

Life Skills Awareness Level of Undergraduate Arts Students in Aizawl City

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Abstract

Life skills can be broadly defined as a combination of knowledge, behaviors, attitudes, and values that enable individuals to effectively deal with their environment and achieve their goals. These skills encompass competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, organization, social and communication abilities, adaptability, problem-solving, and cooperative engagement in a democratic context. Mastering these skills is essential for actively contributing to a peaceful and constructive future. With life skills, one is able to explore alternatives, weigh pros and cons and make rational decisions in solving each problem or issue as it arises. It also entails being able to establish productive interpersonal relationships with others. The present study aims to find out the life skills awareness of Undergraduate students in Aizawl city. A sample of 110 students (male & female) were taken for this study and the data were collected by using Life Skills Awareness scale containing five points by the investigators. For the analysis and interpretation of result, the researchers have used t-test, mean and standard deviation.

Keywords: *Life Skills, Awareness Scale, Undergraduate students.*

Introduction

Human beings' unlimited wants have led to the emergence of new challenges, which require a prompt and effective response from a socially responsible education system. In today's world, education plays a crucial role in supporting individuals and fostering a peaceful life. As such, the primary objective of education is to equip students with the necessary skills to become dynamic citizens capable of coping

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with future challenges and thriving in a rapidly changing world. Life skills serve as a bridge, enabling individuals to transform knowledge, attitudes and values into practical abilities.

The World Health Organization (1999), in its Life Skills Education initiative, define Life skills as “psychological competence.” This refers to an individual’s ability to maintain mental well-being and demonstrate adaptive, positive behavior when interacting with others and engaging with their culture and environment. WHO identifies 10 core life skills that are essential for psychological competence: Self-Awareness, Empathy, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Decision Making, Problem-Solving, Effective Communication, Interpersonal Relationships, Coping with Stress, and Managing Emotions.

Being a part of any society, life styles of individuals demand certain changes with respect to moral, social and religious values. College students are directly affected by these inevitable life changes in terms of physical, psychological and social health. Resultantly, the exposure with high-risk behaviors such as onset of drug use, unprotected sexual behavior, extremism, conduct behaviors and low self-esteem and confidence during adolescent life activities is observed in them (Mangrulkar, 2022).

Life skills is any ability that helps you thrive in personal and professional settings. From managing finances to communicating effectively, life skills are fundamental abilities that help us navigate daily challenges effectively. Life skills meaning extends beyond basic survival - it encompasses the tools and capabilities needed to adapt, grow, and succeed in an ever-evolving society. It is the invisible force that shapes our success in every aspect of life. These skills are not innate but can be learned and developed over time. Life skills are crucial for personal growth, professional success, and overall well-being in various aspects of life, including education, work, relationships, and personal development. Individual’s certain abilities to adapt positive behaviors and deal effectively with challenges and demands of everyday life are defined as life skills (Chaudhary & Mehta, 2012).

Life skills Education also helps students develop important strategies for managing problems, planning, time management, and decision-making. These skills are important in enabling students to successfully navigate transitions in life. Through Life skills Education, learners acquire abilities such as critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, stress and anxiety management, self-esteem, and empathy (Veena & Vivek, 2010). Ultimately, life skills foster healthy behavior and enhance self-confidence, empowering individuals to lead more fulfilling and resilient lives.

Need and Importance of the Study

In recent years, the needs of college students have evolved significantly. Today, they require more than just traditional academic instruction. Modern students face a range of unique challenges, including financial pressures, mental health concerns, and the lasting effects of global disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Young intellectuals suffered at increased rates from stress, anxiety, sleep-related issues, depression, and suicidal ideation. A firm action to protect the students' safety and physical, social, and mental well-being must be taken in partnership with their communities, students, and higher education institutions (Zarowski, 2024). Raising awareness about life skills is crucial for improving the overall quality of life. Such awareness enhances students' abilities and encourages a positive attitude toward acquiring more knowledge and skills.

Students play a vital role in preparing communities and societies to explore new opportunities, achieve higher levels of progress, and foster development. This can only be fully realized if students are equipped with essential life skills. To be effectively equipped, students must first understand what life skills are and recognize their significance in personal, social, and professional contexts.

Integrating life skills with teaching methods is key to fostering the development of positive behaviors, attitudes, knowledge, values, and skills in students. Awareness of life skills helps address various challenges, such as bullying, violence, crime, antisocial behavior, substance abuse (including alcohol and drugs), smoking, premarital pregnancy, peer conflicts, suicidal tendencies, stress, and trauma. It enables students to face life's challenges and meet its demands with resilience and confidence (Hanan, 2019). Life Skills training can promote interactive, decision-making, problem - solving, critical thinking and stress management skills and lead to more social acceptability, which in turn reduce drug abuse tendency (Moshki, 2014). Additionally, self-reflection plays an important role in helping students transfer what they learn in the classroom to real-life situations, making their education more practical and impactful.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the Life Skills Awareness of Undergraduate Arts students in Aizawl City
2. To compare the Life Skills Awareness of Undergraduate Arts students with respect to gender.
3. To compare the Life Skills Awareness of Undergraduate Arts students with respect to locality.

4. To compare the Life Skills Awareness of Undergraduate students with respect to family type.
5. To give suggestions for improvement of Life Skills.

Definition of Key Terms

Life Skills: Life skills can be defined as abilities that enable humans to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life. They may also be called psychosocial skills, as they are psychological in nature and include thinking and behavioral processes.

Undergraduate Students: Undergraduate students refer to students studying BA in Aizawl City.

Life Skills Awareness: A dispositional measure of mindfulness to assess the thinking skills, social skills and coping skills of individuals.

Delimitation of the Study

For the present study, the data collection was delimited to Undergraduate Arts students studying in Aizawl City. The scope of data collection was confined to this stream due to constraints in resources and time.

Methodology

Method of the study

The investigation is Descriptive in nature. The research methodology focuses on the Life Skills Awareness Level of Undergraduate Arts students in Aizawl City.

Population and Sample

The population includes Undergraduate Arts students studying in Aizawl City. Proportionate stratified random sampling was used for the study. The sample consists of 110 students in total. Out of these, 69 students are female and 41 students are male; 87 students belong to Urban locality and 23 students belong to Rural locality; 87 students belong to Nuclear family and 23 students belong to Joint family. All the sampled students belong to Arts stream.

Life Skills Awareness Level of Undergraduate Arts Students in Aizawl City

Gender	Male	41	Total
	Female	69	110
Locality	Urban	87	
	Rural	23	
Family type	Nuclear	87	
	Joint	23	

Tool used

For the purpose of the study, a Life Skills Tool developed by the researcher was used. The tool was in the process of standardization which was reviewed and approved by the supervisor for use in the study. The tool consisted of statements designed to assess life skills, with responses rated on a 3-point Likert Scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, and Disagree.

Statistical Techniques

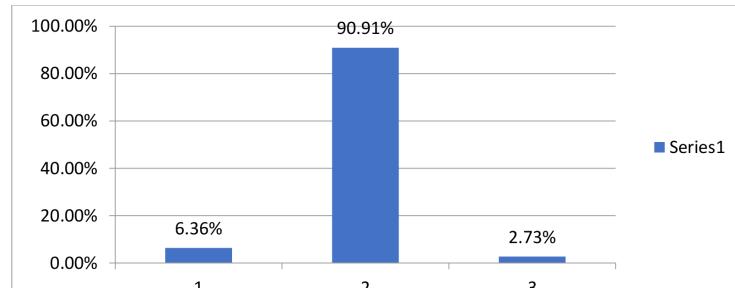
Descriptive statistical techniques such as Mean and Standard Deviation, and Inferential Statistical techniques like T- test will be used.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table-1

Life Skills Awareness of Undergraduate students

S/No	Raw Scores	No of students	Percentage	Level of Awareness
1	68 to 100	7	6.36%	High
2	34 to 67	100	90.91%	Average
3	0 to 33	3	2.73%	Low

Figure-1**Life Skills Awareness of Undergraduate students**

From the above Table and Figure 1.1, it has been found that 6.36% of the undergraduate Arts students in Aizawl City have scored high level of awareness, 90.91% have average level of life skills awareness and 2.73% have scored low level of life skills awareness. Hence, we can conclude that majority of the sampled students (90.91%) have Average Life skills awareness.

Table 2**Comparison of Life Skills Awareness of Undergraduate Students with respect to Gender.**

gender	N	Mean	Std. De- viation	Std. Error Mean	Degrees of freedom (df)	t	Remarks
Female	69	1.20	.405	.049	106	1.98	Not significant at 0.05 level
Male	41	1.22	.419	.065			

The t-value testing the significance of mean difference in Life skills awareness of female and male undergraduate arts students came out to be 1.98, the calculated t value of 1.98 is lower than the criterion t value at both .01 and .05 level which indicates that there is no significant difference. This shows that there is no significant mean difference in life skills among undergraduate students with respect to gender.

Table 3: To compare the Life Skills Awareness of Undergraduate students with respect to locality.

Locality	N	Mean	Std. De- viation	Std. Error Mean	Degrees of freedom (df)	t	Remarks
Urban	87	1.37	.485	.052	106	1.98	Not significant at 0.05 level
Rural	23	1.39	.499	.104			

The t-value testing the significance of mean difference in Life skills awareness of undergraduate students in Aizawl City belonging to urban and rural came out to be 1.98 the calculated „t“ value of 1.98 is lower than the criterion „t“ value at both .01 and .05 level which indicates that there is no significant mean difference in life skills among undergraduate arts students with respect to locality.

Table 4

To compare the Life Skills Awareness of Undergraduate students with respect to Family type.

Family type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Degrees of freedom (df)	t	Remarks
Nuclear	87	1.30	.460	.049	106	2.37	significant at the critical value 0.05 level
Joint	23	1.35	.487	.102			

The t-value testing the significance of mean difference in Life skills awareness of undergraduate students belonging to nuclear and joint family came out to be 2.37, the calculated „t“ value of 2.37 is higher than the criterion „t“ value at 0.05 level which indicates that there was significant difference. Likewise, the mean value is 1.30 for nuclear family; 1.35 for joint family. The standard deviation is .460 for nuclear family; and it is .487 for joint family respectively. This shows that there is significant mean difference in Life skills among undergraduate students with respect to Family type. It can also be observed from the above table that respondents from joint family had better life skills.

Major Findings of the Study

The present study revealed that the Life Skills Awareness of Undergraduate Arts students in Aizawl City is Average. It also shows that there is no significant difference in the Life skills awareness of undergraduate Arts students in Aizawl City with respect to Gender and Locality. A significant mean difference in their life skills awareness has been found with respect to Family type.

Discussion

1. It was found that undergraduate Arts students generally possess a moderate level of awareness regarding life skills. Prakash & Nirmala (2015) also found similar results. This is not surprising, as college students are in a transitional phase where they are still developing essential life skills through academic learning, social interactions, and real-world experiences

2. The researcher found that there is no significant difference in the life skills awareness of Undergraduate Arts students with respect to gender. Biswajita & Lakshmipriya (2024) also found similar results. This is because life skills education and exposure to real-life challenges are generally similar for both male and female students in academic settings. Both genders have access to the same curriculum, social interactions, and extracurricular activities, which contribute to their overall awareness of life skills. Additionally, societal changes and equal educational opportunities have reduced gender-based differences in life skills development.
3. The researcher found that there is no significant difference in the life skills awareness of Undergraduate Arts students with respect to locality. Thus, revealed that life skills awareness is primarily influenced by the individual, rather than by demographic factors.
4. Findings revealed that students from joint families have a higher level of life skills awareness compared to those from nuclear families. This is because joint family environments provide greater social interaction, collective decision-making, and opportunities to learn from multiple family members. Living in a larger family structure fosters interpersonal skills, adaptability, conflict resolution, and emotional intelligence through daily interactions and shared responsibilities. In contrast, students from nuclear families may have fewer social engagements within the household, limiting their exposure to diverse perspectives and collaborative problem-solving experiences.

Suggestions

1. Encourage Decision-Making and Responsibility – students should be given opportunities to make choices and take responsibility for their actions, as this helps them develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and accountability. Parents, teachers, and mentors can create supportive environments where adolescents are encouraged to make decisions—whether in academics, extracurricular activities, or daily life situations.
2. Real-Life Exposure and Practical Learning – Providing students with hands-on experiences through internships, career counselling, and financial literacy sessions helps them develop essential skills for real-world challenges. Internships offer practical workplace exposure, allowing them to explore career options and build professional skills. Career counselling helps them make informed decisions about their future, while financial literacy sessions teach money management, budgeting, and responsible spending. These opportunities bridge the gap

between theoretical knowledge and practical application, preparing students for independent and successful adulthood.

3. **Digital Literacy and Safe Internet Use** – Educate students on responsible social media usage, online safety, and critical thinking to help them navigate the digital world effectively. Teach them about privacy settings, recognizing cyber threats, avoiding misinformation, and maintaining a positive digital footprint. Encouraging ethical online behavior, media literacy, and awareness of cyberbullying ensures they use technology responsibly and safely while making informed decisions in the digital space.
4. **Stress and Time Management Training** – Teaching students effective stress and time management techniques helps them handle academic and personal pressures more efficiently. Mindfulness practices, such as meditation and deep breathing, promote emotional regulation and reduce anxiety. Goal setting enables them to break tasks into manageable steps, enhancing focus and motivation. Prioritization skills, including task scheduling and time-blocking, ensure they manage responsibilities effectively without feeling overwhelmed. Equipping students with these strategies fosters resilience, improves productivity, and enhances overall well-being.

Conclusion

Life skills are essential for students to navigate the complexities of academic, personal, and professional life. They provide the tools needed for effective communication, problem-solving, decision-making, emotional regulation, and time management—skills that are crucial for success in both higher education and beyond. By cultivating these skills, students can build resilience, adapt to challenges, and develop a sense of responsibility, which are key to personal growth and well-being. Furthermore, life skills enhance interpersonal relationships and contribute to a more positive and supportive campus environment. As undergraduate students prepare for the workforce and adult life, these competencies empower them to make informed choices, interact effectively with others, and contribute meaningfully to society. Therefore, integrating life skills education into the curriculum and fostering their development should be a priority, ensuring that students are equipped with the essential abilities to thrive in an increasingly complex and fast-paced world.

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