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AN ASSESSMENT OF LIFE SKILLS AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS OF JOINT FAMILY AND NUCLEAR FAMILY IN MYSORE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The challenges of life can be handled well by an individual only when they possess the essential life skills. Life skills are the skills enabling the individual and empowering them in facing the difficulties as well as adjustment problems. High school students coming under the adolescence face many social, emotional, academic and interpersonal relationship problems. Life skills makes adolescents to do the task in competent way. The objective of the present study was to examine Family type differences in various dimensions of Life skills among High School Students in Mysore District. The present Research project consists of 1000 samples (279 Joint Family and 721 Nuclear Family) High School Students. Descriptive Survey Research design was employed to collect the data. Life Skills Scale developed by Anjum Ahamad and Saba Parveen was used for the study. The scale consists of 40 items divided into 10 dimensions. The tool has reliability and validity established. Personal information schedule was also included to collect the demographic data. The data were analyzed by employing mean, SD and 't- test. The results revealed that there is significant difference in Life Skills scores between Joint Family ($M=151.4, SD=13.56$) was lower than the students from Nuclear Family ($M=153.9, SD= 13.87$) an independent sample t testis calculated and the obtained $t(998) = 2.57, p=.010$. The results indicate that students from Nuclear Family tend to have significantly higher life skills compared to those from Joint families. The findings of the study contributes for the development of suitable Life Skills intervention programme to promote psychological well-being and successful life of High School Students.

KEYWORDS: *Life Skills, High School Students, Joint Family and Nuclear Family, Life Skills Scale.*

INTRODUCTION

High School Students are in the age group of adolescence. A stage of transition from childhood to adulthood. They face lots of challenges, possess abundant vigor and energy, but are in the turmoil of confusion. The physical, biological, psychological, behavioural changes creates challenges on the adolescence. To handle these and to be more responsible individual proper guidance and life skills training would help the adolescents to find better ways to deal with life.

Life skills are psychosocial abilities that help individuals navigate challenges and interactions in their personal, social, and professional lives. They enhance adaptability and resilience, empowering individuals to handle stress, maintain relationships, and make effective decisions. Life skills are fundamental to fostering self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and coping mechanisms.

Life skills address the key abilities of communication and self-organization that enable people to consider their further growth. Increased self-confidence contributes to a sense of authority over their own lives—and a capacity to contribute in a multitude of respects to their community's life (Jones & Lavalley, 2009).

According to WHO(1999) Life skills are rooted in psychosocial skills, where psycho refers to the skills of dealing with cognitive processes and social skills means the skills to deal with other people in the society.

Chakra (2016) conducted a study on “Influence of Personal Variables on Core Affective Life Skills of Adolescents”. This study was conducted to find out the influence of personal variables on core affective life skills of adolescents. The sample was comprised of 544 adolescents, including 292 girls and 252 boys. The result revealed that the request of birth and family income has significant influence on interpersonal relationship dimension of life skills. The study showed, Family type, sibling's number and gender have no significant influence on core affective life skills.

RESEARCH METHOD:

Objective of the Study: To study the family structure (joint Vs nuclear families) on life skills level among students and in various dimensions of life skills, including Self- awareness, Empathy, Critical thinking, Decision making, Problem solving, Effective communication, Creative thinking, Interpersonal relationships, Coping with stress and Coping with emotion.

Hypothesis: There is a significant difference between students from joint and nuclear families in various dimensions of life skills, including self-awareness, empathy, critical thinking, decision-making, problem-

solving, effective communication, creative thinking, and interpersonal relationships, coping with stress, and coping with emotion.

Variables:

Independent Variable: High School Students, Gender, Age, Domicile, Family Type.

Dependent Variable: Life Skills

Operational Definitions:

Life Skills: Refers to the set of abilities and competencies essential for dealing effectively with the challenges of life. The life skills scale developed by Anjum Ahamad and Saba Parveen(2021) will be used as the reference to measure these skills.

High School Students: Refers to students enrolled in the 8th, 9th, or 10th standard in a high school in Mysore district. This is based on school documents.

Age: The age of the students was recorded based on the information provided in the personal information schedule designed by the researcher.

Gender: The gender of the students (male or female) was recorded based on responses in the personal information schedule.

Class: The grade or standard the student belongs to (8th, 9th, or 10th) was recorded in the personal information schedule.

Domicile: The Domicile (Urban and Rural) of the students was recorded based on the responses of the students given in the Personal Information Schedule.

Family Type: The Family type (Joint Family and Nuclear Family) of the students was recorded based on the responses of the students in the Personal Information Schedule.

RESEARCH DESIGN:

The research adopted a Descriptive survey research Design. The design involved:

- **Survey Method:** A structured questionnaire was used to collect data on the life skills of high school students.
- **Questionnaires:** Standardized life skills scales were administered to the students to quantify their levels of life skills across various dimensions.

Study Sample:

The present study involved a total of 1000 high school students from Mysore district, a representation of 279 students from Joint Family and 721 students from Nuclear Family. The students were selected from various high schools across the district to create a representative sample of the student population.

To assess the life skills of these students, the Life Skills Scale (English and Kannada Version) was administered. The Life Skills Scale in English later translated into Kannada by subject expert translators to ensure linguistic accuracy and cultural relevance.

The selected schools for data collection included: Morarji Desai Residential School, Varakunda, Morarji Desai Model Residential School, S. Hoskote, Sri Kuvempu High School, Kuvempunagar, Shri Adichunchungiri Central School, Kuvempunagar, Rotary West School, Saraswathipuram, Rotary Midtown Mysore, Karnataka Public School, Kuvempunagar, Mysore Lions School, Bannimantapa, Mysuru, Bharatha Seva Dala High School, Saraswathipuram, Morarji Desai Residential School, Sabbanahalli (Bilikere), Hunsur Taluk, Babu Jagjivan Ram School, Rajivnagar, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Residential School, Yelwala, Shri Nataraj Public School, Mysuru, Sree Nataraja High School, Mysuru.

Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the respective Headmasters/Headmistresses/Principals of the selected high schools. Additionally, informed consent was sought from the participating students, ensuring voluntary participation in the study.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS:

Personal Information Schedule: Personal information schedule was used to collect the general data of the high school students. It consisted of the information like name, age, gender, class, School Name, Domicile (Rural/Urban), Family Type (Joint/Nuclear).

Life Skills Scale: Life skills scale developed by Anjum Ahamad and Saba Parveen (2021) was used for the study. The scale consists of 40 items. Divided into 10 dimensions those are Self-awareness, Empathy, Critical thinking, Decision making, Problem solving, Effective communication, Creative thinking, Inter personal relationship, Coping with stress, Coping with emotion. The test has reliability and validity established.

Procedure of the Study

The study followed a systematic and structured approach to ensure the reliability and validity of

the findings. The procedure consisted of the following key steps:

Step1: Preparation and Design

The researcher designed the Personal Information Schedule and selected the Life Skills Scale for data collection. The Personal Information Schedule was developed to record essential demographic details such as age, gender, class, and domicile and Family type. The Life Skills Scale was chosen as the primary tool for assessing various dimensions of life skills among high school students.

Step2: Translation of Tools

To ensure accessibility and ease of understanding for all students, the Life Skills Scale was translated into Kannada by expert translators. This step was crucial in minimizing language barriers and ensuring that students from different linguistic backgrounds could comprehend and respond to the scale effectively.

Step3: Pilot Study

Before administering the Life Skills Scale to the full sample, a pilot study was conducted. The pilot study aimed to:

- Test the reliability and clarity of the translated version.
- Identify any ambiguities or difficulties in understanding the questionnaire.
- Assess the time required for completion of the scale.
- Ensure that the scale was appropriate for the target age group.

Based on the findings from the pilot study, necessary modifications were made to enhance the clarity and effectiveness of the questionnaire.

Step4: Data Collection

Once the final version of the Life Skills Scale was ready, data collection was initiated in various high schools across Mysore district. The following procedure was followed:

1. Permission was obtained from the Respective Headmasters / Headmistresses / Principals of the selected schools.
2. Informed consent was obtained from participating students to ensure voluntary participation.
3. The researcher visited each school and introduced themselves to the students.

The objectives and importance of the study were explained clearly.

4. A rapport was established with the students to create a comfortable environment for participation. Students were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and used for research purposes only.
5. A total of 1000 students (279 students from Joint Family and 721 students from Nuclear Family) were provided with the Life Skills Scale and detailed instructions on how to complete it.
6. Students were guided on carefully reading and responding to the items on the scale. Any doubts were clarified before they proceeded.
7. Once the students completed the Life Skills Scale, the questionnaires were collected for further processing.

Step5: Data Analysis

After the completion of data collection, the following steps were carried out for analysis:

- Responses were checked based on the Life Skills Scale Manual.
- Raw scores were recalculated for each student.
- The raw scores were converted into Z-scores to standardize the data.
- The level of life skills was classified according to the Life Skills Scale Manual, ensuring consistency in interpretation.
- Appropriate statistical techniques were used to analyze the data, including descriptive and inferential statistics to examine differences and correlations among variables.

This systematic approach ensured that the study was conducted in a scientifically rigorous manner, providing valid and reliable insights into the life skills of high school students in Mysore district.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

The data collected was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to interpret the data:

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Measures such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution were used to summarize the data.
- **Inferential Statistics:** T-tests, ANOVA, and other relevant statistical tests were applied to examine differences in life skills between Joint Family and Nuclear family type students and across other variables (e.g., class level, age).

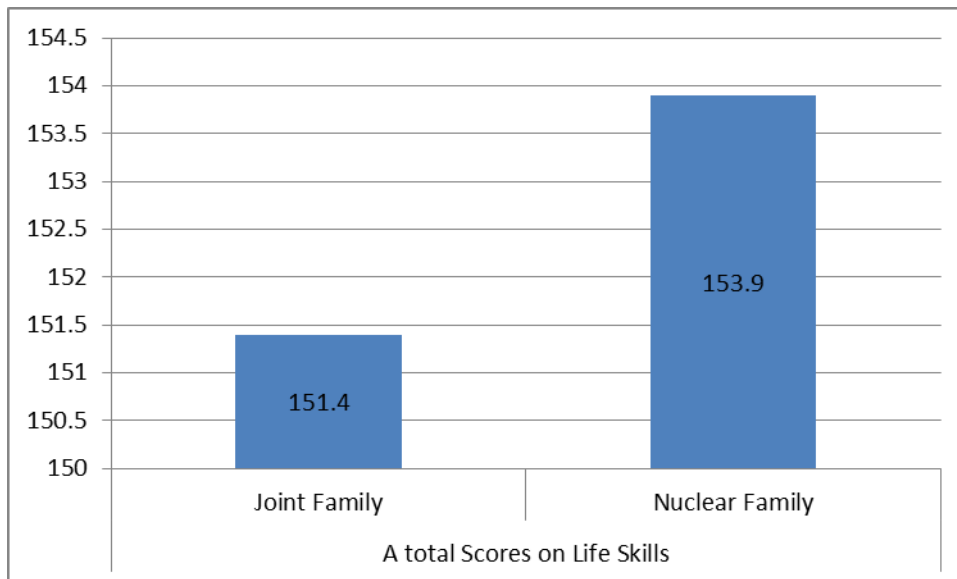
This analysis will provide the necessary insights into the life skills possessed by high school

students and help in identifying the family type based differences.

Table Shows the N, Mean, Standard Deviation and t ratio on difference in overall life skill levels between students from joint and nuclear families

Group		A total Scores on Lifeskills				
		N	Mean	SD	t	p
A total Scores on Life Skills	Joint Family	279	151.4	13.56	2.57	.010
	Nuclear Family	721	153.9	13.87		
Total		1000				

The Graph shows the mean score difference in overall life skill levels between students from joint and nuclear families



The results presented in Table indicate a significant difference in overall life skill levels between students from joint and nuclear families. The mean life skill score for students from joint families (M = 151.4, SD = 13.56) was lower than that of students from nuclear families (M=153.9,SD=13.87).At-test was conducted to examine this difference, yielding a statistically significant result, $t(998) = 2.57, p = .010$, suggesting that students from nuclear families tend to have

significantly higher overall life skill levels compared to those from joint families.

There is a significant difference between students from joint and nuclear families in various dimensions of life skills, including self-awareness, empathy, critical thinking, decision-making, problem-solving, effective communication, creative thinking, and interpersonal relationships, coping with stress, and coping with emotion.

The findings of this study align with previous research that highlights the influence of family structure on life skill development. Studies have suggested that nuclear family environments often promote greater self-reliance, independence, and individual decision-making due to the fewer number of family members and less collective responsibility-sharing (Rani & Kumar, 2020). This could explain why students from nuclear families demonstrated higher self-awareness, creative thinking, and coping with emotions compared to those from joint families. In contrast, joint family structures are known for fostering social support, shared responsibilities, and collective decision-making, which might result in less emphasis on individual self-awareness and personal problem-solving skills (Sharma & Singh, 2019).

Contrary to the present findings, some studies have indicated that joint families provide a nurturing environment that strengthens life skills such as emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, and effective communication (Patel & Mehta, 2018). These studies argue that living in a larger family unit enables individuals to develop better conflict-resolution skills, emotional intelligence, and cooperative behavior, which are essential components of life skills. However, the lack of significant differences in interpersonal relationships and effective communication in this study suggests that while joint family settings may encourage these skills, nuclear families may also provide alternative opportunities for social interaction and communication through school, peer groups, and extracurricular activities (Verma & Thomas, 2021).

The observed differences in self-awareness, creative thinking, and coping with emotions may stem from the contrasting dynamics of joint and nuclear families. Nuclear families often necessitate greater personal responsibility from children, requiring them to be more self-aware and independent in their thinking and problem-solving approaches (Ghosh, 2017). The higher scores in coping with emotions among nuclear family students could be attributed to the need for greater emotional self-regulation in a setting where fewer immediate family members are available for emotional support (Kumar & Sharma, 2022). On the other hand, joint family structures may provide a stronger emotional support system, which might reduce the necessity for independent emotional coping mechanisms.

Overall, while family structure does influence certain dimensions of life skills, the lack of

significant differences in multiple areas suggests that other factors, such as educational experiences, peer interactions, and individual personality traits, may also play a crucial role in life skill development. Future research could explore the interaction between family structure and external influences to provide a more comprehensive understanding of life skill acquisition.

CONCLUSION:

High School students age comes under adolescence age. There are lots of changes in the physical, psychological and social domains of life. High school students face inferiority complex, identity crisis, role conflicts, social behavioural problems, conflicts with parents and peer group. Life skills prepares the adolescence to overcome these deficits. Hence, the present study focused on the assessment of life skills. The major findings of the study was that students from Nuclear Family tend to have significantly higher life skills compared to those from Joint families.

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