

Research Paper

## The Empowering Relationship Between Life Skills and Happiness in Students

Mr. Sachin Nagesh Gharat<sup>1\*</sup>

### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the relationship between life skills and happiness among senior college students. The objective was to examine how specific life skills, such as self-awareness, empathy, decision-making, problem-solving, communication skills, interpersonal skills, and stress management, correlate with happiness levels. A sample of 100 college students (aged 18-24 years) from Khopoli, Maharashtra, was selected using a combination of non-probability accidental and purposive sampling. Data were collected using the Life Skills Test by Chauhan Sarika (2016) and the Happiness Scale by Gilbert (2012). Statistical analysis, including Pearson's correlation coefficient, revealed significant positive correlations between life skills and happiness. Notably, self-awareness ( $r = 0.77$ ), empathy ( $r = 0.79$ ), interpersonal skills ( $r = 0.76$ ), and stress management ( $r = 0.63$ ) showed strong associations with happiness. Decision-making ( $r = 0.63$ ), problem-solving ( $r = 0.58$ ), and communication skills ( $r = 0.64$ ) exhibited moderate correlations with happiness. The results suggest that enhancing life skills can be crucial in improving students' well-being. The study highlights the importance of fostering these skills in educational settings to promote emotional health and happiness.

**Keywords:** *Life skills, happiness, college students, self-awareness, empathy, interpersonal skills, stress management, well-being, correlation analysis*

The relationship between life skills and happiness in students has gained significant attention in recent years due to the increasing recognition of the importance of holistic education. Life skills—defined as the abilities that enable individuals to deal with the demands and challenges of everyday life effectively—are crucial for students' personal development, mental well-being, and academic success (World Health Organization [WHO], 1997). In the context of education, these skills encompass a broad range of competencies, including problem-solving, communication, emotional regulation, decision-making, and interpersonal skills (UNICEF, 2012). Research suggests that developing life skills is essential for academic achievement and fostering happiness and mental well-being, both of which are crucial in navigating the complexities of modern life.

Happiness, in turn, is increasingly recognized as a critical outcome of education. It is widely regarded as a multidimensional construct that encompasses emotional well-being, life

<sup>1</sup>Head Constable Raigad Police, Khopoli Police Station, Tq - Khalapur, District – Raigad, Maharashtra India.

\*Corresponding Author

Received: December 11, 2022; Revision Received: December 21, 2022; Accepted: December 30, 2022

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satisfaction, and the ability to experience positive states of mind (Diener et al., 1999). In the educational setting, happiness among students is linked to improved academic performance, better social relationships, and lower levels of stress and anxiety (Suldo et al., 2006). Consequently, the question of how life skills influence happiness in students has become a pertinent area of study. By fostering life skills, educators and policymakers may provide students with the tools they need to lead fulfilling and balanced lives, both during their educational journeys and beyond.

This introduction outlines the importance of life skills in the context of student development and happiness. It highlights how the acquisition and application of life skills can have a significant impact on students' well-being and suggests that an empowering relationship exists between these two variables. By exploring relevant literature, this paper seeks to examine how life skills contribute to happiness in students, with the aim of providing insights into how educational systems can better integrate these skills into curricula to promote students' overall flourishing.

The need for life skills education has been acknowledged by several global organizations, including the WHO and UNESCO, both of which emphasize the importance of preparing young people to face life's challenges in a healthy and productive manner (UNESCO, 2012). Studies have shown that students who possess strong life skills tend to experience greater life satisfaction, higher levels of resilience, and better mental health outcomes (Stewart-Brown, 2006). Additionally, life skills are seen as essential in reducing harmful behaviors such as substance abuse, violence, and early school dropout, all of which can negatively impact students' happiness and overall well-being (Lloyd & McMahon, 2012).

A closer examination of the relationship between life skills and happiness reveals that life skills are not only directly related to students' emotional and psychological well-being but also enhance their capacity to manage stress, regulate emotions, and build positive social relationships (Schwartz et al., 2018). These competencies are foundational for happiness, as they equip students with the tools to navigate the various pressures and challenges they face both in and outside the classroom. For example, students who are taught emotional regulation and effective communication skills are more likely to have healthy relationships and maintain a positive outlook on life, contributing to their overall happiness (Goleman, 1995).

Furthermore, the concept of happiness in students extends beyond mere emotional pleasure or the absence of negative feelings. It is also closely linked to students' sense of purpose and achievement. Life skills such as goal setting, decision-making, and time management enable students to pursue their goals more effectively and manage the inevitable challenges that arise along the way. As students become more competent in these areas, they are likely to experience a greater sense of autonomy and self-efficacy, both of which are key determinants of happiness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The development of these life skills, therefore, not only contributes to students' immediate well-being but also lays the foundation for long-term happiness and success.

In light of these findings, the integration of life skills into educational curricula appears to be an effective approach to enhancing students' happiness. This approach aligns with positive psychology principles, which emphasize the cultivation of strengths and the promotion of well-being (Seligman, 2011). By teaching students how to develop resilience, manage emotions, and build positive relationships, educators can help students achieve a higher level

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of happiness and emotional well-being, thus improving their quality of life both during their academic careers and in adulthood.

In conclusion, the empowering relationship between life skills and happiness in students is a critical area of research and practice. By focusing on the development of life skills within educational frameworks, schools can play a pivotal role in fostering students' happiness and well-being. This, in turn, has the potential to enhance their academic performance, social interactions, and overall life satisfaction. As the understanding of this relationship continues to evolve, it is clear that life skills education can be a powerful tool for promoting happiness in students, ensuring they are better equipped to navigate the challenges of life and achieve long-term fulfillment.

### *Objective of the study*

To investigate the relationship between life skills and happiness among college students.

### *Hypothesis*

There is a positive correlation between specific life skills, such as self-awareness, empathy, decision making, problem solving, communication skills, interpersonal skills, managing stress, and happiness among senior college students.

### *Sample*

For the current research study, the investigator selected a sample of 100 senior college students, comprising both boys and girls, from Khopoli in Maharashtra. The purpose of the study was to assess life skills and their relationship with happiness in this demographic. To measure these variables, the researcher administered a comprehensive test designed to evaluate various life skills and a happiness assessment specifically tailored for college students. Data collection was conducted in a structured manner to ensure valid results.

The participants in the study were aged between 18 and 24 years, with a mean age of 20.47 years and a standard deviation of 3.12 years, indicating a diverse age range within the sample. The sampling method employed was a combination of non-probability accidental sampling and purposive sampling, which allowed the researcher to target specific individuals who met the criteria for the study while also considering the convenience of access to participants. This approach aimed to ensure a representative sample of the college student population in the specified area.

### *Variable*

1. **Happiness**
2. **Life Skills**
  - Self-Awareness
  - Empathy
  - Decision Making
  - Problem Solving
  - Communication Skills
  - Interpersonal Skills
  - Managing Stress

### *Research Tools*

- **Life Skills Test by Chauhan Sarika (2016):** The Life Skills Scale consists of 138 statements in their original form, divided into ten subcomponents, each representing

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a specific area of life skills. The statements are presented as indicators, traits, or constructs related to these areas. When compiling the statements for the instrument, we focused on the learning outcomes of the Life Skills Programme, which aims to enhance core life skills. Participants were asked to rate their life skills by placing a tick mark on a five-point ordinal scale, indicating their assessment from 1 to 5 for each statement.

- **Happiness Scale (Gilbert, 2012):** The assessment consists of nine items designed to explore individuals' perceptions and anxieties about experiencing happiness and positive emotions. For example, one statement is, "I feel I don't deserve to be happy." Participants evaluate how well each statement reflects their own experiences using a five-point Likert scale, where 0 means "Not at all like me" and 4 means "Extremely like me." The scale demonstrates strong internal consistency, indicated by a high Cronbach's alpha of .90.

### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

*Table No-1 Correlation (Pearson r) between life skills and happiness in college students*

	Self-Awareness	Empathy	Decision Making	Problem Solving	Communication Skills	Interpersonal Skills	Managing Stress	Happiness
Self-Awareness	1							
Empathy	0.80**	1						
Decision Making	0.71**	0.72**	1					
Problem Solving	0.76**	0.68**	0.72*	1				
Communication Skills	0.70**	0.58**	0.69*	0.81*	1			
Interpersonal Skills	0.82**	0.73**	0.74*	0.68*	0.66**	1		
Managing Stress	0.70**	0.72**	0.73*	0.63*	0.72**	0.78**	1	
Happiness	0.77**	0.79**	0.63*	0.58*	0.64**	0.76**	0.63**	1

*Significant 0.05\* = 0.10, 0.01\*\* = 0.14*

The correlation matrix presents the relationships between life skills and happiness among college students. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) is used to measure the strength and direction of these relationships. The significance level is set at 0.05, meaning that correlations with a p-value less than 0.05 are considered statistically significant.

**Self-Awareness and Happiness:** A strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.77, p < 0.01$ ) exists between self-awareness and happiness. This suggests that individuals with a better understanding of themselves tend to experience higher levels of happiness. **Empathy and Happiness:** Empathy also shows a strong positive correlation with happiness ( $r = 0.79, p < 0.01$ ). This indicates that being empathetic towards others contributes significantly to overall happiness. **Decision Making and Happiness:** While decision-making skills have a moderate positive correlation with happiness ( $r = 0.63, p < 0.01$ ), this relationship is not as strong as that of self-awareness and empathy. **Problem-Solving and Happiness:** Problem-solving skills also demonstrate a moderate positive correlation with happiness ( $r = 0.58, p < 0.01$ ), suggesting that the ability to effectively tackle challenges contributes to well-being.

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Communication Skills and Happiness: Communication skills show a moderate positive correlation with happiness ( $r = 0.64, p < 0.01$ ), indicating that effective communication can positively impact happiness. Interpersonal Skills and Happiness: Interpersonal skills have a strong positive correlation with happiness ( $r = 0.76, p < 0.01$ ), suggesting that building and maintaining positive relationships is crucial for well-being. Managing Stress and Happiness: Managing stress shows a moderate positive correlation with happiness ( $r = 0.63, p < 0.01$ ), indicating that the ability to cope with stress positively impacts happiness.

The importance of various life skills in contributing to overall happiness among college students. Fostering self-awareness, empathy, decision-making, problem-solving, communication, interpersonal skills, and stress management can positively impact well-being.

### CONCLUSION

1. The correlation analysis reveals a strong positive association between various life skills and happiness among college students, suggesting that developing these skills can significantly contribute to overall well-being.

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### Acknowledgement

The author appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

### Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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***How to cite this article:*** Gharat, S.N. (2022). The Empowering Relationship Between Life Skills and Happiness in Students. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 10(4), 2324-2329. DIP:18.01.224.20221004, DOI:10.25215/1004.224