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### Impact of parents educational and occupational background on life skills among school going adolescents from Nainital district of Uttarakhand

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#### Abstract

Parents have important role in rearing & development of adolescents. The way adolescents are loved, cared & nurtured by parents will decide their future life opportunities. Adolescents acquire most of their life skills viz. style of communicating, social relationships, empathy, emotion and stress management from their family background. Present study was aimed to find life skills variance among school going adolescents w.r.t. their parents educational and occupational background. A descriptive survey research design was used on sample comprising 800 school going adolescents, randomly selected from four blocks of Nainital district, Uttarakhand. Data collection was done applying self-standardized life skills tool comprising fifty eight items, on seven life skills domains. Collected data was analyzed through SPSS version 25 to enumerate mean, SD, F-value and t-value. Results of this study show that there exists no significant difference in total life skills among the school going adolescents' w.r.t. occupational background of parents as well as mothers' education; while fathers' educational background show significant impact.

**Keywords:** Parent education, parent occupation, life skills, adolescents

#### Introduction

Life skills are the abilities that somebody acquires through their daily life experiences, which helps them to succeed in various life domain viz. professional, personal and social. According to UNICEF report (2002) <sup>[17]</sup> there are numerous life skills, majorly falling under four components i.e. communication skills, interpersonal skills, thinking skills and self-management skills. World Health Organization (1993) <sup>[20]</sup> defines life skills under ten core sets viz. critical thinking, creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, communication skill, interpersonal skill, empathy, self-awareness, coping with emotions and coping with stress.

Due to higher intellectual aptitude, adolescents are considered as utmost productive contributors to any society. Life skills facilitates adolescents to do things with right perspective; enhance their efficiency & productivity; leads constructive development that transform them to an ideal citizen. Adolescents with low level of life skills are known to develop aberrant behaviors leading to lifelong health and social anxieties. Family environment is the first educational institute every adolescent gets. Adolescents' observe their parents, emulate and learn regarding: How to communicate, behave and understand oneself and others. Constructive, healthier home environment with consistent concern of parents is very important for better life skills development among adolescents. Parent's age, attitude, education & occupation influences the physical, emotional and social development of adolescents.

Numerous investigators indicated that, educated parent better understand the needs of adolescents; they are more cognizant about growth & career prospective of adolescents; provide conducive environment to adolescents so that they learn and grow well; more careful for mental well-being of adolescent; provide productive thoughts and positive guidance to live healthier life; they maintain consistency discipline with adolescents which helps them to endure tough times in life ahead (Adhe *et al.*, 2020, Paul and Babu, 2018) <sup>[1, 14]</sup>.

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Many researchers assessed the effect of parental occupation and income on life skills of adolescents. Secured profession of parents significantly impacts adolescents self-confidence, academic achievement, social and interpersonal relationships (Kaur, Maheshwari and Thapar, 2015; Kumara *et al.*, 2019) [9, 11].

Considering the responsibilities of the parents to provide pioneering environment for development of life skills among adolescents, present study was designed with aim to assess the impact of parent occupation and level of education on life skills among school going adolescents from four blocks of Nainital district, Uttarakhand.

### Research Methods

In present investigation descriptive survey design was employed, through random sampling technique 800 school going adolescents from four blocks (Haldwani, Kotabag, Bhimtal and Ramgarh) of district Nainital (Uttarakhand) were selected to collect data using self-standardized life skills tool based on conceptual framework of WHO. Tool consists of 58 items under seven life skills domains *viz.* critical thinking (CT), creative thinking (CRT), decision making and problem solving skills (DM & PS), interpersonal relationship and communication skills (IPR & C), empathy (E), self-awareness (SA) and stress management (SM). The items had binary options, YES and NO. A correct answer (Yes) was coded as 1 and incorrect answer (No) as 0 for positive nature item; while negative nature item was coded as 1 (NO) for correct response and 0 (YES) for incorrect responses. Thus, the maximum possible score of the test was 58 and minimum 0. The reliability of questionnaire was 0.80.

Information regarding parents' occupation and parents' education was collected using self-prepared personal data schedule. Information regarding parents' occupation was collected as, father's occupation - government or non-government, mother's occupation - working or house wife. While parents' education information was gathered under five categories i.e. illiterate, high school, intermediate, graduate and post graduate.

For data analysis Independent t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was executed using SPSS version 25. The p-value <0.05 was considered as cut off value for significance.

### Result and Discussion

#### Impact of father's occupation on life skills

In the present investigation we found that mean value of total life skills for school going adolescents whose father had government service was  $39.65 \pm 8.67$ , while whose father had non-government services was  $38.65 \pm 8.33$ . The observed t-value (1.469) and p value (0.142) signify non-significant difference for total life skills. Life skill domain CT & E showed significant differences among school going adolescents w.r.t. their father's occupation, while other life skills domains i.e. CRT, SA, SM, DM & PS, IPR & C showed no significant difference at 0.05 level of significance (p value > 0.05) (Table 1).

Our findings are in accordance to many researchers Antara *et al.* (2019) [2] observed no significant difference in life skills among adolescents w.r.t their father's occupation i.e. employed and unemployed. Mathew and Joes (2018) [13] also concluded no significant difference in level of life skills on the basis of parents' job. Lathriatpuli *et al.*, (2020) [12] study indicated that domains of life skills, didn't have any correlation with parents' occupation. Chakara's (2017)

findings also reflected no significance difference in life skills of adolescents' w.r.t father's occupation i.e. labor, daily wage earner, farmer, business man and government/private job. Chakra (2016) [5] reported a significant impact of parent's income on interpersonal dimension of life skills which is in contrast to our results.

#### Impact of mother's occupation on life skills

In present investigation we observed significant differences in the CT domain of life skills among school going adolescents with their mother's occupation ( $p < 0.05$ ). Other life skills domain i.e. CRT, DM & PS, IPR & C, E, SA, SM along with total life skill scores differ non-significantly w.r.t their mother's occupation. ( $p > 0.05$ ) (Table 2).

Our results are antagonistic with the findings of Kaur (2014) [9] & Chakra (2016) [5], who reported the occupation of mother to have more significant influence in development of interpersonal relationship skills of adolescent. They also concluded that adolescents whose mothers were house wives possess better life skills compared to their counterparts.

#### Impact of father's education on life skills

In current study we found F-value 3.176 and p-value 0.013 for total life skills. For life skills domain E, F-value and p-value were 3.5999 and 0.006, respectively. For life skills domain CRT, F-value and p-value were 2.876 and 0.022, respectively. These results clearly reflects significant difference in total life skills, E and CRT domain of life skills among school going adolescents w.r.t their father's education. Other life skills domain i.e. CT, DM & PS, IPR & C, SA, SM didn't show significant difference w.r.t their father's education (Table 3).

Our findings are in parallel to the finding of Borah *et al.* (2022) [4], who reported a significant association between father's educational qualifications with total life skills score. Similar to our observation, Dhingra and Chauhan (2017) [7] found highly significant correlation between father's education and total life skills score. In accordance to our results, Kaur (2014) [9] observed significant difference in life skills scores among adolescents' w.r.t father's education. Anuradha (2014) [3] found moderate association between life skills score and educational qualification of father.

In contrast to our study, Mathew and Jose (2018) [13] observed that there is no significant association between life skills score and parents' education. Chakra (2016) [5] reported significant influence of level of father's education only on coping with emotion skills. Antra *et al.*, (2019) [2] noticed significant difference in only one dimension of life skills i.e. SA with educational qualification of father i.e. graduate and above. Lalhriatpui *et al.*, (2020) [12] also observed that adolescents whose parents had high level of educational qualification, were better in DM skills.

#### Impact of mother's education on life skills

F-value and p-value for life skills domain CRT was 2.619 and 0.034, respectively; for life skills domain E, F-value and p-value were found to be 3.520 and 0.007, respectively. These results point toward significant difference for both life skills domain CRT and E of school going adolescent's w.r.t their mother's education. Other life skills domain i.e. CT, DM & PS, IPR & C, SA, SM and total life skills showed no significant difference at 0.05 level of significance (p value > 0.05). Findings of our present investigation are similar with the results of Mathew and Jose (2018) [13]. They also didn't observe any statistically significant difference in life skills scores w.r.t parent's educational qualifications.

In contrast to our findings, Sharma (2003) [16] reported that the life skills were closely associated with mother’s educational qualifications. Kaur (2014) [9] also reported significant difference in life skills of adolescents’ w.r.t. mother’s education. Contrary to our finding, Chakra (2016) [5] reported that educational qualification of mother had significant impact on interpersonal relationship skills of adolescents. Dhingra and Chauhan (2017) [7] found highly significant correlation between mother’s educational qualifications and life skills

and its domain except emotional coping skills. Antara *et al.*, (2019) [2] observed statistically significant difference in life skills of adolescent’s w.r.t mother’s educational qualifications; Borah *et al.*, (2022) [4] also observed a significant association between mother’s education i.e. below high school and high school and above, and in case of critical thinking dimension, students whose mothers had education above high school showed higher life skills scores

**Table 1:** Difference in the level of life skills among school going adolescents with respect to father’s occupation.

| Life skill dimension                                | Occupation       | N   | Mean  | Std. Deviation | t value | p value |
|---|------------------|-----|-------|----------------|---------|---------|
| Critical Thinking                                   | Government       | 212 | 7.00  | 1.75           | 2.411   | 0.016   |
|   | Non – Government | 588 | 6.68  | 1.67           |         |         |
| Creative Thinking                                   | Government       | 212 | 4.68  | 1.32           | 0.438   | 0.661   |
|   | Non – Government | 588 | 4.63  | 1.33           |         |         |
| Decision Making and Problem solving skills          | Government       | 212 | 8.41  | 2.38           | 0.514   | 0.607   |
|   | Non – Government | 588 | 8.31  | 2.30           |         |         |
| Interpersonal relationship and communication skills | Government       | 212 | 4.34  | 1.61           | -0.194  | 0.846   |
|   | Non – Government | 588 | 4.36  | 1.55           |         |         |
| Empathy   | Government       | 212 | 5.33  | 1.45           | 2.415   | 0.016   |
|   | Non – Government | 588 | 5.04  | 1.54           |         |         |
| Self-Awareness                                      | Government       | 212 | 5.29  | 1.69           | 1.069   | 0.285   |
|   | Non – Government | 588 | 5.14  | 1.69           |         |         |
| Stress Management                                   | Government       | 212 | 4.59  | 1.77           | 0.771   | 0.441   |
|   | Non – Government | 588 | 4.48  | 1.77           |         |         |
| Total Life Skill                                    | Government       | 212 | 39.65 | 8.67           | 1.469   | 0.142   |
|   | Non – Government | 588 | 38.65 | 8.33           |         |         |

**Table 2:** Difference in Life Skills among school going adolescents with respect to Mother’s occupation (Working and Housewife)

| Life skill domain                                   | Occupation | N   | Mean  | Std. Deviation | t value | p value |
|---|------------|-----|-------|----------------|---------|---------|
| Critical Thinking                                   | Housewife  | 658 | 6.82  | 1.66           | 2.115   | 0.035   |
|   | Working    | 142 | 6.49  | 1.81           |         |         |
| Creative Thinking                                   | Housewife  | 658 | 4.64  | 1.33           | -0.447  | 0.655   |
|   | Working    | 142 | 4.69  | 1.31           |         |         |
| Decision Making and Problem solving skills          | Housewife  | 658 | 8.35  | 2.28           | 0.330   | 0.742   |
|   | Working    | 142 | 8.28  | 2.52           |         |         |
| Interpersonal Relationship and Communication Skills | Housewife  | 658 | 4.35  | 1.55           | -0.251  | 0.802   |
|   | Working    | 142 | 4.39  | 1.61           |         |         |
| Empathy   | Housewife  | 658 | 5.15  | 1.51           | 1.545   | 0.123   |
|   | Working    | 142 | 4.94  | 1.53           |         |         |
| Self-Awareness                                      | Housewife  | 658 | 5.18  | 1.65           | -0.014  | 0.989   |
|   | Working    | 142 | 5.18  | 1.87           |         |         |
| Stress Management                                   | Housewife  | 658 | 4.49  | 1.77           | -0.785  | 0.433   |
|   | Working    | 142 | 4.62  | 1.78           |         |         |
| Total Life Skill Score                              | Housewife  | 658 | 38.99 | 8.32           | 0.508   | 0.612   |
|   | Working    | 142 | 38.59 | 8.94           |         |         |

**Table 3:** Difference in Life Skills among school going adolescents with respect to their father’s education i.e. illiterate, high school, intermediate, graduate and post graduate

| Life skill domain                                   | Education      | N   | Mean | Std. Deviation | F value | P Value |
|---|----------------|-----|------|----------------|---------|---------|
| Critical Thinking                                   | Illiterate     | 36  | 6.69 | 1.85           | 1.893   | 1.893   |
|   | High School    | 208 | 6.55 | 1.60           |         |         |
|   | Intermediate   | 241 | 6.72 | 1.74           |         |         |
|   | Graduate       | 216 | 6.98 | 1.64           |         |         |
|   | Post-graduate  | 99  | 6.89 | 1.80           |         |         |
| Creative Thinking                                   | Illiterate     | 36  | 4.56 | 1.61           | 2.876   | 0.022   |
|   | High School    | 208 | 4.43 | 1.38           |         |         |
|   | Intermediate   | 241 | 4.64 | 1.33           |         |         |
|   | Graduate       | 216 | 4.74 | 1.23           |         |         |
|   | Post- graduate | 99  | 4.93 | 1.24           |         |         |
| Decision Making and Problem                         | Illiterate     | 36  | 7.81 | 2.69           | 2.288   | 0.058   |
|   | High School    | 208 | 8.04 | 2.31           |         |         |
|   | Intermediate   | 241 | 8.35 | 2.29           |         |         |
|   | Graduate       | 216 | 8.60 | 2.31           |         |         |
|   | Post-graduate  | 99  | 8.57 | 2.25           |         |         |
| Interpersonal Relationship and Communication Skills | Illiterate     | 36  | 4.33 | 1.45           | 1.000   | 0.407   |

|                        |                |     |       |      |       |       |
|------------------------|----------------|-----|-------|------|-------|-------|
|                        | High School    | 208 | 4.29  | 1.55 |       |       |
|                        | Intermediate   | 241 | 4.25  | 1.51 |       |       |
|                        | Graduate       | 216 | 4.46  | 1.63 |       |       |
|                        | Post- graduate | 99  | 4.55  | 1.59 |       |       |
| Empathy                | Illiterate     | 36  | 5.03  | 1.44 | 3.599 | 0.006 |
|                        | High School    | 208 | 4.85  | 1.52 |       |       |
|                        | Intermediate   | 241 | 5.05  | 1.55 |       |       |
|                        | Graduate       | 216 | 5.37  | 1.44 |       |       |
|                        | Post-graduate  | 99  | 5.30  | 1.56 |       |       |
| Self-Awareness         | Illiterate     | 36  | 5.14  | 1.55 | 1.188 | 0.315 |
|                        | High School    | 208 | 5.18  | 1.57 |       |       |
|                        | Intermediate   | 241 | 5.03  | 1.68 |       |       |
|                        | Graduate       | 216 | 5.23  | 1.81 |       |       |
|                        | Post-graduate  | 99  | 5.45  | 1.75 |       |       |
| Stress Management      | Illiterate     | 36  | 4.58  | 1.76 | 2.291 | 0.058 |
|                        | High School    | 208 | 4.30  | 1.92 |       |       |
|                        | Intermediate   | 241 | 4.51  | 1.72 |       |       |
|                        | Graduate       | 216 | 4.51  | 1.73 |       |       |
|                        | Post-graduate  | 99  | 4.95  | 1.62 |       |       |
| Total Life Skill Score | Illiterate     | 36  | 38.14 | 8.48 | 3.176 | 0.013 |
|                        | High School    | 208 | 37.63 | 8.17 |       |       |
|                        | Intermediate   | 241 | 38.56 | 8.38 |       |       |
|                        | Graduate       | 216 | 39.89 | 8.46 |       |       |
|                        | Post- graduate | 99  | 40.64 | 8.63 |       |       |

**Table 4:** Difference in Life Skills among school going adolescents with respect to their mother's education i.e. illiterate, high school, intermediate, graduate and post graduate

| Life skills Dimensions                              | Education     | N   | Mean  | Std. Deviation | F value | P-Value |
|---|---------------|-----|-------|----------------|---------|---------|
| Critical Thinking                                   | Illiterate    | 98  | 6.49  | 1.65           | 1.424   | 0.224   |
|   | High School   | 272 | 6.68  | 1.71           |         |         |
|   | Intermediate  | 174 | 6.86  | 1.65           |         |         |
|   | Graduate      | 137 | 6.94  | 1.73           |         |         |
|   | Post graduate | 119 | 6.85  | 1.70           |         |         |
| Creative Thinking                                   | Illiterate    | 98  | 4.55  | 1.42           | 2.619   | 0.034   |
|   | High School   | 272 | 4.47  | 1.34           |         |         |
|   | Intermediate  | 174 | 4.76  | 1.31           |         |         |
|   | Graduate      | 137 | 4.72  | 1.27           |         |         |
|   | Post graduate | 119 | 4.87  | 1.28           |         |         |
| Decision Making and Problem solving skills          | Illiterate    | 98  | 8.18  | 2.36           | 1.096   | 0.357   |
|   | High School   | 272 | 8.15  | 2.30           |         |         |
|   | Intermediate  | 174 | 8.49  | 2.29           |         |         |
|   | Graduate      | 137 | 8.44  | 2.34           |         |         |
|   | Post graduate | 119 | 8.57  | 2.37           |         |         |
| Interpersonal Relationship and Communication Skills | Illiterate    | 98  | 4.27  | 1.56           | 1.281   | 0.276   |
|   | High School   | 272 | 4.36  | 1.48           |         |         |
|   | Intermediate  | 174 | 4.33  | 1.62           |         |         |
|   | Graduate      | 137 | 4.22  | 1.68           |         |         |
|   | Post graduate | 119 | 4.63  | 1.51           |         |         |
| Empathy   | Illiterate    | 98  | 4.96  | 1.53           | 3.520   | 0.007   |
|   | High School   | 272 | 4.90  | 1.52           |         |         |
|   | Intermediate  | 174 | 5.15  | 1.49           |         |         |
|   | Graduate      | 137 | 5.36  | 1.40           |         |         |
|   | Post graduate | 119 | 5.39  | 1.62           |         |         |
| Self-Awareness                                      | Illiterate    | 98  | 5.21  | 1.56           | 1.089   | 0.361   |
|   | High School   | 272 | 5.18  | 1.56           |         |         |
|   | Intermediate  | 174 | 5.13  | 1.78           |         |         |
|   | Graduate      | 137 | 5.01  | 1.88           |         |         |
|   | Post graduate | 119 | 5.44  | 1.72           |         |         |
| Stress Management                                   | Illiterate    | 98  | 4.63  | 1.71           | 1.632   | 0.164   |
|   | High School   | 272 | 4.32  | 1.86           |         |         |
|   | Intermediate  | 174 | 4.54  | 1.70           |         |         |
|   | Graduate      | 137 | 4.53  | 1.82           |         |         |
|   | Post graduate | 119 | 4.79  | 1.65           |         |         |
| Total Life Skills                                   | Illiterate    | 98  | 38.30 | 7.66           | 2.067   | 0.083   |
|   | High School   | 272 | 38.06 | 8.23           |         |         |
|   | Intermediate  | 174 | 39.26 | 8.52           |         |         |
|   | Graduate      | 137 | 39.21 | 8.74           |         |         |
|   | Post graduate | 119 | 40.55 | 8.83           |         |         |

## Conclusion

Although many researchers have shown that parents' occupation significantly affects development of life skills among adolescents; results of the present study undoubtedly contradict the same and we observed that total life skills of adolescents are not affected by the parents' occupation. Reason for our observation could be attributed to living condition and family background of adolescents. In present investigation, sample consisted of adolescents from government and government aided schools. Majority of adolescents studying in such schools belong to lower middle class and lower class socioeconomic background. Despite of geographically vivid locations, parents of such adolescents don't have secured profession and enough earnings sources. Such parents are not well connected with their adolescents and are unable to provide healthier productive environment for establishing of cordial relationship. Daily challenges met and experience congregated by adolescents of such parents are very similar, resulting in non-significant difference in their life skills.

In present study, we also observed that total life skills of adolescents significantly differ with respect to father's education. The reason for above observation could be credited to the fact that, 40 percent adolescent's fathers possess education qualification level of graduation or above. Adolescents whose parents' were graduate or post graduate have better life skills than those whose parents' were illiterate or have school level education. Fathers with higher education better understand the needs of their adolescents, and such adolescents are more dependent on their fathers in comparison to adolescents whose fathers are less educated. In relation to mothers education we didn't found any significant difference in life skills, possible reason for such observation could be that, majority of mothers possess education qualification level of intermediate or below. In such case they can't understand mental, emotional, and social needs of their adolescents. They also hesitate to participate in school level activities, such as parent teacher meet and also are unable to do effective parenting.

## Recommendations

In present study sample population was confined to adolescents going to government schools of only four blocks of Nainital district, Uttarakhand. The study may need to further extend to private schools and rural /urban locality to make the result more globalize.

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