



## Attitudes of Life-Skills of Higher Secondary Students in Relation to Selected Variables

**Bijoya Saha**

Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Calcutta Girls' College, Kolkata-700013, W.B.

---

### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Life-skills are a set of abilities, attitudes and socio-emotional competencies that enable individuals to learn, make informed decisions, exercise rights to lead to healthy and productive life and subsequently become agents of change.

**Objectives:** a) To study the difference of the life-skills of higher secondary students on the basis of habitat (urban and rural areas).

b) To study the difference of the life-skills of higher secondary students on the basis of their streams (science, commerce and humanities).

c) To study the difference of the life-skills of higher secondary students on the basis of their gender (boys and girls).

**Methodology:** 300 higher secondary students of six higher secondary schools of Kolkata and South 24 Parganas Districts were taken as sample through stratified random sampling technique. Questionnaire on Life-Skill Education of the students was used to collect the data. SPSS 16 version was used for the data analysis.

**Findings:** 1. The urban and rural areas differs variety on their attitudes towards life skills education. 2. The attitudes of the science, commerce and humanities streams are equally homogenous. 3. The boys and girls and also differs variety on their attitudes towards life skills education.

**Conclusion:** This study provides significant information to know actual scenario of life-skills education in the school and impact in society. The findings of the study could be used in all the secondary school in West Bengal for better life-skills education. This study could help and encourage the Government in imparting life- skills education among the students effectively.

**Keywords:** Life-skills; Higher Secondary Students and Covid-19.

### INTRODUCTION

“Like the overflow of a great river, it irrigates and fertilizes great tracts of life’s territory.” -----

Slaughter

The sexual needs take instrumental role in diverse endeavours of human kind; this is established by Freud and other psychologists. Sexual urge is one of the most fundamentals in man’s life. The sole aim of this urge is not to procreate off spring sadomasochism but a man’s entity or personality evolves round the complete satisfaction of this need. A man’s mental, emotional and



social changes rest on this sexual life. Hence sexual life and complete evolution are of great essence.

Society is not still. New possibility rises with new once, perennial evaluation gets slacken and commandments get collapsed with the passage of time.

The woman folk are subject to be established at the deserving niche of the society out of breaking feudal custom. As its one of the results boys-girls, Young women enjoy promiscuity conservative orientation is dispelling. This is a certainly healthy system to the evolution of society.

With the help of optimal transparency and freedom aberrant behaviour and indulgence of life style have started fundamentally for the commercial interest. The rootless cultural flow is devouring us, is leading our life style to the perversion what is fuelled by the preponderance of globalization. More over the continuous propaganda of powerful mass-media is canvassing this melody of trained across the town and villages. The personal secret flamboyance of the men and women has been made commercial commodity.

Our young world has already been victim to frustration and confliction because of financial draw back. With this, these colored campaigns and enduring broadcasting are leading them astray and rousing ill curiosity. Family and societal bonds get collapsed. Sexual aberration is rearing its ugly head. A handful of respected in the society are tagging the tradition of society as antique. Various personal and societal malaises are being created in this unrest environment, such as:

- Drug addiction
- Unwanted pregnancy
- HIV – AIDS – which are increasingly scared.

Most men are now raring to shed old thought and habit. With the progress of time societal protest and contradiction are being gradually relating to scientific sexual education concept are being decoloured. It is needless to say that ‘Life-skill education’ is largely meaningful and its area is indeed enough in respect of sexual education.

An interesting and potential approach to promote health and learning during and after the COVID-19 pandemic is life-skills education (WHO, 2003), “Life-skills are psychosocial and interpersonal ‘abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life’” (WHO, 1994).

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

“Abroad history – Life-skills based education has a long history of supporting child development and healthy promotion. In 1986, the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion recognized life skills in terms of making better health choice. The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) linked life skills to education by starting that education should be directed towards the development of the child’s fullest potential. The 1990 Somtien Declaration on Education for all took this vision further and included life skills among essential learning tools for survival, capacity development and quality of life. The Dakar World Education conference took a position that all young people and adults have the human right to benefit from an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be (Dellor Commission-1996) and included life skills in two out of the six EFA goals.



Life-skills based education is now recognized as a methodology to address a variety of issues of child and youth development and thematic responses including as expressed in UNGASS on HIV/AIDS (2001), UNGASS on children (2002), World Youth Report (2003), World Program for Human Right Education (2004), UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (2005), UN Secretary General's study on violence Against Children (2006), 51<sup>st</sup> Commission on the status of women (2006) and the World Development Report (2007).

Indian History—the question to introduce sex – related subjects in the school curriculum has been arises much before in our country too. A long discussion and debate had been going on but negative decision has been taken time and again. First recommendation to introduce such a curriculum has been made in 1993 across all India is support of it. But no Endeavour was soon to implement it. NCERT took lucid decision to introduce that subject that year. But it was they did not instruct to add such a curriculum when they recommended for national infrastructure of curricula in 2000” (Kumar, 2021).

## CONCEPT AND DEFINITION

In life-skills education every aspect life comes within it, but for the skills development of adolescence reproduction and sexual health. For this reason it called ‘Adolescence Reproduction and Sexual Health Skill’ (ARSH Skill).

“Adolescence Reproduction and Sexual Health Skill (ARSH Skill) are abilities that help to promote physical, mental and social well being in respect of reproductive and sexual health among adolescents and youth, empowering them to take positive action, to protect them from risky situation and to promote healthy social relationship.”

What is ‘Life-Skills’?

According to Nelson Jones (1991) defined “life-skills education originated in thinking about training and education.....particular attitudes, knowledge and skills which enable individual to deal effectively with demands and challenges of everyday life.”

World health organization:

WHO has defined life-skills as “....the ability for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenge of everyday life.”

“In other words life-skills are effectively with the facilities the physical, mental and emotional well being of an individual.”

“The basic life-skills curriculum offers youth the emotional, social and intellectual tools needed to achieve successful life on a personal level, on interpersonal level and within the community and workplace.”

UNICEF:

“Life-skills based education is behaviour change or behaviour development approach.”

According to Fredrick Kilander:

“.....an education calculated to bring about adult attitudes and behaviour that assure desirable home making, the establishing and building of families.”

--Sex education in elementary and secondary school: Kilander.

According to American School Health Association:



“It includes more than anatomical and reproductive information. It implies that a men’s sexuality is integrated into his total life development as a health entity and source of creative energy.”

Understanding ten core of life-skills:

UNICEF, UNESCO and WHO list the ten core of life-skills strategies and techniques describe in following table 1-

Thinking Skills	Social Skills	Negotiation Skills
Self awareness Problem solving Decision making Critical thinking Creative thinking	Inter personal relation Effective Communication Empathy	Managing Feeling/emotion Coping with stress

### **Thinking Skills:**

- Self awareness
  - Learning about “me as a special person”.
  - Self control.
  - My right and responsibilities.
- Problem Solving:
  - Learning the basic steps for problem solving.
  - Generating solution to difficult problem or dilemmas.
  - Conflict resolution.
- Decision Making:
  - Learning the basic steps for decision making.
  - Making difficult decision.
  - Decision making about important life plans.
- Critical thinking:
  - Learning the basic process in critical thinking.
  - Making objective judgment about choices and risk.
  - Resisting media influence on attitude towards smoking and alcohol.
- Creative thinking:
  - Developing capacity to think in creative ways.
  - Generating new ideas about things that are taken for granted.
  - Adapting to changing social circumstances.

### **Social Skills:**

- Interpersonal relation:
  - learning to value relationships with friends and families.
  - Forming new relationship and surviving loss of friendship.
  - Seeking support and advice from other in a time of need.
- Effective Communication:

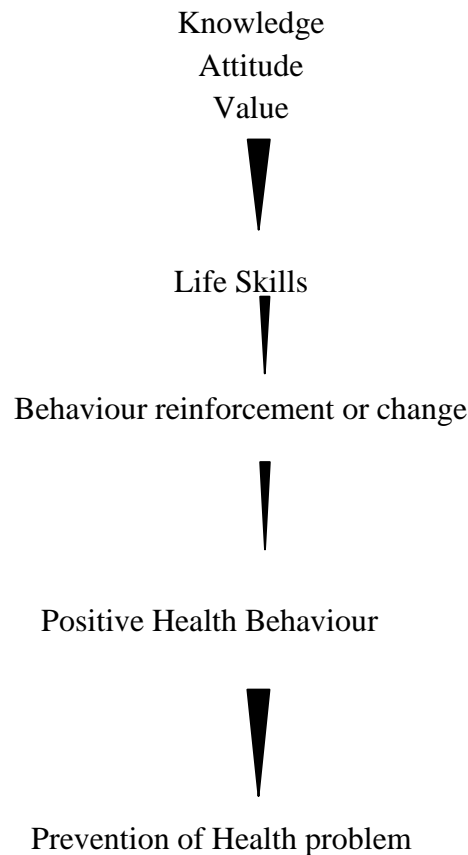


- Basic verbal and nonverbal communication skills
- Assertive communication in the face of peer pressure
- Using assertiveness to resist pressure to engage in potentially health damaging activities (e.g. unprotected sex).
- Empathy:
  - Understanding how people are alike and how they differ and learning how to appreciate difference between people.
  - Avoiding prejudice and discrimination against people who differ.
  - Caring for people with AIDS.

**Negotiation Skills:**

- Managing emotion:
  - Recognition of the expression of different emotions.
  - Understanding how emotion affect the way we behave.
  - Manage with emotional distress.
- Coping with stress:
  - Identifying source of stress.
  - Methods for coping in stressful situations.
  - Coping in situations of adversity.

How 'Life-Skills' lead to primary prevention of health problems:





### Thus the ‘Life- Skills’....

Are applied

- in various aspects of life
- in human relationship learning about rights and responsibility
- in health issues:
  - Mental health – stresses
  - HIV – AIDS / STD prevention
  - Drug abuse
  - Sexual violence
  - Teenage pregnancy
  - Suicide prevention

A large part of life-skills education consists of values and characteristics building. Some part of in life-skills education will be added in the life science syllabus. And the rest of the part will be carried through co-curriculum activities.

- **Behaviour change through ‘Life-Skills’:**

Ignorance > Awareness > Concern > Knowledge > Motivation > Readiness to change > Willingness to change > Acceptance > Habit > Life style.

- **Activities of ‘Life-Skills’ education:**

According to the main concept of life-skills education is various activities have been divided into following parts:

1. **“Physically:** To give the students proper information about various sexual body parts about their functions, growth and how to take care of those organs, so that the confusion and the wrong concept can be removed from their minds.
2. **Mentally:** The information about physical knowledge has to be presented to the boys and girls in such a way so that they can be freed from the anxiety, curiosity and other mental stress.
3. **Cultural:** We have to help the students in such a way so that they can understand the society well and can live within the society properly, for that reason their creativity has to be applied in proper way.
4. **Social:** The Social norms which are important to form a relation between a family and the society has to be stated to students. The students’ respect for their friends and for other opposite sex has to be increased.
5. **Moral:** Life-skills education helps the students to improve their mental and social health by which their moral gets developed. They will learn how to give more priority to others self than themselves” (WHO, 2020).

### REVIEWS OF RELATED LITERATURE

Murthy, M. S. R. (1991) made a study on “Concept formation of sex and reproduction among unmarried rural adolescent girls”. He found that the pubertal age of respondents was around 13



years, caste-Hindu girls were better and earlier perception of sex and reproduction as compared to the other groups.

Buwa, S.K. (2003) made a study on conducting adolescence education programmed for girls in slums.

**The objectives of the study were-**

- (1) To assess the level of awareness among 12-18 years age group girl beneficiaries of health check up and health education services in Anganwadis in Kolhapur city about: (a) Physical changes during adolescence. (b) Emotional changes during adolescence among respondents.
- (2) Reproductive health among respondents and their impression of HIV / AIDS.

**Major findings were as follows-**

- (1) Two- third of the respondent- girls belonged to the age group 14-16 years hailing from families with a monthly income between Rs. 600 to 2400. About three – fourths of these girls had 4 to 6 members in the family. Half of them were engaged in economically gainful activities to supplement the family income, while the remaining half was attending school.
- (2) At least three – fourth of the girls equated adolescence only with coming of age (commencement of menses) while around one – fifth equated it with day dreaming and attainment of fertility.
- (3) An overwhelming majority (87 percent) of girls were advised by their mothers about bodily changes, while 60 percent girls noticed that they had become a subject of extra case at home, 18 percent girls families felt irritated while in 14 percent homes, extrastrain developed.
- (4) Simultaneous with bodily changes all the girls began to face mental stress in certain actions such as going out along (40 percent) speaking to boys (32 percent), speaking with father and brothers (12 percent) and mixing with other girls (11 percent).

Washington, D.C. (2003) made a study on “The impact of life skill education on Adolescent Sexual behaviour” in South Africa think of risky behaviour.

**The objectives of the study were-**

1. Understanding sexuality / relationship with the opposite sex.
2. Self-esteem, assertiveness and decision making.
3. HIV/AIDS: looking after people with AIDS.

The life-skills programmed objectives to increase knowledge and develop skill to help youth protect themselves from HIV infection and to safeguard their reproductive health.

**Major finding were as follows-**

1. Most study respondents have been exposed to at least some life-skills education.





2. Knowledge about HIV prevention topics increased, particularly among Africans, males and younger youth.
3. Youth exposed to life-skills education are more likely to use condoms, but there was no effect on other key behaviour.
4. Life-skills education should support secondary abstinence, which is already increasing due to other factors.

Life-skills Based Education (A Regional Over view Prepared for: The South Asia Life-Skills Based Education Forum, 2005- UNICEF)

**The objectives of the study were-**

1. Understanding of the dichotomy between in school life-skills-based education and adolescents who are not in school.
2. In school life-skills programming in the content of education sector reform.
3. Promotion of interest and responsibility among duty bearers for life-skills development, especially among vulnerable children and adolescents.

**Major findings were as follows-**

1. Understanding and conceptualization of life-skills based education.
2. Designing and measuring performance.
3. Development and implementation of life-skills programming.
4. Building acceptance of life-skills programming.
5. Coordination, networking and linkages.

Khera and Khosla (2012) in their “study investigated the relationship between self-concept and core life-skills in randomly selected 500 adolescents studying in secondary classes of Sarvodaya schools situated in south Delhi who had under gone YUVA School Life-Skills Programme (SLP). They suggested that there is a positive correlation between core affective life-skills and self-concept of adolescents which means those who possess these essential skills have better confidence in all aspects. Life-skills education helps in building self-concept, self-esteem and self-efficacy in adolescents and enables them to translate knowledge and attitudes into actual abilities thereby improving the quality of life and emotional regulation ability to make good lifestyle decisions”.

From the above mentioned studies, no clear had been made to focus on attitudes of higher secondary students towards the life-skills after COVID 19 in West Bengal. Realizing this problem the present researcher has formulated the present problem and hoped that the findings of this investigation will help the curriculum maker of life-skills education.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study were-

- a) To study the difference of the life-skills of higher secondary students on the basis of habitat (urban and rural).
- b) To study the difference of the life-skills of higher secondary students on the basis of their streams (science, commerce and humanities).
- c) To study the difference of the life-skills of higher secondary students on the basis of their gender (boys and girls).





## **HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY**

H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant difference of higher secondary students on the basis of habitat towards life-skills.

H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant difference of higher secondary students on the basis of their streams towards life-skills.

H<sub>0</sub>3: There is no significant difference of higher secondary students on the basis of their gender towards life-skills.

## **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

Researcher was chosen survey method for the study.

### **Population:**

The population of the study will be treated all the higher secondary students under the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education in Kolkata and South 24 Parganas Districts areas.

### **Sample:**

The study considered with higher secondary students from which 150 boys and 150 girls were selected as sample for present investigation.

### **Sampling Technique:**

In the present study the researcher have chosen stratified random sampling technique.

### **Variables:**

In the present study the researcher has taken independent variable, dependent variable and control variable.

#### **❖ Independent Variables are:**

- Habitat (urban and rural)
- Stream (science, commerce and humanities)
- Gender (boys and girls)

#### **❖ Dependent Variable is:**

- Attitude of the higher secondary student towards life-skills education

#### **❖ Control variable is:**

- West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education

## **TOOLS USED**

A standardized Life Skill Assessment scale by Dr. Radha Krishnan Nair (2010) was used in this study. The Life Skills Assessment Scale is highly reliable. Its Cronbach's Alpha score was 0.84. "An extensive exercise was done to establish face and content validity of the Life Skills Assessment in the tool construction. The item discriminate analysis was carried out and the scale was potential of discriminating high scorer and low scorer on the relevant scales. The Scoring for the Life Skills Assessment Scale is based on the five point scale ranging from Always true of me to Not at all true of me".

## **Procedure:**

The tool was administered to 300 higher secondary students (N=300) who belonged to science, commerce and humanities groups of Government sponsored schools under the West



Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education in Kolkata and South 24 Parganas Districts in West Bengal. Informed consent was obtained from the individual participants and concerned higher authorities. Researcher collected the completed questionnaire within 30 minutes.

### Statistical Analysis:

For the analysis of the data descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard deviation) and inferential statistics like t-test and F test were used.

### Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

Objective 1- To study the difference of the life-skills of higher secondary students on the basis of habitat (urban and rural).

**Table 2- Difference the Life-skills of higher secondary students on the basis of habitat (urban and rural)**

Group	N	M	S.D.	T	Df	Table value	Level of significance
Urban	150	33.18	14.99	4.20	298	2.59**	0.01
Rural	150	31.87	12.43				

**\*\*table value at 0.01 level of significance**

Form the above table 2 shows the mean, S.D. and t-value of life-skills of higher secondary students with respect to habitat (urban and rural areas). The mean value of urban area (M=33.18) with S.D =14.99 are little higher than the mean value of rural area (M=31.87) with S.D= 12.43. Calculated t-value (4.20) with df= 298, also express that it is higher than the table value on 0.01 levels of significance (2.59). So, the result indicated that there is significant difference between the two groups. It implies that there is significant difference in the life-skills of both urban and rural areas. It also means that the life-skills of higher secondary students of both urban and rural areas are not equally homogenous. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Objective 2- To study the difference of the life-skills of higher secondary students on the basis of their streams (science, commerce and humanities).

**Table 3-Difference in like-skills with respect to streams**

Variable	N	M	S.D.	Df	Table value	F	Level of significance
Science	50	12.07	4.04	2 (between groups)	3.03(df for greater mean square/ 0.05 level of significance )	0.91	NS
Commerce	50	11.85	3.92	297 (within groups)	4.68 (df for smaller mean square/0.01 level of significance )		
Humanities	50	17.86	4.47				

**NS= not significant**

The above mentioned table 3 shows the mean, S.D. and F-value of life-skills of higher secondary students with respect to streams (science, commerce and humanities). The mean value of



humanities (M=17.86) with S.D.=4.47 is higher than the mean value of science (M=12.07) with S.D.= 4.04 and commerce (11.85) with SD.= 3.92. Calculated F-value (0.91) with df=2 (between groups) and 297 (within groups), also express that it is lower from the table value so, the null hypothesis is accepted. Thus, no significant difference exists between the group means.

Objective 3- To study the difference of the life-skills of higher secondary students on the basis of their gender (boys and girls).

**Table 4- Difference Life-skills of boys and girls higher secondary students**

Group	N	M	SD.	T	Df	Table value	Level of significance
Boys	150	33.75	14.48	3.69	298	2.59**	0.01
Girls	150	28.36	12.09				

**\*\*table value at 0.01 level of significance**

From the above table 4 mean scores indicates that boys and girls higher secondary students differed in their life-skills but t-value shows that there is significant difference between boys and girls of higher secondary students in their life-skills. It also means that the life-skills of higher secondary students of both boys and girls are not equally homogenous. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

## CONCLUSION

The researchers come to the following conclusion at the end of the work. The boys and girls and also urban and rural areas differs variety on their attitude towards life-skills education. But the attitude of the science, commerce and humanities streams are equally homogenous. The life- skills education is well organized in different schools of West Bengal through curriculum transaction, seminar, workshop etc. This education may get the benefit out of it for building self reliant gender conscious responsible society.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The researchers took their sample from three schools, which might not represent fully the cross-section of the population.
- The study might be conducted over a variety of sample. But due to economic drawbacks the study was restricted with only 2 boys, 2 girls, 2 co-education higher secondary schools.
- Only 300 higher secondary students as sample and also West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education council only selected.

## REFERENCE

- Best, W.I.; & Kahn, V.J (2006). *Research in education*. Prentice' Hall of India Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi,
- Buwa, S.K. (2003). *Adolescence Education Programmed for Girls in Slums*. New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd.



- Khera, S.; & Khosla, S. (2012). A study of core life skills of adolescents in relation to their self concept developed through yuva school life skill programme. *International Journal of Social Science & Interdisciplinary Research*, 1(11), 115-125.
- Kumar, A. (2008). *Research Methodology of education*. Alfa publication. New Delhi- 110 002.
- Kumar, S. (2021). Prerequisite of Life Skills Education for Citizenship. *Development*, 6 (2). 35-45.
- Linda, F. (2007): *Introduction to health psychology*. Akash Press, New Delhi.
- Mangal S.K. (2007). Statistics in Psychology and education. Prentice' Hall of India Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi.
- Murthy, M.S.R. (1991). *Concept formation of sex and reproduction among unmarried rural adolescent girls*. Fifth Survey of Educational Research.
- Misra, R.P. (1989). *Research Methodology A hand book*. Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi.
- UNESCO. "Final report of the UNESCO Regional seminar on HIV/AIDs and education William the school system for English- speaking countries in eastern and southern Africa". Harare (1995). Print.
- UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia (2005). *Life Skills-Based Education in South Asia: A Regional Overview prepared for the South Asia Life Skills-Based Education Forum*. Dhaka: UNICEF.
- Washington, D.C. (2003): The impact of life skill Education on Adolescent Sexualbehaviour, in South Africa thinks of risky behaviour. *International Journal of Social Science & Interdisciplinary Research*, 2(9), 12-19.
- World Health Organization (WHO) (1997). *Life skill education for children and adolescents in school: Introduction a guide line to facilitate the development and implementation of life skill programmes*. Geneva, Switzer land.
- <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity>