# Life Skills and Self-Concept of Adolescents

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**Abstract:** *The phase between 12 years and 18 years in human developments is commonly considered as the adolescent period. It is a critical phase of development and is the transition period from childhood to adulthood. During adolescence, the students have to develop certain life skills that will help them to grow into caring and responsible adults. Adolescence is also crucial period for formation of individual's self-concept. Life skills help to boost self-concept of adolescents. The present study was conducted to assess the life skills and self-concept of adolescents studying 9th standard in Tirupati town. One hundred students were selected randomly from four high schools (50 boys and 50 girls) using systematic, stratified random sampling technique. Life Skills Self Rating Scale developed by Anuradha (2005) was used to assess the life skills and Self Concept Rating Scale developed by Prathiba Deo (2011) was used to assess the self-concept. The results revealed that adolescents were having moderately good life skills and scored moderate in self-concept scores. Moderate association was found between life skills and father's education and self-concept score and family income (p<0.05). However, a strong association was found between the life skills and self-concept scores of sample adolescents.*

**Keywords:** Life skills, Self-concept, Adolescents

## 1. Introduction

Adolescence is a transitional stage of development from childhood to adulthood. This period is characterized with dramatic changes in physiological, social, emotional and cognitive aspects. According to World Health Organization (WHO) adolescence covers the period of the life between ten and eighteen years of age.

Adolescence is an important phase of transition which lays for future success in directions including not only academics but also life skills. During adolescent period the students develop skills that will help them to grow into caring and responsible adults. World Health Organization (WHO), has defined life skills as, "the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life". UNICEF, defined life skills as, "a behavior change or behavior development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: knowledge, attitude and skills". Thus, life skills are essentially those abilities that help to promote mental wellbeing and competence in young people as they face the realities of life. WHO and UNICEF, has given a list of ten major life skills. The ten core life skills are-Self-Awareness, Empathy, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Decision Making, Problem Solving, Effective Communication, Interpersonal Relationship, Coping with Stress, and Coping with Emotions.

Adolescence is also a period of life during which self-concept takes its shape. Self-concept refers to the totality of a complex, organized and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence. Parental upbringing, family economic status, parental education etc., influence the development of one's self-concept. If a child's life is confused and if parental upbringing is also negative, it results in development of negative self-concept. On the contrary, a positive parental upbringing will help to develop a positive self-concept among children.

Research showed that positive correlation existed between life skills and self-concept of adolescents (Sandhya and Shivani, 2012, Abbas, 2013). To re-examine the association, the present study was planned to assess the life skills and self-concept among adolescents. The scope also includes assessment of association between life skills, self-concept and demographic variables of adolescents.

### 1.1 Objectives

1. To assess the life skills of adolescents studying 9th standard.
2. To assess the self-concept among adolescents studying 9th standard.
3. To find out the association among socio-demographic variables of the sample and life skills.
4. To find out the association among socio-demographic variables of the sample and self-concept.
5. To know the association between life skills and self-concept of sample adolescents.

Based on the above objectives, the following null hypotheses were framed.

### 1.2 Hypotheses

1. There is no significant association between socio-demographic variables of the sample and their life skills scores.
2. There is no significant association between socio-demographic variables of the sample and their self-concept scores.
3. There is no association between the students who have below average and above average life skills scores and those who have below average and above average self-concept scores.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Sample

Students studying 9th standard in high schools in Tirupati town constituted the sample. 100 children (50 boys and 50 girls) were selected randomly using systematic random sampling technique.

### 2.2 Tools

1. *General Information Schedule* was developed specially to collect personal and demographic information of children and their parents
2. *Self-Concept Rating Scale (SCRS)* developed by PrathibaDeo (2011) was used. The SCRS checklist consists of 90 adjectives which cover almost all the important aspects of personality. It measures all the aspects perceived, ideal, real and social self of the individual and all together give the total self-concept score of the subject. The reliability and validity of the scale established were satisfactory. The minimum possible score is 39 maximum possible score is 179. Greater score on Self-Concept Rating Scale indicates that adolescent have good self-concept and vice versa.
3. *Life Skill Self Rating Scale (LSSRS)* developed by Anuradha (2005) was used to assess life skills score of the sample. The scale has 65 items. The minimum score was 65 and maximum was 195. The scale was standardized with good reliability and validity. Greater score on LSRS indicates that adolescents have good life skills and vice versa.

## 3. Results

The data was pooled, scored, tabulated and subjected to suitable statistical analysis. Table – 1 shows the distribution of sample students according to gender, type of family, educational status of parents and family income.

**Table - 1**

As evident from table 1, 50 per cent of sample were girls and 50 per cent were boys selected through systematic stratified random sampling to enable comparison . Majority (83 per cent ) of the students were from nuclear family, which clearly shows the current trend of breaking down of joint family system. From the table it is also clear that 54 per cent of fathers and 49 per cent of mothers were literates. Nearly equal percent of fathers and mothers were illiterates. Majority of the families (70 percent) monthly income was more than Rs. 5,000/- .

**Table - 2**

Table –2 and graph – 1 shows the frequency distribution of the sample according to Life Skills Scores. The life skills of the sample were assessed using Life Skills Self Rating Scale (LSSRS) (Anuradha, 2005). As per the scale the minimum possible score is 65, maximum possible score is 195.. The life skills mean score of the sample was 147.28, (S.D. = 21.557) and range was 85-185. This shows that adolescents were having moderately good life skills.
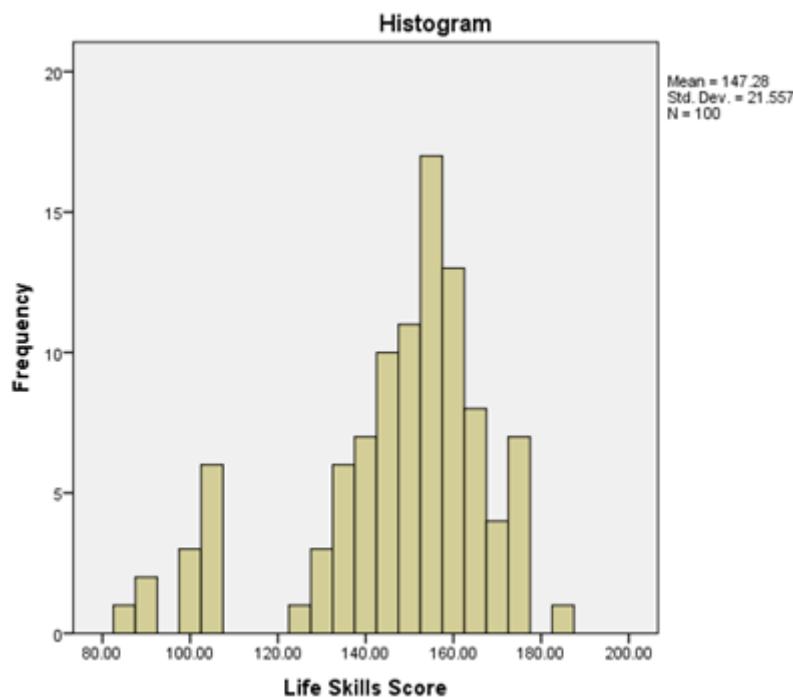


**Graph – 1:** Frequency Distribution of Life Skills Scores

Table-3 shows the distribution of sample according to socio-demographic variables and life skills score.

**Table - 3**

From the table 3, it is clear that 27 per cent of boys and 24 per cent of girls were having life skills score less than 147.28. Nearly equal per cent had life skills score above 147.28. Comparatively children from nuclear families had more life skills score than those from extended and joint families. Parents in nuclear families spend more time with children and the experiences they provide might help children to improve life skills. From the table it is also clear that there is no significant association between the socio demographic variables of the sample and their life skills score. Moderate association was found between the life skills scores and fathers' educational status.
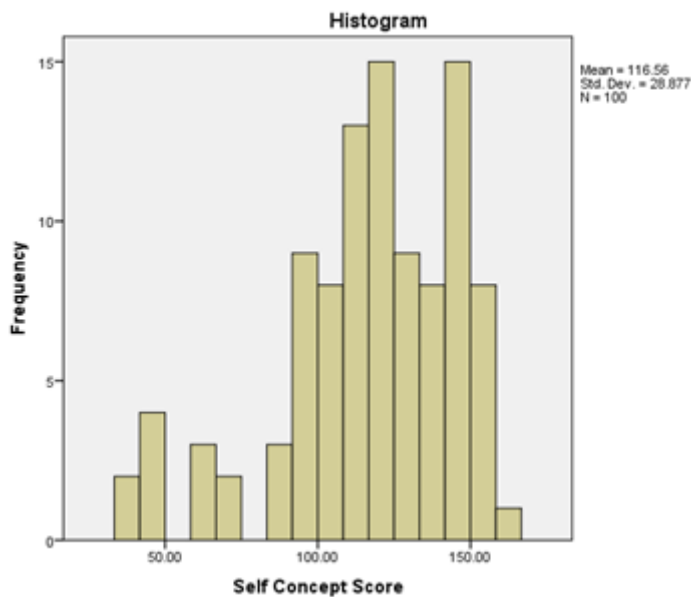
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## Table - 4



**Graph 2:** Frequency Distribution of Self-Concept Scores

Table – 4 and graph 2 shows the frequency distribution of the sample according to self-concept scores. The self-concept scores of the sample were assessed using Self-Concept Rating Scale (SCRS) (PrathibaDeo, 2011). The self-concept mean score of the sample was 116.56, (S.D. = 28.87) and range was 39-179. This shows that adolescents were having moderately good self-concept. Graph 2, shows the graphical distribution of the self-concept scores of sample.

From table - 5 it is clear that 27 per cent of boys and 24 per cent of girls were having self-concept score less than the mean score. Nearly equal per cent had self-concept score above the mean. Comparatively children from nuclear families had more self-concept score than those from extended and joint families. With regard to Parental Education fathers' education seems to have no much role , however, difference in children's self-concept score was observed as per mothers' educational status . Majority of the students whose mothers were illiterates have below average self-concept scores. Students whose family income is reasonably more had higherself-concept score.

## Table - 5

From the table it is evident that there is no significant association between socio-demographic variables viz., gender, type of family, parental educational status and self-concept scores of the sample students. However, significant association was observed between the self-concept scores and family's monthly income.

## Table - 6

From Table - 6 it is evident that majority (26per cent) of students who scored above average self-concept scores also scored above average life skills scores .The chi-square value is significant (p < 0.001), and hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and it can be said that there is association between the students who have below average and above average life skills score and those who have below average and above average self-concept score. Hence, training of adolescents through life skills certainly helps to improve their self-concept.

## 4. Conclusions

- The life skills mean score of the sample was 147.28, (S.D. = 21.557) and range was 85-185. This shows that the sample 9th grade students were having moderately good life skills.
- No significant association was observed among socio-demographic variables and life skills scores of students except that of fathers' educational status for which moderate association was found.
- The self-concept mean score of the sample was 116.56, (S.D. = 28.87) and range was 39-179. This shows that adolescents were having moderately good self-concept
- No significant association was observed among socio-demographic variables and self-concept scores of student's except that of self-concept scores and family's monthly income, for which moderate association was observed.
- Significant strong association was found between the life skills scores and self-concept scores of sample 9thstandard students.

## 5. Implications

The results of the study revealed that the sample students studying 9th standard in Tirupati high schools have moderately good life skills and self-concept. As significant association was found between life skills and self-concept, improvement of life skills among adolescents helps not only to play a matured adult role but also to boost their self-concept.

## References

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**Table 1:** Distribution of the Sample According To Gender, Type of Family, Educational Status of Parents and Family Income

| S.No. | Socio- Demographic | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | **Gender** | | |
| | Boys | 50 | 50 |
| | Girls | 50 | 50 |
| 2. | **Type of Family** | | |
| | Nuclear | 83 | 83 |
| | Joint | 6 | 6 |
| | Extended | 11 | 11 |
| 3. | **Father's Education** | | |
| | Literates | 54 | 54 |
| | Illiterates | 46 | 46 |
| 4. | **Mother's Education** | | |
| | Literates | 49 | 49 |
| | Illiterates | 51 | 51 |
| 5. | **Income (Rupees)** | | |
| | <5,000/- | 30 | 30 |
| | >5,000/- | 70 | 70 |

**Table 2:** The Frequency Distribution of the sample according to Life Skills Scores (n= 100)

| S.No. | Life Skills Scores | Frequency | Per cent | Cumulative per cent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 115-130 | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| 2. | 131-145 | 20 | 20 | 40 |
| 3. | 146-150 | 39 | 39 | 79 |
| 4. | 151-165 | 14 | 14 | 93 |
| 5. | 166-180 | 7 | 7 | 100 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 | |

**Statistics:**

Mean = 147.2800 S.D = 21.557

Median = 152.50 Skewness = -1.168

Mode = 143.00 Range = 85-185

**Table 3:** Distribution of the Sample According Socio-Demographic Variables and Life Skills score

| S.No. | Socio- Demographic Variables | Life skills scores | | Total | Chi-square value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Below Average | Above Average | | |
| 1. | **Gender** | | | | |
| | Boys | 27 | 23 | 50 | 0.421 |
| | Girls | 24 | 26 | 50 | P<0.421 |
| 2. | **Type of Family** | | | | |
| | Nuclear | 30 | 35 | 65 | 0.974 |
| | Joint | 14 | 10 | 24 | P<0.615 |
| | Extended | 6 | 5 | 11 | |
| 3. | **Father's Education** | | | | |
| | Literates | 24 | 26 | 50 | 3.014 |
| | Illiterates | 25 | 25 | 50 | P<0.222 |
| 4. | **Mother's Education** | | | | |
| | Literates | 27 | 23 | 50 | 0.603 |
| | Illiterates | 31 | 19 | 50 | P<0.437 |
| 5. | **Income (Rupees)** | | | | |
| | <5,000/- | 33 | 17 | 50 | 0.897 |
| | >5,000/- | 14 | 36 | 50 | P<0.897 |

**\*** Percentage are same as frequency as the sample size is 100 (N=100)

**Table - 4: The Frequency Distribution of the Sample according to Self-Concept Scores (N= 100)**

| S.NO. | Self-concept | Frequency | Per cent | Cumulative per cent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 39-59 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| 2. | 60-89 | 6 | 6 | 12 |
| 3. | 90-119 | 20 | 20 | 32 |
| 4. | 120-149 | 37 | 37 | 69 |
| 5. | 150-179 | 31 | 31 | 100 |
| | Total | 100 | 100 | |

**Statistics:**

Mean = 116.56 S.D = 28.87

Median = 120.0 Skewness= -0.984

Mode = 142.0 Range = 39-179

**Table 5:** Distribution of the Sample according to Self-Concept and Socio-Demographic Variables

| S.No. | Variables | Self-Concept Scores | | Total | Chi-square value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Below Average (39-121) | Above Average (121- | | |
| 1. | **Gender** Boys Girls | 27 24 | 23 26 | 50 50 | 0.157 P<0.517 |
| 2. | **Type of family** Nuclear Joint Extended | 34 11 5 | 29 14 7 | 63 25 12 | 0.974 P<0.974 |
| 3. | **Father's Education** Literates Illiterates | 25 25 | 26 24 | 50 50 | 0.670 P<0.715 |
| 4. | **Mother's Education** Literates Illiterates | 27 32 | 23 18 | 50 50 | 1.579 P<0.209 |
| 5. | **Income (Rs)** < 5,000 > 5,000 | 21 10 | 29 40 | 50 50 | 5.039 P<0.025 |

**Table 6:** Life Skill Scores, Self- Concept and Chi-Square Value

| S.No. | Self-concept | Life skills | | Total | Chi-square | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Below average | Above average | | | |
| 1. | Below average | 25 | 26 | 51 | 0.000 (df=1) | 0.997 |
| 2. | Above average | 24 | 25 | 49 | | |
| | Total | 49 | 51 | 100 | | |

@ Not significant at P< 0.997