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THE AWARENESS OF LIFE SKILLS AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS: A DIMENSION-WISE ANALYSIS OF THE TEN CORE LIFE SKILLS.

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Abstract:

Life skills equip young people to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life, and their systematic assessment among undergraduate students remains critical for higher-education planning. This paper presents a dimension-wise analysis of awareness of the ten core life skills identified by the World Health Organization - self-awareness, empathy, critical thinking, creative thinking, decision-making, problem-solving, effective communication, interpersonal relationship, coping with stress and coping with emotion-among undergraduate students affiliated with Rani Channamma University, Belagavi. Data were collected from 347 undergraduate students using a structured Likert-scale questionnaire covering all ten dimensions and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The overall level of life skills awareness was found to be high ($M=4.13$, $SD=0.87$ on a five-point scale). Dimension-wise analysis revealed that Empathy ($M=4.30$) and Interpersonal Relationship ($M=4.27$) were the most strongly developed dimensions, while Coping with Stress ($M=4.03$) and Critical Thinking ($M=4.06$) emerged as comparatively weaker dimensions. The findings suggest that targeted interventions in stress-coping and critical-thinking skills could strengthen the overall life-skills profile of undergraduate students.

Key Words: Life Skills, Undergraduate Students, WHO Core Life Skills, Dimension-wise Analysis, Awareness

I. INTRODUCTION:

Life skills are psychosocial and interpersonal abilities that help individuals deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. The World Health Organization (WHO) identifies ten core life skills, namely self-awareness, empathy, communication skills, decision-making, problem-solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, coping with stress, coping with emotion, and interpersonal relationship skills, and has emphasized that life skills education significantly improves psychosocial competence and mental health among young people.

Life skills among undergraduate students have received growing research attention in India and abroad. Ajay Kumar and Dwivedi (2025), in an analytical study of life skills among Indian undergraduate students, found that life skills play a significant role in personality development, emotional adjustment, and academic growth, with urban students showing relatively higher awareness of communication and decision-making skills than their rural counterparts. Rathod Santosh Shesharao (2022), in a comparative study of life skills among male and female college students in Mumbai, examined dimensions including self-awareness, empathy, decision-making, problem-solving, communication, interpersonal relationships, and stress management, and found that female students demonstrated higher empathy and interpersonal-relationship skills. Emilda Josephine and Selvakumar (2015), studying life skills among 498 college students across medicine, engineering, education, arts, and science streams, similarly reported significant differences in life skills based on gender and course of study.

Despite this growing body of work, comparatively few Indian studies have reported a full dimension-wise breakdown of all ten WHO core life skills for a single undergraduate sample most existing studies report either an aggregate awareness score or comparisons on a limited subset of dimensions. This creates a gap in understanding precisely which specific life-skills dimensions are comparatively well developed among undergraduate students, and which require focused institutional attention. The present study addresses this gap by presenting a dimension-wise descriptive analysis of awareness of all ten core life skills among undergraduate students.

1.1 Statement of the Problem:

The topic selected for the present investigation is “**Awareness of Life Skills among Undergraduate Students: A Dimension-wise Analysis of the Ten Core Life Skills.**”

1.2 Objectives of the Study:

1. To study the level of awareness of the ten core life skills among undergraduate students.
2. To identify the major dimensions of life skills among undergraduate students.

1.3 Hypotheses of the Study:

1. There is no significant difference in the level of awareness across the ten core life-skills dimensions among undergraduate students.

II. METHODOLOGY:

2.1 Research Method:

The investigator employed the **Descriptive Survey Method**, considered appropriate for collecting information on awareness under existing conditions without manipulating variables.

2.2 Population and Sample:

The Sample Comprised 347 Undergraduate Students drawn from colleges affiliated Rani Channamma University, Belagavi, covering Belagavi and Vijayapura districts, selected through the affiliated-college network of the university.

2.3 Tool Used for Data Collection:

A structured questionnaire covering the **Ten Core Life-Skills Dimensions** identified by the WHO was administered, comprising **100 statements** (10 statements per dimension) rated on a **Five-Point Likert Scale** ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Dimension-wise scores were computed as the mean of the ten item-scores within each dimension for every respondent.

2.4 Statistical Techniques:

The collected data were analyzed using **Descriptive Statistics-Mean and Standard Deviation-Computed** separately for the overall scale and for each of the ten life-skills dimensions.

III. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA:

The data are analyzed by computing the **mean and standard deviation** for overall awareness and for each of the ten life-skills dimensions, presented below along with graphical representation.

Table-1: Overall Descriptive Statistics of Life Skills Awareness

N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
347	4.13	0.87	1.00	5.00

Table-1 shows the overall mean awareness score of 4.13 on the five-point scale, with a standard deviation of 0.87, indicating a high overall level of life skills awareness among the undergraduate students sampled, with moderate variability around the mean.

Table-2: Dimension-wise Mean Scores of Life Skills Awareness (N = 347):

Dimension	Mean	SD	Rank
Empathy	4.300	0.889	1
Interpersonal Relationship	4.272	0.921	2
Self-Awareness	4.215	0.900	3
Coping with Emotion	4.118	0.955	4
Effective Communication	4.099	0.969	5
Decision-Making	4.089	0.957	6
Problem-Solving	4.077	0.974	7
Creative Thinking	4.072	0.961	8
Critical Thinking	4.056	0.951	9
Coping with Stress	4.033	0.969	10

Table-2 presents the dimension-wise mean scores of life skills awareness. Empathy recorded the highest mean score ($M=4.300$), followed closely by Interpersonal Relationship ($M=4.272$) and Self-Awareness ($M=4.215$), indicating that undergraduate students in the sample are comparatively strongest in the affective and relational dimensions of life skills. Coping with Stress recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 4.033$), followed by Critical Thinking ($M=4.056$) and Creative Thinking ($M=4.072$), suggesting that the cognitive and stress-management dimensions are comparatively less developed than the affective and relational dimensions, though all ten dimensions fall within the “high awareness” band on the five-point scale.

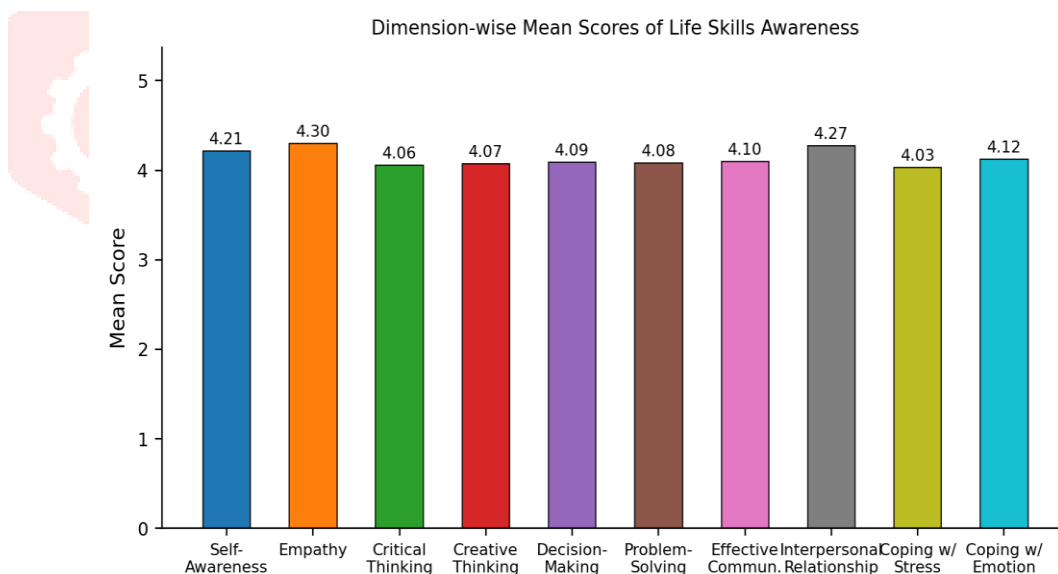


Fig.1: Bar graph showing dimension-wise mean scores of life skills awareness among undergraduate students.

IV. DISCUSSION:

The finding that Empathy and Interpersonal Relationship are the most strongly developed dimensions is consistent with Rathod Santosh Shesharao (2022), who similarly found that empathy and interpersonal-relationship skills were comparatively well developed among the college students studied in Mumbai. It is also consistent with the thesis's own literature review, which notes that empathy and interpersonal skills were found essential for maintaining healthy relationships and social adjustment among students generally.

The comparatively lower score for Coping with Stress aligns with a broader pattern noted in international research on college-student mental health, which has repeatedly flagged rising stress and emotional-regulation difficulties among college students, and with the observation that students

possessing stronger coping skills and emotional-regulation abilities report better psychological well-being. Given that Coping with Stress ranks lowest among all ten dimensions in the present sample, this points to a specific, actionable area for institutional intervention - such as structured stress-management workshops - rather than a generic life-skills programme covering all dimensions equally. The comparatively lower scores for Critical Thinking and Creative Thinking further suggest that cognitive life-skills dimensions may benefit from more deliberate curricular attention than they currently receive, a gap also flagged in the broader life-skills literature, which notes that many existing studies focus on specific dimensions rather than providing a comprehensive, dimension-wise profile of overall awareness.

V. CONCLUSION:

The present study found a high overall level of life skills awareness among undergraduate students ($M=4.13$, $SD=0.87$). Dimension-wise analysis revealed that Empathy, Interpersonal Relationship and Self-Awareness were the most strongly developed dimensions, while Coping with Stress, Critical Thinking, and Creative Thinking were comparatively the weakest, though still within the high-awareness range. These findings suggest that undergraduate life-skills development programmes would benefit from placing particular emphasis on stress-coping and cognitive-skills training, alongside continued reinforcement of the already well-developed affective and relational dimensions.

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