



## Communication Apprehension Among The Social Work Students – A Study

### KEYWORDS

Social Workers, Appropriate Skills, Group Discussion, Meetings, Interpersonal Conversations and Public Speaking.

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**ABSTRACT** *This paper is an endeavour on communication apprehension of budding social workers with the objective of to identify the difference and association between selected socio demographic profiles of the respondents with chosen dimensions. Tools: The present descriptive study portrays with a self prepared questionnaire was adopted by framing 24 statements with four dimensions viz., Group discussion, Meetings, Interpersonal conversations and Public speaking. Results: 1. there is a statistically significant difference between domicile of the respondents with their Group Discussion and Interpersonal apprehension. 2. There is a statistically significant association between medium of study in higher secondary of the respondents with their group discussion. Recommendations: Developing advanced communication skills begin with simple interactions. In this regard, the social workers are provided with numerous opportunities like interacting with so many different kinds of peoples in a day. They can be practiced every day in their given settings that range from social to the professional. New skills take time to refine.*

### Introduction

Research is often focused on human development, psychotherapy and counseling, social policy, public administration, social program evaluation, and community development. The subject of social work as a profession has been greatly aided by the development of responsible professional membership, organizations, training schools and literature. The study of social work is an important factor in our way towards building up harmony in society. Here, the social workers typically undergo a systematic set of training and qualifications that are distinct from those of care workers, care assistants or social care workers, who may undertake social work roles but not necessarily have the qualifications of a professional social worker.

### Need of the Study

It is an obvious fact that communication is such a vital part of each of us that it contributes heavily to the success or failure of every human activity. It is hard to name a human activity in which communication does not play an important role. For all professions, the failure to communicate effectively can lead to serious and sometimes tragic consequences. Hence, Social workers need to communicate effectively with service users and careers, other social workers, their managers, and other professionals. Each of these types of communication has its own challenges, often its own rules and language, and an inability to operate effectively in one or more of these areas has been at the root of many of the high-profile tragedies which have beset the history of social work.

### Objectives of the Study

- > To study the socio economic profile of the respondents.
- > To measure the opinion level of the respondents towards selected dimensions.
- > To identify the difference and association between selected socio demographic profile of the respondents with chosen dimensions of Communication Apprehension.
- > To suggest the applicable measures based on findings of the study.

### REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

Marie Diggins (2004) exhibited that this resource guide is

about teaching and learning communication skills in social work qualifying education. It is intended to be a resource for all of those involved in teaching and learning on the new social work degree. Aiming to communicate in a professional inner in a variety of contexts with people from a diverse range of backgrounds can be difficult, but it is a fundamental skill without which it is difficult to perform many other social work tasks or, perhaps, the social work role at all.

Clark (2005) notated that social work as a profession aims to address the impact of social problems on the lives of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. To achieve this, the members of the profession, the organizations through which they work, and the schools of social work must have the knowledge base, theories, and values to understand relevant social issues, especially for the purpose of creating positive change.

Jagannath K. Dange (2010) exhibit that there is a common belief that students entering Post Graduation have appropriate computing skills for study purposes and there is no longer a felt need for computer training programmes in tertiary education. First year students of Post Graduation were surveyed in 2009, they were asked about their Education and Computing backgrounds. Further, the elaboration of issues raised was gathered through focused interviews. Collected data was then analyzed through the percentage analysis. Nowadays Indian regional students have higher confidence in their Computing abilities.

### Materials and Method

The researcher has adopted a Descriptive Research Design to describe the social work students' communication challenges. A self prepared questionnaire was adopted by framing 24 statements with four dimensions viz., Group discussion, Meetings, Interpersonal conversations and Public speaking. Each dimension consists of 6 statements relevant to the objective which are comparatively short and simple by logical moving from easy to more difficult questions. The pre-test was conducted to check the relevance of questionnaire with ten respondents, which helps the researcher to make the secondary modifications to the questionnaire. The modified copies were systematically arranged and included in the final Materials and Method students pursuing post graduation degree in Master

of Social Work. As per the study period, the students' enrollment was found that there are 24 students in second year and 15 students in first year (n=39). By adopting census method the researcher provides equal chance to the all participants of both first and second year students of social work.

**Results and Discussions**

**a) Socio-Demographic Profiles**

**Class of Studying:** 61.5 percent of the respondents are studying in second year master of social work and about 38.5 percent are studying in first year master of social work.

**Gender:** 76.9 percent of the respondents are Male and the remaining 23.1 percent of the respondents are Female students studying in MSW course.

**Age:** 66.7 percent of the respondents are in 23–25 years of age. About one fourth (23.1 percent) of the respondents are in the age group of below 22 years and the remaining 10.3 percent of the respondents are in age group of above 25 years.

**Marital Status:** 79.5 percent of the respondents are unmarried and about 20.5 percent of the respondents are married after their under graduation.

**Father Occupation:** 41 percent of the respondent's father's occupation is categorized as others, 30.8 percent of respondent's father occupation is business, 15.4 percent of the respondent's fathers are private employee and the remaining 12.8 percent of the respondent's fathers are government employees occupation is private employee.

**Family Income:** The results show that 61.5 percent of respondent's family income is below Rs. 25000 and 38.5 percent of the respondents family income is above 25000.

**Family Type:** 76.9 percent of the respondents are living in as nuclear family and the remaining 40.7 percentage of the respondents are living as joint family with regard to their family type.

**Place of Living:** 53.8 percent of the respondents are living in urban areas and 46.2 percent of the respondents are living in rural areas.

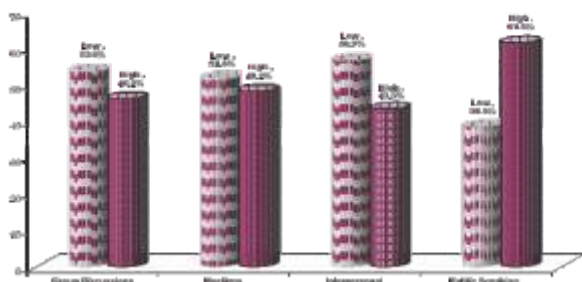
**Present Place of Living:** 43.6 percent of the respondents are days scholars, 38.5 percent of the respondents are staying in outside, 12.8 percent of the respondents are hosteller and 5.1 percent of the respondents are accommodating with relative's house.

**Size of Family:** 71.8 percent of the respondents family size is medium (1to5), 23.1 percent of the respondent family size is large (5 above) and the remaining 5.1 percent of the respondent's family size is small (1to3).

**Board of Studied in Secondary School:** 92.3 percent of respondents are studied in state board, 2.6 percent of the respondents are studied in Central board and 5.1 percent of the respondents are studied in Matriculation board.

**Medium of Study in Higher Secondary School:** 64.1 percent of the respondents are studied in Tamil medium, 28.2 percent of the respondents are studied in English medium , 5.1 percent of the respondents are studied Malayalam and the remaining 2.6 percent of the respondents are categorized as others.

**Diagram – 1 Cylinder Showing the Level of Opinion towards the selected Dimensions**



It is portrayed from the above cylinder diagram that the level of opinion on group discussion which flows minimum value from 12 and its goes up to maximum of 21 with mean 16.28 (SD:2.492). Further, interpreting the opinion on meetings (mean 19.03) and interpersonal (mean 18.41) the mean ranges with modest with same median value of 18.00, when it compared with public speaking the mean stands high with 19.97 and SD. 3.414. Possessing effective presentation skills is an essential ingredient for leadership. Although few receive formal public speaking training in their academic careers, social workers are well educated about the importance of words to motivate clients, advocate for communities and create social change (Mankita, 2009).

**Table 1: Difference between Domicile and dimensions of communication apprehension**

H1a = There is a statistically significant difference between domicile of the respondents with their Group Discussion and Interpersonal apprehension  
 H1b = There is no statistically significant difference between domicile of the respondents with their Meeting and Public Speaking apprehension.

Domicile	Mean	S.D	Statistical Inference
<b>Group Discussions</b>			T=-2.987 Df=37 .005<0.05 <b>Significant</b>
Rural (n=18)	15.11	1.937	
Urban (n=21)	17.29	2.513	
<b>Meetings</b>			T=-.728 Df=37 .471>0.05 Not <b>Significant</b>
Rural (n=18)	18.56	4.076	
Urban (n=21)	19.43	3.414	
<b>Interpersonal</b>			T=-2.432 Df=37 .020<0.05 <b>Significant</b>
Rural (n=18)	17.11	2.720	
Urban (n=21)	19.52	3.371	
<b>Public Speaking</b>			T=-1.088 Df=37 .284>0.05 Not <b>Significant</b>
Rural (n=18)	19.33	3.926	
Urban (n=21)	20.52	2.892	
<b>Overall</b>			T=-2.073 Df=37 .045<0.05 <b>Significant</b>
Rural (n=18)	70.11	10.868	
Urban (n=21)	76.76	9.176	

**Statistical Test:** Student't' Test has been used for the above table

H0a =There is no statistically significant difference between domicile of the respondents with their Group Discussion and Interpersonal apprehension.

H0b = There is a statistically significant difference between domicile of the respondents with their Meeting and Public Speaking apprehension.

**Results**

By categorizing of domicile with two variable viz., Rural and Urban, the participation of the respondents in urban (n=21) is not greater when compare to participation of rural (n=18) respondents. Though, the mean value stand high in each domain but the participation of two variables is differences with 3 respondents, which means that rural respondents are seems to be have more communication apprehension when compare to the urban respondents.

Hence, there is a statistically significant difference between domicile of the respondents with their Group Discussion and Interpersonal apprehension. The individuals consider face-to-face interaction the most effective and preferred means to communicate and resolve conflict with others (John J.Drussell, 2012).The calculated value 0.005 is less than the table value (p<0.05). Therefore, the hypothetical results that H1a is accepted. Further, analyzing apprehension of meetings and public speaking that there is no statistically significant difference were found. Hence, the hypothetical results that H1b is accepted.

**Table 2**  
**Association between medium of study in higher secondary school (12th) of the respondents and their opinion about overall communication apprehension**

H1a = There is a statistically significant association between medium of study in higher secondary of the respondents with their group discussion.

H1b = There is a statistically significant association between medium of study in higher secondary of the respondents with their meetings, interpersonal and public speaking.

Dimensions	Medium of study in Higher Secondary School (12 <sup>th</sup> )					Statistical Inference
	Tamil (n=25)	English (n=11)	Malayalam (n=2)	Others (n=1)	Total (n=39)	
<b>Group Discussions</b>						X <sup>2</sup> =11.199 Df=3 .011<0.05 Significant
Low	10(40%)	10(90.9%)	0	1(100%)	21(53.8%)	
High	15(60%)	1(9.1%)	2(100%)	0	18(46.2%)	
<b>Meetings</b>						X <sup>2</sup> =3.649 Df=3 .302>0.05 Not Significant
Low	13(52%)	7(63.6%)	0	1(100%)	21(53.8%)	
High	12(48%)	4(36.4%)	2(100%)	0	18(46.2%)	
<b>Interpersonal</b>						X <sup>2</sup> =5.112 Df=3 .164>0.05 Not Significant
Low	12(48%)	8(72.7%)	0	1(100%)	21(53.8%)	
High	13(52%)	3(27.3%)	2(100%)	0	18(46.2%)	
<b>Public Speaking</b>						X <sup>2</sup> =2.127 Df=3 .546>0.05 Not Significant
Low	10(40%)	5(45.5%)	0	0	15(38.5%)	
High	15(60%)	6(54.5%)	2(100%)	1(100%)	24(61.5%)	
<b>Overall</b>						X <sup>2</sup> =5.611 Df=3 .132>0.05 Not Significant
Low	11(44%)	8(72.7%)	0	1(100%)	20(51.3%)	
High	14(56%)	3(27.3%)	2(100%)	0	19(48.7%)	

Statistical Test: Chi-square Test has been used for the above table

H0a = There is no statistically significant association between

medium of study in higher secondary of the respondents with their group discussion.

H0b = There is no statistically significant association between medium of study in higher secondary of the respondents with their meetings, interpersonal and public speaking.

**Results**

The above table infers the respondents (n=25) those who have studied tamil as a medium in higher secondary were found significant in group discussion with high opinion of 60 percent when compare to English as medium with low 90.9 percent. The calculated value 0.11 is less than the table value (p<0.05). Hence, H1a is accepted. Further, the remaining dimensions were found not significant, which mean that they are comfortable with their communities in meetings, establishing relationship with others and public speaking. It is quite natural that as a social worker who address the community will speak with community language and they never found difficulty when compare to group discussion. Therefore, Hence, there is no statistically significant association between medium of study in higher secondary of the respondents with their meetings, interpersonal and public speaking. So, the hypothetical results that H1b is rejected. The Social workers have a prominent profile. People's views were rarely uniformly positive or negative. They tended to be influenced by a range of considerations relating both to the varying roles that social workers are required to fulfil and to the context within which they operate. Adjectives commonly used to describe the profession were 'helpful', 'vital', 'interfering', and 'overworked' (Sara Davidson and Susan King, 2005).

**Suggestions**

As a lifelong student of human behavior in the social environment, a social work practitioner begins as an applied social scientist. Despite many MSW graduates' dark memories of their mandatory skills which may exhibit through as follows:

- ❖ The social workers students should be confident in knowing that the profession is can make worthwhile contributions to the society. Take time each day to be aware of their opinions and feelings so that they can adequately convey them to others.
- ❖ Developing advanced communication skills begins with simple interactions. In this regard, the social workers are provided with numerous opportunities like interacting with so many different kinds of peoples in a day. They can be practiced every day in their given settings that range from social to the professional. New skills take time to refine.

**Conclusion**

Social work is carried out within a network of human relationships. Indeed, it is human relationships and the many types of problems associated with them that are usually at the root of social workers' professional tasks. And it is this relational dimension in social work practice which often draws students into making it their career – fulfilling their wish to 'work with people'. In this regard, effective communication lies at the heart of social work practice.

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