

Life Skills of Tribal Secondary School Students of Attappady: In special focus on Sustainable Development Goals

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Abstract

Life skill is one of the most discussed terms for the past few years. In this context this study tried to find the status of the life skills of the tribal secondary school students. Tribes are considered as one of the weaker sections of the society. Hence the researcher found it important to know the level of life skills of the upcoming generation among the tribes. The study was conducted on a sample of 90 tribal secondary students from different schools of Attappady. The researcher developed and standardized a Life Skill Test for Tribal Students with an intention to collect the needed data for the present study. Percentage analysis, Independent sample t test and ANOVA was applied to test the hypothesis. The findings show that the level of life skills of tribal students is moderate. The study also reveals that gender and the community has no differential effect on the life skills of the tribal students of various secondary schools of Attappady.

Key words. *Attappady, life skills, secondary schools, tribes, Sustainable Development goals*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Life skills are the basic learning needs for all young people in present scenario. Life skills can mean many different things and different people need a different set of skills to survive effectively in present scenario and to fulfill their needs. The most important skills in life are the survival skills that people need to develop to meet their individual or specific needs like psychological needs, safety needs, social needs and need for self-actualization.

Life skills are the abilities which can help and promote well-being and happiness among youth. NCF (2005) also emphasized that development of life skills is the inherent goal of school education. WHO has classified ten core life skills, which are broadly classified into three categories viz. thinking skills (self-awareness, problem solving, decision making, critical thinking and creative thinking), social skills (interpersonal relationships, empathy and effective communication) and emotional skills (managing emotions and dealing with stress). Khera and Khosla (2012) found that there was a positive co-relation between core cognitive as well as affective life skills and self-concept of adolescents (VIII & XI class students) which means those who possessed these essential skills were more confident in all aspects. Neeraj and Rani (2020) revealed that found that there was significance difference between boys and girls' students on level of life skills. Female students had better life skills than male students of all dimension of life skill i.e. decision making, problem solving, empathy, self-awareness, communication skill, interpersonal relationship, coping with emotions, coping with stress, creative thinking and critical thinking. Meenu and Rani (2021) revealed that girls had better cognitive life skills than their counterparts. Further, significant gender differences in cognitive and interpersonal dimensions of life skills were observed among secondary school students. It also indicated a significant difference between boys and girls with respect to overall life skills.

Life skills are essential competencies that empower individuals to effectively navigate various challenges and contribute positively to society. Integrating life skills education into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework can significantly enhance the achievement of SDG targets.

Skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and interpersonal skills are crucial for addressing diverse SDG objectives. For instance, promoting critical thinking enables individuals to analyze complex social, economic, and environmental issues, fostering informed decision-making aligned with SDG principles. Problem-solving skills facilitate innovative solutions to challenges like poverty, inequality, and climate change, advancing SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and SDG 13 (Climate Action). Communication and interpersonal skills are vital for building partnerships (SDG 17) and fostering inclusive communities (SDG 16). Empowering individuals with these skills enhance their capacity to collaborate effectively, advocate for change, and promote social cohesion, thereby advancing sustainable development efforts.

Life skills education also contributes to SDG 4 (Quality Education) by equipping learners with the competencies needed for lifelong learning and sustainable livelihoods. By integrating life skills into the SDG framework, societies can foster holistic development, empower individuals, and accelerate progress towards achieving the global goals.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study followed survey method. For this study the researcher used random sampling method and selected 90 tribal secondary students from different schools of Attappady. The researcher developed and standardized a Life Skill Test for Tribal Students with an intention to collect the needed data for the present study. The maximum score of the test was 50. The Cronbach Alpha value obtained for the tool is 0.867 which denotes that the tool is highly reliable. The content validity of the tool was also established. Percentage analysis, Independent sample t test and ANOVA was applied to test the hypothesis.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find the level of life skills of tribal students studying in secondary schools of Attappady
2. To find whether there exists any significant difference in the life skill of tribal students studying in secondary schools of Attappady when classified based on their gender
3. To find whether there exists any significant difference in the life skill of tribal students studying in secondary schools of Attappady when classified based on their community

Hypothesis of the Study

1. Level of life skills of tribal students studying in secondary schools of Attappady does not vary
2. There exists no significant difference in the life skill of tribal students studying in secondary schools of Attappady when classified based on their gender
3. There exists no significant difference in the life skill of tribal students studying in secondary schools of Attappady when classified based on their community

Variables of the Study

Life Skill is considered as the variable for undertaking this study.

III. DISCUSSION

The obtained data were coded and tabulated and were subjected to various statistics to test whether the stipulated hypothesis is right or wrong. The result of the analysis is discussed further.

Preliminary Analysis of the Data Distribution of the Life Skills of Tribal Students from Secondary Schools of Attappady

The data obtained were subjected to preliminary analysis so as to know the normality of the distribution. The outcome of the preliminary analysis is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Preliminary Analysis for the Data Obtained for Life Skill of Tribal Students of Secondary Schools in Attappady

Variable	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Life Skill	90	14.63	13.25	8.53	0.656	-0.872

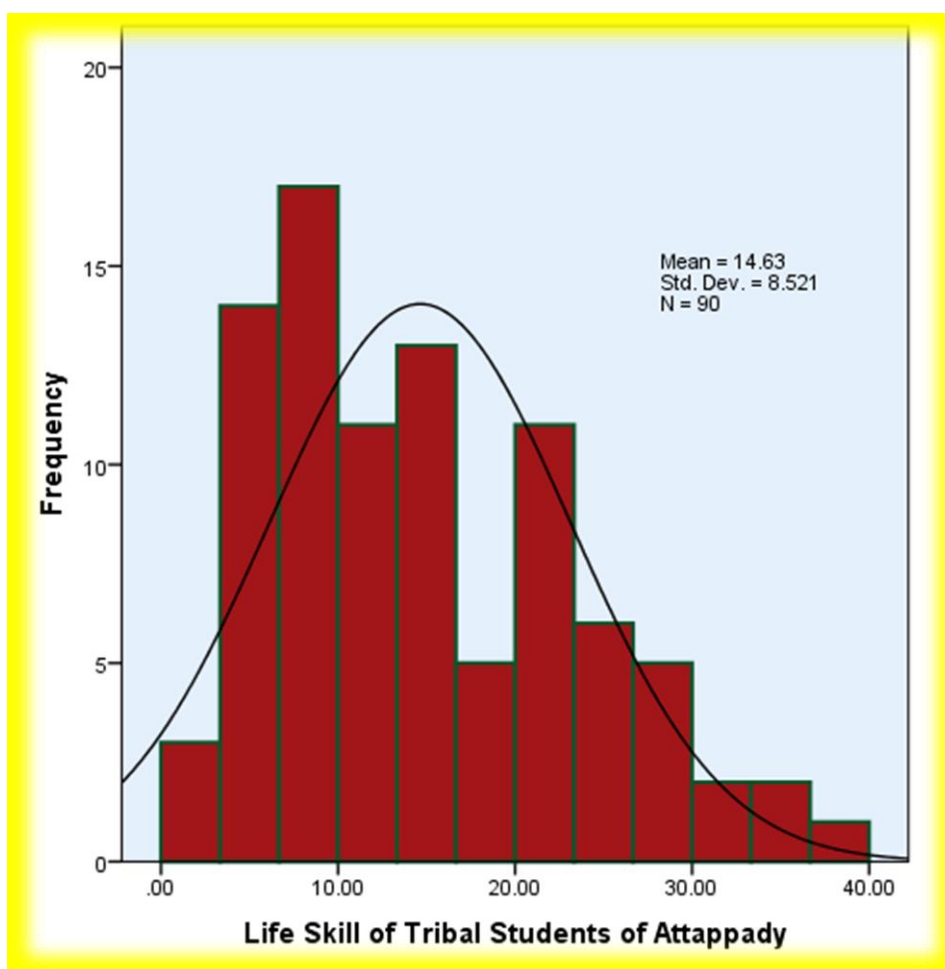
Table 1 record that the mean value obtained for the life skill of tribal students is 14.63 and median is 13.25. Standard deviation obtained for the data distribution is 8.53. The skewness and kurtosis for the data distribution is obtained as 0.656 and -0.872 respectively.

From the descriptive analysis itself it can be inferred that the life skill of tribal students is low. The mean value obtained, 14.63 is much lesser than half of the total score of the Life Skill Test.

Descriptive analysis points out that the distribution of the data of the life skill is almost normal. Figure 1 portrays the data distribution.

Figure 1

Histogram showing the Score Distribution of Life Skills of Tribal Secondary Students of Schools of Attappady



Levels of Life Skill of Tribal Students of Secondary Schools in Attappady

Researcher calculated the mean and standard deviation of the marks obtained by the students. M+SD and M-SD was calculated and based on the obtained value, the total sample were divided into three groups of Life Skill – High, Average and Low. Table 2 shows the categorization of tribal students into the three groups.

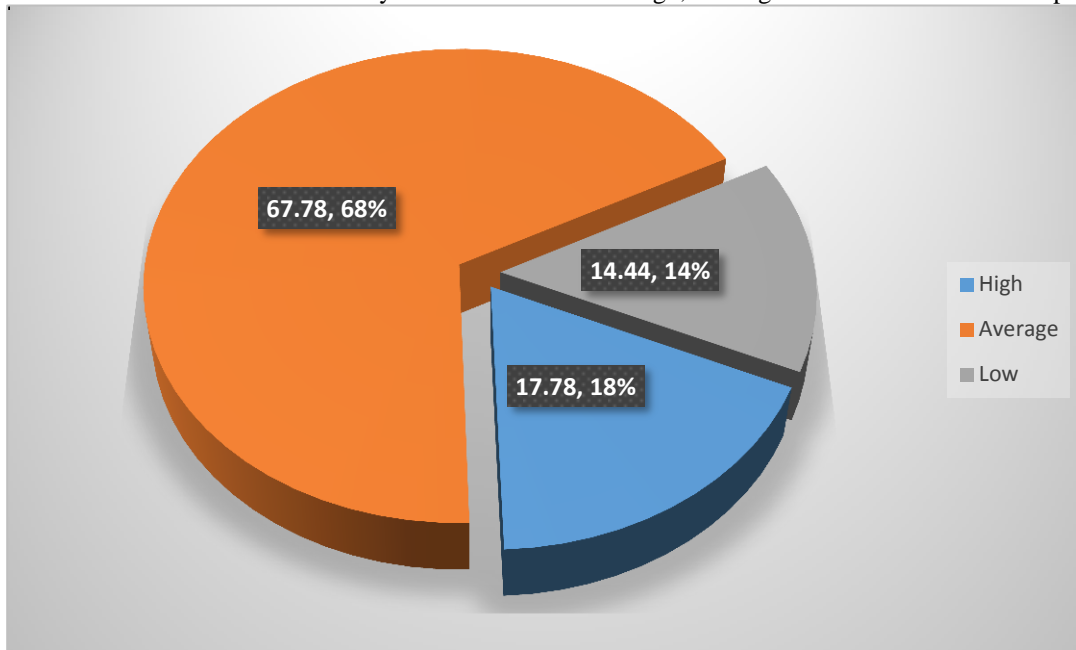
Table 2
Number and Percentage of Tribal Students Falling into High, Average and Low Life Skill Group

Variable	Group	Score	n	%
Awareness	High	≥ 23.15	16	17.78
	Average	23.15- 6.11	61	67.78
	Low	≤ 6.11	13	14.44
Total			90	100.00

As per Table 2, 17.78 per cent (n =16) of the total sample can be grouped as High Life Skill group. 61 students, constituting the 67.78 per cent of the total sample is found to be falling into the average life skill group. Remaining 14.44 percent (n = 13) is classified under the low life skill group.

The percentage analysis shows that the students of Attappady are having moderate life skill based on the score obtained in the conducted life skill test. Figure 2 illustrates the classification of the students of Attappady into different Life Skill Group.

Figure 2
Classification of Tribal Secondary School Students into High, Average and Low Life Skill Group



Significance of difference in the life skill of tribal students studying in secondary schools of Attappady when classified based on their gender

The researcher by applying independent sample t test analysed the differential effect of gender on the life skills of tribal students. The result is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3
Significance of Difference in the Mean Score of Life Skill of Tribal Students of Secondary Schools of Attappady Classified based on Gender

Variable	Gender	n	M	SD	t	p
Life Skill	Female	47	13.72	9.42	1.066	0.289
	Male	43	15.63	7.39		

The t value obtained for the test of significance of the mean life skill score of female and male tribal students is 1.066 ($p = 0.289$). As the p value is greater than .05 it can be said that the difference is not significant at .05 level of significance.

Significance of difference in the life skill of tribal students studying in secondary schools of Attappady when classified based on their community

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics for the Scores of Life Skills of Tribal Students of Attappady

Variable	Group	n	M	SD
Life Skill	Irula	72	15.71	8.85
	Kurumba	7	9.75	3.99
	Muduga	11	10.70	6.24

From Table 4, it can be seen that the mean value of life skill obtained by the tribal students of different communities is not the same. To test whether the difference in the mean score is significant or not, the researcher went for ANOVA, the result of which is displayed in Table 5

Table 5
Significance of Difference in the Mean Digital Literacy of Teacher Educators Classified based on the Educational Qualification

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between groups	419.923	2	209.961	3.023	0.054
Within group	6041.852	87	69.447		
Total	6461.775	89			

As per Table 5, it can be noted that the F value obtained is 3.023 which is less than the table value. Hence it can be recorded that the difference is not significant at .05 level of confidence.

IV. FINDINGS

The findings of the present study is as follows:

- The tribal students studying in the various secondary schools of Attappady have moderate level of life skill
- There exists no significant difference in the life skill of tribal students studying in secondary schools of Attappady when classified based on their gender
- There exists no significant difference in the life skill of tribal students studying in secondary schools of Attappady when classified based on their community

V. CONCLUSION

The study intended to study the status of life skills of the tribal students of different secondary schools of Attappady. The study points out the need for giving more importance to develop the life skills of tribal students. Our education system has to focus on developing life skills needed for a smooth living in congruent with the needs of the current era.

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