

Construction and Standardization of Life Skills Scale

¹T. Regina, ²Dr. M. Govindan

¹Research Scholar, Department of Educational Psychology,
Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

²Professor and Head, Department of Educational Psychology,
Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to construct and validate a research tool for measuring the Life Skills of the higher secondary students. For this purpose the investigator developed a tool composing 50 items with 10 dimensions. The reliability of the tool was found to be 0.81. To establish the validity of the tool face validity method was used. In this scale, norms are also evolved to find the level of Life Skills of higher secondary students.

Introduction

Life skills are psychosocial abilities that enable individuals to translate knowledge, attitude and values regarding their concerns into well informed and healthy behaviors. The World Health Organization (2003) has defined "Life skills as abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enables individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life". Further, life skills are a group of psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathies with others, and cope with and manage their lives in a healthy and productive manner.

Importance of Life Skills

Life today is exponentially more complicated and complex than it was 40 or 50 years ago. In the competitive world many students have not the basic and required skills in dealing with life problems. Life Skills promotes self-esteem, self confidence, prevention of anti social activities and into promotion of general well-being and health. It also plays a significant role during adolescence in solving many psycho-social problems. Life skills bring greater acceptance, better relations and a healthy, positive life. It also enables individuals to translate knowledge, attitudes and values into actual abilities.

Construction of Life Skills Inventory

As per the investigator's knowledge, there is no standardized comprehensive scale for measuring the life skills of higher secondary students in relation to Self- Esteem, Mental Health and Teachers Encouragement.

Steps Involved in Constructing the Life Skills Scale

Information regarding the life skills of the higher secondary students was collected at three stages:

- i. Discussion with the students, teachers and experts.
- ii. Extensive review of related studies
- iii. Investigators personal observations and experiences

For the purpose of collecting the required information regarding the life skills of the higher secondary students, the investigator met the students and asked their opinion about the skills needed for their life at present and in future. Further, the investigator reviewed several research studies related to the life skills of the higher secondary students.

Item pooling

The information collected through various sources and the investigator's direct observations were arranged and scrutinized. Totally, 70 statements related to life skills of the higher secondary students were generated and classified into the following 10 dimensions and a draft tool was prepared.

Dimensions

Self-Awareness	Empathy
Creative Thinking	Critical Thinking
Problem Solving	Decision Making
Effective Communication	Interpersonal Relationship
Coping with Emotions	Coping with Stress

Self- Awareness:

A prerequisite for effective communication and interpersonal relations, as well as for developing empathy for others (WHO, 2003).

Empathy:

Ability to understand and accept others’ feeling.

Effective Communication:

The dynamic process by which people exchange thoughts, ideas, and messages.

Interpersonal relationship:

Ability to communicate or have relationship with others for good change or ability to seek for cooperation.

Critical Thinking:

Ability to analyze information and experiences in an objective manner.

Creative Thinking:

Enables to explore available alternatives and consequences of actions or non actions.

Problem solving:

Self-directed cognitive behavioral process by which a person attempts to identify or discover effective or adaptive ways of coping with problematic situations on encountered cratered in everyday living.

Decision Making:

Making decision after examining the choices and consequences in view of one’s values and goals.

Coping with Emotion:

Ability to cope with emotions properly.

Coping with Stress:

Ability to relax and reduce stress.

Table: 1

Life Skills Dimensions and the Number of statements in Each Dimension (Pilot Study)

Sl. No	Dimensions	Serial-wise Statement Number	Total Number of Statements
1	Self-Awareness	1to7	7
2	Empathy	8-14	7
3	Creative Thinking	15-21	7
4	Critical Thinking	22-28	7
5	Problem Solving	29-35	7
6	Decision Making	36-42	7
7	Effective Communication	43-49	7
8	Interpersonal Relationship	50-56	7
9	Coping with Emotions	57-63	7
10	Coping with Stress	64-70	7
Total Number of Statements			70

Pilot Study

In order to perfect the scale, a pilot study was conducted among 100 students studying in higher secondary schools, located in Chennai and Thiruvallur Districts of Tamil Nadu. For the pilot study, 100 tools were distributed to 50 male and 50 female higher secondary students. The tools were distributed and collected through personal contact with the students in the premises of the respective higher secondary schools. The 100 tools administrated in the pilot study were scored and arranged in descending order from the top most scorer to the bottom most scorer. There are two criterion groups. The upper group consisting of 27 students and lower group of 27 students were arranged. Then they were subjected to item analysis.

Item Analysis

There are 70 statements in the pilot study scale. For each statement, the response pattern is “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Undecided”, Disagree” and Strongly Disagree” and the score is assigned 5 for “Strongly Agree”, 4 for “Agree”, 3 for “Undecided”, 2 for Disagree” and 1 for Strongly Disagree”. In this way one can get a maximum score of 350 and minimum score of 70. Then, the responses were subject to critical ratio analysis of ‘t’.

Table: 2
Life Skills Scale

Sl. No of the Statements	Statements	't' Value	Remarks
Dimension 1: Self-Awareness			
1.	I feel generally positive about self-awareness.	2.67	Selected
2.	I have a good self-image.	1.98	Selected
3.	I speak unfriendly in front of teachers.	2.66	Selected
4.	I am easily establishing rapport with new people I meet.	0.374	Not Selected
5.	I have learnt about myself and have of see the world.	3.22	Selected
6.	I am aware of the invests related to my study.	2.36	Selected
7.	I am realistic about myself.	0.502	Not Selected
Dimension2: Empathy			
8.	I am able to comprehend someone's feelings.	2.38	Selected
9.	I am able to view the world from other person's perspective.	2.87	Selected
10.	I enjoy making other people feel better.	1.035	Not Selected
11.	It upsets me to see someone being treated disrespectfully	0.502	Not Selected
12.	When I see a person who is upset, I feel moved to help them.	2.67	Selected
13.	I become more irritated than sympathetic when I see someone's tears.	2.58	Selected
14.	I find it silly for people to own out of happiness.	2.67	Selected
Dimension3: Creative Thinking			
15.	I feel that my creative work is one of the most powerful means I have communicating with others.	2.03	Selected
16.	I see my creative work as a rebellion against narrowness and dullness.	1.035	Not Selected
17.	I had a sense of awe at the high levels of technical skills being brought out of me.	0.502	Not Selected
18.	I believed strongly in what I was creating, without doubting or questioning myself.	3.22	Selected
19.	I put myself in the mood I wanted my creative work to take on.	3.22	Selected
20.	Creativity is a crucial component of living successfully.	2.38	Selected
21.	I am creative in my presentation on my all academic activities.	2.67	Selected
Dimension4: Critical Thinking			
22.	I like thinking critically.	2.58	Selected
23.	Thinking critically will be useful for my future.	3.97	Selected
24.	For me it is important to use my intellectual skills correctly.	0.398	Not Selected
25.	Thinking critically is useful for everyday life.	3.22	Selected
26.	I can develop meta cognitive thinking ways	0.502	Not Selected
27.	When I encounter a problem, I can solve it, and make deductions.	2.67	Selected
28.	When I encounter a matter, I can think critically, reassuringly.	2.58	Selected
Dimension 5: Problem Solving			
29.	I work hard to solve the problems.	3.97	Selected
30.	I am confident about my ability to solve problems.	2.36	Selected

31.	I can discover the causes of the problems.	0.385	Not Selected
32.	I will plan for various alternatives to a particular problem.	3.97	Selected
33.	I take the elderly suggestion to solve the problems.	2.58	Selected
34.	I have learned ways to manage difficult problems-78.	2.67	Selected
35.	I am able to direct ways in solving problem.	0.502	Not Selected
Dimension6: Decision Making			
36.	I can achieve my goals at work and my personal life.	3.22	Selected
37.	I can avoid mistakes that can cost my organization.	0.502	Not Selected
38.	I can act on the decision for my study.	2.09	Selected
39.	I can make decision when I think about situation.	2.67	Selected
40.	If I do not have enough information to make a decision, I have to take help from my teachers.	3.97	Selected
41.	I can seek advice from others for taking decisions.	0.502	Not Selected
42.	I can make decision when there is insufficient information before done my decision.	2.46	Selected
Dimension 7: Effective Communication			
43.	I am able to listen and talk to my friends.	3.22	Selected
44.	I write in abbreviation when sending int.	0.143	Not Selected
45.	I can communicate effectively with my school friends.	2.38	Selected
46.	I feel that lack of communication breeds problems in my relationships.	2.67	Selected
47.	I feel good communication is easy to understand others.	3.97	Selected
48.	I realize that communication is an important aspect in everyday life for all of us.	0.502	Not Selected
49.	I use my cell phone for more text messaging than receiving or dialing calls.	2.36	Selected
Dimension 8: Interpersonal Relationship			
50.	I give my full attention to others when they talk to me.	3.22	Selected
51.	I encourage others to talk when appropriate.	2.18	Selected
52.	I respect the dignity and rights of others.	2.67	Selected
53.	I cooperate with others to create the best results.	3.22	Selected
54.	I have ability to listen tears member with different view prints and to purpose an agenesis.	3.97	Selected
55.	I frequently use courtly words and phrases	1.402	Not Selected
56.	IT is difficult for me to see things from the other person's point of view.	0.267	Not Selected
Dimension 9: Coping with Emotions			
57.	I can express my feelings in words.	2.67	Selected
58.	I get nervous when I have to talk to my authorities.	2.59	Selected
59.	I tried to help my feelings to myself.	3.97	Selected
60.	I discuss my feelings with someone.	0.249	Not Selected
61.	I try to get emotional support from friends or relives.	3.22	Selected
62.	I try to get advice from someone about what to do.	2.03	Selected
63.	I get upset and let my emotions out.	1.735	Not Selected
Dimension 10: Coping with Stress			

64.	I write talk and explain my stress in order to get feedback from my friends.	2.67	Selected
65.	I can't express have I feel when something goes wrong.	2.67	Selected
66.	I use a calm attitude to think about how to hope with the problem.	1.020	Not Selected
67.	I generalize that I have bad luck when I face stress.	4.37	Selected
68.	I feel difficulty to cope with new possibilities.	2.58	Selected
69.	I feel difficulty to study in a new atmosphere.	0.255	Not Selected
70.	I am very difficult to compete with other students.	3.97	Selected

In the item analysis only such of those items having satisfied the level of the 't' values with more than 1.96 were selected. There are 38 statements with 0.01 level of statistical significance and there are 12 statements with 0.05 level of statistical level of significance. It may be remembered that the tool used in the pilot study has 70 statements in total. Out of these 70 statements only 50 statements were selected and those items are presented in table 3. These 50 statements constitute the final form of the Life Skills Scale.

The following statement numbers 4, 7, 10, 11, 16, 17, 24, 26, 31, 35, 37, 41, 44, 48, 55, 56, 60, 63, 66, and 69 have been rejected, since the 't' values were not at the level of statistically significance.

Table: 3 Statements selected for final form of the Life Skills Scale

Serial Number of the Statements Selected	't' value	Remarks
Dimension 1: Self-Awareness		
1.	2.67	Selected
2.	1.98	Selected
3.	2.66	Selected
5.	3.22	Selected
6.	2.36	Selected
Dimension2: Empathy		
8.	2.38	Selected
9.	2.87	Selected
12.	2.67	Selected
13.	2.58	Selected
14.	2.67	Selected
Dimension3: Creative Thinking		
15.	2.03	Selected
18.	3.22	Selected
19.	3.22	Selected
20.	2.38	Selected
21.	2.67	Selected
Dimension4: Critical Thinking		
22.	2.58	Selected
23.	3.97	Selected
25.	3.22	Selected
27.	2.67	Selected
28.	2.58	Selected
Dimension 5: Problem Solving		
29.	3.97	Selected
30.	2.36	Selected
32.	3.97	Selected
33.	2.58	Selected
34.	2.67	Selected
Dimension6: Decision Making		

36.	3.22	Selected
38.	2.09	Selected
39.	2.67	Selected
40.	3.97	Selected
42.	2.46	Selected
Dimension 7: Effective Communication		
43.	3.22	Selected
45.	2.38	Selected
46.	2.67	Selected
47.	3.97	Selected
49.	2.36	Selected
Dimension 8: Interpersonal Relationship		
50.	3.22	Selected
51.	2.18	Selected
52.	2.67	Selected
53.	3.22	Selected
54.	3.97	Selected
Dimension 9: Coping with Emotions		
57.	2.67	Selected
58.	2.59	Selected
59.	3.97	Selected
61.	3.22	Selected
62.	2.03	Selected
Dimension 10: Coping with Stress		
64.	2.67	Selected
65.	2.67	Selected
67.	4.37	Selected
68.	2.58	Selected
70.	3.97	Selected

Table: 4 Life Skills Dimensions and the Number of Statements in Each Dimension (Final Study)

Sl. No.	Dimensions	Total Number of Statements
1	Self-Awareness	5
2	Empathy	5
3	Creative Thinking	5
4	Critical Thinking	5
5	Problem Solving	5
6	Decision Making	5
7	Effective Communication	5
8	Interpersonal Relationship	5
9	Coping with Emotions	5
10	Coping with Stress	5
	Total Number of Statements	50

Reliability:

Reliability refers to consistency through a series of measurements. A scale or test is reliable to the extent that repeat measurements made by it under constant conditions will give a same result (Moser & Kalton, 1989). To establish the reliability of the scale, split- half method was used. The reliability co-efficient of the tool was found to be 0.81 and indicates that the constructed scale possess the reliability at 0.01 level significance.

Validity:

The concept of appropriateness and accuracy as applied to a research process is called validity (Rantithkumar, 2011). The research tool constructed by the investigator was validated by applying face validity method. For establishing validity, the investigator distributed a set of objectives and the tool constructed for the study to 10 experts

in order to ascertain its validity. All the experts opined that the statements in the scale are relevant. Therefore, the scale has face validity.

Table: 5 Percentile Norms and Interpretation for the Life Skills Scale

Sl. No	Percentile	Score Range	Interpretation
1	Below P ₂₅	- 83	Low
2	P ₂₅ to P ₇₅	84- 166	Average
3	Above P ₇₅	Above 167	High

Table: 6 Norms for Life Skills Scale

Life Dimension	Skills	Level of Life Skills		
		Low	Average	High
Dimension - 1		1-8	9-17	18-25
Dimension - 2		1-8	9-17	18-25
Dimension - 3		1-8	9-17	18-25
Dimension - 4		1-8	9-17	18-25
Dimension - 5		1-8	9-17	18-25
Dimension - 6		1-8	9-17	18-25
Dimension - 7		1-8	9-17	18-25
Dimension - 8		1-8	9-17	18-25
Dimension - 9		1-8	9-17	18-25
Dimension - 10		1-8	9-17	18-25
Total		1- 83	84-166	167 Above

Conclusion:

Life skills are essential components for the success of life. The final form of the Life Skills Scale consists of 50 statements with 10 dimensions. The investigator believes that the 10 dimensions and 50 statements in the scale are meaningful and reflect the life skills of the higher secondary students and it will be helpful to measure the level of their life skills.

References:

- [1] Moser, Claus A. & Graham Kalton. (1989). Survey methods in social investigation (2nd edn.) Aldershot, Gower.
- [2] Rantithkumar. (2011). Research methodology. (3rd edn.). Sage Publications, London.
- [3] World Health Organization. (2003). Skills for health. www.who.int/schoolyouth/media/en/sch_skillshealth_03.pdf.