

# Life Skills among Secondary Stage Students in Jharkhand with Special Reference to Lohardaga, Khunti and Ranchi Districts

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## Abstract:

Life skills are key abilities that help people manage the demands and challenges of daily life. For Secondary Stage Students i.e. class 12<sup>th</sup> students' skills like critical thinking, decision-making, communication, problem solving and emotional regulation are important for their overall development as the NEP 2020 emphasizes on skill-based education. In Jharkhand, especially in Lohardaga, Khunti, and Ranchi districts, social and economic factors greatly affect students' life skills. Recognizing these influences is important for encouraging positive behaviour, improving educational results, and preparing students to handle both local and global challenges. The findings reveal that the majority of students (58.75%) possess a moderate level of life skills, followed by 21.25% with low levels and 17.71% with high levels, while only a small proportion falls in the very high and very low categories. The overall mean score indicates a moderate level of life skills among students. Among the three districts, Secondary Stage Students of Lohardaga district have higher Life Skills in comparison to Ranchi and Khunti.

The study further examines differences in life skills based on gender, habitat, type of school, and school board. A significant difference was found between male and female students, with males showing higher life skills. Similarly, a significant difference was observed between rural and urban students, with rural students scoring higher. However, no significant differences were found based on the type of school i.e. government and private, school boards i.e. JAC, CBSE, and ICSE.

The study highlights the need for strengthening life skills education among secondary stage students to enhance their personal, social, and emotional competencies. It emphasizes the role of educational institutions in integrating life skills training into the curriculum to promote holistic development and better preparedness for real-life situations.

**Keywords:** Life Skills, Secondary Stage Students, Jharkhand, Lohardaga, Khunti, Ranchi Districts.

## INTRODUCTION

Life skills are now a key part of modern education, particularly during the secondary stage when teenagers face major physical, emotional, and social changes. According to the World Health Organization, life skills are the abilities that help individuals show positive behavior while tackling everyday challenges. These skills include critical thinking, decision-making, problem solving, communication, empathy, and emotional regulation. They are vital for overall growth and effective participation in society. In secondary education, life skills are crucial for preparing students for both academic success and real-life situations. This level of education sets the groundwork for future career choices, social connections, and responsible citizenship. Life skills help students manage stress, make informed choices, and develop healthy relationships. This, in turn, supports their overall well-being and



resilience. Jharkhand, with its diverse cultural and economic background, faces unique challenges and opportunities for developing life skills in secondary students. Districts like Lohardaga, Khunti, and Ranchi have significant tribal populations and varying access to education, which calls for focused efforts. Assessing the status and growth of life skills among students in these areas is important for promoting inclusive and quality education. This aligns with the goals of overall development and social change.

## **LIFE SKILLS**

Life skills are the essential abilities that individuals need to navigate the complexities of everyday life. These skills encompass a broad range of competencies, including emotional, social, cognitive, and practical abilities that enable individuals to handle challenges, make informed decisions, and lead fulfilling lives. Life skills are not just academic or technical; they are fundamental to personal development, social interaction, and overall well-being. This introduction will explore the importance of life skills, the key types of life skills, and how they can be developed and applied in various aspects of life.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF LIFE SKILLS**

Life skills are crucial for several reasons. Firstly, they enable individuals to effectively manage their personal lives. Life skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making help people to assess situations, consider possible outcomes, and make choices that align with their values and goals. These skills are particularly important in today's fast-paced world, where individuals are constantly faced with complex situations and the need to adapt to change.

Secondly, life skills are essential for building and maintaining healthy relationships. Communication, empathy, and conflict resolution are key social life skills that help individuals to interact effectively with others, whether in personal or professional contexts. Good communication skills enable people to express their thoughts and feelings clearly and listen to others, fostering mutual understanding and respect. Empathy allows individuals to understand and share the feelings of others, which is crucial for forming strong, supportive relationships. Conflict resolution skills help people to navigate disagreements and find constructive solutions, which is vital for maintaining harmony in relationships.

Thirdly, life skills contribute to personal well-being and resilience. Emotional life skills, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and stress management, help individuals to understand and manage their emotions, cope with stress, and maintain a positive outlook on life. These skills are essential for mental health, as they enable individuals to handle challenges and setbacks without becoming overwhelmed. In addition, practical life skills, such as time management, financial literacy, and self-care, help individuals to take control of their daily lives, reduce stress, and achieve a balanced lifestyle.

## **LIFE SKILLS CAN BE CATEGORIZED INTO SEVERAL KEY TYPES: -**

**i. Cognitive Skills:** These include critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, and creativity. Cognitive skills are essential for processing information, analyzing situations, and making informed decisions. They enable individuals to think logically, consider different perspectives, and come up with innovative solutions to problems.

**ii. Social Skills:** Social skills include communication, empathy, teamwork, and conflict resolution. These skills are vital for building and maintaining relationships, collaborating with others, and navigating social situations. Good social skills enhance interpersonal interactions and contribute to a supportive social network.

**iii. Emotional Skills:** Emotional skills involve self-awareness, self-regulation, and stress management. These skills help individuals to understand their emotions, manage their reactions, and maintain

emotional balance. Emotional intelligence, which encompasses these skills, is crucial for personal well-being and effective social interactions.

**iv. Practical Skills:** Practical skills include time management, financial literacy, and self-care. These skills are necessary for managing everyday tasks and responsibilities. They help individuals to organize their lives, make sound financial decisions, and take care of their physical and mental health.

## DEVELOPING AND APPLYING LIFE SKILLS

Developing life skills is a lifelong process that begins in childhood and continues throughout adulthood. Here are some ways to develop and apply life skills:

**i. Education and Training:** Schools, colleges, and vocational programs play a crucial role in teaching life skills. These institutions provide opportunities for students to develop cognitive, social, emotional and practical skills through structured learning experiences. Additionally, workshops and training programs focused on specific life skills, such as financial literacy or communication, can be beneficial.

**ii. Self-Reflection:** Self-awareness is the foundation of many life skills. By regularly reflecting on their thoughts, feelings, and behaviour, individuals can identify areas for improvement and develop strategies to enhance their skills. Journaling, meditation, and mindfulness practices are effective tools for self-reflection.

**iii. Practice and Application:** Life skills are best developed through practice and real-life application. Whether it's engaging in group activities, volunteering, managing personal finances, or resolving conflicts, hands-on experiences provide valuable opportunities to apply and refine life skills.

**iv. Seeking Feedback:** Constructive feedback from peers, mentors, or coaches can help individuals to identify their strengths and areas for growth. Feedback provides insights into how others perceive one's skills and can guide personal development efforts.

## RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

This research is based on the increasing demand for developing fundamental life skills in secondary level pupils to help them develop entirely because of the constantly changing socioeconomic landscape. The districts of Lohardaga, Khunti and Ranchi, within the state of Jharkhand, represent many different areas, particularly in reference to the diverse levels of tribal and rural areas; students have difficulty obtaining educational, communicative, and decision - making opportunities. Therefore, having knowledge about the student's life skills level will allow for the creation of relevant educational experiences. Additionally, the objective of this research is to assist students in transitioning from academics to the real world through developing their self-esteem, the ability to think critically, and to adapt socially, enhancing the likelihood of future employment.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the level of Life Skills of Secondary Stage Students of three Districts i.e. Lohardaga, Khunti, and Ranchi.
2. To find a significant difference between the Life Skills of the Secondary Stage Students with respect to background Variables.

## HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- i. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students of district wise.
- ii. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Life Skills of Secondary Stage Students on the basis of their gender.
- iii. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students in their Life Skills on the basis of their habitat.

- iv. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students in their Life Skills on the basis of the types of Schools.
- v. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students in their Life Skills on the basis of the School Board.

**TOOLS USED**

Self – constructed and validated tool on the Life Skills scale for data collection.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The researcher used a descriptive survey method. The study aimed to assess Secondary Stage Students’ Life Skills.

**SAMPLE OF THE STUDY**

The sample consisted of 480 Secondary Stage Students i.e. 12<sup>th</sup> class students selected randomly from different Schools of three districts i.e., Ranchi, Lohardaga and Khunti.

**LIFE SKILLS OF SECONDARY STAGE STUDENTS**

**Table No. 1- Level Of Life Skills Of Secondary Stage Students**

Variables	Range	Level	No. of Responses	Percentage	Mean	SD
Life Skills (LS) of Secondary Stage Students (SSS)	92 - 106	Very High	5	1.04%	68.76	9.62
	77 -91	High	85	17.71%		
	62 - 76	Moderate	282	58.75%		
	47 - 61	Low	102	21.25%		
	32 - 46	Very Low	6	1.25%		
<b>Total</b>			480	100%		

It is inferred from the table 4.3 that 1.04% Secondary Stage Students (SSS) have very high level of Life Skills (LS), 17.71% of Secondary Stage Students have high level of Life Skills, 58.75% of Secondary Stage Students have moderate level of Life Skills, 21.25% of Secondary Stage Students have low level of Life Skills and 1.25% of SSS have very low level of Life Skills.

**NULL HYPOTHESIS (H<sub>0</sub>)1**

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students of Lohardaga and Khunti.

**DISTRICT WISE MEAN SCORES OF SECONDARY STAGE STUDENTS IN THEIR LIFE SKILLS**

**TABLE NO. 2**

District Wise	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
Lohardaga	100	75.04	8.50	4.92	S
Khunti	140	69.15	9.96		

(At 0.05 level of significance, the table value of ‘t’ is 1.98)

From the above table, it is inferred that there is a significant difference between the districts. The mean scores of Lohardaga Students is **75.04**, while the mean scores of **Khunti Students is 69.15**. Based on the mean scores of both the Districts, it is concluded that Lohardaga District students have higher Life Skills than Khunti District Secondary Stage Students. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**NULL HYPOTHESIS (H<sub>0</sub>) 2**

**There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students of Lohardaga and Ranchi.**

TABLE NO. 3- District-Wise Mean Scores Of Secondary Stage Students In Their Life Skills

District Wise	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
Lohardaga	100	75.04	8.50	8.08	S
Ranchi	240	66.47	9.81		

(At 0.05 level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.98)

From the above table, it is inferred that there is a significant difference between the districts. The mean scores of Lohardaga Students is **75.04**, while the mean scores of **Ranchi Students is 66.47**. Based on the mean scores of both districts, it is concluded that Lohardaga District students have higher Life Skills than Ranchi District Secondary Stage Students. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**NULL HYPOTHESIS (H<sub>0</sub>) 3**

**There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students of Khunti and Ranchi.**

Table No. 4- District-Wise Mean Scores Of Secondary Stage Students In Their Life Skills

District Wise	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
Khunti	140	69.15	9.96	2.55	NS
Ranchi	240	66.47	9.81		

(At 0.01 level of significance, the table value of 't' is 2.58)

From the above table, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between the districts. The mean scores of Khunti Students is **69.15**, while the mean scores of **Ranchi Students is 66.47**. Based on the mean scored it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of Life Skills of Khunti and Ranchi District Secondary Stage Students. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**NULL HYPOTHESIS (H<sub>0</sub>) 4**

**There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Life Skills of Secondary Stage Students on the basis of their gender.**

Table No.5- Gender Wise Mean Scores Of Secondary Stage Students In Their Life Skills

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
Male	240	70.11	9.74	3.09	S
Female	240	67.41	9.32		

(At 0.05 level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.98)

From the above table, it is inferred that there is a significant difference between the genders. The mean scores of **male students is 70.11**, while the mean scores of **female students is 67.41**. Based on the mean

scores of both genders, it is concluded that male students have higher Life Skills than female Secondary Stage Students. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**NULL HYPOTHESIS (H<sub>0</sub>)5**

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students in their Life Skills on the basis of their habitat.

Table No.6- Habitat Wise Mean Scores Of Secondary Stage Students In Their Life Skills

Habitat	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
Rural	240	71.05	8.87	5.36	S
Urban	240	66.47	9.81		

(At 0.05 level of significance, the table value of ‘t’ is 1.98)

From the above table, it is inferred that there is a significant difference between secondary stage students belonging to rural and urban habitats. The mean scores of rural students is 71.05, while the mean scores of urban students is 66.47. Based on the mean scored it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of Life Skills of Secondary Stage Students on the basis of Habitat. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**NULL HYPOTHESIS (H<sub>0</sub>) 6**

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students in their Life Skills on the basis of the types of Schools.

Table No. 7- School Type-Wise Mean Scores Of Secondary Stage Students In Their Life Skills

Type of Schools	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
Private	320	67.97	9.55	2.55	NS
Government	160	70.34	9.60		

(At 0.01 level of significance, the table value of ‘t’ is 2.58)

From the above table, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between the types of Schools. The mean scores of students studying at private schools is 67.97, while the mean scores of students studying at government schools is 70.34. Based on the mean scores of both types of schools, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the types of Schools. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**NULL HYPOTHESIS (H<sub>0</sub>)7**

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students in their Life Skills on the basis of the School Board.

Table No. 8-School Board Wise Mean Scores Of Secondary Stage Students In Their Life Skills

School Board	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
JAC	160	68.93	8.97	.99	NS
CBSE	160	69.96	9.61		

(At 0.05 level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.98)

From the above table, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between the JAC and CBSE Boards. The mean scores of **JAC Board students is 68.93**, while the mean scores of **CBSE Board students is 69.96**. Based on the mean scores of both School Boards, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the JAC and CBSE Boards. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**NULL HYPOTHESIS (H<sub>0</sub>) 8**

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students in their Life Skills on the basis of School Boards.

Table No. 9- School Board Wise Mean Scores Of Secondary Stage Students In Their Life Skills

School Board	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
JAC	160	68.93	8.97	1.44	NS
ICSE	160	67.39	10.11		

(At 0.05 level of significance, the table value of 't' is 1.98)

From the above table, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between the JAC and ICSE Boards. The mean scores of **JAC Board students is 68.93**, while the mean scores of **ICSE Board students is 67.39**. Based on the mean scores of both School Boards, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the JAC and ICSE Boards. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**NULL HYPOTHESIS (H<sub>0</sub>) 9**

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students in their Life Skills on the basis of the School Board.

Table No. 10- School Board Wise Mean Scores Of Secondary Stage Students In Their Life Skills

School Board	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
CBSE	160	69.96	9.61	2.33	NS
ICSE	160	67.39	10.11		

(At 0.01 level of significance, the table value of 't' is 2.58)

From the above table, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between the CBSE and ICSE Boards. The mean scores of **CBSE Board students is 69.96**, while the mean scores of **ICSE Board students is 67.39**. Based on the mean scores, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of Life Skills of Secondary Stage Students on the basis of schools Board. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

- i. The study reveals that the majority of students (58.75%) possess a moderate level of life skills, followed by 21.25% with low levels and 17.71% with high levels, while only a small proportion falls in the very high and very low categories.
- ii. The mean scores of Lohardaga district are higher than of Khunti and Ranchi district. On the basis of gender and habitat, there is a difference in the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students.

iii. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Secondary Stage Students in their Life Skills on the basis of types of Schools and School Board. Also there is no significant difference between the mean scores of Khunti and Ranchi districts.

## CONCLUSION

Life skills have also emerged as an essential part of holistic education, particularly among students at the secondary stage of education, as this is the critical stage of development for the students. Considering the context of the Jharkhand state, which is known for its rich cultural diversity and economic challenges, the importance of life skills can be seen as more significant in the districts such as Lohardaga, Khunti, and Ranchi, which are known to have unique contexts of education due to the tribal population and rural scenario of the area. Life skills are considered essential as they can enable students to cope with the challenges of life effectively and can also help them to face the opportunities that are to come in the future by improving the students'

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