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>Remarks (0.01 level)</b>
<b>Experimental</b>						
Pre-test	30	20.233	3.56	0.65	7.9799	Significant
Post-test	30	27.466	3.46	0.63		

The above table shows the Mean, Standard Deviation, Standard error mean and t-value of the Experimental group. The mean value of pre-test was 20.233 and post-test was 27.466 and the standard deviation was 3.56 in the pre-test and 3.46 in the post-test. The t-value was 7.9799. The calculated t-value (7.9799) is greater than the table value. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference between the scores of pre-test and post-test of Experimental group students in the level of social

skills. Moreover, the Experimental group students show more achievement scores (M=27.466) at post-test level when compared with pre-test scores (M=20.233) through craft based pedagogy.

**Hypothesis 4**

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the Control group and the Experimental group in the level of social skills at the post-test.

**Table 4. Mean scores of Control and experimental group in Post-test**

Variables				Standard		Remarks
Post-test	N	Mean	S. D	Error Mean	t-value	(0.01 level)
Control	30	23.433	3.46	0.63		
Experimental	30	27.466	3.46	0.63	4.5132	Significant

The above table shows the Mean, Standard Deviation and Standard error mean of Control and Experimental groups. The mean scores of Control group students were 23.433 and the Experimental group were 27.466 and the standard deviation was 3.46 and 3.46 respectively. The t-value was 4.5132. It is inferred that the calculated t-value (4.5132) is greater than the table value. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference between the Control group and Experimental group students in their social skills scores at post-test level. The mean difference between

Control group (23.433) and Experimental group (27.466) is 4.033. Moreover, after the treatment, the Experimental group students have more social skills scores (M=27.466) exposed through craft based pedagogy when compared with Control group students (M=23.433) who were learned through conventional methods at post-test level.

### Hypothesis 5

There is no significant difference between the scores of post-tests and post-delayed as regarding the level of social skills by the Control group.

**Table 5. Mean score of control group in Post- test and Delayed Post- test**

Variables	N	Mean	S. D	Standard Error Mean	t-value	Remarks (0.01 level)
Control group						
Post-test	30	23.433	3.46	0.63		
Delayed Post Test	30	20.800	3.82	0.70	2.7988	Significant

The above table shows the post-test and delayed post-test scores of the Control group regarding social skills at elementary level. The mean score of post-test of the Control group was 23.433 and the delayed post-test score was 20.800. The standard deviation of post-test was 3.46 and 3.82 for the delayed post-test. The t-value was 2.7988. It is inferred that the calculated t-value (2.7988) is greater than the table value. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference between the post-test and post-delayed test scores regarding the

level of social skills of Control group students. The social skill scores were reduced from post-test (23.433) to post-delayed test (20.800) was 2.633. Therefore, it is inferred that conventional method did not bring an effect to enhance social skills of Control group

**Hypothesis 6**

There is no significant difference between the scores of post-test and post-delayed regarding the level of social skills of the Experimental group.

**Table 6. Mean score of Experimental group in Post- test and Delayed Post- test**

<b>Variables</b>		<b>Standard</b>			<b>Remarks</b>	
<b>Experimental Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S. D</b>	<b>Error Mean</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>(0.01 level)</b>
Post-test	30	27.466	3.46	0.63		
Delayed post Test	30	29.966	3.38	0.62	2.8310	Significant

The above table shows the scores of post-test and post-delayed tests of the Experimental group. The mean score of the post-test of the Experimental group was 27.466 and post-delayed test was 29.966. The standard deviation of post and delayed post-test was 3.46 and 3.38 respectively. The t-value was 2.8310. It is inferred that the calculated t-value (2.8310) is greater than the

table value. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference between the post-test and post-delayed test scores of Experimental group students regarding the level of social skills. The increased mean social ill scores from post-test (27.466) to post-delayed test (29.966) is 2.500. Therefore, after the post-test, the Experimental group



students had developed and retained the social skills through craft based strategy.

**Hypothesis 7**

There is no significant difference between the scores of the Control group and the Experimental group in the level of social skill at the post-delayed test level.

**Table 7. Mean scores of Control and Experimental group in Delayed post – test**

<b>Variables</b>					<b>Standard</b>	<b>Remarks</b>	
<b>Delayed Post test</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S. D</b>	<b>Error Mean</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>(0.01 level)</b>	
Control	30	20.800	3.82	0.70	9.8481	Significant	
Experimental	30	29.966	3.38	0.62			

The above table depicts the post-delayed test score of Control and Experimental groups. The mean score of the post-delayed test of the Control group was 20.800 and the Experimental group was 29.966. The standard deviation of delayed post-test of Control group and Experimental group was 3.82 and 3.38 respectively. The t-value was 9.8481. It is inferred that the calculated t-value (9.8481) is greater than the table value. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference between the Control group and Experimental group students in their social skills scores at post- delayed test. The mean difference in the Post-delayed test between Control group (20.800) and

Experimental group (29.966) is 9.166. Moreover, after the post-test (duration 10 days), the Experimental group students have acquired more social skill through craft based pedagogy and it was revealed through the scores (M=29.966) when compared with Control group students (M=20.800) who were learned through conventional method at delayed post-test level.

**Findings of the study**

- There is no significant difference between the pre-test scores of the Control group and the Experimental group regarding social skills of children at elementary level.

- There is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of Control group students in the level of social skills.
- There is a significant difference between the scores of pre-test and post-test of Experimental group students in the level of social skills.
- There is a significant difference between the scores of the Control group and Experimental group in post- test in the level of social skills.
- There is a significant difference between the post-test and post-delayed test scores regarding the level of social skills of Control group students.
- There is a significant difference between the post-test and post-delayed test scores of Experimental group students regarding the level of social skills.
- There is a significant difference between the Control group and Experimental group students in their social skills scores at post-delayed tests.

## **Discussion**

An attempt has been made to study the social skills of children at elementary level. It is inferred from the present study that social skills among the children are less before intervention. In the pre-test for control and

experimental groups there is no difference in their levels of social skills. Intervention through craft based pedagogy was employed for the experimental group. The experimental group showed better results than the control group. After a period of time, a delayed post test was conducted for both the groups. The experimental group scores showed that they performed better than the control group. The given responses from the students ensure that the craft based pedagogy not only plays its role in cognitive domain but also in personality development. It will be worthwhile to introduce craft based pedagogy for improving the curricular aspects, social aspects, economic aspects and for a better thinking youth.

## **Educational implications**

### **For students**

- It will help the students in developing the sense of cooperation and mutual understanding as they learn through different group activities.
- It motivated the students to learn the subject matter with interest.
- It will be helpful for the students to apply the knowledge, skills and attitude as they learn to apply the subject matter through learning by doing.

### **For Teachers**

- The study will be helpful in motivating the students and teachers to make use of the interventions to remove social skill deficits.
- It will be helpful for the teachers to identify and understand the social skills, its different dimensions and its importance for the students.

### **Suggestions for further research**

- The study is based on a small sample and from a limited number of schools. For a wider generalisation a study can be undertaken covering a variety of samples like government aided, private schools, and urban schools.
- The present study was confined only to the students of Madurai district. Similar studies can be conducted in other districts also.
- The present study dealt with the only variable social skills. Some more variables like self-concept, self-esteem, adjustment etc. may be included in further studies.
- The present study is related to investigating the enhancement of social skills through craft based pedagogy in children at elementary level. Similar studies can be

conducted to various age groups of children.

- Studies to see the enhancement of social skills intervention strategies on the academic achievement of children could be undertaken.
- A similar study can be conducted on social skills of children with other age groups such as secondary school students or higher-level education.

### **Conclusion**

Social skills, as the components of behaviour, allow us to interact and behave socially and effectively, establishing and maintaining positive relationships, making responsible decisions and handling challenging situations confidently with appropriate self-control. A child having good social skills is able to perform better academic achievement in school. The study revealed that craft based pedagogy is very helpful in the enhancement of social skills among children at elementary level. The teachers and parents can make use of alternative methods to develop the social skills of the children. Sticking on older methods to develop social skills won't be a successful one. Craft based pedagogy revealed that the students unconsciously acquired the social skills.

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### ABOUT THE AUTHORS



**Nurcilin Asha, N** is a faculty member at District Institute of Education and Training, T.Kallupatti, Madurai district, Tamil Nadu, India. She received her master degree from Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University and has qualified CBSE NET in Education. She has more than 7 years teaching experience.. She has done many action researches in the rural schools of Madurai district. She is presently working on many more papers. Her interest in English language teaching.



**Taj Aysha, A** is a faculty member at District Institute of Education and Training, T.Kallupatti, Madurai district, Tamil Nadu, India. She has more than 10 years teaching experience. She has qualified CBSE NET in Tamil literature.

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