



**Effect of Life Skill Training on Self -Esteem, Empathy and Mental Health of High  
School Students in Iran**

**Abstract**

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## ABSTRACT

The World Health Organization has defined life skills as, "the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life".

Life skills are essentially those abilities that help promote mental well-being and competence in young people as they face the realities of life. Most development professionals agree that life skills are generally applied in the context of health and social events. They can be utilized in many content areas prevention of drug use, sexual violence, teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS prevention and suicide prevention.

In short, life skills empower young people to take positive action to protect themselves and promote health and positive social relationships.

With life skills, one is able to explore alternatives, weigh pros and cons and make rational decisions in solving each problem or issue as it arises. It also entails being able to establish productive interpersonal relationships with others. Life skills enable effective communication, for example, being able to differentiate between hearing and listening and ensuring that messages are transmitted accurately to avoid miscommunication and misinterpretations.

For this reason, investigator is interested to explore how life skills education can mitigate the "storm and stress" experienced by so many adolescents. His goal has been to shed light on how life skills training can help the adolescent resist peer pressure and the risk behaviors of criminal activities, drug addictions, and the problems associated with low self-esteem, bad mental health, and low empathy. Therefore, researcher has attempted to study Effect of Life Skill Training on Self -Esteem, Empathy and Mental Health of High School Students in Iran.

For this purpose initially five high schools were selected randomly. Then from each school 30 students were selected whom the authorities of schools felt had some problems. Thereafter, self-esteem, empathy and mental health questionnaires were administered to all these 150 female students. Finally, 60 students were selected 12 from each school that was having low self-esteem, problem in empathy and poor mental health. Therefore, total sample of the present

study comprised sixty (60) female students. Then, they were assigned randomly to experimental and control groups. Each group had 30 subjects the experimental group was given Life skill training for 10 days, while the control group wasn't given such training. The Self esteem, Empathy and Mental health of the Experimental group were measured before and after Life skill training, while the Self Esteem, Empathy and Mental Health of the control group were measured twice but without Life Skill training. Self –esteem was measured with the help of Coppersmith's self-esteem inventory (1981). This inventory consists of 58 items and mental health was measured with the help of the General Health questionnaire developed by Goldberg (1972). The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28) is a popular 28-item instrument. Empathy was measured with the help of the Davis empathy inventory (1980). This inventory consists of 58

items. Independent-samples t- test, paired –samples t- test and covariates were used to analyze the data. The following results were obtained:

It was found that there was a significant difference between pre and post condition on all the dimensions of self-esteem, i.e., General, Social, School academic and Home parent self esteem. On all the dimensions, subjects of the experimental group scored higher in post condition than pre condition. There was insignificant difference between pre and post condition on all the dimensions of self-esteem studied for the control group.

It was found that there was a significant difference between pre and post condition on all the dimensions of empathy, i.e., Fantasy, Perspective, Empathy concern, and Personal distress. On all the dimensions, experimental group scored higher in post condition. However, there was insignificant difference between pre and post condition on all the dimensions of empathy of the control group.

It was found that there was a significant difference between pre and post condition on all the dimensions of mental health, i.e., physical, anxiety, social and depression. On all the dimensions, experimental group scored lower (thus having better mental health) in post condition. However, there was insignificant difference between pre and post condition on all the dimensions of mental health of the control group.

It was found that there was a significant difference on various dimensions of self esteem between the experimental and the control group after life skill training. This means that life skill training was effective in increasing self-esteem.

It was found that there was a significant difference on various dimensions of empathy between the experimental and the control group after life skill training. This means that life skill training was effective in increasing empathy.

It was found that there was a significant difference on various dimensions of mental health between the experimental and the control group after life skill training. This means that life skills training were effective in improving mental health.