

Original Research Article

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## Assessment of Life Skills Effecting the Empower Status of Farm Women in Telangana State

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### ABSTRACT

#### Keywords

Empowerment, life skills, Assessment, farm women, Education, Rural areas, Life skills intervention

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Rural women constitute 70 per cent of total female population of the country. The profile of rural woman is that of illiterate, ignorant, poor, superstitious, suppressed and oppressed because of limited skills. The rural woman needs to be trained, through life skills education. Education is a powerful tool for transformation of society. It can inculcate social, moral, and professional values in a person. It can also help in Life skills development. There are different types of life skills. WHO lend nine basic life skills i.e. self-awareness, empathy, effective communication, interpersonal relationship skills, creative thinking, critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, coping with stress and emotions For development of such life skills investigator prepared a life skills intervention program. A sample of 120 farm women was selected from rural areas of Telangana by using purposive sampling method. Life Skills Self Rating Scale (LSSRS) (WHO 1999), was used for assessing life skills of farm women. The result of the study revealed that overall life skills was found with low category (56%), average score (34%) and high score (10%). They need life skills Intervention program for effecting the empower status of farm women.

### Introduction

Life skills: A skill is a learned ability to do something well. So Life Skills are the abilities that individuals can develop to live a fruitful life. Life skills are psychosocial abilities that enable individuals to translate knowledge, attitudes and values regarding their concerns

into well informed and healthy behaviours. Empowered with such skills, farm women are able to take decisions based on a logical process of " what to do, why to do, how to do and when to do". Life skills education is an effective tool for empowering the women to act responsibly take initiative and took control.

Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (WHO, 1996). Life skill education aims to provide women with strategies to make healthy choices that contribute to a meaningful life. Life skills are the abilities that help to promote mental well being and competence in women as they face the realities of life. It helps the women to take positive actions to protect themselves and to promote health and meaningful social relationship. Life skill facilitates a complete and integrated development of individuals to function effectively as social beings. Life skills can be applied in the contexts of social and health events.

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. Developing life skills helps women in translating knowledge, attitude and values into healthy behavior that makes their life fruitful. Life skills also help in empowering women by imparting healthy behavior and helping them to avoid risks and to make appropriate decisions at the right time.

### **Major like skills**

The core set of life skills which help in promoting health and well being of women

- Decision making
- Creative thinking
- Effective communication
- Self-awareness
- Coping with stress and emotions
- Empathy
- Problem solving
- Critical thinking
- Interpersonal relationship skills

### **Studies related to assessment of life skills effecting the empower status of farm women**

The topic is of a significant area of interest to the researchers, theorists, and practitioners, and there have been a numerous researches carried out to emphasize the importance and effectiveness of life skills education in the development of women “ social, emotional and cognitive development and dealing with their psychosocial problems and issues.

According to Aishwarya *et al.*, (2006) life skills training enhance critical thinking abilities, which further impacts were living life actively, being responsible in the job and in future planning too.

Prasanna Kumar (2014) stated that it is our need to identify the areas where women are still facing problems and are unable to access resources, institutional knowledge and basic education.

Sowjanya and Hans (2015) opined that life skills education is one of the most important means of empowering women and giving them knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to be a full partner in the development process.

Aparna and Raakhee (2011) studied that life skill education for adolescents its relevance and importance on life skills which help in the promotion of general wellbeing and psychosocial competence, empower young people, promote health and positive social relationships and in building productive interpersonal relationships with others.

Vranda and Rao (2011) proved that life skills training enhanced their psychosocial Competencies. Nnachi (2008) research findings indicated that conducting training programme on empowerment of rural women

and its practices increase rural women skills. Rural women should be empowered by knowledge for maximum productivity for personal and national development.

Parveen and Leonhauser (2004) stated that education, training of skill acquisition and exposure to all information media can help women in getting empowered.

### **Materials and Methods**

The present study was conducted in rural areas of Telangana state by using an experimental research design. A total of 120 farm women were selected by purposive sampling technique. Data was collected by administering standardized. Life Skills Self Rating Scale (LSSRS): Based on the review of literature, considering components of life skills given by (WHO 1999), nine statements were framed under each head of core set of life skills. Thus, hundred statements were framed. The scale was then subjected to scrutiny by a panel of three experts from Education, Psychology and Human Development field to determine the relevancy and suitability for inclusion under each head of the scale. After expert's scrutiny and after item analysis, the final form of LSSRS had 65 items. This scale includes decision making, creative thinking, effective communication skills, self-awareness building skills, coping with stress and emotions, empathy, problem solving, critical thinking and interpersonal relationship skills. The data on life skills of farm women was calculated, tabulated and presented in detail.

### **Results and Discussion**

The life skills of farm women by obtaining data using scale. This scale includes decision making, creative thinking, effective communication skills, self-awareness building skills, coping with stress and emotions,

empathy, problem solving, critical thinking and interpersonal relationship skills. The data on life skills of farm women was calculated, tabulated and presented below in detail.

It was clear from the blow tables that the life skills of the respondents were studied viz., decision making, creative thinking, effective communication skills, self awareness building skills, coping with stress and emotions, empathy, problem solving, critical thinking, interpersonal relationship skills. In this test there are presented a total of 65 items and each statement has its score. For each statement there are three responses in terms of mostly, sometimes, and never.

It was clear from the table 1. According to decision making, Only three per cent of the respondents had taken most of the decisions by their own whereas some respondents depend on others for taking simple decisions (70%), confident about taking right decisions (58%), take decisions by their own (54%), estimates advantages and disadvantages of different plans before taking an important decision (43%). Equal percentage (42%) of the respondents sometimes have a clear picture about their future plans and they workout several plans to decide the best.

It was clear from the table 2. With reference to creative thinking, thirty nine per cent of the respondents had searched mostly for opportunities to do new things whereas sometimes respondents for trying to do things that are new and different (75%), easily adapted to change circumstances (64%), imagined characters while reading a book (61%) and thinks differently from others (55%).

It was clear from the table 3. As per effective communication skills, Highest percentage (45%) of the respondents had never ask many questions when they don't understand and

sometimes most often respondents disagree with others let them know (63%), they adjust their speech according to the understanding of the listener. Equal percentage (40%) of the respondents never or sometimes thinks well before speaking.

It was clear from the table 4. According to self awareness building skills, maximum percentage of the respondents do the things sometimes confidently (62%). Most often respondents never control their behaviour to protect their family prestige (71%) followed by they never accept their mistakes without any hesitation (59%), they do not bother when they cannot fulfill their responsibility (58%), they never feel a responsible citizen (56%), never short tempered (55%) and they never fight for their rights (51%).

It was clear from the table 5. When comes to coping with stress and emotions, more than half of the percentage of respondent

sometimes felt that they can express their unwillingness through their feelings rather than with argument (63%) followed by they cannot think normally in angry mood (54%) and they felt that they will try to be normal with the people when they are distressed (53%).

However, respondents never practice meditation or yoga and listen their favourite music to cope up from stress (68%), they never success due to imbalance of their emotions (67%), never felt depressed if things go against their wish and they never believe that a little stress is necessary for successful completion of work (58%), they never find ways to do things peacefully without stress (57%), they never practice fine arts to overcome stress (55%), never felt resentful when they don't get their way and they never felt distressed when try to overcome by thinking that everyone has some trouble or other (53%) (Fig. 1).

**Table.1** Distribution of respondents according to Decision making n=120

S. No.	Statements	Mostly 3	Some times 2	Never 1
<b>Decision-making</b>				
1.	I take decisions on my own	3 (3%)	65 (54%)	52 (43%)
2.	I depend on others for taking simple decisions	--	84 (70%)	36 (30%)
3.	I have a clear picture about my future plans	--	50 (42%)	70 (58%)
4.	I stick to my decisions though others strongly disagree with me	--	36 (30%)	84 (70%)
5.	I work out several plans to decide the best	--	50 (42%)	70 (58%)
6.	I am confident that I always take right decisions	--	70 (58%)	50 (42%)
7.	Before taking an important decision I estimate advantages and disadvantages of different plans	--	52 (43%)	68 (57%)

**Table.2** Distribution of respondents according to creative thinking n=120

S. No.	Statements	Mostly 3	Some times 2	Never 1
<b>Creative thinking</b>				
1.	I search for opportunities to do new things	47 (39%)	40 (33%)	33 (28%)
2.	I try to do things that are new and different	6 (5%)	90 (75%)	24 (20%)
3.	I can easily adapt to changing circumstances	7 (6%)	77 (64%)	36 (30%)
4.	I observe a lot to get new ideas	27 (23%)	37 (31%)	56 (47%)
5.	I think differently from others	21 (18%)	66 (55%)	33 (28%)
6.	I Imagine characters while reading a book	20 (17%)	73 (61%)	27 (23%)

**Table.3** Distribution of respondents according to Effective communication skills n=120

S. No.	Statements	Mostly 3	Some times 2	Never 1
<b>Effective communication skills</b>				
1.	I ask many questions when I don't understand	26 (22%)	40 (33%)	54 (45%)
2.	When I disagree with others let them know	3 (3%)	75 (63%)	42 (35%)
3.	I can adjust my speech according to the understanding of the listener	1 (1%)	66 (55%)	53 (44%)
4.	I think well before speaking	24 (20%)	48 (40%)	48 (40%)

**Table.4** Distribution of respondents according to self-awareness n=120

S. No.	Statements	Mostly 3	Some times 2	Never 1
<b>Self-awareness skills</b>				
1.	I do things confidently	5 (4%)	74 (62%)	41 (34%)
2.	It bothers me when I cannot fulfil my responsibility	--	51 (43%)	69 (58%)
3.	I control my behaviour to protect my family prestige	--	35 (29%)	85 (71%)
4.	I fight for my rights	--	59 (49%)	61 (51%)
5.	I am a responsible citizen	--	53 (44%)	67 (56%)
6.	I accept my mistakes without any hesitation	--	49 (41%)	71 (59%)
7.	I am short tempered	--	54 (45%)	66 (55%)

**Table.5** Distribution of respondents according to coping with stress and emotions n=120

S. No.	Statements	Mostly 3	Some times 2	Never 1
<b>Coping with stress and emotions</b>				
1.	I know that one cannot think normally in angry mood	--	65 (54%)	55 (46%)
2.	I express my unwillingness through my feelings rather than with argument	--	75 (63%)	45 (38%)
3.	I feel depressed if things go against my wish	--	51 (43%)	69 (58%)
4.	My success is due to balance of my emotions	--	40 (33%)	80 (67%)
5.	I feel resentful when I don't get my way	--	56 (47%)	64 (53%)
6.	Though I am distressed, I try to be normal when I am with the people	--	64 (53%)	56 (47%)
7.	I believe that a little stress is necessary for successful completion of work	--	50 (42%)	70 (58%)
8.	I practice meditation / yoga to cope up from stress.	--	39 (33%)	81 (68%)
9.	Practicing fine arts help to overcome stress	--	54 (45%)	66 (55%)
10.	Whenever I feel distressed, I try to overcome by thinking that everyone has some trouble or other	--	56 (47%)	64 (53%)
11.	I find ways to do things peacefully without stress	--	52 (43%)	68 (57%)
12.	I listen to my favourite music to cope up from stress	--	38 (32%)	82 (68%)

**Table.6** Distribution of respondents according to Empathy n=120

S. No.	Statements	Mostly 3	Some times 2	Never 1
<b>Empathy</b>				
1.	I am easily influenced by others	--	62 (52%)	58 (48%)
2.	I think about pros and consequences before doing an important task	1 (1%)	74 (62%)	45 (38%)
3.	I have many friends	1 (1%)	65 (54%)	54 (45%)
4.	I take the advice of elders when I am in trouble	--	53 (44%)	67 (56%)
5.	I can make friendship easily	1 (1%)	48 (40%)	71 (59%)
6.	I sacrifice a lot to maintain friendly relations	1 (1%)	56 (47%)	63 (53%)
7.	I visit my friends houses frequently	--	63 (53%)	57 (48%)

8.	I attend immediately if anyone is in trouble	--	72 (60%)	48 (40%)
9.	I do not hesitate to ask help of friends and relatives to reach my goal	--	59 (49%)	61 (51%)
10.	I often give donations to poor	--	56 (47%)	64 (53%)
11.	I don't mind if my friend shouts me when he/she is in bad mood	1 (1%)	58 (48%)	61 (51%)
12.	I tease people for their low performance	--	58 (48%)	62 (52%)
13.	I care for old people	--	57 (48%)	63 (53%)
14.	I always extend help to handicap persons	--	66 (55%)	54 (45%)
15.	I always think about difficulty in a work before asking others to do it.	--	59 (49%)	61 (51%)

**Table.7** Distribution of respondents according to Problem solving skills n=120

S. No.	Statements	Mostly 3	Some times 2	Never 1
<b>Problem solving skills</b>				
1.	I can solve my own problems	--	80 (67%)	40 (33%)
2.	I think of many solutions to a problem	1 (1%)	89 (74%)	30 (25%)
3.	During free time I spend time solving puzzles, word games, Sudoku etc	--	55 (46%)	65 (54%)
4.	I will not leave a problem until I find a solution	--	44 (37%)	76 (63%)
5.	I am good at resolving conflicts between people	--	78 (65%)	42 (35%)
6.	If I find any problem difficult, I take the help of others	--	75 (63%)	45 (38%)

**Table.8** Distribution of respondents according to life skills n=120

S. No.	Statements	Mostly 3	Some times 2	Never 1
<b>Critical thinking</b>				
1.	I think critically before taking any important step	--	68 (57%)	52 (43%)
2.	I always consider others rights	--	58 (48%)	62 (52%)
3.	I estimate choices and risks before accepting a task	--	43 (56%)	77 (64%)
4.	I strongly resist if my friend force me to engage in unhealthy behaviour	--	56 (47%)	64 (53%)
5.	I can judge right or wrong	--	47 (39%)	73 (61%)

**Table.9** Distribution of respondents according to life skills n=120

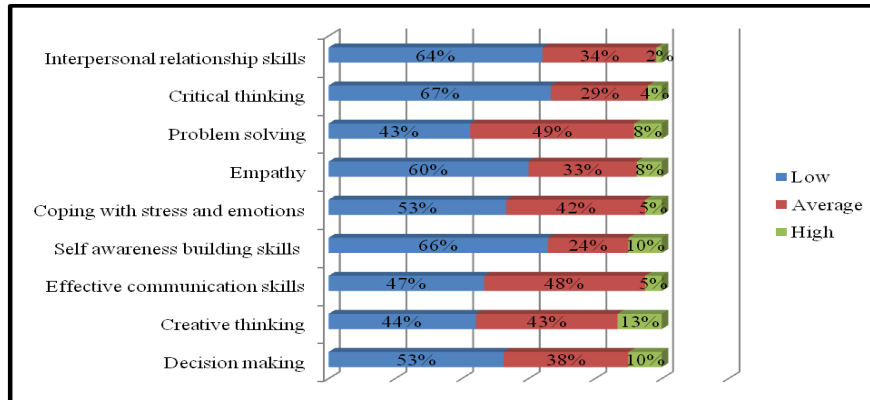
S. No.	Statements	Mostly 3	Some times 2	Never 1
<b>Interpersonal skills</b>				
1.	If anyone misbehaves with me I oppose strongly	--	64 (53%)	52 (43%)
2.	I discuss a lot to divert my friends from engaging in bad habits	--	53 (44%)	62 (52%)
3.	I believe that speech is good for expression rather than silence	5 (4%)	40 (33%)	77 (64%)

**Table.10** Perceived level of life skills n=120

Level of life skills	Scores	Categories	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<b>Decision making</b>	17-21	High	12	10%
	16-11	Average	45	38%
	7-10	Low	63	53%
<b>Creative thinking</b>	15-18	High	16	13%
	11-14	Average	51	43%
	6-9	Low	53	44%
<b>Effective communication skills</b>	10-12	High	6	5%
	7-9	Average	58	48%
	4-6	Low	56	47%
<b>Self awareness building skills</b>	17-21	High	12	10%
	11-16	Average	29	24%
	7-10	Low	79	66%
<b>Coping with stress and emotions</b>	28-36	High	6	5%
	20-27	Average	50	42%
	12-19	Low	64	53%
<b>Empathy</b>	35-45	High	9	8%
	25-34	Average	39	33%
	24-15	Low	72	60%
<b>Problem solving</b>	15-18	High	10	8%
	11-14	Average	59	49%
	6-9	Low	51	43%
<b>Critical thinking</b>	13-15	High	5	4%
	9-12	Average	35	29%
	5-8	Low	80	67%
<b>Interpersonal relationship skills</b>	7-9	High	2	2%
	5-6	Average	41	34%
	3-4	Low	77	64%
<b>Overall life skill</b>		High	12	10%
		Average	41	34%
		Low	67	56%



**Fig.1** Percentage distribution of perceived level of life skills



It was clear from the table 6. With regard to empathy, it was opined that only one per cent of the respondents mostly think about pros and consequences before doing an important task, maintains many friends, friendship easily, sacrifice a lot to maintain friendly relations and they don't mind if their friends shouts on them when he/she is in a bad mood. More than half of the percentage of respondents sometimes thinks about pros and consequences before doing an important task (62%), attends immediately if anyone is in trouble (60%), always, extend help to handicap persons (55%), have many friends (54%), visits friends house frequently (53%), influences others easily (52%).

It was clear from the table 7. According to problem solving, it is interested to note about that majority of the respondents sometimes thinking of many solutions to a problem (74%) followed by they can solve their own problems (67%), good at resolving conflicts between people (65%) and taking the help of others if they find any problem difficult (63%). Fifty four per cent and sixty three per cent of the respondents never spend time solving puzzles, word games, Sudoku etc during their free time and never leave a problem until find a solution.

It was clear from the table 8. With reference to critical thinking, maximum percentage of

respondents never estimates choices and risks before accepting a task (64%), judge right or wrong (61%), resist if their friend force me to engage in unhealthy behavior (53%) and consider other rights (52%). Fifty seven per cent of the respondents sometimes think critically before taking important step.

It was clear from the table 9. When comes to interpersonal relationship skills, fifty three per cent of the respondents sometimes misbehaves with me when I oppose strongly and never discuss a lot to divert their friends from engaging in bad habits (56%) and never believe that speech is good for expression rather than silence (63%).

Perceived level of life skills were studied in Table 10. Highest percentage was found in low category viz., critical thinking (67%), self awareness building skills (66%), interpersonal relationship skills (64%), empathy (60%), decision making and coping with stress and emotions (53%), creative thinking (44%). Average score was found highest in problem solving (49%) and effective communication skills (48%).

Lowest percentage was found in high category viz., decision making and self awareness building skills (12%), creative thinking (16%), problem solving (10%), empathy (9%), effective communication skills

and coping with stress and emotions (6%), critical thinking (5%) and interpersonal relationship skills (2%).

Hence it can be concluded that overall life skill was found with low category (56%), average score (34%) and high score (10%).

### **Major findings of the study**

Perceived level of life skills were studied in Table 10. Highest percentage was found in low category viz., critical thinking (67%), self awareness building skills (66%), interpersonal relationship skills (64%), empathy (60%), decision making and coping with stress and emotions (53%), creative thinking (44%). Average score was found highest in problem solving (49%) and effective communication skills (48%).

Lowest percentage was found in high category viz., decision making and self awareness building skills (12%), creative thinking (16%), problem solving (10%), empathy (9%), effective communication skills and coping with stress and emotions (6%), critical thinking (5%) and interpersonal relationship skills (2%).

Hence it can be concluded that overall life skill was found with low category (56%), average score (34%) and high score (10%).

The study concluded that overall life skills of farm women were perceived low category. They need life skills Intervention program for effecting the empower status of farm women. Intervention on life skill education is helpful for the farm women to take positive actions and improving their coping with stress and emotion, problem solving ability. Life skills are the building blocks of one behavior and need to be learnt well to lead a healthy, meaningful and productive life. Attempts should be made to understand the women

problems and guide them in acquisition of life skills. The intervention on life skill development is a good support system for women at the community level. Imparting life skill training through inculcating life skill education will help women to overcome such difficulties in life.

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