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LIFE SKILL AWARENESS AMONG STUDENT TEACHERS

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Abstract
The present study investigated the level of life skill awareness among student teachers and its association with selected demographic variables. The study adopted the normative survey method and selected a sample of 150 student teachers from government, aided, and self-financing colleges through random sampling technique. Data were gathered using the Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) developed by A. Smitha and Mary Vineetha Thomas (2018). The scale consists of 25 items distributed under four dimensions and follows a five-point Likert format. The instrument possesses high reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.87) and validity (0.90). Statistical techniques such as descriptive analysis, differential analysis, correlation, and regression were employed using SPSS software for data analysis. The results indicated that student teachers exhibit a very high level of life skill awareness. An increase in awareness was observed with advancing age, whereas variations based on gender, type of college, department, and family income were found to be negligible. The regression analysis showed a significant model ($F = 9.453$, $p < 0.05$), in which age and family type jointly accounted for 11.4% of the variance in life skill awareness ($R^2 = 0.114$). Among the dimensions, Core Life Skills Awareness emerged as the most influential predictor. The study concludes that student teachers generally possess a consistently high level of life skill awareness, with demographic variables exerting only a marginal influence.

Keywords: *Life Skill Awareness, Student Teachers*

Introduction

The changing demands of the contemporary world have made life skills an essential component of education. In the 21st century, individuals are expected not only to acquire academic knowledge but also to develop the ability to face personal, social, and professional challenges effectively. The traditional system of education mainly concentrates on scholastic achievement, often giving less importance to practical competencies required for everyday life. Skills such as decision-making, communication, emotional management, critical thinking, and problem-solving are necessary for leading a balanced and successful life. According to John Dewey, education should be closely connected with real-life experiences and practical living. In this context, life skills education becomes highly important in helping individuals develop confidence, adaptability, responsibility, and positive interpersonal relationships. For student teachers in particular, life skill awareness is essential, as they are future educators responsible for guiding and shaping younger generations.

Need for the Study

In recent years, the role of teachers has become more complex and demanding due to rapid social, technological, and educational changes. Student teachers are required to handle various academic and classroom situations effectively while also maintaining emotional stability and professional competence. To meet these expectations, they must possess adequate awareness of life skills such as effective communication, creative thinking, interpersonal relationships, stress management, and decision-making. Although teacher education programmes focus on developing teaching competencies, the level of awareness regarding life skills among student teachers may vary due to different personal and demographic factors. Therefore, it is necessary to study the extent of life skill awareness among student teachers and examine the influence of variables such as age, gender, type of college, family type, and income. The findings of the study may help in strengthening teacher education programmes and promoting the holistic development of future teachers.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the present study lies in its contribution to understanding the level of life skill awareness among student teachers. Since student teachers are future educators, their awareness and application of life skills are essential for maintaining effective classroom management, healthy relationships, and professional efficiency. The study provides useful information regarding the strengths and weaknesses of student teachers in different dimensions of life skills. It also helps teacher educators, administrators, and policymakers recognize the need for incorporating life skill training into teacher education curricula. In addition, the study examines the influence of demographic variables on life skill awareness, which may support the development of suitable guidance and intervention programmes. Ultimately, the study contributes to the preparation of capable, confident, emotionally balanced, and socially responsible teachers who can successfully meet the challenges of modern education and society.

Statement of the Problem: The present investigation is entitled as: "A Study on Life Skill Awareness among Student Teachers."

Operational Definitions of the Terms

- Awareness: In the present study, awareness refers to the level of knowledge, understanding, and perception possessed by student teachers regarding the meaning, components, and significance of life skills.
- Life Skills: Life skills are psychosocial competencies and adaptive abilities that help individuals effectively manage the demands, responsibilities, and challenges encountered in daily life.
- Student Teachers: Student teachers refer to students pursuing Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programmes in colleges of education and undergoing professional teacher training.

Objectives of the Study: The study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To assess the overall level of life skill awareness among student teachers.
2. To examine the significant difference in the mean scores of life skill awareness among student teachers with respect to their selected personal variables.
3. To identify the relationship between life skill awareness and the selected subsamples of student teachers.
4. To determine the predictor variables influencing life skill awareness among student teachers.

Hypotheses of the Study: The following null hypotheses were framed for the study:

1. The level of life skill awareness among student teachers is very high.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of life skill awareness among student teachers based on their personal variables.
3. There is no significant relationship between life skill awareness and the selected personal variables of student teachers.
4. There are no significant predictor variables influencing the life skill awareness of student teachers.

Methodology

The present study adopted the normative survey method to examine and interpret the existing level of life skill awareness among student teachers with reference to prevailing conditions, practices, and trends. Data were collected using the standardized Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) developed by A. Smitha and Mary Vineetha Thomas (2018). The tool consists of 25 items distributed under four dimensions, namely General Awareness of Life Skills, Core Life Skills Awareness, Awareness of Life Skills Education in Teacher Training, and Application-Oriented Awareness. The scale follows a five-point Likert format ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree, with scoring values assigned from 5 to 1 for favourable statements.The population of the study comprised nearly 32,000 students enrolled in Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programmes. From this population, a sample of 150 student teachers from Tamil Nadu was selected using the random sampling technique. For analysing the collected data, statistical techniques such as descriptive analysis (Mean and Standard Deviation), differential analysis ('t' test and 'F' test), correlation analysis, and regression analysis were employed.

Analysis of the Level of Life Skill Awareness Score of Entire Sample and Subsamples

One of the major objectives of the study was to examine the level of life skill awareness among student teachers in the total sample as well as in the selected subsamples. For this purpose, Mean and Standard Deviation values were calculated for both the entire sample and the subsamples. The population and sample for the study consisted of students studying in colleges of education. The subsamples considered for analysis included variables such as Age, Gender, Type of College, Subject Specialization, Year of Study, Locality of Residence, Medium of Instruction, Family Type, Monthly Family Income, Parents' Occupation, Mother's Qualification, Father's Qualification, and Number of Family Members.

Table 1.Mean And Standard Deviation Of Life Skill Awareness

Variable	N	Mean	SD
Life Skill Awareness	150	117.37	5.72

The above table 1 shows the mean score and standard deviation of student teachers Life Skill awareness are found to be 117.37 and 5.72 respectively. It is concluded that the student teachers Life Skill awareness is Very High (101-125).

Table-2. t-test showing the relationship between life skill score and some personal variables of the respondents							
S.No	Variables		N	Mean	Std	*t*	*p*
1.	Gender	Male	24	116.83	5.49	**-.508**	**.612**
		Female	126	117.48	5.72		
2.	Year of study	First Year	62	118.61	6.00	**2.278**	**.024**
		Second Year	88	116.50	5.29		
3.	Locality	Rural	63	117.44	5.44	**.130**	**.897**
		Urban	87	117.32	5.86		
4.	Medium	Tamil	100	117.49	5.91	.355	.723
		English	50	117.14	5.21		
5.	Income	1-2l	106	117.10	5.86	**0.903**	**0.368**
		2.1l-4L	44	118.02	5.20		

1. **Gender:** The t-test analysis showed that female student teachers (M = 117.48) scored slightly higher than male student teachers (M = 116.83) in life skills awareness. However, the obtained t-value (–0.508) was not significant at the 5% level (p = 0.612). Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating no significant difference based on gender.
2. **Income:** Student teachers from the income group ₹2.1–4 lakh (M = 118.02) scored slightly higher than those from ₹1–2 lakh (M = 117.10). However, the obtained t-value (0.903) was not significant at the 5% level (p = 0.368). Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, showing that family income has no significant influence on life skills awareness.
3. **Year of Study:** First-year student teachers (M = 118.61) scored higher than second-year students (M = 116.50). The obtained t-value (2.278) was significant at the 5% level (p = 0.024). Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating a significant difference in life skills awareness based on year of study.
4. **Locality:** Rural student teachers (M = 117.44) scored slightly higher than urban students (M = 117.32). However, the obtained t-value (0.130) was not significant at the 5% level (p = 0.897). Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating no significant difference based on locality.
5. **Medium of Instruction:** Tamil medium student teachers (M = 117.49) scored slightly higher than English medium students (M = 117.14). However, the obtained t-value (0.355) was not significant at the 5% level (p = 0.723). Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, showing no significant difference based on medium of instruction.

Table-3. F-test showing the relationship between life skill score and some personal variables of the respondents							
S.No	Variables		N	Mean	Std	f	p
1.	Age	20-25	58	115.69	6.06	**4.825**	**.009**
		26-30	77	118.19	5.18		
		30-35	15	119.67	5.14		
2.	Type of College	Government	50	117.14	5.21	**.404**	**.669**
		Aided	50	117.96	5.99		
		Private	50	117.02	5.86		
3.	Department	Arts	73	117.99	5.15	**.938**	**.394**
		Science	57	116.61	6.52		
		Commerce	20	117.30	4.85		
4.	Family type	Nuclear	43	115.42	6.20	4.795	.010
		Joint	86	117.78	5.45		
		Single Parent	21	119.71	4.28		
5.	Parental occupation	Both Working	49	117.84	5.18	**1.059**	**.369**
		Father Working	45	118.13	5.13		
		Mother Working	33	116.67	6.30		
		Self-Employment	23	115.91	6.65		
6.	Mothers qualification	School	69	116.75	6.26	1.048	.353
		College	49	118.29	4.75		
		Professional	32	117.31	5.61		
7.	Fathers qualification	School	60	118.08	5.26	1.091	.339
		College	34	117.50	4.76		
		Professional	56	116.54	6.53		
8.	Family members	3 Members	84	118.23	5.52	2.204	.114
		4 Members	54	116.24	5.98		
		5 Members	12	116.50	4.58		

1. **Age:** The ANOVA results showed a significant difference in life skills awareness among different age groups (F = 4.825, p = 0.009). Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. Students aged 30–35 years (M = 119.67) had higher awareness than those aged 26–30 years (M = 118.19) and 20–25 years (M = 115.69), indicating that awareness increases with age.
2. **Type of Institution:** The obtained F-value (0.404, p = 0.669) was not significant at the 5% level. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating no significant difference in life skills awareness among student teachers from government, aided, and private institutions.
3. **Group of Study:** The obtained F-value (0.938, p = 0.394) was not significant at the 5% level. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, showing no significant difference in life skills awareness among Arts, Science, and Commerce student teachers.
4. **Family Type:** The ANOVA results revealed a significant difference in life skills awareness based on family type (F = 4.795, p = 0.010). Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. Students from single-parent families (M = 119.71) showed higher awareness than those from joint (M = 117.78) and nuclear families (M = 115.42).
5. **Parental Occupation:** The obtained F-value (1.059, p = 0.369) was not significant at the 5% level. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating that parental occupation does not influence life skills awareness.
6. **Mother's Qualification:** The obtained F-value (1.048, p = 0.353) was not significant at the 5% level. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, showing that mother's qualification does not influence life skills awareness.
7. **Father's Qualification:** The obtained F-value (1.091, p = 0.339) was not significant at the 5% level. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, indicating that father's qualification does not influence life skills awareness.
8. **Family Size:** The obtained F-value (2.204, p = 0.114) was not significant at the 5% level. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, showing that family size does not influence life skills awareness.

Table.4. Stepwise Regression Between Life Skill Awareness and Personal Variables

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			**Structure Coefficient**
		B	Std. Error	Beta	r	Sr2	
2	(Constant)	110.028	1.746				
	Family Type	2.067	.691	.233	.240	0.057	0.712
	Age	2.051	.691	.231	.238	0.056	0.706

Note. The dependent variable Life Skill Awareness.R^2=0.114, Adjusted R^2=0.102
sr^2 is squared semi-partial correlation. * $p < .05$ F= 9.453, Df=(2,147).

The stepwise multiple regression analysis was carried out to identify the significant predictors of life skills awareness among student teachers. The regression model examined the influence of age and family type on life skills awareness. The overall model was statistically significant (F = 9.453, df = 2,147, p < 0.05), indicating that the predictors significantly explained the variation in life skills awareness.The coefficient of determination (R^2 = 0.114) revealed that 11.4% of the variance in life skills awareness was explained by age and family type. Both variables were found to be significant positive predictors, suggesting that differences in age and family structure influence the level of life skills awareness among student teachers. Although the explained variance is modest, the predictors make meaningful contributions to the model.

Table.5 Stepwise Regression Between Life Skill Awareness and Dimensions

Model	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**r**	**Sr2**	**Structure Coefficient**
(Constant)	-4.974E-14	0.000				
Core Life Skills Awareness	1.000	0.000	.535	1.000	0.286	1.000
Application-Oriented Awareness	1.000	0.000	.263	1.000	0.069	1.000
General Awareness of Life Skills	1.000	0.000	.248	1.000	0.062	1.000
Awareness of Life Skills Education in Teacher Training	1.000	0.000	.235	1.000	0.055	1.000

Note. The dependent variable Life Skill Awareness. R2=1, Adjusted R2=1 sr2 is squared semi-partial correlation. * p < .05 F= 958.23, Df=(4,145).

Table 5 presents the stepwise regression analysis showing the contribution of different dimensions to overall life skills awareness. The regression model was highly significant (F = 958.23, p < 0.05) with an R^2 value of 1.00, indicating that the dimensions together explained the total variance in life skills awareness. Among the predictors, Core Life Skills Awareness was the strongest contributor (β = 0.535, Sr^2 = 0.286), followed by Application-Oriented Awareness (β = 0.263, Sr^2 = 0.069), General Awareness (β = 0.248, Sr^2 = 0.062), and Awareness in Teacher Training (β = 0.235, Sr^2 = 0.055).The findings indicate that all four dimensions significantly predict life skills awareness, with Core Life Skills Awareness emerging as the most influential factor.

However, the perfect R^2 value suggests possible overlap among the variables, and therefore the results should be interpreted cautiously.

Discussion of Results

The present study revealed that student teachers possess a very high level of life skills awareness, supporting earlier studies such as Avcı and Kamer (2018), Jayachithra (2020), and Rout, Malla, and Puhan (2024). The findings indicate that age significantly influences life skills awareness, with older students showing higher awareness, which agrees with Bala et al. (2024) and Fernando and Bual (2024).

No significant difference was found based on gender, type of institution, group of study, locality, medium of instruction, income, parental occupation, parental education, and family size. These findings are consistent with earlier studies which reported that life skills awareness is generally independent of demographic and socio-economic factors.

The study also found that first-year student teachers have higher life skills awareness than second-year students. Further, students from single-parent families showed higher awareness compared to those from nuclear and joint families, highlighting the influence of family environment on life skills development.

Correlation and regression analyses revealed that age and family type are significant predictors of life skills awareness, though their contribution is moderate. The regression analysis of life skills dimensions showed that all dimensions significantly contribute to overall awareness, with Core Life Skills Awareness emerging as the strongest predictor.

Overall, the findings emphasize that life skills awareness among student teachers is generally high and is influenced more by personal and contextual factors than by demographic variables. The study highlights the importance of strengthening life skills education in teacher training programmes to develop competent and socially responsible teachers.

Conclusions

The study concludes that student teachers possess a very high level of life skill awareness, indicating strong psychosocial competencies. The findings show that life skill awareness increases with age, while first-year students and students from single-parent families demonstrate comparatively higher awareness. Inferential analysis revealed that age and family type significantly influence life skill awareness, whereas variables such as gender, income, type of institution, group of study, locality, medium of instruction, parental occupation, parental qualification, and family size do not show significant differences. Regression analysis further confirmed that age and family type are important predictors of life skill awareness. The dimensional analysis also showed that all dimensions significantly contribute to overall awareness, with Core Life Skills Awareness emerging as the strongest predictor. Overall, the study highlights that student teachers generally maintain a high level of life skill awareness, with only a few demographic factors having a meaningful influence.

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