



A STUDY ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN RELATION TO LIFE SKILLS ASSESSMENT IN TUMKUR DISTRICT

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Abstract: This research holds paramount significance within the educational domain as it delves into the intricate relationship between life skills and academic performance among secondary school students in Tumkur District. This study investigates the correlation between academic performance and life skills among secondary school students. The sample comprises 120 IX standard students from six schools, selected from government, private aided, and unaided schools in Tumkur City using stratified random sampling. The research employs the Life-Skills Assessment Scale developed by Subasree and Nair (2010) to assess various life skills among the participants. Academic performance data will be collected from the respective schools, with academic performance serving as the dependent variable and life skills as the independent variable, alongside background variables such as sex and type of school management. Data analysis entails descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation, as well as independent t-test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) along with Scheffe's post hoc analysis, and Karl Pearson's Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation. The results, obtained using the SPSS Package associated with MS Excel, are evaluated at significance levels of 0.05 and 0.01 confidence levels. This study aims to explore the relationship between life skills and academic achievement while considering a set of selected background variables. The findings from the current study contribute to the existing body of knowledge on academic performance and life skills among secondary school students. While gender does not appear to be a significant factor in academic achievement, the type of school management significantly influences students' performance. Furthermore, fostering life skills is crucial for enhancing academic outcomes, regardless of gender or school type. Understanding how life skills contribute to academic success can provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers, aiding in the design of interventions to enhance the overall development of students.

Index Terms - Academic performance, life skills, assessment, secondary school, students

I. INTRODUCTION

In contemporary discussions within the educational sphere, there is a burgeoning recognition of the vital role played by life skills in the holistic growth of students. Life skills encompass a wide array of abilities and competencies that empower individuals to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented in their daily lives. These competencies, spanning from problem-solving and decision-making to effective communication and interpersonal skills, are not only essential for academic excellence but also for personal and professional flourishing. Recognizing the intricate interplay between life skills and academic performance among secondary school students holds significant implications for educational policies and practices. This research endeavors to comprehensively explore this nuanced relationship.

Academic performance, typically gauged through grades and standardized test scores, constitutes just one aspect of students' overall development, while life skills encompass a broader spectrum of capabilities contributing to success across various domains. This study aims to delve into how the acquisition and application of life skills impact students' academic performance.

Life skills can be categorized into different types, including hard skills (technical abilities), natural skills (such as motor skills), and soft skills, often referred to as life skills. These encompass psychological capacities like self-awareness and interpersonal effectiveness (Lawrence, 2015). In today's swiftly evolving world, where conventional methods of imparting life skills fall short due to evolving influences on youth development (Dinesh & Belinda, 2014), deliberate educational efforts become imperative in nurturing life skills among individuals. Thus, structured programs explicitly designed to impart life skills to young learners are deemed essential (Gomes, A. R., & Marques B., 2013).

Academic performance, as defined in educational literature (Carter, 1959) pertains to the knowledge acquired or skills developed in academic subjects, typically evaluated through test scores or teacher-assigned grades. It serves as the primary criterion and ultimate outcome of educational endeavors (Pannu Randeep, 2010). This study seeks to explore the correlation between life skills and academic performance, considering potential influencing factors such as gender and school management style. Previous studies have highlighted gender disparities in the acquisition and utilization of life skills, indicating differences in communication styles, problem-solving approaches, and emotional regulation strategies between male and female students. Additionally, the type of school administration, whether government, private aided, or unaided, may introduce contextual factors influencing students' exposure to and development of life skills.

To assess students' life skills, this study employs a self-developed Life Skills Scale for Adolescent Students encompassing various dimensions relevant to secondary school students. Moreover, academic performance data sourced from school records offer tangible indicators of students' scholastic performance. The research sample comprises 120 students drawn from government, private aided, and unaided schools in Tumkur city, enabling a comprehensive examination of the relationship between life skills and academic performance across diverse educational settings.

The findings of this study bear significant implications for educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders in secondary education. By elucidating the relationship between life skills and academic performance, the study highlights the importance of integrating life skills education into the secondary school curriculum. Furthermore, understanding how gender and school management type influence this relationship can inform targeted interventions and support systems aimed at enhancing students' holistic development. Ultimately, this study contributes to ongoing discussions on improving educational outcomes by fostering the acquisition and application of life skills among secondary students.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The study of academic performance among secondary school students in relation to life skills assessment is situated within a broader context of research examining the multifaceted factors influencing student outcomes. Several studies have explored the relationship between life skills and academic achievement, shedding light on the critical role of life skills in shaping students' educational trajectories. Eljo, Sathyabama, and Rohini (2023) provided insights into the initial levels of life skills among adolescent school students and the impact of interventions on enhancing these skills. Their findings highlighted the importance of addressing life skills deficits to improve overall student well-being and academic performance.

Furthermore, Wahlang, Humtsoe, and Kapoor (2022) highlighted gender differences in life skills among adolescents residing in Child Care Institutions (CCIs), emphasizing the need for gender-sensitive approaches to life skills education. Agadi (2022) corroborated the positive relationship between life skills and academic achievement among secondary school students, with a particular emphasis on gender disparities in life skills development and academic attainment. Meanwhile, Raju and Rao (2022) provided insights into the nuanced nature of gender dynamics in relation to life skills among secondary school pupils.

In exploring variations in life skills across different types of schools, Monika and Ronak (2022) found no significant differences in gender-related life skills between private and government schools, suggesting that institutional factors may not significantly influence life skills development among adolescents.

However, Rai and Vandana (2019) identified challenges in achieving optimal levels of life skills and academic achievement among senior secondary students, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to address these issues.

Moreover, Lawrence (2015) examined the relationship between life skills development and academic achievement among community college students, demonstrating the interconnectedness of these variables in shaping student success. Collectively, these studies provide valuable insights into the complex interplay between life skills, academic performance, and various contextual factors affecting student outcomes.

In the context of the present research, which focuses on the academic performance of secondary school students in Tumkur District, Karnataka, there is a notable research gap concerning the specific relationship between life skills assessment and academic achievement within this geographical context. While existing studies offer valuable insights into broader trends and patterns, there is a need for localized research that examines the unique socio-cultural and educational setting of Tumkur District. By addressing this research gap, the present study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the relationship between life skills and academic performance, providing valuable insights for educational practitioners, policymakers, and stakeholders in the region.

III. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The study of the academic performance of secondary school students in relation to life skills assessment in Tumkur District holds significant importance for several reasons. Firstly, understanding the relationship between life skills and academic achievement is crucial for developing comprehensive educational interventions that address the holistic needs of students. By assessing the impact of life skills on academic performance, educators and policymakers can tailor educational programs to promote not only cognitive development but also socio-emotional well-being, thereby fostering a more supportive and inclusive learning environment.

Secondly, the findings of this research have practical implications for school administrators and educators in Tumkur District. By identifying the specific life skills that are most strongly associated with academic success among local adolescents, schools can design targeted interventions to enhance these skills and improve overall student outcomes. Such interventions may include the integration of life skills education into the curriculum, the implementation of mentoring or counseling programs, and the provision of extracurricular activities that promote the development of key life skills.

Moreover, studying the academic performance of secondary school students in relation to life skills assessment can help identify and address disparities in educational outcomes within Tumkur District. By examining how different demographic factors, such as gender, socioeconomic status, and geographic location, interact with life skills and academic achievement, researchers can develop strategies to mitigate inequities and promote educational equity for all students.

Additionally, the findings of this research can inform broader policy discussions surrounding education reform and development in Tumkur District and beyond. By highlighting the importance of life skills in shaping academic success, policymakers can advocate for investments in educational programs that prioritize the development of these skills alongside traditional academic subjects. This, in turn, can contribute to the creation of a more resilient and adaptable workforce, better equipped to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

In conclusion, the study of the academic performance of secondary school students in relation to life skills assessment in Tumkur District is not only academically enriching but also holds practical significance for improving educational outcomes, promoting equity, and informing policy decisions. By addressing this topic, researchers can contribute to the ongoing efforts to create a more holistic and effective educational system that meets the diverse needs of all students.

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The selected problem for this present research is as follows:

“A Study on the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in relation to Life Skills Assessment in Tumkur District”

V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives for the present paper

1. To find out the difference in the Academic Performance of secondary school boys and girls.
2. To identify the difference in the Academic Performance of secondary school students studied in government, private aided and private unaided schools.
3. To examine the relationship between Life Skills and Academic Performance of secondary school students.

VI. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following are the research hypotheses for the present study:

1. There is no significant difference in the Academic Performance of secondary school boys and girls in schools.
2. There is no significant difference in the Academic Performance among secondary school students attending in government, private aided and private unaided schools.
3. There is no significant relationship between Life Skills and Academic Performance of secondary school students.

VII. METHODOLOGY

This study investigates the correlation between academic performance and life skills among secondary school students. The sample comprises 120 IX standard students from six schools, selected from government, private aided, and unaided schools in Tumkur City using stratified random sampling. The research employs the Life-Skills Assessment Scale developed by Subasree and Nair (2010) to assess various life skills among the participants. Academic performance data will be collected from the respective schools, with academic performance serving as the dependent variable and life skills as the independent variable, alongside background variables such as sex and type of school management. Data analysis entails descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation, as well as independent t-test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) along with Scheffe's post hoc analysis, and Karl Pearson's Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation. The results, obtained using the SPSS Package associated with MS Excel, are evaluated at significance levels of 0.05 and 0.01 confidence levels.

VIII. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Table-1: Independent 't' test results pertaining to Academic Performance scores of secondary school boys and girls.

Sex	N	df	Mean scores	Std. Deviation	't' Value	Sig. level	Results
Boys	60	118	378.183	86.735	1.42	NS	Not Significant
Girls	60		403.183	105.143			
Table Value @ 0.05 level=1.98							

The table presents the results of an independent t-test comparing the academic performance scores of boys and girls in schools. The study included 60 participants of each gender. The mean academic performance score for boys was 378.183 with a standard deviation of 86.735, while for girls, the mean score was 403.183 with a standard deviation of 105.143. The calculated t-value was 1.42, and the significance level, indicating 'Not Significant'. This means that the observed difference in academic performance between boys and girls was not statistically significant. The critical table value at a significance level of 0.05 was 1.98, which was higher than the calculated t-value of 1.42, further supporting the conclusion that there is no significant difference in academic performance between school boys and girls.

The same result was represented in graphical presentation in Fig. No.1.

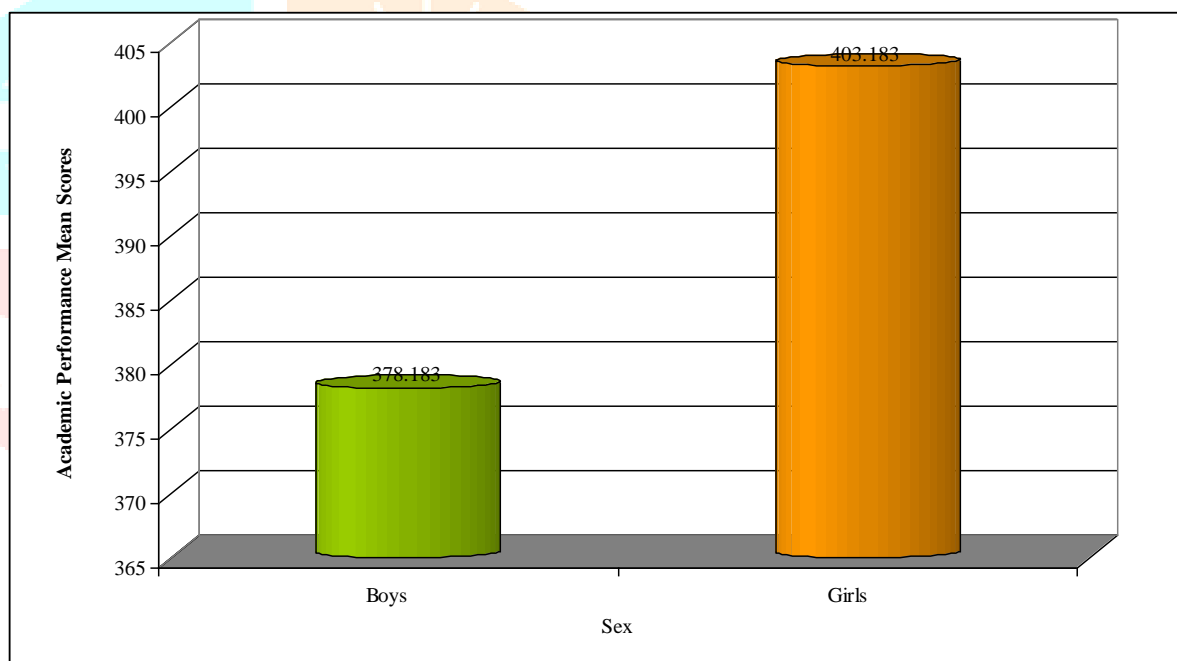


Fig.No.1: Comparison of Academic Performance mean scores secondary school boys and girls.

Table-2: Showing **One-Way ANOVA** results related to Academic Performance scores of secondary school students studied in government, private aided and private unaided schools.

Variable	Source of Variance	Sum of squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	'F' & Sig. Level	Results
Type of School Management	Between Groups	260160.117	2	130080.058	17.81**	Sig. at 0.01 level
	Within Groups	854699.850	117	7305.127		
	Total	1114859.967	119			

{Table Value for 0.01 level is 4.78 (df=117; 2)}

Table-2 presents the results of a One-Way ANOVA test examining the academic performance scores of secondary school students across different types of school management: government, private aided, and private unaided schools. The analysis indicates a significant difference in academic performance scores among the groups, as evidenced by an F-value of 17.81, which is significant at the 0.01 level. This suggests that the type of school management has an influence on students' academic performance.

Table-2(a): Shows Post Hoc Test results related to Academic Performance of secondary school students due to variation in type of school management.

Variable	Groups			Mean Difference
	Government	Private Aided	Private Unaided	
Type of School Management	429.225	417.650	-	11.575
	-	417.650	325.175	92.475*
	429.225	-	325.175	104.050*

*Significant at 0.05 level of confidence (Table 'F' value is 1.98)

In Table-2(a), the post hoc test results further elucidate the differences in academic performance among the three types of schools. The mean difference in academic performance scores between government and private aided schools is 11.575, between private aided and private unaided schools is 92.475, and between government and private unaided schools is 104.050. Additionally, significant mean differences are observed between private aided and private unaided schools (92.475) and between government and private unaided schools (104.050), both significant at the 0.05 level of confidence. The students from government schools had higher academic performance when compared with students from private aided and private unaided schools respectively. These findings highlight the importance of considering the type of school management when assessing academic performance among secondary school students.

The same result was represented in graphical presentation in Figure No.-2.

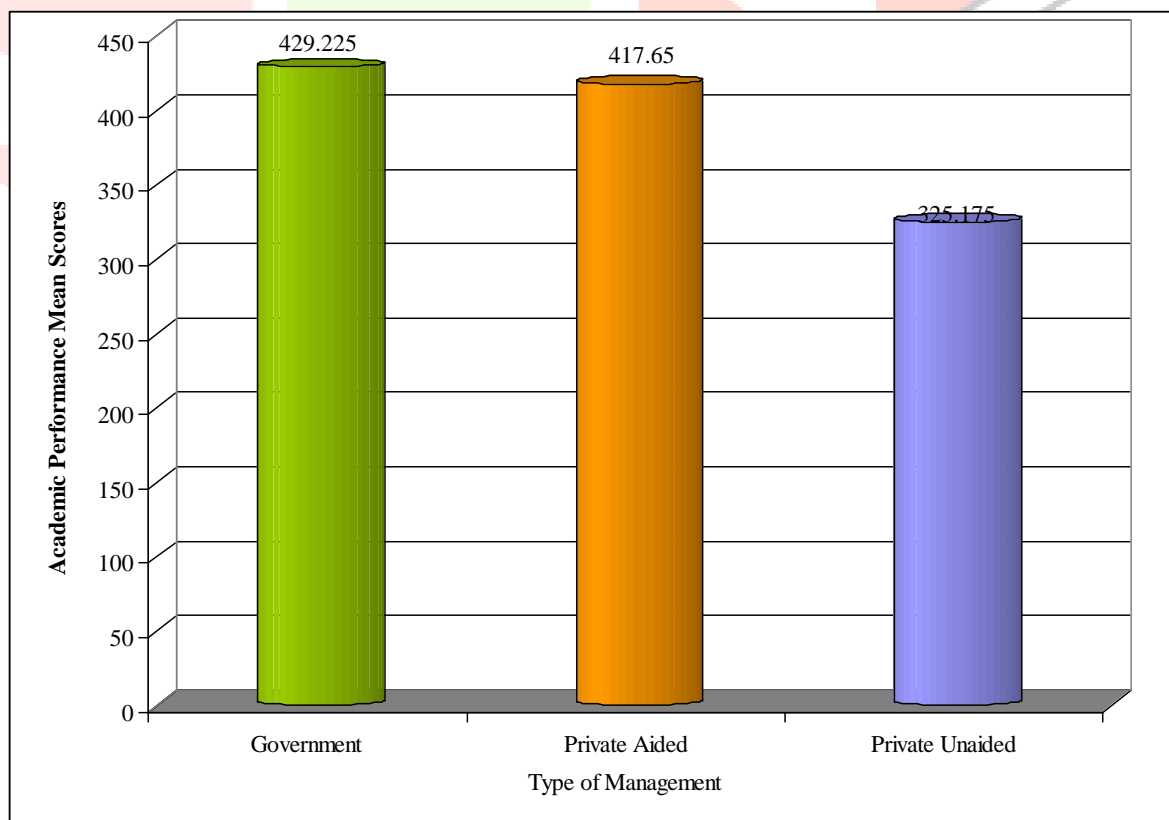


Figure No.-2: Showing the mean scores comparison of Academic Performance of secondary school students studied in government, private aided and private unaided schools.

Table-3: Showing the correlation results related to Life Skills and Academic Performance of secondary school students.

Variables	No.	df	'r' Value	Table Value	Results
Academic Performance	120	118	0.640**	0.228	Significant @ 0.01 level
Life Skills					

[Table value for 0.01 level is 0.228]

Table-3 displays the correlation results between Life Skills and Academic Performance of secondary school students. The correlation coefficient (r-value) between Academic Performance and Life Skills is 0.640, indicating a strong positive correlation. This means that as Life Skills increase, Academic Performance tends to increase as well. The table value for significance at the 0.01 level is 0.228, and since the calculated correlation coefficient (0.640) is greater than this table value, the correlation is considered significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore, the results suggest that there is indeed a significant positive relationship between Life Skills and Academic Performance among secondary school students.

IX. FINDINGS

1. There was no significant difference in the Academic Performance of secondary school students of boys and girls.
2. There was a significant difference in the Academic Performance of secondary school students studying in government, private aided and private unaided schools. The students from government and aided schools are better academic performance when compared with private unaided schools.
3. There was a significant positive relationship between Life Skills and Academic Performance of secondary school students.

X. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings of the current study reflect a nuanced understanding of the relationship between academic performance, life skills, and various demographic factors among secondary school students. Consistent with previous research, the analysis revealed no significant difference in academic performance between boys and girls, suggesting gender parity in educational outcomes. However, a notable disparity emerged concerning the type of school management, with government and aided schools showing superior academic performance compared to private unaided schools. This highlights the influence of institutional factors on students' academic achievements.

Moreover, the study identified a significant positive relationship between life skills and academic performance among secondary school students. This echoes previous research findings that highlight the importance of life skills development in enhancing academic outcomes. Additionally, insights from prior studies shed light on gender differences in life skills, with some indicating variations between males and females, while others found no significant disparity. These contrasting findings highlight the complexity of gender dynamics in relation to life skills development and call for further exploration.

XI. CONCLUSION

In summary, the findings from the current study contribute to the existing body of knowledge on academic performance and life skills among secondary school students. While gender does not appear to be a significant factor in academic achievement, the type of school management significantly influences students' performance. Furthermore, fostering life skills is crucial for enhancing academic outcomes, regardless of gender or school type. These insights highlight the multifaceted nature of educational attainment and highlight the importance of holistic approaches to student development.

XII. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study have several implications for educational practice and policy. First, educators and policymakers should consider the influence of school management type on academic performance when designing interventions and allocating resources. Efforts to improve academic outcomes should prioritize schools with fewer resources, such as private unaided institutions, to ensure equitable educational opportunities for all students.

Second, integrating life skills education into school curricula is essential for promoting holistic development and enhancing academic success. Schools should implement comprehensive life skills programs that address critical competencies such as communication, problem-solving, and decision-making. These programs can be tailored to meet the unique needs of diverse student populations and should be evaluated regularly to assess their effectiveness.

Finally, addressing gender disparities in life skills development requires targeted interventions that are sensitive to the social and cultural contexts in which students are situated. Schools should implement gender-sensitive approaches to life skills education that challenge traditional gender roles and empower students to develop a diverse range of skills and competencies.

In conclusion, by adopting a holistic approach to student development that integrates academic learning with life skills education, educators can better prepare secondary school students for success in school and beyond.

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