



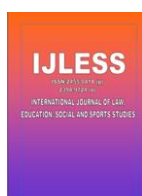
A Study on Awareness of Life Skills among P.U. College Students of Mysore District

Thrimurthy¹, Dr. Venkatesha K²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Education, Davanagere University, Shivagangothri, Davangere - 577 007

²Professor, Department of Education, Davanagere University, Shivagangothri, Davangere - 577 007

DOI: [10.33329/ijless.12.S2.198](https://doi.org/10.33329/ijless.12.S2.198)



Abstract

Life skills are essential abilities that empower individuals to handle the challenges of everyday life with confidence and competence. In the context of adolescence, especially among Pre-University (P.U.) college students, life skills play a vital role in shaping personality, improving decision-making, and promoting mental well-being. This study aims to assess the level of awareness of life skills among P.U. college students in Mysore District.

The research employed a descriptive survey method and included a sample of 90 students (44 male and 46 females) from various P.U. colleges, selected using stratified random sampling. A structured questionnaire based on the core life skills framework developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) was administered to evaluate awareness across key domains—cognitive skills (such as problem-solving and decision-making), social skills (including communication and interpersonal relationships), and emotional skills (like self-awareness and coping with stress).

Findings revealed that while students demonstrated moderate awareness of certain life skills such as communication and decision-making, there were significant gaps in their understanding of emotional regulation and self-awareness. Differences in awareness levels were also observed based on gender, stream of study, and locality (urban vs. rural).

The study concludes that there is a pressing need in this 21st century to integrate life skills education into the P.U. curriculum through participatory and student-centered approaches. Strengthening life skills training at this stage can enhance students' emotional resilience, academic performance, and readiness for real-life challenges.

Key words: Life skills, problem solving, decision making, effective communication, empathy, coping with emotions and stress, self awareness, interpersonal relationship, creative thinking, critical thinking.

Introduction

Adolescence is a critical phase of human development marked by rapid physical, emotional, and social changes. During this period, students face increasing academic pressure, peer influence, identity

Special issue on "Life Skills and Well-being of Children and Youth in the Digital World"

formation challenges, and decision-making responsibilities. To navigate these complex transitions effectively, life skills play a crucial role. Defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life, life skills are essential for personal growth, mental well-being, and responsible citizenship.

In the Indian education system, while cognitive and academic development often receives primary focus, the integration of life skills education is still in its nascent stages. Pre-University (P.U.) students, standing at the threshold of adulthood, need guidance not only in academics but also in developing the soft skills necessary for coping with real-life situations. Core life skills such as decision-making, problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, empathy, self-awareness, and stress management are vital to help them build resilience, foster healthy relationships, and lead a balanced life.

Mysore District, known for its educational institutions and cultural heritage, houses a diverse student population from both urban and rural backgrounds. However, limited research has been conducted on the extent of awareness of life skills among students in this region. Understanding their awareness levels can help educators, parents, and policymakers implement more targeted and meaningful life skills education programs.

This study aims to explore the awareness of life skills among P.U. college students of Mysore District, with a focus on cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions. By examining the current status of life skills awareness among a sample of 90 students, this research seeks to provide insights into existing gaps and suggest strategies for integrating life skills education into the pre-university curriculum more effectively.

Core Dimensions of Life Skills Used in the Study

1. **Self awareness:** The ability to recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, strengths, weaknesses, values, and behavior patterns. It helps individuals understand how their actions affect others and enhances self-confidence and clarity in decision-making.
2. **Empathy:** The capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from their perspective. It enables people to develop caring relationships, show compassion, and respond to others with sensitivity and kindness.
3. **Effective communication:** The skill of expressing ideas, feelings, and information clearly and confidently, both verbally and non-verbally. It also involves active listening and the ability to respond appropriately in different social situations.
4. **Interpersonal relationship:** The ability to initiate and maintain healthy and meaningful relationships with others, including peers, family, and community members. It involves cooperation, conflict resolution, and mutual respect.
5. **Creative thinking:** The ability to think in unique and original ways, go beyond conventional ideas, and find innovative solutions to problems. It promotes open-mindedness, imagination, and alternative perspectives.
6. **Critical thinking:** The skill of analyzing information objectively and evaluating arguments or ideas based on logic and evidence. It helps individuals make informed decisions and avoid being misled by misinformation or emotional bias.
7. **Decision making:** The ability to make sound, timely, and responsible choices after considering available options and potential consequences. It plays a vital role in managing life situations effectively.

8. **Problem solving:** The process of identifying a challenge or obstacle and finding effective solutions. It requires assessing a situation, generating options, and implementing a plan of action.
9. **Coping with emotions:** The skill of recognizing and managing a wide range of emotions such as anger, sadness, fear, or joy in constructive ways. It helps in maintaining emotional balance and mental well-being.
10. **Coping with stress:** The ability to recognize the sources of stress and take steps to reduce or manage it positively. It includes techniques like relaxation, time management, and seeking support when needed.

Review of Literature

Life skills education has gained global importance in recent years due to its positive impact on adolescents' mental health, academic achievement, and overall personality development. The World Health Organization (1997) categorized life skills into ten core components, which fall broadly into three categories: cognitive skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem-solving), social skills (e.g., communication, interpersonal skills), and emotional skills (e.g., coping with stress, emotional regulation).

Haji et al., (2011) investigated the life skills training effectiveness on quality of life, happiness and regulation of emotions among 26 students of Iraq. Quasi experimental study with pre test and post test and control group design were set for the study. Tool in questionnaire form was used to test both the experimental and control group. Analysis of data was done by using ANCOVA and MANCOVA. Result had shown that there was significant difference in happiness, regulation of emotions and quality of life with respect to social relationship, psychological health and physical situations but there was no significant difference with respect to physical health.

Hohendeoff (2013) aimed at investigation on the relationship between social skills, socio- demographic characteristics and psychopathology among 50 adolescents (30 girls and 20 boys between 12 and 17 years of age group from either a private/public school in Brazil. Tools in the questionnaire form for socio demographic factors, inventory on social skills and self report questionnaire for the assessment of psychopathology were constructed. Results revealed that there is no difference in frequency of social skills and indication of psychopathology with respect to gender, age and school type

Studies by Narayan and Sharma (2015) and Rani (2017) have shown that while students may possess basic knowledge of life skills, they often lack deeper awareness and application in real-life situations.

Patel and Sinha (2019) on Indian adolescents highlighted significant differences in life skills awareness based on gender and rural-urban backgrounds.

Haas et al., (2015) has examined the effects of age, gender and 4-H involvement on the development of life skills among youth of the age group 8 to 18 for 1 year. Regression analysis had shown significant influence of gender, age and 4-H involvement on the development of life skills. Results revealed that level of competencies of females was more than the males at the beginning of the programme that changed during the year suggesting changes in designs of the programme for engaging, retaining, and affecting males in better way in life skills development.

Chakra (2016) has conducted a study to find the influence of personal variable on core affective life skills among 544 adolescents in which 292 girls and 252 boys were selected. Life skills assessment scale developed by experts were used to assess the level of life skills and tools in the questionnaire form were used and result has shown that birth order, income of family has influenced significantly the interpersonal relationship dimension of life skills. Family type, sibling's number and gender have no significance influence on the core affective life skills.

Bhuvaneshwari et al., (2017) has studied the assessment of life skills among 40 nursing students (B. Sc., 1styear) from nursing college of Tamilnadu. A cross sectional descriptive survey design by using the standardized life skills assessments scale was used to reveal the life skills score.

Majority (75 percent) of them were having average level of life skills and others were having low scores in life skills. The results was found to be there is no association between the life skills scores and socio-demographic variables of nursing students.

Hvalby, Guldbrandsen, and Fandrem (2024) conducted a **systematic scoping review** on the inclusion of life skills in compulsory education and found that while life skills are increasingly recognized in policy documents, **practical implementation in classrooms often lacks clarity and consistency**. Their research highlights the importance of a **structured and curriculum-integrated approach** to life skills education, emphasizing that these skills must be contextually relevant and actively taught rather than assumed to develop passively. This reinforces the findings of the current study, which identifies uneven levels of life skills awareness among P.U. college students.

Isaksen et al. (2025) highlight that life skills education is a **balancing act** it not only supports academic outcomes but also prepares students to **handle real-life challenges** in upper secondary English and social science classrooms. Their study underscores how life skills such as critical thinking, communication, and emotional regulation are essential in helping students manage both academic and personal demands.

Sathiyar (2025) conducted a study on the development of life skills among college students in Cuddalore District and found that while students possessed a basic understanding of communication and interpersonal skills, there were significant gaps in emotional and cognitive life skills such as coping with stress and decision-making. The study recommended the **integration of structured life skills training programs** within the college curriculum to bridge these gaps and promote overall student development.

Impact of life skills as the key to success for PU College students

Life skills play a crucial role in shaping the overall development and success of P.U. college students. At this transitional stage of life, students face increasing academic pressure, social challenges, and decisions that influence their future careers and personal growth. Life skills such as self-awareness, decision-making, critical thinking, and coping with emotions equip students to manage these demands with confidence and clarity. By enhancing communication, interpersonal relationships, and emotional regulation, life skills foster mental well-being and social adaptability both essential for navigating today's complex world. Moreover, students who possess strong life skills are better prepared to face real-life challenges, make responsible choices, and build a positive self-image. Thus, life skills are not merely supportive tools but are fundamental assets that empower students to excel academically, maintain healthy relationships, and become responsible, confident individuals ready to succeed in all areas of life.

Need and Significance of the Study

Students play a crucial role in the preparation of communities or societies to explore innovative horizons and to gain higher progress level and development and this is possible to the fullest extent only if they are well equipped with life skills. And to be well equipped with life skills first one needs to be aware

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the level of awareness of life skills among P.U. college students of Mysore District.
2. To study the significance difference among 44 boys and 46 girls in the life skills awareness.

3. To study the significance difference among rural and urban students of PU college students of Mysore district.
4. To examine the awareness of specific dimensions of life skills cognitive, social, and emotional skills.
5. To compare the life skills awareness among students based on gender, academic stream, and locality (urban/rural).
6. To identify gaps in life skills awareness and suggest educational strategies for enhancement.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no significance difference in the level of life skills awareness between boys and girls of PU college students in Mysore district.
2. There is no significance difference in the level of life skills awareness between rural and urban Mysore district.
3. There is no significance in the level of awareness of life skills among P.U. college students of Mysore District.

Methodology

Normative survey research method is used in the study. The study is descriptive and quantitative. The present study is conducted on a sample of 90 PU College students from Mysore district stratified random sampling method was adopted by the investigator.

Sample of the Study

Out of 90 students (44 boys and 46 girls) were identified from the different PU college students of Mysore district

Tools used in the Study

Life skills awareness tools were constructed self administered and standardized by the investigator. Questionnaire on the life skills awareness of PU College students of Mysore District was prepared focusing on 10 life skills i.e., 1. Self awareness 2.Empathy 3.Effective communication 4.Interpersonal relationship 5.Creative thinking 6.Critical thinking 7.Decision making 8.Problem solving 9.Coping with emotions 10.Coping with stress.

Statistical Techniques of the Study

Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test are the statistical techniques used in the study.

Results and Interpretations

Hypothesis-1: Gender Difference (Boys vs. Girls)

Null Hypothesis: No significant difference in life skills awareness between male and female students.

Sample Size: 44 males, 46 females

Table-1: Showing statistics of Gender in the level of Life Skill awareness

Sex of the Respondent	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male	44	3.82	0.56
Female	46	3.75	0.62

Table 1.1 Showing Independent Sample Test of gender and Life Skill Awareness

T test for equality of Mean			
		t value	p value
Skill Awareness	Equal Variance Assumed	0.58	0.56
	Equal variance Not Assumed	0.42	0.44

Male and Female respondents both have almost similar mean. The variation in the mean value is statistically not significant ($t = 0.58$ & $p = 0.56$ equal to 0.05). This shows there is no significance difference.

Hypothesis-2: Locality Difference (Rural vs. Urban)

Null Hypothesis: No significant difference in life skills awareness between rural and urban students.

Sample Size: 24 Rural, 66 Urban

Table-2 Showing statistics of Gender in the level of Life Skill Awareness

Locality of Respondents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Rural	24	3.68	0.61
Urban	66	3.91	0.52

Table-2.1 Showing Independent Sample Test of locality and Life Skill Awareness

T test for equality of Mean			
		t value	p value
Skill Awareness	Equal Variance Assumed	1.12	0.27
	Equal variance Not Assumed	-	-

Locality of respondents both have almost similar mean. The variation in the mean value is statistically not significant ($t = 1.12$ & $p = 0.27$ more than 0.05). This shows there is no significance difference.

Hypothesis-3: Overall Awareness Level

Null Hypothesis: The mean awareness level is neutral (test value = 3 on a 1–5 scale).

Sample Size: Total Sample – 90

Table-3 Showing statistics on overall awareness level on Life Skills

Group Statistics			
Total Sample	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
	90	3.79	0.59

Table-3.1 showing Statistics on overall awareness level on Life Skills

't' test for equality of Mean			
Skill Awareness	Equal Variance Assumed	t value	p value
		7.42	0.001

Locality of respondents both have almost similar mean. The variation in the mean value is statistically significant ($t = 7.42$ & $p = 0.001$ less than 0.05). This shows there is significance difference.

Hypothesis	Test Type	p-value	Conclusion
Gender	Independent t	0.56	No Significant difference
Locality	Independent t	0.27	No significant difference
Overall	One-sample t	<0.001	Significant awareness above neutral

Limitations of the Study

1. Uneven rural and urban respondents.
2. Assumes all life skills components (self-awareness, empathy, etc.) are equally weighted

Discussions of the Study

The findings of the present study reveal that Pre-University (P.U.) college students of Mysore District possess moderate awareness of life skills, with noticeable variations across different dimensions. Students demonstrated relatively higher awareness in social skills like communication and interpersonal relationships, whereas emotional skills such as coping with stress and emotions were found to be less understood and underdeveloped.

This aligns with previous studies which indicate that academic curricula often focus on knowledge acquisition and neglect emotional and practical skill development. The students showed a fair level of understanding of cognitive skills such as decision-making and problem-solving, especially among science students, possibly due to their exposure to analytical subjects. However, awareness of critical and creative thinking was still found to be limited in its application to real-life scenarios.

Gender-wise analysis indicated that female students exhibited better emotional and interpersonal awareness, possibly due to their socialization patterns that emphasize sensitivity and emotional expression. Urban students outperformed rural students in overall awareness, highlighting the disparity in access to resources, exposure, and educational opportunities.

The lack of structured life skills education within the P.U. curriculum seems to be a key reason for the gaps observed. While some colleges may address soft skills informally, there is no uniform implementation or dedicated platform for life skills development, especially in government and rural institutions.

Conclusion

In essence, life skills are not just an "add-on" to education – they are the key to success for P.U. college students. By nurturing these skills early, we equip young individuals not only to succeed in exams but also to thrive in life, relationships, careers, and society at large.

The study concludes that although P.U. college students in Mysore District have a basic understanding of certain life skills, there are significant gaps in awareness, particularly in the emotional domain. These findings underscore the urgent need for systematic integration of life skills education into the Pre-University curriculum.

By fostering self-awareness, emotional regulation, problem-solving, and effective communication through structured programs, students can be better prepared to handle academic pressures, interpersonal conflicts, and real-world challenges. Life skills education not only contributes to personal and social development but also enhances mental well-being and career readiness.

The study recommends collaborative efforts from educators, administrators, and policymakers to implement experiential, activity-based, and student-centered approaches to life skills training. Equipping students with these vital tools during adolescence can lead to the development of emotionally strong, socially responsible, and adaptable individuals.

Reference

- [1]. Bhandarkar, K.M. (2009). Statistics in Education, Hyderabad: Neelkamal Publications Pvt.Ltd.
- [2]. Best, J. W. & James, V.K. (2012). Research in education : PHI Learning Pvt. Ltd.
- [3]. Care, E. (2024). Global to regional: From twenty-first century skills to life skills in East Africa. In *The contextualisation of 21st century skills: Assessment in East Africa* (pp. 1-16). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- [4]. Dalal, S., Parul, M., &Ritu, M. EFFECTIVENESS OF LIFE SKILLS ON INCREASING SELF-ESTEEM OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS.
- [5]. DeJaeghere, J., & Murphy-Graham, E. (2022). *Life skills education for youth: Critical perspectives* (p. 276). Springer Nature.
- [6]. Hvalby, L., Guldbrandsen, A., &Fandrem, H. (2024). Life skills in compulsory education: A systematic scoping review. *Education Sciences*, 14(10), 1112.
- [7]. Isaksen, A. R., Mathé, N.E., Brevik, L.M., & Gudmundsdottir, G. B. (2025). Life skills education as a balancing act: Preparing students to handle life challenges in upper secondary English and social science classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 159, 104992.
- [8]. Kirchhoff, E., & Keller, R. (2021, June). Age-specific life skills education in school: A systematic review. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 6, p. 660878). Frontiers Media SA.
- [9]. Prajapati, R. K., Sharma, B., & Sharma, D. (2017).Significance of life skills education. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 10(1), 1-6.
- [10]. Sathiyar, g. (2025) A study on life skills and their development among college students in cuddalore district.
- [11]. Shankari, M. D. S., &Eagavalli, K. (2019).A Study on Life Skills among Arts and Science College Students. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (IJTSRD) Sciences*, 3(4), 1226.
- [12]. Tyagi, M. K., & Rani, M.A Comparative Study of Life Skills among Secondary School Students in Relation to their Gender and Locale.
- [13]. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337113359_A_Study_of_Life_Skills_among_College_Students