



ISSN: 2395-7476  
IJHS 2017; 3(1): 66-71  
© 2017 IJHS  
www.homesciencejournal.com  
Received: 12-11-2016  
Accepted: 13-12-2016

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## Influence of family variables on core affective life skills of youth

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### Abstract

This study was conducted to find out the influence of certain family variables on core affective life skills of youth. Sample comprised of 544 youth including 292 girls and 252 boys. Life skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) developed by Dr. R. Subasree, and Dr. A. Radhakrishnan Nair was used to assess the levels of life skills. Questionnaire was used to find out the selected family variable. The result revealed that education and occupation of mother and family income have significant influence on Interpersonal relationship skill of youth. The education level of father has significant influence on Coping with emotion skill, whereas the family participation in the self- help group has significant influence on coping with stress skill of the youth.

**Keywords:** Youth, Life Skills, Empathy, Interpersonal relationship and Coping with emotions, Coping with stress

### 1. Introduction

According to UNICEF (2002) <sup>[18]</sup> life skills are psychosocial and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions, communicate effectively, and develop the coping and self-management skills needed for a healthy and productive life. These are the personal and social skills required for young people to function confidently and competently with themselves, with other people and with the wider community (TACADE, UK). Life skills enable people to adapt and master their life situations at home, school, work, and any other context in which they find themselves (Rosen, 2003) <sup>[12]</sup>. Life skills infer success in personal and professional life.

Life skills are classified in to two main broad category - core cognitive and core affective life skills. The Core affective life skills consisting of four core life skills such as: Empathy, Interpersonal relationship and Coping with emotions and Coping with stress. Empathy help us to understand and accept others the way they are and it is the prerequisite skills to maintain good social interactions in varied situations. Interpersonal relationship skills help us to develop and maintain positive and healthy relationship with others. Coping with emotions involves recognizing emotions in ourselves and others and how to respond to emotions appropriately. Where as Coping with stress is recognizing the sources of stress in our lives and acting in ways that help to control our levels of stress.

### 2. Significance of the Study

The United Nations (UN) broadly defines youth as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. The definition of Youth in India is clearly described in the National Youth Policy as 'the people coming under the age between 13 to 35 years old. The biological transformations of puberty, the psychological changes that accompany an emerging sexuality, changing relationships with peers and family, and the growing ability for adolescents to think abstractly, represent a critical moment life. Youth is a time of increased self-awareness, self-identity, self-consciousness, pre-occupation with image, and concern with social acceptance (Slater & Tigge mann, 2002) <sup>[15]</sup>. The exploration of self and new found independence at times, results in feelings of stress, anxiety and uncertainty. The involvement of youth in high risk activities such as alcohol, tobacco and drug abuse, delinquency, poor academic performance, dropping out, raising suicide rates is more over due to the lack of skills necessary for facing the life challenges.

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Empirical evidence suggests that deficits in life skills can contribute to delinquent behaviour (Gazda, Ginter, & Horne, 2001)<sup>[3]</sup>.

In the present-day highly competitive world, those who do not possess the ability to take up the gauntlet of competition are left out in the race of life. Whether young people move through these changes acquiring the requisite skills to make a healthy transition to adulthood, depends in large part upon the opportunities given to them from their environment. Family has a significant influence and impact on adolescent development (Moghadamnejhad *et al.*, 2014)<sup>[7]</sup> and is considered the most important institution in shaping children's identity (Shaltsys and Blastyn, 1994, quoted Mohammadi and Latifian, 2008)<sup>[8]</sup>. Gazda and Brooks (1985) suggested that life skills are essential in four life domains, namely family, school, community, and career. There is a positive relationship between life functioning and emotional adjustment (Darden, Ginter, & Gazda, 1996). Research done in the United States finds that an authoritative parenting style, defined as "warm and involved, but firm and consistent in establishing and enforcing guidelines, limits, and developmentally appropriate expectations" has consistently positive effects on adolescents (Steinberg, 2000)<sup>[16]</sup>.

So the youth need life skills especially core affective skills in this crucial stage of transition to develop a healthy integrated personality.

### 3. Review of Related Literature

Anuradha and Lokeswari (2016)<sup>[1]</sup> reviewed the article on impact of life skill education on self-esteem of adolescents. The article emphasized the need of life skill education in the challenging context of globalization and urbanization.

Anuradha (2015)<sup>[2]</sup> assessed the life skills and self-concept of adolescents studying 9th standard in Tirupati town. The results revealed that adolescents were having moderately good life skills and 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.

Kaur Mandeep (2014) assessed the life skills among school going adolescents in relation to gender, locale, parental education and parental occupation. The findings revealed that female and rural school going adolescents possess more life skills than their counterparts. School going adolescents whose fathers and mothers are less educated possess significantly more life skills than their counterparts. School going adolescents who have business as parental occupation possess more life skills than their counterparts. Results of the study further revealed that school going adolescents whose mothers are non-working possess significantly more life skills than those with working mothers.

Mohammadi, *et al.* (2014) attempted to find the efficacy of Life Skills Training on Subjective Well-Being of Students in Iran. It is concluded that, individuals who have lower mental health and also suffer from anxiety, depression and stress, often do not have sufficient information about these disorders and do not know how to cope with them. Life skills instruction was effective in decreasing the neurosis of students and stress-depression of students. The results also show that life skills instruction is effective in increasing the vitality and life determination of the students.

Pujar, Hunshal, and Bailur (2014)<sup>[11]</sup> found that the intervention on life skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, coping with stress and empathy

helped the rural adolescent girls to take positive actions to protect themselves, in solving problems, coping with the stress and to promote positive social relationships.

Sharma and Pathania (2013)<sup>[14]</sup> conducted a study to find out the emotional stability and maturity of both ICDS and Non-ICDS children. The results of the study indicated that the non-ICDS children were found significantly better than that of ICDS in the areas of emotional stability and emotional maturity. The age of the children and type of occupation of the parents showed positive relationship with emotional maturity.

Meenakshi (2012)<sup>[9]</sup> conducted a study on adolescent girls to explore the causes and symptoms of stress in adolescent girls. Major causes of stress were higher academic expectations by parents and career choices. Parental control on everyday activities particularly for girl child as compared to boys was also one of the causes of stress in girls.

Irshad K. (2012)<sup>[4]</sup> conducted a study to find out effect of Life Skills Training on Mental Well-Being and Self-Esteem among Vulnerable Adolescents. The results of the study indicate that life skills training have significant effect on the positive mental health of the vulnerable adolescents.

Joseph and Vasanth (2012)<sup>[5]</sup> showed that there is a significant impact of Life Skills Training on the Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Wellbeing of Adolescents in the age group of 15-17 years studying in various higher secondary schools in Chennai city.

Yuen M (2011)<sup>[23]</sup> summarizes relevant international literature from the U.S., Hong Kong, Australia, Japan that informs our understanding of connectedness and life skills development in children and youth. The findings highlight that connectedness; self-development, cognitive development, and life skills development are interdependent. The empirical evidence showed that significant numbers of young people in transition who feel disconnected from their family, peer and school tend to maintain concerning levels of anxiety, depression and stress in their new environment.

Lahey, (2007) reported that family Microsystem has a major influence on individual development because within this system the individual learns values and attitudes, which will have a long term impact in the future. Hence, the stability of the family, the parenting style, types of family problems and conflicts in a family will determine the type of stresses, conflicts and psychological effects on the individual particularly on adolescents. These ups and downs in the family cause parent-child conflicts, risky behaviours and mood changes in the adolescent's life.

### 4. Objectives of the Study

This study has been taken up with following objectives

1. To study the influence of parents education on life skills of youth.
2. To study the influence of parents occupation on life skills of youth.
3. To study the influence of family income on life skills of youth.
4. To study the influence of family participation in self-help group on life skills of youth.

### 5. Methodology

Ex-post-facto research design was adopted for conducting this study. Simple random sampling procedure was used to collect sample of 544 students studying in I and II year, including 292 female and 252 male. Life skill Assessment Scale (LSAS) developed and standardized by Dr. R. Subasree, and Dr. A. Radhakrishnan Nair was used for the study. Questionnaire was

developed and used to find out the family variables of the youth.

**6. Result and Discussion**

The results are presented and interpreted as follows

**6.1 Influence of Educational Level of Mother on Life Skills**

The influence of ‘Educational level of Mother’ on Life skills

was investigated. The Youth were divided into 3 groups, 1) Below 10<sup>th</sup>, 2) Intermediate, 3) Degree & above. The following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis 1: There would be no significant influence of ‘Educational level of Mother’ on life skills of Youth.

The hypothesis is tested using ANOVA and the results are presented in the table 1.

**Table 1:** Influence of Educational Level of Mother on Life skills

S. No.	Dimensions of Life Skills	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	‘F’ value	Level of significance
1	Empathy	Between Groups	58.469	2	29.234	1.195	@
		Within Groups	13237.029	541	24.468		
		Total	13295.498	543			
2	Interpersonal Relationship	Between Groups	171.862	2	85.931	3.166	*
		Within Groups	14680.895	541	27.137		
		Total	14852.757	543			
3	Coping with emotion	Between Groups	50.681	2	25.340	1.070	@
		Within Groups	12806.406	541	23.672		
		Total	12857.086	543			
4	Coping with stress	Between Groups	35.741	2	17.870	0.616	@
		Within Groups	15702.419	541	29.025		
		Total	15738.160	543			

The table value of ‘f’ for (2,541) df is 3.01, 4.65 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. It can be interpreted from the above table that calculated ‘f’ values are less for all the dimensions except Interpersonal Relationship. Hence the ‘hypothesis’ is rejected at 0.05 levels. It is concluded that educational qualification of mother has significant influence on Interpersonal Relationship skills of Youth. In this study majority of the mothers studied up to matriculation but in comparison to fathers’ their educational level is higher. As mothers are more attached and share a good emotional bonding with the teens, they have significant impact on interpersonal skills of the youth. The finding is in congruence with finding of Sharma (2003) <sup>[13]</sup> and Kaur, M. (2014) that the mother’s education was significantly associated with increased

level of life skills in youth. Mandeep, K. findings also revealed that school going adolescents whose fathers and mothers are less educated possess significantly more life skills than their counterparts.

**6.1 Influence of Educational Level of Father on life skills**

The influence of ‘Educational level of Father on Life skills was investigated. The youth were divided into 3 groups, 1) Below 10<sup>th</sup>, 2) Intermediate, 3) Degree & above. The following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis 2: There would be no significant influence of ‘educational Level of father on life skills of Youth.

The hypothesis is tested using ANOVA and the results are presented in the table 2.

**Table 2:** Influence of Educational Level of Father on Life skills

S. No.	Dimensions of Life Skills	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	‘F’ value	Level of significance
1	Empathy	Between Groups	19.234	2	9.617	0.392	@
		Within Groups	13276.264	541	24.540		
		Total	13295.498	543			
2	Interpersonal Relationship	Between Groups	33.481	2	16.740	0.612	@
		Within Groups	14795.277	541	27.348		
		Total	14828.757	543			
3	Coping with emotion	Between Groups	148.021	2	74.01	3.146	*
		Within Groups	12725.065	541	23.521		
		Total	12873.086	543			
4	Coping with stress	Between Groups	.449	2	.225	0.008	@
		Within Groups	15737.711	541	29.090		
		Total	15738.160	543			

The table value of ‘f’ for (2,541) df is 3.01 at 0.05 level of significance. It is clear from table 2 that the calculated ‘f’ values are less for the all dimensions except coping with emotion. Hence ‘Hypothesis 2’ is rejected at 0.05 levels. It is concluded that educational qualification of Father has significant influence on coping with emotion skill of Youth. The findings are similar to the findings of Anuradha (2015) <sup>[2]</sup> and Kaur Mandeep (2014) that there is association between life skills and father’s education of adolescents.

**6.2 Influence of ‘Occupation of Mother’ on Life Skills**

The influence of ‘Occupation of Mother’ on Life skills was investigated. The Youth were divided into 4 groups, 1) Labour/Daily wage earner, 2) Home maker, 3) Business, 4) Govt./Private Job. The following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis 3: There would be no significant influence of occupation of mother on life skills of Youth. The hypothesis is tested using ANOVA and the results are presented in the table3.

**Table 3:** Influence of ‘Occupation of Mother’ on Life skills

S. No.	Dimensions of Life Skills	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	‘F’ value	Level of significance
1	Empathy	Between Groups	22.761	3	7.587	0.309	@
		Within Groups	13272.738	540	24.579		
		Total	13295.498	543			
2	Interpersonal Relationship	Between Groups	298.163	3	99.388	3.694	*
		Within Groups	14530.594	540	26.909		
		Total	14828.757	543			
3	Coping with emotion	Between Groups	28.378	3	9.459	0.398	@
		Within Groups	12828.709	540	23.757		
		Total	12857.086	543			
4	Coping with stress	Between Groups	54.692	3	18.231	0.628	@
		Within Groups	15683.468	540	29.043		
		Total	15738.160	543			

The table value of ‘f’ for (3,540) df is 2.62, 3.80 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. It is clear from the table 3 that the calculated ‘f’ values are less for all the skills except Interpersonal Relationship. Hence the hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 levels. It is concluded that occupation of mother has significant influence on Interpersonal Relationship skill of Youth. In this study majority of the mothers are house wife, they may spend more time with the teens influencing their life skills. The results are similar to the findings by Kaur, M. (2014) that the youth whose mothers are non-working possess significantly greater life skills than those with working

mothers.

### 6.3 Influence of ‘Occupation of Father’ on Life Skills

The influence of ‘Occupation of Father’ on Life skills was investigated. The Youth were divided into 3 groups, 1) Labour/ Daily wage earner, 2) Farmer, 3) Business, 4) Govt. / Private Job The following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis 4: There would be no significant influence of ‘Occupation of Father’ on life skills of Youth.

The hypothesis is tested using ANOVA and the results are presented in the table 4.

**Table 4:** Influence of ‘Occupation of Father’ on Life skills

S. No.	Dimensions of Life Skills	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	‘F’ value	Level of significance
1	Empathy	Between Groups	18.002	3	6.001	0.244	@
		Within Groups	13277.496	540	24.588		
		Total	13295.498	543			
2	Interpersonal Relationship	Between Groups	97.260	3	32.420	1.188	@
		Within Groups	14731.497	540	27.281		
		Total	14828.757	543			
3	Coping with emotion	Between Groups	58.396	3	19.465	0.821	@
		Within Groups	12798.690	540	23.701		
		Total	12857.086	543			
4	Coping with stress	Between Groups	58.517	3	19.506	0.672	@
		Within Groups	15679.643	540	29.036		
		Total	15738.160	543			

The table value of ‘f’ for (3,540) degree of freedom is 2.62, 3.80 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. It is observed from the above table that the calculated ‘f’ values of all the life skills are not greater than the table value. Hence ‘Hypothesis 4’ is accepted. It is concluded that occupation father has no significant influence on Life skills of Youth.

The influence of ‘Family Income’ on Life skills was investigated. The Youth were divided into 5 groups 1) Up to 5000, 2) 5001- 10000, 3) 10001-20000, 4) 20000 -40000 5) 40000 & above. The following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis 5: There would be no significant influence of ‘family income’ on life skills of youth. The hypothesis is tested using ANOVA and the results are presented in the table 5.

### 6.4 Influence of ‘Family Income’ on Life Skills

**Table 5:** Influence of ‘Family Income’ on Life skill

S. No.	Dimensions of Life Skills	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	‘F’ value	Level of significance
1	Empathy	Between Groups	106.925	4	26.731	1.092	@
		Within Groups	13188.574	539	24.469		
		Total	13295.498	543			
2	Interpersonal Relationship	Between Groups	263.441	4	65.860	<b>2.433</b>	*
		Within Groups	14608.328	539	27.103		
		Total	14871.769	543			
3	Coping with emotion	Between Groups	75.944	4	18.986	0.801	@
		Within Groups	12781.143	539	23.713		
		Total	12857.086	543			
4	Coping with stress	Between Groups	151.120	4	37.780	1.306	@
		Within Groups	15587.040	539	28.918		
		Total	15738.160	543			

The table value of 'f' for (4,540) df is 2.39, 3.35 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. It is evident from the table 5 that the calculated 'f' values are less for all the dimension of Life skill except Interpersonal Relationship. Hence the hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 levels. So it can be concluded that family income has significant influence on Interpersonal Relationship skill of youth. The mean interpersonal relationship skills score of youth belonging to higher income (Rs.40000/month) is significantly higher than other groups. The findings can be supported by the findings of Mousami, Salma & Smriti (2012) that personal-economic differences exist as upper middle class and below poverty line class has showed difference in influence of life skills training in early youth.

### 6.5 Influence of 'Family Participation in Self- Help Group' on Life Skills of Youth

The influence of Family Participation in Self- Help Group on life skills was investigated. The Youth were divided into 2 groups, 1) Yes and 2) No the following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis 6: There would be no significant influence of Family Participation in Self- Help Group on life skills of Youth.

The hypothesis is tested using 't' technique and the results are presented in the table 6.

**Table 6:** Influence of 'Family Participation in self- help group' on Life skills

S. No.	Dimensions of Life Skills	Family Participation in self- help group	No. of observation	Mean value	Standard deviation	't' value	Level of significance
1	Empathy	Yes	306	37.92	4.939	0.557	@
		No	238	37.68	4.967		
2	Interpersonal Relationship	Yes	306	37.00	5.232	0.374	@
		No	238	36.83	5.227		
3	Coping with Emotions	Yes	306	34.35	4.981	0.374	@
		No	238	34.19	4.723		
4	Coping with Stress	Yes	306	24.30	5.472	2.017	*
		No	238	23.36	5.233		

It is evident from the table 6 that for Coping with Stress skill computed 't' values is more than the table value of 't' (1.92) at 0.05 level. Hence the hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level. It is concluded that Family Participation in self- help group has significant influence on coping with stress skill of youth. The mean score of Coping with Stress skills of youth belonging to the family which is a member of self-help group is significantly higher. The family which has good community support can withstand and cope with stress better than others.

### 7. Conclusion

Youth is the critical phase of life. It is a period of major physical, physiological, psychological and behavioural changes with changing patterns of social interactions and relationships. In order to help adolescents and youth better prepare for their adult world, they need life skills. Many researches proved that Life skill Learning is very necessary, and believe that problems that many of our youth are facing can be addressed through skill building. Family is the first and most enduring socialising agency, influences one's behaviour and personality throughout the life. So awareness must be created among parents, on the importance of life skills especially core affective skills in the life of present youth and their role in facilitating development of integrated personality.

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