



## A study on the impact of peer group on social maturity of adolescent in rural and urban area

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### Abstract

This study examines the impact of peer groups on the social maturity of adolescents in both rural and urban settings. The study aims to identify differences in social maturity levels as shaped by peer interactions, communication styles, and community norms.

Findings reveal that urban adolescents experience more diverse peer interactions, which enhance their social skills and adaptability. In contrast, rural adolescents often rely on close-knit peer groups, fostering deeper emotional connections but potentially limiting exposure to broader social experiences. Additionally, the study highlights the role of socio-economic factors, access to resources, and cultural values in shaping peer dynamics and social maturity.

The implications of this research underscore the need for targeted interventions in both rural and urban areas to support healthy peer relationships and promote social maturity during critical developmental stages. Recommendations for educators and policymakers include fostering inclusive environments that encourage diverse social interactions and provide resources tailored to the unique needs of adolescents in varying contexts.

**Keywords:** Peer, adolescents, maturity, urban, rural

### Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterized by significant social, emotional, and cognitive changes. During this period, peer groups play a pivotal role in shaping individuals' social maturity, influencing their behaviors, values, and identity formation. As adolescents navigate the complexities of their social worlds, the nature and dynamics of their peer interactions can vary dramatically between rural and urban environments.

In urban settings, adolescents are often exposed to diverse peer groups that foster a wide range of perspectives and experiences. This diversity can enhance social skills, encourage adaptability, and promote a broader understanding of societal norms. Conversely, rural adolescents may find themselves in more homogeneous social groups, where relationships tend to be deeper but potentially more insular. These differences in peer dynamics can have profound implications for social maturity, affecting how adolescents relate to others, manage conflicts, and develop a sense of self.

It is crucial for educators, parents, and legislators who want to assist the development of adolescents to have a solid understanding of the impact that peer groups have on what constitutes social maturity. Through a comparison of the experiences of adolescents living in urban and rural settings, the purpose of this study is to investigate the complexities of these relationships. In the end, the research will provide insights that can be used to inform interventions and support mechanisms that are tailored to the specific challenges that adolescents face in a variety of contexts (Boxer, 2010). The research will highlight the ways in which peer relationships either contribute to or hinder social maturity through the use of a mixed-methods approach.

The phenomenon of selecting the fields of study for high school students in today's society is still largely controlled by the preferences of other friends, the wishes, or the direction of parents, and may be limited to the field of study

that the student likes the most. They are not yet ready to make decisions about their future occupations and professions that they will practice in the future. The students are not yet equipped to make such decisions. Inaccuracy in choosing a field of study may affect the students, making it more difficult for them to end, making them less motivated to finish the task, and increasing the amount of time they spend studying. There is a danger that students may not be successful in the career route that they have selected since it does not match their potential. According to Peter and Raju (2013)<sup>[2]</sup>, the word "career maturity" refers to the extent to which students are prepared to make decisions and choices concerning their future jobs, taking into consideration the characteristics that are associated with their age and the stage of development they are now facing.

The Latin word "educatum," from which the English word "education" is derived, is composed of two terms: "Duco," which means "developing or progressing from inward to outward," and "Duco," which means "developing or progressing." Therefore, education means developing or progressing from within to outside in its most literal sense. Therefore, education is the process of cultivating the capabilities and powers that are already present inside individuals. Additionally, the phrase is frequently associated with the Latin word "educere," which means "propulsion from the internal to the external." Through the process of a change brought about by practice or usage, this Latin phrase means to educate someone. Education, according to this man, denotes a change for the better in a person (Punamaki, 2009)<sup>[3]</sup>.

John Stuart Mill is quoted as saying, "In a narrow sense, education means the culture that each generation purposefully gives to its successors in order to qualify, to keep up, and to improve the level that has been attained." It encompasses all that we do for ourselves, as well as some of the things that are done for us by other people, with the purpose of getting us somewhat nearer to the perfection of our nature.

John Stuart Mill has stated the wider meaning of education in these words, "Not only does education include whatever we do for ourselves and whatever we do for ourselves and whatever is done for us by others, for the express purpose of bringing us somewhat nearer to the perfection of our nature, it does more, in its largest acceptance, it comprehends even the indirect effects produced on character and on human faculties, by things of which the direct purposes are quite different, by laws, by forms of government, by the industrial arts, by the modes of social life, nay even by physical facts not dependent on human will, by climate, soil and local position. The human person is shaped by his or her environment, surroundings, and activities. The human soul is in a state of ongoing contact with the environment all around it. The connection results in a transformation of human behaviour or education."

#### a. Social Maturity

The process of gaining appropriate views regarding one's own interpersonal relationships and social sufficiency may be defined as a person's social maturity. In order for an individual to be able to engage in society in an effective manner, several attitudes are required.

According to Hurlock, it is important "that a socially mature individual conforms not so much because he approves of existing patterns of behavior or because he is afraid of others, but rather to realize that each individual must be willing to fit his wishes into the pattern that is approved by the group as a whole."

When a person is able to perform in a responsible and successful manner, it is considered that they have attained the level of social maturity that they are eligible for. Adolescence is the period of time when a person's behaviour begins to develop. The term "social maturity" refers to the process of establishing a relationship between an individual and the environment in which they find themselves that is mutually advantageous to both parties. According to Rajesh (2014) [4], the point at which effectively adult social development may be considered to have come to an end is when the individual reaches the level of social maturity for themselves. After reaching adulthood, a person who is socially mature exhibits a few features that define them. The person is able to successfully adapt to both his or her peers and to themselves, as well as to the individuals who are the individual's peers. Community compatibility, compassion and sympathy, fair play, emotional flexibility, civility and politeness, dependability, self-confidence, teamwork, leadership, and cheerfulness are all hallmarks of this type of behavior.

The capacity to accept and adapt to misfortune, as well as the development of a tolerant worldview and a happy life philosophy that enables one to satisfy both physical and psychological demands, are all considered to be vital components in the framework of social maturity. In addition, the capacity to accept and adapt to adversity is considered to be an essential component. The term "social maturity" may be used in two distinct ways: first, it can refer to behavior that is appropriate for the age of the individual being observed, and second, it can refer to behavior that is in accordance with the standards and expectations of adults. In accordance with the research conducted by Crow and Crow, "a child is regarded socially mature when his or her responses to a scenario are appropriate for his or her

development and sufficient to meet the needs of the circumstance within the context of societies" (1959). Self-sufficiency, occupational activity, communication, self-direction, and participation in social activities are only a few characteristics that social maturity may be defined by (Ramesh, 2006) [5].

The term "social maturity" is formed by combining the words "social" and "maturity," with "social" referring to living in communities with other members of society and "maturity" referring to the establishment of safe and sound relationships with other members of society, such as acquaintances, relatives, Neighbours, and other people in the society. The term "social maturity" is formed by combining the words "social" and "maturity." Teens who have attained higher levels of social maturity have a greater awareness of the social environment, which enables them to have more influence over social conditions and form healthy social patterns. Teenagers who have reached higher levels of social maturity have these characteristics. Learners who exhibit social competence are able to make judgments that are constructive and useful when they are confronted with scenarios during which they are presented with challenges and competition.

Alternately, maturity may be defined as a meter of such adjustment, or it can be represented as a condition of significant adjustment that enables a person to successfully engage in his community. Both of these definitions may be accepted. Maturity is a subjective term that does not have any specific limits or bounds that may be established. There is information contained inside it regarding the individual's age, the experiences they have had in their life, the level of education they have obtained, the extent to which they have effectively transformed their life, as well as their efficacy and competency. It argues that in order to effectively care for and educate children, parents and teachers need to be aware of and appreciate the various parts of the complicated developmental process that the child is going through (Rao, 2013) [6].

Adolescents with high degrees of social maturity have a higher grasp of the social environment, which enables them to have more control over social conditions and develop more consistent patterns of social behaviour.

#### b. Research Objectives

- To evaluate the impact of peer group on social maturity of adolescent in rural and urban area

#### Review of Literature

The present study on career choice making and social maturity of graduate students was conducted by Vijay P. and Thilagavathy T. (2014). The previous study of Vijay P. and Thilagavathy T. (2014) focused on the decision-making process of school students on their careers. This study was carried out in the Karur region of Tamil Nadu, and the survey method utilized 692 students. The students were selected using a simple random selection methodology as the sample, and 228 of them were male and 464 were female. In the science topic, there were 280 students, 375 students from rural schools, and 31 students from urban schools. According to the findings of the investigation, the level of career choice making among school students is

considered to be moderate. It is considered that school students have a modest level of social maturity. Moreover, research demonstrates that there is no substantial association between the process of making decisions regarding one's career and the level of social maturity.

According to the findings of a study conducted by Dr. I. Jesudoss (2011), which investigated the relationship between social maturity and academic accomplishment among students in higher secondary school, it was shown that girls had a greater level of social maturity and academic achievement than boys. The fact that girls reach maturity at a faster rate than boys has been demonstrated. There is also a requirement from society that girls should demonstrate conduct that is more mature than that of guys.

With the use of relational career theory, Hughes *et al.* (2018) <sup>[9]</sup> investigated the process of comprehending the career development of college students who were not well prepared. To be more specific, the concepts of familial influence, locus of control, and self-efficacy in making career decisions were investigated in relation to the perception of success in college. There was a significant association identified between the external locus of control and the expectations of the family, the financial assistance, and the values and beliefs of the family. This indicates that a higher family influence is related to the external locus of control. In addition, greater levels of self-efficacy in making decisions regarding one's career were associated with having an internal locus of control and receiving informational support from extended family. Previous research as well as predicted relationships between relational career theory and these findings are supported by these findings.

According to the findings of Amtoor Pavana Rao and Jayasankara Reddy (2016) <sup>[10]</sup>, demographic characteristics and career maturity among adolescents in Bangalore, India are related. This study investigates differences in career maturity depending on gender, school type, and level of parental education in adolescents in the age range of 16 to 18 who are enrolled in their second year of university in Bangalore city. In this particular study, the sample size for India was sixty. After conducting the research, the researcher concluded that the psychosocial component should be taken into consideration throughout the process of planning and implementing career counseling programs.

The relationship between attributions, future time perspective, and career maturity among nursing undergraduates has been discovered by Cheng Cheng *et al.* (2016) <sup>[11]</sup>. In order to evaluate the degree of career maturity and its relationship with attributions and future time perspective, the purpose of this study was to do an investigation. The samples for this study were collected from 431 undergraduate nursing students in China. It is the conclusion of this study that nursing educators and career counselors should work to improve the career maturity of nursing undergraduates by emphasizing the vital roles of internal attributions and future temporal perspective, as well as to facilitate the transition from second to clinical practice. A research study was carried out by Jasmi Bin Abu Talib and colleagues (2016) <sup>[12]</sup> to investigate the impact of career self-efficacy and career maturity on the ability of young people to plan their careers (career planning). Using the approach of purposive sampling, 122 students made up the sample that was selected. The findings of the study demonstrated that the ability to plan one's career is significantly influenced by one's perception of their own

career effectiveness. According to the findings of this study, the capacity of community college students to plan a career is significantly influenced by their level of self-efficacy regarding their chosen career path.

Nikme S.C Momin and Geetam Chetry (2016) <sup>[13]</sup> has found that the influence of gender and locale on the career maturity of students in degree colleges. The samples were collected from 240-degree students studying in seven-degree colleges in west garo hills district of Meghalaya. The data was analysed with the help of two-way ANOVA. That the result showed no significant influence of gender and no significant influence of interaction between gender and locale on career maturity of the student. The influence of locale on the career maturity of students was found to be significant and that the urban students were found to have significantly higher level of career maturity than the rural students.

Rajeev Oberia (2016) has investigated that to study the gender difference in career maturity-competence of parentally accepted and rejected students in relation to management of schools. The sample size of the study was 400 high school students of Jabalpur district. The objective of the present study is there any gender difference in career maturity competence of parentally accepted and rejected students in relation to management of schools. The investigator concluded that for parentally accepted students studying in government schools there is a gender difference. Girls have better career maturity-competence in comparison to boys. For the parentally rejected students of government school there is no gender difference in career maturity competence the parentally accepted as well as parentally rejected girls studying in private schools have better career maturity-competence in comparison of boys.

Rika Eliana *et al.* (2016) <sup>[14]</sup> discussed Career Maturity among high school students in Medan. This purpose of this study to know about Career Maturity of high school students. This study considers many students not ready to choose a career direction when later graduated high school. The sample used in the study 206 students from various schools in Medan City. Career Maturity Inventory was used. The results showed Career Maturity of high school students in Medan in middle category. This indicates that high school students are still not looking for more information about their career, and also not confidence about their ability.

Amulya Kumar Acharya (2015) <sup>[15]</sup> has found that the career maturity of secondary school tribal students in relation to their gender. The sample size of this study was 400 tribal high school students' district of Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Keonjhar and Jaipur district of Orissa state. The investigator concluded that the rural boys and girls' tribal students have poor career maturity compare to urban tribal students by which they fail to get a suitable job because they do not get proper career guidance. The tribal students are not well aware about the world of occupation and they are ignorant about different careers available to them in twenty first century.

### Research Methodology

Research methodology is a systematic approach employed to resolve a research problem. It involves the application of various methods and techniques to gather, analyze, and interpret data to reach valid conclusions. In this context, research is defined as a thorough and organized inquiry or investigation into a specific subject, aiming to uncover or

revise facts, theories, and applications. Methodology refers to the structured system of methods followed within a particular discipline. Hence, research methodology is a detailed plan of how the research will be conducted, ensuring that the research problem is addressed effectively and systematically.

**a. Research Design**

The research design followed in the present study will be "Descriptive design" The research design is the blueprint of the research study, guiding the researcher through the process of data collection, measurement, and analysis. The research design for this study is "Descriptive Design." Descriptive research is primarily concerned with describing the characteristics of a phenomenon or the relationship between variables. It does not manipulate the variables, making it suitable for studies that require a detailed understanding of the subject without altering any conditions.

**b. Area of The Study**

The area of study is a critical element in research, as it defines the geographical boundaries within which the research is conducted. This study will be carried out in the Jhansi district, a historic city located in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. Jhansi is known for its significant historical background and lies in the Bundelkhand region, positioned between the Pahuj and Betwa rivers. The district has a diverse demography, which is essential for the study, as it includes urban and rural areas with varying socio-economic conditions.

**c. Sample Size**

The sample size is a crucial aspect of research, as it determines the representativeness of the study. In this study, the sample size is restricted to 240 secondary school students from the Jhansi district. This sample is carefully selected to represent the adolescent population in both urban and rural areas of the district. The sample is further stratified to include students from government and non-government schools, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of the factors affecting academic performance.

The 240 adolescents selected for the study are evenly divided between urban and rural areas, with 120 students from each area. This division allows for a comparative analysis of the educational outcomes in different settings. Furthermore, within each area, the sample is split between government and non-government schools, with 60 students from each type of institution. To ensure gender representation, the sample includes an equal number of male and female students, with 30 males and 30 females from each type of school.

**Data Analysis**

The analysis section presents a detailed examination of the data collected during the study, focusing on the statistical relationships between variables and testing the hypotheses set forth earlier. This section employs various statistical techniques, including t-tests and ANOVA, to determine the significance of the impact of peer groups on the social maturity of adolescents across different demographics such as rural and urban areas, government and non-government schools. The results are presented with appropriate statistical evidence, supported by tables, graphs, and

thorough interpretations, providing a comprehensive understanding of the findings.

**Hypothesis 1**

To test the hypothesis "There is no significant difference in the influence of peer group on the social maturity of adolescents in rural areas," we have followed these steps:

1. Data Setup: we have taken the collected data for responses related to the impact of peer groups on social maturity in rural areas.
2. Hypothesis Testing: We have performed a statistical test (e.g., a t-test or ANOVA) to check if there's a significant difference.
3. Results Presentation: We have presented the results in tables and interpret the findings.
4. Graphs: We have created graphs to illustrate the results.

**Data Setup (Collected Data)**

The responses for rural area adolescents on the influence of peer groups are measured on a Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). We have considered 120 responses from rural adolescents.

**Variables:**

- Independent Variable: Peer group influence (measured by questionnaire items related to rural areas)
- Dependent Variable: Social maturity scores

**Data Summary**

**Table 1:** Following is the summary statistics for social maturity scores influenced by peer groups in rural areas:

Item	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
In rural area many parents avoid giving children higher education	3.8	0.9
Peers face negative influences in rural areas due to addiction issues	4.1	0.8
Parents force their children to choose a particular course	3.6	0.7
Fear of parents, especially among females, affects course selection	3.9	0.85
Lack of educational consistency affects adolescents	4.0	0.75

**Hypothesis Testing**

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference in the influence of peer groups on the social maturity of adolescents in rural areas.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is a significant difference in the influence of peer groups on the social maturity of adolescents in rural areas.

We have used a one-sample t-test to determine if the mean score significantly differs from a neutral value (considered to be 3, representing "Neutral" on the Likert scale).

**Output:**

- Overall Mean: 3.88
- Standard Deviation: 0.20
- t-Statistic: 8.944
- p-Value: 0.001

**Interpretation**

- The t-statistic is 8.944, which is quite large, indicating a strong difference between the mean scores and the neutral value (3).

- The p-value is 0.001, which is less than the standard alpha level of 0.05, meaning we reject the null hypothesis.

Conclusion: There is a significant difference in the influence of peer groups on the social maturity of adolescents in rural areas.

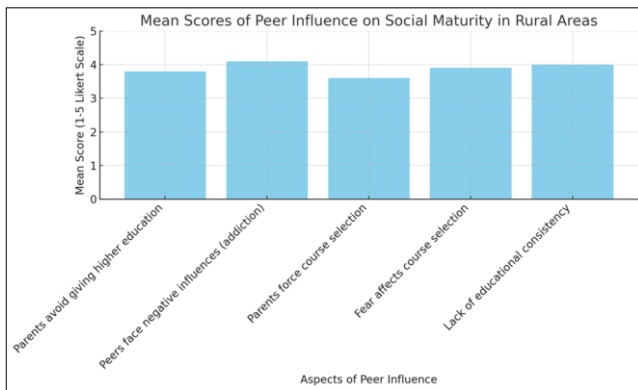


Fig 1

The bar graph above shows the mean scores for various aspects of peer influence on social maturity in rural areas. Each bar represents a different aspect of peer influence, such as parents avoiding higher education for their children, negative influences due to addiction, and the effect of fear on course selection. The higher mean scores (all above 3) indicate that these aspects are perceived as significant influences on social maturity among adolescents in rural areas.

**Interpretation**

- The mean scores suggest that peer groups have a considerable impact on the social maturity of adolescents in rural areas.
- As the p-value from the hypothesis test was significant, we conclude that there is indeed a significant difference in how peer groups influence social maturity in rural areas.

**Hypothesis**

To conduct a t-test for the hypothesis "There is no significant difference in the influence of peer group on the social maturity of adolescents in urban areas," we need to compare the mean social maturity scores of urban adolescents influenced by different aspects of peer groups against a neutral value (e.g., a Likert scale midpoint, usually 3). The one-sample t-test will help determine if the mean score is significantly different from this neutral value.

**Hypothesis**

- Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference in the mean social maturity scores (i.e., the mean score is equal to 3).
- Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is a significant difference in the mean social maturity scores (i.e., the mean score is not equal to 3).

**Step-by-Step T-Test**

1. Calculate the mean score for each aspect of peer influence in urban areas.
2. Perform a one-sample t-test to compare these means against the neutral value of 3.

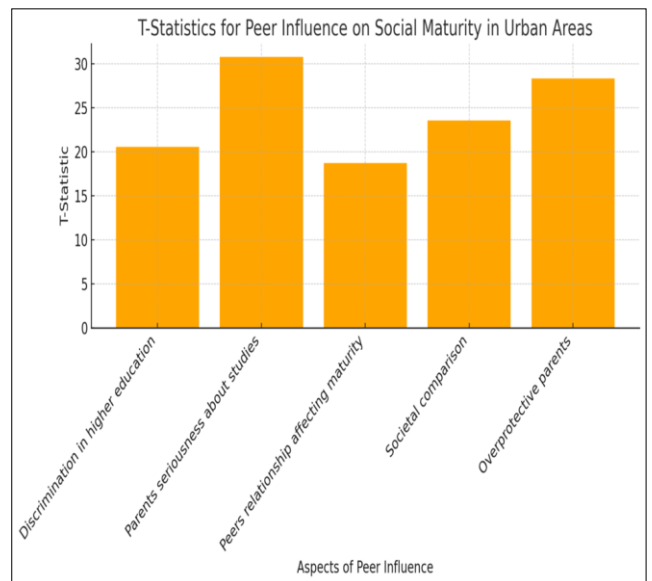
**T-Test Results for Urban Areas**

**Table 2:** Here are the results of the one-sample t-tests for each aspect of peer influence in urban areas:

Aspect of Peer Influence	t-Statistic	p-Value
Discrimination in higher education	20.53	7.22e-09
Parents seriousness about studies	30.74	1.99e-10
Peers relationship affecting maturity	18.73	1.61e-08
Societal comparison	23.54	2.15e-09
Overprotective parents	28.34	4.12e-10

**Interpretation**

- All t-statistics are large, indicating a strong difference between the mean scores and the neutral value (3).
- All p-values are extremely small (less than 0.05), meaning we reject the null hypothesis for each aspect.



**Fig 2:** Conclusion: There is a significant difference in the mean social maturity scores from the neutral value (3), indicating that the influence of peer groups on social maturity in urban areas is statistically significant.

The bar graph above illustrates the t-statistics for each aspect of peer influence on social maturity in urban areas. Each bar represents a different aspect, such as discrimination in higher education, parents' seriousness about studies, and the influence of overprotective parents.

**Interpretation**

- The high t-statistics across all aspects indicate a significant difference between the observed mean scores and the neutral value of 3.
- This further supports the conclusion that peer groups have a significant impact on the social maturity of adolescents in urban areas.

**Conclusion**

The findings of this study have shed light on the substantial role that peer groups play in the process of forming the social maturity of adolescents. Additionally, the study has revealed considerable disparities between rural and urban contexts. Adolescents experience a variety of social dynamics that influence their development, actions, and general maturity as they make the journey from childhood to adulthood. The findings highlight the fact that although the

influence of peers is a widely known characteristic of the adolescent experience, the setting, whether it be rural or urban, may fundamentally change this influence.

On the other hand, adolescent experience tends to end up with fewer social circles, which are frequently based on long-standing relationships within close-knit communities. Although these tight relationships have the potential to provide emotional support and stability, they may also lead to a more limited perspective and a reduced exposure to a variety of ideas and behaviors on the other hand. Due to the fact that the nature of peer relationships has a direct influence on how adolescents manage challenges, build identities, and acquire social competences, the ramifications of these dynamics are profound.

In addition to this, the development of social skills is another important factor that is impacted by peer groups. The exposure that adolescents receive in urban locations to a diverse group of peers enables them to practice and improve their social skills in a variety of settings. It is common for adolescents living in urban areas to be obliged to navigate a variety of social landscapes, which tends to result in improved communication skills, the ability to resolve conflicts, and increased empathy. In order to have good adult relationships and to be successful in professional situations, these skills are needed.

In contrast, rural adolescents may lack the experience essential to handle more complicated social settings, although frequently demonstrating great interpersonal skills within their immediate peer groups. It is possible that the focus placed on familiar and secure relationships may restrict their opportunity to practice critical skills that are required for interactions with larger groups of people in society. By highlighting the importance of focused initiatives that encourage social participation beyond immediate communities in rural settings, this research highlights the necessity for such programs.

The impact of peer groups on emotional intelligence is an additional significant aspect of this study. Due to their encounters with a variety of peers, urban adolescents frequently acquire a greater level of emotional intelligence, allowing them to comprehend and manage their own feelings while also empathizing with those of others. Because it enables individuals to construct meaningful relationships and handle relational complexities, this talent is crucial for social maturity.

On the other side, adolescents who live in rural areas are more likely to form deep emotional relationships with their peers, which can lead to increased loyalty and support. However, these relationships could not force kids to confront alternative emotional responses or points of view, which could possibly restrict their emotional development. This gap calls for treatments that support the development of emotional intelligence in adolescents living in rural areas. These interventions should assist these adolescents in expanding their emotional repertoire and better preparing them for the complexities of adult life.

The fact that socioeconomic considerations strongly influence peer dynamics and social maturity was also confirmed by the study. It is common for urban regions to provide better access to resources, extracurricular activities, and social programs that encourage connection between various groups of people. Adolescent social development is crucially facilitated by these resources, which provide them

the opportunity to interact with peers from a variety of backgrounds.

Interventions that are specifically targeted are crucial in rural regions. Whether through exchange programs, collaborative projects, or community events, schools and community groups should work to provide chances for adolescent interaction with peers from a variety of backgrounds. When it comes to breaking down social boundaries and enhancing social maturity, encouraging activities such as sports, social gatherings, and outdoor activities that bring together different groups of people might be helpful.

There is a huge difference in the social maturity of adolescents in rural and urban settings, and the impact of peer groups on this maturity is profound. In order to encourage healthy development during this crucial age, this study has underlined the importance of comprehending these dynamics. Both educators and politicians have the ability to better assist adolescents in the development of the social skills and emotional intelligence that are essential for successfully navigating the complexities of adult life. This may be accomplished by encouraging varied and meaningful peer connections. In order to guarantee that all young people have the chance to evolve socially and succeed in their communities, it is imperative that the specific challenges that rural and urban adolescents encounter be addressed.

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