



# Assessment of Life Skills Development among Secondary School Students: Impact of Gender and Type of School Management

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

This research paper discusses the influence of gender and school management style on life skills development among secondary school students in Mandya District, Karnataka. The study adopted a descriptive survey method to collect data from 108 students in six schools, which represented the government, private aided and private unaided sectors. To assess life skills, this study used the Life Skills Assessment Scale developed by A. Radhakrishnan Nair in 2011. Statistical analyses, which include independent t-tests and one-way ANOVA, were conducted at a significance level of 0.05. Findings showed that there was a significant difference in the life skills development between boys and girls, with girls showing a higher level of ability. Besides, students from private unaided schools showed a greater level of life skills as compared to government and private aided schools. These data suggest both that gender and school management style play an important influence in the development of life skills. In pointing out these discrepancies, there is a need for specific targeted educational interventions and resources as well to improve life skills across many school settings. Thus, this study contributes toward a larger discussion on improving the state of life skills education, pointing out specific areas for targeted improvement.

**Keywords:** Life Skills, development, gender, type of management, secondary school students.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The term “life skills” refers to a set of competencies required for the general development of individuals, especially those in adolescence. These capabilities are very important for people’s development and adaptation within different social and educational spheres. Life skills include critical thinking; problem-solving, communication and emotional control, all of which help students manage their lives productively (World Health Organization, 1997).

In the Indian educational scenario, advancement of life skills is increasingly accepted as an integral part of secondary school. According to the National Policy on Education, 1986, there is a greater emphasis on including life skills in the curriculum so that well-rounded persons can be generated who can face real-world situations. Despite this, there is incredible assortment in how well life skills are trained across educational settings and demographic consortiums.

Several Indian researches have looked into the impacts of a range of aspects on life skills development. For example, Kumar and Tiwari (2017) revealed that children in urban schools had superior life skills than their rural counterparts, citing variations in educational resources with socio-cultural contacts. Similarly, Sharma and Sharma (2019) highlighted that private school pupils were often provided with better access to resources and co-curricular activities which in turn led to enhanced development of life skills than government school students. Gender differences in life skill development have also gained considerable interest.

Mehta and Sharma (2020) established that girls possessed better interpersonal as well as intrapersonal skills compared to boy students. This conclusion is in line with the larger literature, which indicates that gendered socialization processes influence life skill development differently across genders (Mohan, 2018). Moreover,

the type of school management-government, private aided, or private unaided-has a great influence on academic achievement. According to Singh and Prasad (2021), private unaided schools often provide a more enriched learning environment, which can have a positive influence on life skill development. On the contrary, government as well as private aided schools may face barriers in the process such as limited resources and inadequate infrastructures limiting the overall efficiency of imparting life skills (Joshi, 2022). The study aims at contributing to the available literature by answering how gender and school management style have impacted the process of developing life skills amongst secondary school-going students in Karnataka's Mandya district. It is the hope of the project to be able to bring forth insights as to how educational methods and policies could be changed so that in diverse school settings, development in life skills could improve.

## 2. NEED FOR THE STUDY

The significance of this research lies in its prospective to increase understanding of how gender and school administration styles control the development of life skills among secondary school going students and by identifying and examining these discrepancies, the research provides critical awareness on the effectiveness of existing educational techniques as well as the disparities that exists between varied types of institutions. The findings can help policymakers, educators and stakeholders understand the need of focused interventions and resource allocation to close gaps in life skills education. This is critical for establishing strategies that address various student needs and ensuring that all children, regardless of gender or school management style, have equal access to holistic development. In addition, the study contributes to a larger conversation about educational equity and the role of life skills in preparing children for the future.

## 3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Understanding the development and significance of life skills among school going students at secondary level is critical in increasing effective educational programmes and policies and life skills are key characteristics that allow students to deal with personal as well as social issues, build informed decisions and live successful lives. This research looks at the existing literature on life skills education, centering on how it impacts students in different contexts that is gender differences, school management styles as well as educational settings.

### Studies related to Life Skills

**Ubale et al., (2023)** investigated the relevancy of life skills to management students by stating how important it is to implement interpersonal, emotive and cognitive abilities into the body of holistic education and their result highlight the need for life skills education to be delivered in a relevant and effective manner to foster positive attitudes and overall development among postgraduates.

**Eljo, Sathyabama & Rohini (2023)** examined life skills of adolescent school students and stated that a considerable number of participants had low levels of life skills before intervention, although gains were noted after training and the results point to the need for better life skills education in schools to link these gaps.

**Wahlang, Humtsoe & Kapoor (2022)** examined research on teenagers in Meghalayan child care institutions and results confirmed that a significant portion of the sample lacked or had average life skills levels and notably, their examination revealed gender based disparities; the adolescent boys showed better life skills than school girls.

**Sudha & Mythili (2022)** studied to know the life skills of high school going adolescents in Tamil and English medium schools and results confirmed that students from Tamil medium schools had higher life skills than other counter part and this investigation highlights the influence of the medium of instruction on life skills development and the need to include life skills training in the school curriculum.

**Raju & Rao (2022)** conducted a critical analysis of life skills among secondary school students in Visakha Patnam and found that most of them had ordinary life skills. They concluded that gender and residence place did not significantly affect life skills and hence other factors may play a greater role.

**Monika & Ronak (2022)** compared secondary school students' life skills in private and public schools in Sonipat District. Their results did not find any significant differences in life skills based on gender or school type, thus indicating a need for further research into other factors that may be influencing them.

**Kumari & Sood (2022)** examined the influence of school type on the development of life skills of tribal children in Himachal Pradesh, India and they confirmed that school children from both government as well as private schools possessed the similar levels of life skills, which entails that school administration style might not be a significant forecaster in life skills development within tribal communities.

**Erduran & Korur (2022)** were developed as well as standardized a comprehensive Life Skills Scale and investigated its relation with several student variables namely GPA, grade level and socio-economic status and their examination found that the academically successful children were generally better at life skills, thus highlighting the relationship between academic performance with life skills mastery.

## Research Gap

The reviewed studies offer valuable knowledge on life skill development; however, they also present many deficits. Many of the studies conducted have focused on certain groups or places, like management students or staff in child care centers, limiting the scope of generalizing the results. Moreover, although some research focuses on the influence of gender and type of school on the life skills, there are few comprehensive studies that explore the interaction of these characteristics under various educational conditions.

In addition, while much of the literature available calls for more life skills education, there is not much analysis of the successful intervention options or how different educational settings influence these outcomes. For a better understanding of the range in life skills development, more rigorous comparative research involving varied geographic regions and educational backgrounds are required.

This study aims to bridge the gaps by exploring how gender and school management styles impact life skills development among students in Karnataka secondary schools, hence a more nuanced understanding of how these variables interact and influence educational results.

## 3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The research crisis identified for the existing investigation is: “*Assessment of Life Skills Development among Secondary School Students: Impact of Gender and Type of School Management.*”

## 5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present research are as follows:

1. To compare the difference in the Life Skills of secondary school students with regard to gender.
2. To compare the difference in the Life Skills of secondary school students with regard to type of school management.

## 6. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following are the research hypotheses for the existing research:

1. There is no significant difference in the Life Skills between secondary school boys and girls.
2. There is no significant difference in the Life Skills among secondary school students studying in government, private aided and private unaided schools.

## 7. METHOD USED

**Population:** The population is consists of secondary school students educating in government, private aided and private unaided schools situated at Mandya District, Karnataka, India.

**Sample Size:** A sample of 108 students studying in selected (six) secondary schools followed by Karnataka State Syllabus would be drawn by utilizing simple random sampling technique and the data representation would be given to students of boys and girls. Giving representation of all type of schools, a sample of 108 secondary school students were randomly selected from secondary schools in Mandya district of Karnataka, India.

**Tools of the Study:** To investigate about the life skills of the students, the researcher has utilized ‘Life Skill Assessment Scale’ developed by A. Radhakrishnan Nair (2011) along with students’ personal information proforma regarding name, gender and type of school management.

**Collection of Data:** The data was collected by the researcher herself by personally visiting the schools and administered the scale namely, Life Skill Assessment Scale for secondary school students under normal conditions. The teachers have been told to respond to the items freely and frankly. The secondary school students included in the sample were told to furnish the details required from them along with personal proforma.

## 8. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

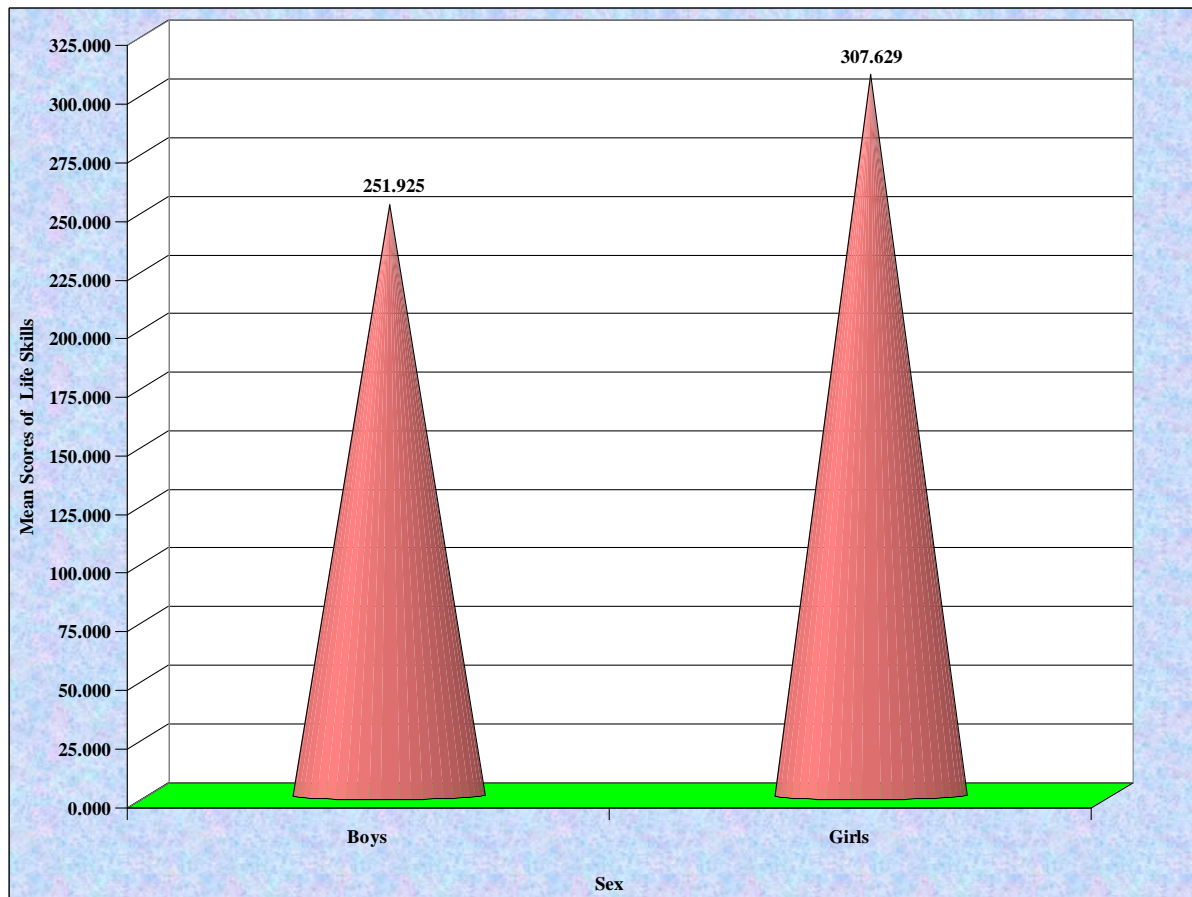
**Table-1:** Independent ‘t’ test results related to Life Skills scores of secondary school boys and girls.

Gender	Sample of respondents	Mean scores	Std. Deviation scores	‘t’ Value	Sig. level
Boys	54	251.925	50.409	5.63	**
Girls	54	307.629	52.366		

\*\*Significant at 0.01 level is 2.63 [N=108; df=106]

The above table 1 inferred that variable, sample, mean, standard deviation, ‘t’ value and significance level related to Life Skills scores of secondary school students due to variations in gender. The independent ‘t’

value for Life Skills of secondary school boys and girls is found to be 5.63 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. This means 'there is a significant difference in the Life Skills between secondary school boys and girls.' However, the mean scores of secondary school girls ( $M=307.629$ ) are found to be higher than the mean scores of boys ( $M=251.925$ ). It is proved statistically that secondary school girls demonstrating better life skills development when compared to boys. The same has been graphically presented in fig.1.



**Fig.1:** Comparison of mean scores of Life Skills between secondary school students with regard to gender.

**Table-2:** One-Way ANOVA results related to Life Skills scores of secondary school students with regard to type of schools.

Variable	Source of Variance	Sum squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Squares	'F' Value	Sig. level
Type of Schools	Between Groups	64332.667	2	32166.333	11.28	*
	Within Groups	299466.000	105	2852.057		
	Total	363798.667	107			

\*Significant at 0.05 level is 3.09 [df 2, 105]

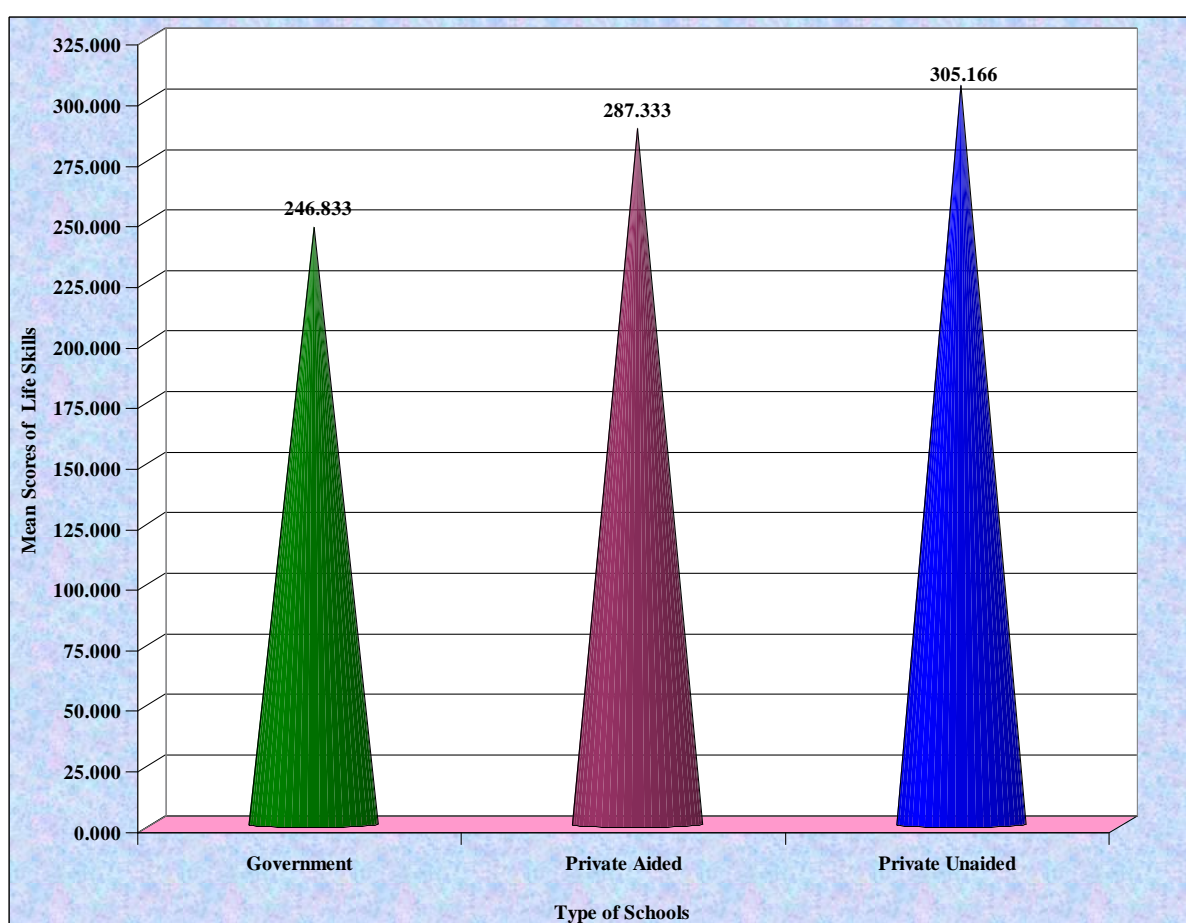
The above table 2 shows One-way ANOVA results to know the significant differences in the Life Skills of secondary school students due to variations in type of schools. The sum of squares and mean squares considered at 'df 2 and 105 related to Life Skills of secondary school students for between groups are 64332.667 and 32166.333 and for within groups are 299466.000 and 2852.057 respectively from government, private aided and private unaided schools. As per the statistical applications, the obtained 'F' value of 11.28 related to Life Skills of secondary school students from different type of schools is greater than the tabulated value 3.09 (df= 2, 105) at 0.05 level of confidence and thus, it shows statistically significant at 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and an alternate hypothesis has been accepted that is, 'there is a significant difference in the Life Skills among secondary school students studying in government, private aided and private unaided schools.' To determine the significant difference in the life skills of secondary school students from different type of schools of these paired mean scores, the Scheffe's post hoc test was applied and the results are presented in table-2(i).

**Table-2(i):** Scheffe's Post Hoc Analysis on Life Skills scores of secondary School students studying in different type of schools.

Type of Schools			Mean Difference
Government	Private Aided	Private Unaided	
246.833	287.333	-	40.500*
-	287.333	305.166	17.833
246.833	-	305.166	58.333*

\*Significant at 0.05 level.

Table-2(i) shows significant paired mean differences in the Life Skills of secondary school students studying in government and private aided & government and private unaided schools and the mean differences are 40.500 and 58.333 respectively which were greater than the critical difference value at 0.05 level of confidence. It concludes that 'there were significant differences in the Life Skills of secondary school students studying in government and private aided & government and private unaided schools.' But the Life Skills of secondary school students studying in private aided and private unaided schools and the mean difference are 17.833 which is less than the critical difference value at 0.05 level of confidence. It was not significant statistically. It was concluded that, the life skills of secondary school students attending private unaided schools exhibited superior life skills development compared to their peers in private aided and government schools. The same has been graphically presented in fig.2.



**Fig. 2:** Comparison of mean scores of life skills among government, private aided and private unaided secondary school students

## 9. RESULTS

1. There exist a significant difference in the Life Skills between secondary school boys and girls ( $t=5.63$  at 0.01 level).
  2. There exists significant difference in the Life Skills among secondary school students studying in government, private aided and private unaided schools ( $F=11.38$  at 0.01 level).
- The analysis revealed a significant difference in life skills between secondary school boys and girls, with a t-value of 5.63 at a 0.01 significance level. This indicates that female students exhibited higher levels of life



skills compared to their male counterparts. This result aligns with previous studies suggesting that girls often demonstrate stronger interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, potentially due to gendered socialization processes and differing educational experiences (Mehta & Sharma, 2020). This finding underscores the need to address these disparities by implementing gender-sensitive interventions that can support boys in developing essential life skills more effectively.

The one-way ANOVA analysis showed a significant difference in life skills among students from government, private aided and private unaided schools, with an F-value of 11.38 at a 0.01 significance level. Students in private unaided schools exhibited superior life skills compared to those in government and private aided schools. This discrepancy can be attributed to the enhanced resources, infrastructure and educational approaches often associated with private unaided schools (Singh & Prasad, 2021). Government and private aided schools may face limitations such as fewer resources and less emphasis on extracurricular activities, which can impact the development of life skills. This highlights the need for resource enhancement and innovative pedagogical strategies in government and private aided schools to foster more comprehensive life skills education.

## 10. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study indicate significant differences in the development of life skills among students based on gender and type of school management. Female students had higher life skills than their male counterparts, which indicate that specific educational strategies may be needed for girls. Students in private unaided schools showed better life skills development than their counterparts in government and private aided schools, which points to resource availability and educational practices as influencing factors. These results draw attention to critical areas of intervention. They also indicate the quality of educational resources in type of schools that should accompany gender disparities in interventions efforts.

## 11. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

**Here, the researcher made variable wise implications to increase life skills among secondary school students:**

**1. Gender-Sensitive Education Strategies:** The significant difference in life skills development between the genders calls for gender-sensitive educational strategies that cater to the needs of boys and girls differently. Schools should implement programs enhancing life skills in ways appealing to both genders, such as cooperative learning and leadership opportunities for boys and emotional intelligence and social skills for girls. Additionally, teachers should be trained to recognize and support diverse developmental needs to create a more balanced skill development environment.

**2. Resource allocation and curriculum enhancement:** The disparate life skills among students from government, private aided and unaided schools suggest an improvement in resource allocation and curriculum enhancement in government and private aided schools. Policymakers and educational administrators must work toward the enhancement of resources such as extracurricular programs and life skills training modules for the government and private aided schools. Best practices from private unaided schools, such as innovative teaching methods and enriched learning environments, can be implemented to bridge the gap. Supplemental resources and support for life skills development can also be provided by fostering partnerships between schools and community organizations.

**3. Life Skills Programmes:** Schools must have the comprehensive life skills programs which integrate academic learning with practical skills training. Such programs must be offered to all students, regardless of gender or type of school and must be designed to address a wide range of skills needed for personal and professional success. The establishment of regular assessment and feedback mechanisms will facilitate the assessment of these programs' effectiveness, enabling adjustments as may be required.

By addressing these implications, educational institutions can work to ensure a more equitable and efficient approach to life skills education- ultimately preparing students better to face the challenges and opportunities they will encounter in the future.

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