

Assessment and Enhancement of Life Skills among Higher Secondary Students in Tirap District of Arunachal Pradesh: A Gender Perspective

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Abstract

The current research work aims at studying the life skills among the higher secondary students with a special focus to gender differences. Life skills can be defined as personal traits and skills that help individuals deal with life challenges in a positive manner and perform activities within their capacities. Life skills are really necessary to enhance and strengthen life towards full utilization of the potential in an efficient manner. The research method applied in this study was Descriptive Survey Method. For the study the researcher used systematic random sampling to select 240 students from Tirap district to form the sample. In this study, data was collected with the help of Life Skills Tool which was developed by the researcher. The results showed a significant number of students possessed an average level of life skills and observed a significant difference in life skills between boys and girls students.

Keywords— Life skills, higher secondary students, gender differences, Descriptive Survey Method, Tirap district.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the present context of India, the youths have a significant role to play in the socio-economic development of the country. Hence, for people of this age, their overall development is of great significance as youths face many problems, such as identity formation, managing emotion, building relationships, resisting peer pressure, and acquiring information, educational pressure. At this stage of life, they also experience considerable pressure from family, peers, and education making them susceptible to mental health problems arising out of different physical, emotional, and social changes such as poverty, abuse or violence (WHO, 2020d). This has led to a drastic rise in problems related to adolescence such as stress, fear, anxiety, AIDS cases, suicidal tendencies, and maladaptive behaviour among others as aforementioned by Ezpeleta et al. (2020).

Furthermore, there has been increased cases of drug abuse and dependence, and school dropout in the recent past (WHO, 2020c). If these problems are not properly addressed, these issues can adversely affect the overall development and well-being of young people, hindering their future success and development.

School education, especially at the secondary and higher secondary level, plays a significant role in developing positive personality traits among students. To address the challenges they face, it is necessary to develop skills among students that prepare them to face adversities and unfavourable circumstances and overcome these situations independently Meenu, & Rani, R. (2021). These skills are generally termed life skills. Life skills are strengths and abilities that help people face their daily problems with a positive attitude and perform daily tasks effectively. Life skills are

essential for enhancing and strengthening life, enabling individuals to fully utilize their potential efficiently. The National Education Policy 2020 considers life skills important in the development of children because it leads to good communication, cooperation, teamwork, and resilience. Critical life skills (including financial literacy, digital literacy, commercial skills, health care and awareness, child care and education, and family welfare) are also prominent areas discussed in NEP 2020. The main aim of life skills education is to enable adolescent students to develop an insight and a concept of their identity as individuals of worth and dignity.

Rationale of the study:

Adolescence is a very important stage of growth which is typically marked by notable physiological, affective and social transformations. In addition to undergoing this phase, young people also seek to find their own identities, assert their independence from adults and navigate through the complications that adolescence brings along with it. Often, they are faced with serious problems such as flunking exams, disappointing grades, intense competition in school and high expectations coming from parents. If not addressed for a long time, these pressures can cause frustration which may appear in the form of various mental or behavioural health concerns. Hence, life skills should be taught at this level; adolescents will require them for daily navigation as well as preparing themselves for future achievement.

Various studies underscore the significance of Life Skills and Life Skills Education. For instance, **Kumar and Chhabra (2014)** emphasize that life skills are crucial for adolescents as they transition from childhood to adulthood, enhancing their psychosocial competence, preventing tobacco abuse, and fostering positive self-esteem. Similarly, **Awasthi and Kumari (2011)** advocate for the promotion of life skills education in schools, arguing that it is essential for the socialization of students. **Aparna and Rakhee (2011)** also highlight that incorporating life skills education into the school curriculum can make adolescents' lives more meaningful and help them reach their full potential. This education empowers young people to take proactive steps to protect themselves, promoting health and positive social relationships within society.

Research literature suggests that that life skills education promotes the overall health and wellbeing of children and adolescents, offering lifelong benefits and protection in risk situations.

Despite the extensive evidence supporting the importance of life skills, there is a noticeable gap in research specifically focused on life skills education in Tirap District of Arunachal Pradesh. Recognizing this gap and the critical role of life skills, this study aims to investigate the status of life skills education among higher secondary students in the Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh.

Statement of the problem: *“Assessment and Enhancement of Life Skills among Higher Secondary Students in Tirap District of Arunachal Pradesh: A Gender Perspective”*

Delimitations of the Study: The present study is delimited to

- i) Learners of class XI students.
- ii) Higher Secondary School.
- iii) Tirap District of Arunachal Pradesh.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the overall life skills of Higher secondary students in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh.
2. To find out the significant difference in life skills of Higher secondary students in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh with regards to gender.

Hypothesis:

H₀1: There is no significant difference in life skills of Higher secondary students in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh with regards to gender.

II. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

For the present study, Descriptive cum survey method was employed to measure the level of Life skills of higher secondary students in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh.

Sample of the Study: This study was conducted in Tirap District of Arunachal Pradesh. 240 students were randomly chosen from the eleventh standard students of the selected district, among whom 117 were boys and 123 were girls.

Tools: For the present piece of research work. The Life skills scale developed by the researcher was used to measure the level of life skills of higher secondary students.

Statistical Techniques:

The data was analysed using statistical technique like percentage and t test.

III. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

To achieve the above-stated objectives the percentage analysis has been used in the objective no. 1 for assessing the level of Life Skills of higher secondary students in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh and to compare the difference in Life Skills of higher secondary students in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh with this in mind, the independent sample t-

test technique was employed. Objective wise analysis is provided below.

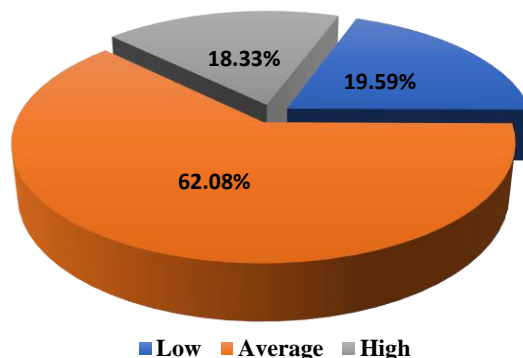
Obj1: To find out the level of life skills among higher secondary students in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh.

Table 1.1: Level of Life Skills among Higher Secondary students in Tirap District of Arunachal Pradesh.

Table 1.1 Showing life skills of higher secondary students and the percentage of learners at each level.

Levels	Range	N	%
Low Life Skills	89-115	47	19.59
Average Life Skills	116-152	149	62.08
High Life Skills	153-203	44	18.33
Total		240	100

Fig. 1.1. Showing life skills of senior secondary students and the percentage of students at each level.



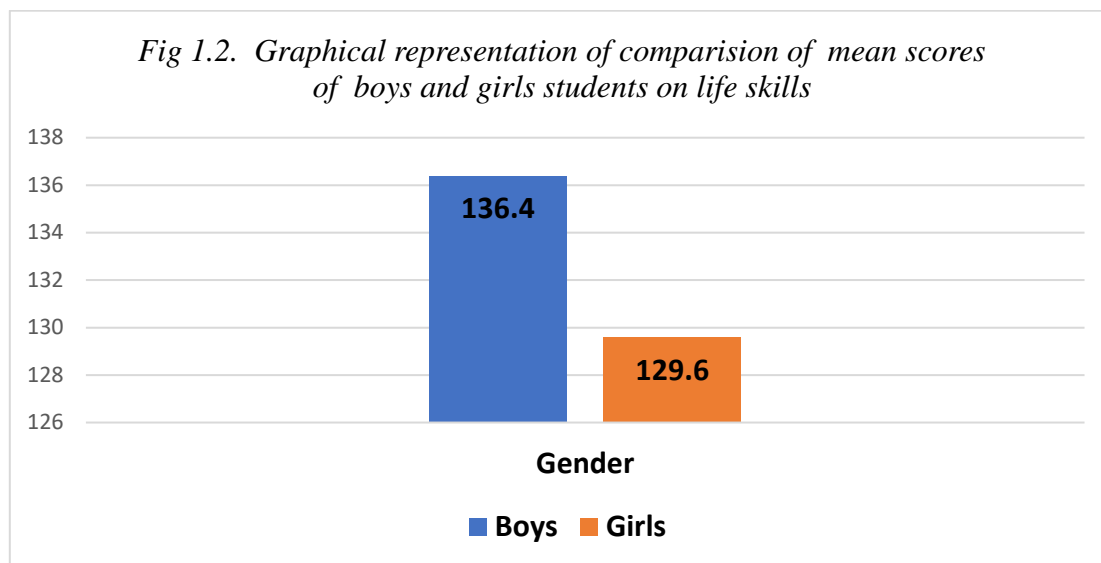
It is understood from the table 1.1 that 18.33 % of overall higher secondary students have high level of life skills, 62.08 % of overall higher secondary students have average level of life skills and majority of higher secondary students 19.59 % have low level of life skills.

Obj2: To find out the significant difference in life skills of higher secondary students in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh with regards to gender.

Table 1.2: Shows mean, standard deviation, 't' ratio and significance level of life skills of higher secondary students with regards to gender.

Table 1.2. Showing N, Mean, SD, Sed, df, t- value and level of significance of Life skills among senior secondary students with regard to gender.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	SE _D	df	t-value	Level of significance	Remarks
Boys	117	136.4	19.8					
Girls	123	129.6	20.3	2.5	238	2.32	0.05	S



Interpretation: Table 1.2, shows that the calculated t-value is 2.32 which is greater than the critical t (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance of df (238). Therefore, the formulated hypothesis “*There is no significant difference in the life skills between male and female of higher secondary school students in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh.*” is rejected. It can be inferred that boys and girls differ significantly in life skills. Further, the mean score of boys (136.4) is greater than the girls students (129.6). This indicates that boys students are better in life skills than the girls counterparts.

IV. FINDINGS

The present study reveals that majority students falls under the category of average life skills. The present study is consistent with the findings of **Amirudin & Muzaki (2019)**. Further it is also revealed that there exists a significant difference in the life skills of male and female higher secondary students. The study is consistent with the findings of **Rani and niraj 2020** and contradictory to the findings of **Meenu, & Rani, R. (2021)**.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It is understood from the findings that majority of the learners have an average level of Life skills. The probable reason of this may be attributed to the lack of awareness about life skills, lack of support from family, institution and society at large, lack of qualified teachers, and also defects in implementation of life skills education. It is also observed from the findings that a

significant difference exists between boys and girls students. The higher mean score of boys in life skills may be attributed to societal expectations, peer pressure, and mindset. Society often encourages boys to be independent and assertive, fostering a mindset that values self-reliance and problem-solving. Peer groups emphasize traits like leadership and resilience, driving boys to develop these skills to gain acceptance. The result of the present study lays strong emphasis on incorporating life skill camps/ workshops, life skill training for parents and teachers, life skill clubs in schools, and placing social work trainees Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh to enhance the life skills of adolescents. This study is significant for teachers, parents, and other concern authority to take necessary action towards life skills for young learners to improve their quality of life.

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