

## Content Analysis of Grade 1 Textbooks Regarding Social Skills

Muhammad Hifzur-Rehman\*

Mushtaq Ahmad<sup>1\*\*</sup>

Shaista Khalid<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

### Abstract

The study was aimed to analyze the content of Grade 1 textbooks in terms of to what extent the content supported the development of social skills in students? Content analysis method of qualitative research to collect and analyze the data was applied. The population of the study consisted of all the textbooks of grade 1 published by Punjab curriculum and textbook board Lahore, Pakistan for the academic year 2020-21. Textbooks of 3 subjects: Urdu, English and General Knowledge were selected through purposive sampling. A checklist developed in the light of reviewed literature related to social skills, was used as a research tool to analyze the textbooks content. The checklist was also got validated from ten PhD experts in the field. To find out social skills given in the checklist the manifest and latent content of the selected textbooks was analyzed. It was found that the content of the selected textbooks supported the development of these 5 social skills: communication, decision making, cooperation, empathy and interpersonal relationship skills. However, the content supported the development of communication skill at high level.

**Keywords:** *social skills, content analysis, textbook, development*

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\*PhD scholar, Department of Education, University of Sargodha,  
mhifzurrehman@gmail.com

Associate professor, Department of education, university of Sargodha\*\*

Associate professor, Department of education, university of Sargodha \*\*\*

## **Introduction**

The main function of education is holistic development of individual. This is the focal point of all the educational institutions. All the efforts made directly or indirectly by educational institutions lead to the performance of this function (Gul, Rehman & Qasem, 2013). Through the real performance of this function individual's highest level of well-being is achieved, which is the ultimate goal of education policy makers, teachers and parents (OECD, 2015). Social development is one of the dimensions of holistic development (Gul, Rehman & Qasem, 2013).

Individual's well-being is the outcome of social development. Consideration of social development can improve and sustain human development and consequently the vulnerability of individual and community decreases. Inability to participate effectively in social and cultural life and, in some characteristics, alienation and distance from mainstream society can affect a person's ability to realize his right to a decent living. Moreover, individuals and groups may face many barriers in the realization of their rights (Browne & Millington, 2015). Theorists related to social development emphasize the intense need of social skills among children (Huitt & Dawson, 2011).

Social skills are a set of learned behaviors which gives the individual, the ability to exercise an influential relationship with other members of the society and abstain from reactions that are considered unreasonable in a society (Agran, Hughes, Thoma, & Scott, 2016; Davies, Cooper, Kettler & Elliott, 2015; Gresham, 2016; Yoder, 2015). Initiating a relationship, cooperation, helping, collaborating with others, requesting help and appreciating and praising others are some examples of social skills. Learning these social skills and creating persuasive relationships with others is the most important activity of childhood. Unlikely, some children remain unable to learn these skills; hence most of these children face negative reactions from other children and adults. Practicing social skills represents the individuals' social success and behavioral health (Rawles, 2016). These skills are rooted in the social and cultural foundations of the society and include behaviors like initiating new communications, seeking help, and suggesting help for others. Developing social skills is one of the most important aims of childhood education, and the level to which children and adults enjoy these skills influences their educational success and their personal and social health (Morgan, Hsiao, Dobbins, Brown., & Lyons, 2015; Rawles, 2016). The level of intellect and existence of social

skills are closely connected, and individuals with high intellect do possess many social skills (Daraee, Salehi&Fakhr, 2016).

Socially acclimatized children exhibit the ability to initiate, maintain, and close a conversation. They are able to solve problems, recognize social signals and resolve conflict. In a nutshell, they successfully establish relations with others and can control their emotions to achieve social success in life. Successful development of social skills guarantees a person's effective communication in society (Alberg, 2019).

International organizations while addressing human development in their policies and other documents have also focused the social aspect of human development. In a working paper published by World Bank Group (Guerra, Modecki & Cunningham, 2014) the effective teaching of social skills has been emphasized. OECD (2015) agreed on the need to develop a “whole child” with a balanced set of cognitive, social and emotional skills so that they can face the challenges of 21st century. UNESCO (2015) in Education 2030, Incheon Declaration Framework for Action Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all, recommends focusing the development of high-level social skills among children.

National education policies and documents give due waiting to the social dimension of development and recommend developing social skills among children. National Education Policy (2009) aimed at developing individuals equipped with social skills. Minimum Standards for Quality Education in Pakistan (Government of Pakistan, 2016) when addressing standards for curriculum demands students' holistic development, setting standards for learners expect the learners to have social skills and presenting standards for early years education demands for social skills in the very first standard. Draft of National Education Policy 2017 (Government of Pakistan, 2017) aims at holistic development and also addresses the social dimension of students' development.

School is the place where a significant part of social development takes place. Teachers being the agent of the respective society and one of the main stakeholders of students' socialization (Alberg, 2019) are held responsible to develop social skills in students. However, to perform this duty they are bound to follow the guidelines and demands given in the national curriculum and interpreted in the textbooks because textbooks serve as the primary teaching resource for teachers to guide their teaching process. Teachers find textbooks particularly useful because they provide order and pacing of instruction and serve as a structured framework for teaching throughout the academic year.

### **Statement of the problem and rationale of the study**

Research findings (Morgan et al., 2015; Daraee et al., 2016; Rawles, 2016; Alberg, 2019), documents published by international organizations (UNESCO, 2015; OECD, 2015; Guerra et al., 2014), theorists related to social development (Huitt, & Dawson, 2018), our national education policies (Government of Pakistan, 2009, 2017) and national curriculum (Government of Pakistan, 2006; PCTB, 2017) emphasize the need for social skills development in children.

Textbooks are one of the main sources of social skills. As textbooks are not only reliable agencies of information but also initial tools for developing the behavior and attitudes of students, they are considered important channels for the promotion of knowledge and skills at every level of education (Government of Pakistan, 2018). Textbooks are believed to have strong effect on classroom activities and consequently students' learning (Tarr et al., 2008). Teachers find textbooks chiefly useful as they provide sequence and pace of instruction and work as a structured framework for teaching throughout the academic year (Government of Pakistan, 2016).

The considerable significance of social skills and the relative lack of research (Daraee et al., 2016) motivated the researcher to conduct this study. Hence the study was opted by the researcher to find out the inclusion of social skills in the content of the textbooks for grade 1 prepared by Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board Lahore, Pakistan.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the study were:

- i. To find out social skills included in the content of the Textbooks for Grade 1.
- ii. To determine the extent to which the content of different Textbooks for Grade 1 supports the development of social skills.

### **Research Questions**

1. How many social skills have been included in the content (phrases, activities, words and pictures) of General Knowledge Textbook for Grade 1?
2. How many social skills have been included in the content (phrases, activities, words and pictures) of Urdu Textbook for Grade 1?

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3. How many social skills have been included in the content (phrases, activities, words and pictures) of English Textbook for Grade 1?
4. To what extent the content of different Textbooks for Grade 1 support the development of different social skills?

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Research design**

In this study content analysis technique was used to find out social skills in grade 1 textbooks. This method studies the content with reference to the intentions and meanings hidden in the messages and their particular contexts (Prasad, 2008). As content analysis is one of the basic methods for qualitative research. So with the help of content analysis different kinds of studies are possibly executed. Content analysis can also be used in quantitative studies as it enables the objective and systematic analysis of a textual data (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009). Through an analysis of different communications, the researchers can study human behavior indirectly by using this technique. In reality, it is a technique that helps researchers to study human behavior in an indirect way. It makes an analysis of their communications so that valid and replicable inferences can be made from texts to the context in use. The main reason for the selection of content analysis method instead of some other method is the discovery of meanings (Krippendorff, 2019). Conceptual content analysis was applied in which the researcher chose concepts to examine and then quantify and count their presence in the text through specific words, phrases, sentences and images (Carley, 1990; Busch et al., 2005).

#### **Sampling and sample**

The sample of the study was selected through purposive sampling as recommended by Frankel, Wallen and Hyun (2012) for content analysis. In sampling methods texts are sampled according to their situations, sources, genres, intertextualities and time periods. Purposive sampling aims at selecting all the text which contributes to answer proposed research questions (Krippendorff, 2004). The textbooks of English, general knowledge and Urdu of grade 1, out of all the textbooks of grade 1, were sample of the study. These textbooks were prepared by Punjab curriculum and textbook board Lahore for the academic year 2020-21 in the light of

students' learning outcomes of National Curriculum 2006 prioritized for textbooks.

### **Source of Data**

The textbooks of English, general knowledge and Urdu of grade 1 prepared by Punjab curriculum and textbook board Lahore for the academic year 2020-21 in the light of students' learning outcomes of National Curriculum 2006 were the source of data for this study.

### **Data collection tool**

A checklist consisted of social skills found out in the literature reviewed was developed. The checklist was developed to find out social skills in the content of general knowledge, Urdu and English for grade 1 prepared by Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board Lahore for the academic year 2020-21. The checklist was also validated from ten PhD experts in the field.

### **Unit of analysis**

What exactly is to be analyzed is called the unit of analysis. In this study words, phrases, sentences, pictures, gestures, activities and exercises were specified as unit of analysis.

### **Data analysis**

To find out social skills given in the checklist the manifest and latent content of the selected textbooks was analyzed applying the content analysis technique to collect and analyze the data. In conducting content analysis, a researcher specifies whether he/she will analyze the manifest or the latent content. He may also specify both the manifest and the latent content of a communication. The manifest content of a communication means the surface, obvious content—the words, images, pictures, and so on which are directly accessible to the naked eye or ear. It needs no inferences. The latent content refers to the underlying meaning of what is shown or said. To reach the underlying meaning a researcher might read through the selected content and make an assessment of the degree to which the content is likely to develop the specified skill or concept (Frankel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012). After analysis the researcher either draws themes and writes results qualitatively or calculates frequency of occurrence of the intended skill or concept whether the concept or the skill exists in manifest content, in the form of words, pictures or images, or in latent content, in the form of phrases, sentences or activities which induce the development of specified skill or concept. In this study both the

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manifest and latent contents were analyzed. During analysis the frequency of occurrence of the words, phrases and pictures, which were directly accessible to the naked eye and expressed some social skill, were calculated. For example, in the sentence "We should *speak softly* with others" the underlined words directly express communication skill. The sentences and activities which supported the development of social skills through their underlying meanings were also coded and calculated. For example, the sentence "Match the words with the pictures" supports the development of decision making skill.

### Social skills analysis

To find out social skills in grade 1 text books, the manifest and latent content (words, pictures phrases, sentences and activities) was analyzed. The frequencies and percentages of each social skill and their totals were calculated. Table (1) shows the frequencies and percentages of social skills in grade 1 textbooks.

Table.1

*Frequencies and percentages of social skills in Grade 1 textbooks*

Social skills	Subjects			Skill wise Frequency and percentage out of total
	General knowledge f / %	English f / %	Urdu f / %	
Communication	5 26%	66 87%	6 46%	77 71%
Decision making	3 16%	7 10%	6 46%	16 15%
Cooperation	1 5%	1 1%	0 00%	02 2%
Interpersonal relationship	9 48%	1 1%	1 8%	11 10%
Empathy	1 5%	1 1%	0 00%	2 2%
Frequency and percentage of skills in each subject	19 18%	76 70%	13 12%	108 100%

Table 1 drawn above horizontally reflects the frequency and percentage of each social skill present in the manifest and latent content

(words, phrases, sentences, pictures, gestures, activities and exercises) of each subject and vertically its relative frequency and percentage in all the five social skills found out in the text books of Urdu, English and General Knowledge (Social Studies and Islamiyat) for grade 1. These text books contained words, phrases, sentences, pictures, gestures, activities and exercise questions at 108 places which support the development of communication, decision making, cooperation, interpersonal relationship and empathy skills. These texts contained 71% (77) communication skill, 15% (16) decision making skill, 2% (2) cooperation skill, 10% (11) interpersonal relationship skill and 2% (2) skill of empathy. The text book of general knowledge contained 18% social skills of all the 3 texts. It contained 26% (5) communication skill, 16% (3) decision making skill, 5% (1) cooperation skill, 48% (9) interpersonal relationship skill and 5% (1) empathy skill. The text book of English contained 70% social skills of all the three textbooks. It contained 87% (66) communication skill, 10% (7) decision making skill, 1% (1) cooperation skill, 1% (1) interpersonal relationship skill and 1% (1) empathy skill. The text book of Urdu contained 12% social skills of all the three textbooks. It contained 46% (6) communication skill, 46% (6) decision making skill, 8% (1) interpersonal relationship skill and 0% cooperation and empathy skills.

To determine the extent to which the grade 1 text books contain the content which support the development of different social skills, the following criterion was applied.

**Table 2**

*Criterion to determine the extent of existence of social skills supporting content*

Range of frequency of social skill existence	Extent/level
Below than 10 time occurrence (in selected 3 text books)	Low
10-30 time occurrence (in selected 3 text books)	Medium
Above 30 time occurrence (in selected 3 text books)	High

To determine the extent to which the content of grade 1 text books support the development of different social skills, the level of existence was decided by calculating the frequency of occurrence of each social skill



**Table 3**

*Extent/level of existence of social skills supporting content in grade 1 text book*

Sr. No	Social skill	Frequency	Extent/level
1	Communication	77	High
2	Decision making	16	Medium
3	Cooperation	02	Low
4	Interpersonal relationship	11	Medium
5	Empathy	02	Low

Table 3 depicts the extent of existence of each social skill in the content of grade 1. The content supporting the development of communication skill existed in text books of grade 1 at high level (77 times). The content supporting the development of decision making skill existed in text books of grade 1 at medium level (16 times). The content supporting the development of cooperation skill existed in text books of grade 1 at low level (2 times). The content supporting the development of interpersonal relationship skills existed in textbooks of grade 1 at medium level (11 times). The content supporting the development of empathy skill existed in textbooks of grade 1 at low level (2 times).

### **Results and discussion**

A text book is placed at the position of an imperative reference and resource for students' learning in education system. It guides the teacher to decide about the depth and limit of the content to be presented to the students while teaching (Sharma, 2017). So it is necessary to analyze this resource. The study was aimed to analyze the content of Grade I textbooks in terms of to what extent the content supported the development of social skills in students? The results revealed that the text books of grade 1 contained 71% communication skill. These results conform to the findings of Ghasemi and Majidi Parast (2014) who found communication skill at the second rank in social skills while analyzing the social skills in the social training book in first grade of junior high school. These results are in conformity with the findings of Babaei and Abdi (2014) who analyzed the text books of social studies and natural sciences in Iran and found that the components of communication skill were the most dominant in the

second grade natural science. However, the results are incongruence with the findings of Al-maughrabi (2021). He analyzed the content of ninth grade science to find out the inclusion of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. He found 5% component of communication skill. The results revealed that the text books of grade 1 contained cooperation skill only 2%. The results of this study are in line with the findings of Karimi (2021) who reported in his research that cooperation skill was attended at a low level in social studies text book. The results also conform to the findings of Al-maughrabi (2021). He analyzed the content of ninth grade science to find out the inclusion of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. He found 4% component of cooperation skill. However the findings of Babaei and Abdi (2014) contradicted these results. They found the highest percentages (30.19 percent) belonged to the attribute of teamwork and collaboration in the first grade social studies text book. The findings of Ahghar and Eftekhari (2016) were also incongruence with the results of this study. They reported the highest frequency belonged to the subscale of cooperation while analyzing the 8<sup>th</sup> grade text book of social sciences studies. The possible reason behind this contradiction is the difference of grades. In higher grade text books cooperation skill is more emphasized as compared text books of lower grades keeping in view the social needs of children. The results revealed that the text books of grade attended the decision making skill at medium level. The results do not conform to the findings of Ahghar and Eftekhari (2016). They found the highest frequencies of decision making skill in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade text book of social sciences studies. The possible reason behind this contradiction may also be the difference of grades. In higher grade text books decision making skill is more emphasized as compared to text books of lower grades keeping in view the social needs of children. The results showed the low frequency of empathy in grade 1 textbooks. The results are incongruence with the findings of Ahghar and Eftekhari (2016). They found the high frequencies of empathy skill in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade text book of social sciences studies. Again this nonconformity may be because of the grade difference.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The content of the Textbooks for grade 1 supports the development of five social skills: communication, decision making, interpersonal relationship, cooperation and empathy. Communication skill exists in the content at high level. Interpersonal relationship and decision making skills exist in the content at medium level. Cooperation and empathy skills exist in the content at low level. However, the content of English textbook contains

more social skills as compared to the other textbooks for grade 1. By and large, it can be concluded that communication skill components in the grade 1 textbooks are prevailing; while cooperation and empathy skills components have been attended superficially. It can also be concluded that the equal attention have not been paid to the components of all social skills as many social skills have not been attended in the content of the textbooks for grade

1. As cooperation and empathy skills have been attended in the content of the textbooks for Grade 1 at low level, so the more inclusion of cooperation and empathy skills is recommended. The other important social skills like critical thinking and problem solving have not been attended in the textbooks for Grade 1. It is recommended for Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board that the content supporting the development of the superficially attended and the ignored social skills be included in the textbooks for Grade 1.

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