

# Assessment of Life Skills Among Basic B.Sc. Nursing First Year Students: A Cross Sectional Study

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## ABSTRACT

**Background of the study:** The world is advancing with a high pace in terms of technology in every field facilitating human habitation. Health care is now a competence-based task with challenges awaiting perfection and precision. Nursing students need to cope up with this speed and learn the basics with technical advancements. Life skills are the core skills that make a person use his/her maximum potential in achieving the challenging tasks in learning.

**Aim:** A cross sectional study to assess the life skills among the Basic BSc Nursing First year students.

**Method:** It was a Descriptive cross-sectional study with a sample of 129 Basic B.Sc. Nursing First year students of Sajjalashree Institute of Nursing Sciences Navanagar, Bagalkot. and Sharadambe Institute of Nursing Sciences Vidyagiri. Bagalkot selected complete enumeration sampling technique. Life skill Assessment Scale was used to collected data regarding Life skills. Chi square test was used to determine the association between global life skill scores of nursing students and their socio demographic factors.

**Results:** the mean age of the sample was 20.42 ± 3.6 years 79.1% females, and 20.9% males. The mean global life skill score was 241.50 ± 31.09, ranging between 162 to 315. No significant association was found between

global life skill scores and socio demographic factors.

**Conclusion:** Most (51.6%) of the Nursing students had average life skills. The nursing students' life skills must be strengthened by proper training.

**Key words:** Basic B.Sc. Nursing, students, Life skill, nursing institution

## INTRODUCTION

A skill can be defined as a learned ability (of any creature whether human or others) to do something well. Life skills are those abilities which are adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively in the society with the demands and challenges of everyday human life. World Health Organisation (WHO) defines Life Skill 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 thus needed for the promotion of good health and well-being, rather than as an intervention aimed only at those already at risk<sup>1</sup>.

A character/ quality is more useful and worthy when it is in practice hence building resilience with Life skills is very important among nurses. To handle a stressful

situation it is more important to have a strong internal strength than outer expression. It needs creative and critical thinking and problem solving and decision making skills. "A stitch in time saves nine". Hence the decisions taken in critical situations do matter. Indians take decision more from their emotional perspective than situational thinking hence emotional stability has its own importance while dealing with tough situations. What fuels once capacity of work is their knowledge about self that is self-awareness. The one who knows his or her own capacities has better out comes and has the abilities to choose their fights.

In a constantly changing environment, having life skills is an essential part of being able to meet the challenges of everyday life. The dramatic changes in global economies over the past five years have been matched with the transformation in technology and these are all impacting on education, the workplace and our home life. To cope with the increasing pace and change of modern life, students need new life skills such as the ability to deal with stress and frustration. Today's students will have many new jobs over the course of their lives, with associated pressures and the need for flexibility.<sup>2</sup>

Life skills are defined as a set of psychosocial competence and personal skills that help people make carefully big decisions, communicate effectively with others, develop coping skills with surrounding circumstances, and manage oneself that leads to progress and success.<sup>3</sup> To a student, life skills or soft skills are skills for them to excel in education and to get ahead in life. Certain skills may be more or less relevant to you depending on your circumstances, age, culture, beliefs or geographic location.<sup>4</sup>

Life skills are abilities that enable a person to navigate a range of life contexts with a sense of personal confidence, social conscience, and professional competence. They are developed through the use of

processes that are inclusive and sensitive to individual, local and regional diversity.<sup>5</sup>

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

It was a cross sectional study with an aim to assess the life skills among Basic B.Sc. Nursing first year students of B.V.V.S. Sajjalashree institute of nursing sciences and Sharadambe institute of nursing sciences Bagalkot, Karnataka. Out of 140 students, 129 students were selected by complete enumeration sampling technique excluding 11 students based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. The researchers approached the principals of respective institutions and obtained administrative permission and then approached the nursing students, explained the purpose of the study and obtained informed consent from them.

The baseline information was collected by structured baseline proforma and the level of life skills was assessed by life skill assessment scale. It is a self-report scale that assesses the level of life skills in terms of 10 domains (skills), namely; Self-awareness, Empathy, Effective communication, coping with stress, coping with emotions, interpersonal relationship, decision making, problem solving, creative thinking and critical thinking. Each item is weighted on a 0–4 interval scale. The tools were pretested on 10 first year nursing students from B.V.V.S institute of Nursing sciences, Bagalkot.

The collected data was analysed using SPSS statistical package. The description of socio Demographic factors and Quality of sleep was done using frequency and percentage distribution, the association between quality of sleep and baseline factors was found using Chi-square test and logistic regression analysis.

Results: The mean age of sample was 20.42  $\pm$  3.6 years that majority (79.1%) of students were females and 20.9% students were males. 41% of the mothers of sample had formal education upto SSLC (10<sup>th</sup> standard) and 79.9% were home makers.

The mean global life skill score was 241.50  $\pm$  31.09, ranging between 162 to 315.

Domain wise the mean life skill score for self awareness was 98.7  $\pm$ 5.35, Empathy; 39.03  $\pm$ 4.69, Effective Communication; 28.74  $\pm$ 4.14, interpersonal relationship; 36.72  $\pm$ 5.87, creative thinking; 26.21 $\pm$ 3.91,

critical thinking; 37.99 $\pm$ 5.19, Decision making; 38.51 $\pm$  4.69, Problem solving; 33.56  $\pm$ 4.63, coping with emotions; 35.63  $\pm$ 6.13 and coping with stress; 24.82  $\pm$ 4.47.

**Table No. 1: Distribution of nursing students according to their level of global life skill scores. N= 129**

Sex		Life Skill Global score				Total	Chi square Value	P value
		Average	High	Low	Very Low			
Female	F	30	1	29	42	102	5.48	0.14
	%	29.4	1.0	28.4	41.2	100		
Male	F	6	0	14	7	27		
	%	22.2	0	51.9	25.9	100.0		
Total	F	36	1	43	49	129		
	%	27.9	0.78	33.3	37.9	100		

F= frequency, % = percentage

The global life skill scores were divided into 4 categories. Average, High, Low and Very Low. 51.6 % of the nursing students had average level of life skill scores, 38 % had very low life skill scores, and 33 % had low

life skill scores. 41.2 % (42) of the female students and 25.9 % (7) had very low level of life skills. Only 1 student had high life skill score.

**Table No.2: Association between socio-demographic factors of Nursing students and their global life skill scores. N= 129**

S No.	Variable	Chi-square value	DF	P Value
1	Age	4.63	2	0.16
2	Sex	5.48	2	0.14
3	Place of Residence	10.189	3	0.17
4	Mother's Education	10.827	5	0.765
5	Father's Education	14.809	5	0.465
6	Mother's Occupation	16.389	5	0.174
7	Father's Occupation	10.255	5	0.594

$\alpha$ =0.05, DF =Degree of freedom

Chi square test was used to determine the association between global life skill scores of nursing students and their socio demographic factors. No significant association was found between global life skill scores and any of the socio demographic factors.

## CONCLUSION

The study results suggest that the nursing students had poor life skills. The life skills are core competencies that make the learning more productive. There must be some strategies adapted in Nursing curriculum that focus on strengthening the life skills among Nursing students.

### Declaration by Authors

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**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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