

A Study on Life Skills as Predictors of Academic Performance in College Learners

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Abstract—This study explores the influence of life skills on academic performance among college students through factor analysis. The results identify three key dimensions: Cognitive and Academic Skills, Emotional and Social Skills, and Motivation and Self-Management. Each dimension includes essential skills ranging from critical thinking and time management to resilience and self-motivation which contribute to academic success. Statistical tests (KMO = 0.627; Bartlett's Test $p < 0.001$) confirm the adequacy and validity of the factor structure. The findings emphasize the need for educational institutions to adopt integrated skill-building strategies that enhance students' academic outcomes and emotional resilience.

Index Terms—Social Skills, Academic Performance, Life skills, Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

Life skills play a crucial role in shaping the academic success and overall development of college students. These essential skills, including communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, time management, adaptability, and emotional intelligence, help students navigate academic challenges effectively. Beyond subject knowledge, students require decision-making abilities, self-discipline, and interpersonal skills to manage coursework, collaborate with peers, and handle stress.

The ability to set goals, prioritize tasks, and stay motivated significantly influences academic performance, retention rates, and personal growth. Students with well-developed life skills tend to be

more organized, resilient, and confident, enabling them to balance academic responsibilities with extracurricular activities and future career planning. Furthermore, strong life skills foster better engagement in learning, improved problem-solving in complex subjects, and enhanced teamwork in group projects.

As colleges increasingly emphasize holistic education, integrating life skills training into the curriculum has become essential. Developing these skills not only improves academic outcomes but also prepares students for professional success and lifelong learning. Therefore, understanding the impact of life skills on college students' academic performance is vital for educators, policymakers, and students alike, as it helps create a supportive learning environment that nurtures both intellectual and personal growth.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Geeta Garg (2011) studied the Academic Anxiety and Life Skills of Secondary School Children. The study stated that students in the prevailing education system were not able to meet the real challenges of the world that are beyond their academic life. It was found that students from private schools had better development of Life Skills than students of govt. school students. Correlation technique were used to assess the difference. The study also revealed significantly high negative relationship between Life Skills and Academic Anxiety.

Garg, R., Goyal, S., & Singh, K. (2017) important in producing doctors with an understanding of evidence-

based medicine. The reason behind this is lack of encouragement, lack of basic infrastructure, facilities and structured mentorship programs, no extra incentives to researchers and the long journey to get academic acclaim. Another additional aspect is of lack of writing skills for biomedical publication.

D. Siva Shankari | Dr. K. Eagavalli (2019) carried out a "A Study on Life Skills among Arts and Science College Students" The study investigated life-skills among college students. The findings revealed there is a significant in a study on life skills among arts and science college students with respect to College Locality, Type of Group and Parents Education and not with Gender, Medium of Instruction, Type of Family and Parents Income.

Currie, L. K & et.al (2012) The study examines life-skills as predictors of academic performance, finding that four categories of life-skills account for an additional 9.4% of variance in cumulative GPA beyond traditional predictors like high school GPA and SAT scores, with physical fitness being significant.

Mendoza, J. D. (2024) The study found a significant relationship between life skills ability and academic success among college freshmen, indicating that well-developed life skills, such as goal setting and teamwork, positively predict academic performance and career maturity in students. The findings reveals that Strong life skills linked to academic success and career maturity and Career development plan proposed for college freshmen's enhancement.

Choudhary, A., & Bakshi, R. (2024) The paper emphasizes the significance of life skills in enhancing academic performance, advocating for their integration into school curricula. It highlights research findings that support the positive correlation between life skills and students' holistic development and academic success. It highlights the positive impact of integrating life skills into the school curriculum on students' academic performance and the findings from various research papers and articles support the notion that life skills enhance academic attainment.

Haerani, I., & Sari, A. P. (2024) This study reveals that life skills, particularly verbal communication, significantly predict academic achievement in youth. Regression analyses indicate that enhanced life skills education leads to improved academic performance, highlighting its transformative impact on college

learners' success. Life skills education enhances communication, decision-making, and problem-solving abilities and Verbal communication predicts academic, career, and personal growth success.

Nadaf & et.al (2024) This paper emphasizes that core life skills, such as emotional regulation and problem-solving, significantly correlate with reduced academic stress, which in turn enhances academic performance among students with learning disabilities, suggesting life skills training is crucial for educational success. Quantitative assessments revealed significant negative correlations between academic stress and key life skills such as emotional regulation, self-awareness, problem-solving, and effective communication and Qualitative insights indicated increased confidence among students with learning disabilities.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In today's highly competitive and rapidly changing educational environment, academic performance is no longer determined solely by cognitive intelligence or subject knowledge. College students are increasingly expected to demonstrate a range of life skills, including critical thinking, emotional regulation, time management, and self-motivation, to achieve academic success and cope with academic pressures.

However, many students lack the necessary cognitive, emotional, and behavioral competencies required to manage academic demands effectively. Despite institutional efforts to provide academic resources, the absence of structured life skills training often leads to stress, poor academic outcomes, and decreased student engagement. Moreover, existing research has predominantly focused on subject-specific performance indicators, with limited emphasis on how life skills directly influence academic achievement.

This gap highlights the need to systematically investigate the role of life skills in shaping academic performance. By identifying and analyzing the core dimensions of life skills—such as cognitive abilities, emotional intelligence, and self-management—this study aims to understand their relative impact on students' academic success. The findings will contribute to developing targeted interventions and support systems that enhance not just academic performance, but also students' personal growth and well-being.

IV. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to identify the key life skills that contribute to better learning outcomes among college students. By examining various dimensions such as cognitive and academic skills, emotional and social competencies, and motivation and self-management abilities, the study aims to understand how these skills influence students' academic performance. Recognizing which life skills have the most significant impact will help educators and institutions design effective strategies and support systems to enhance student learning, academic success, and overall personal development.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A structured questionnaire was distributed among college students to assess their proficiency in various life skills and their corresponding academic performance. The study involved a sample of 131 college students from various academic disciplines and backgrounds. Participants were selected using a stratified sampling technique to ensure diversity in terms of academic performance, gender, and socio-economic background. Statistical tool factor analysis was used in SPSS to measure correlations between impact of life skills and academic performance of students.

VI. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on examining the influence of life skills on the academic performance of college students. It specifically explores three core dimensions of life skills: Cognitive and Academic Skills (such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and time management), Emotional and Social Skills (including stress management, emotional intelligence, and teamwork), and Motivation and Self-Management (like goal-setting, persistence, and task organization). The study is limited to college students, considering their unique developmental stage where life skills play a crucial role in shaping both academic outcomes and personal growth.

Analysis and Interpretations

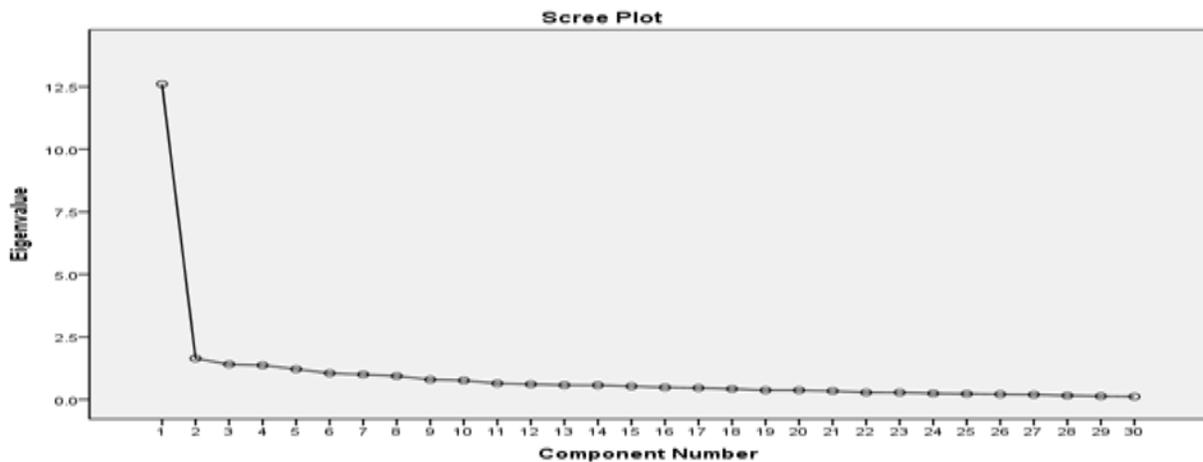
Factors Influencing Life Skills for College Students Academic Performance

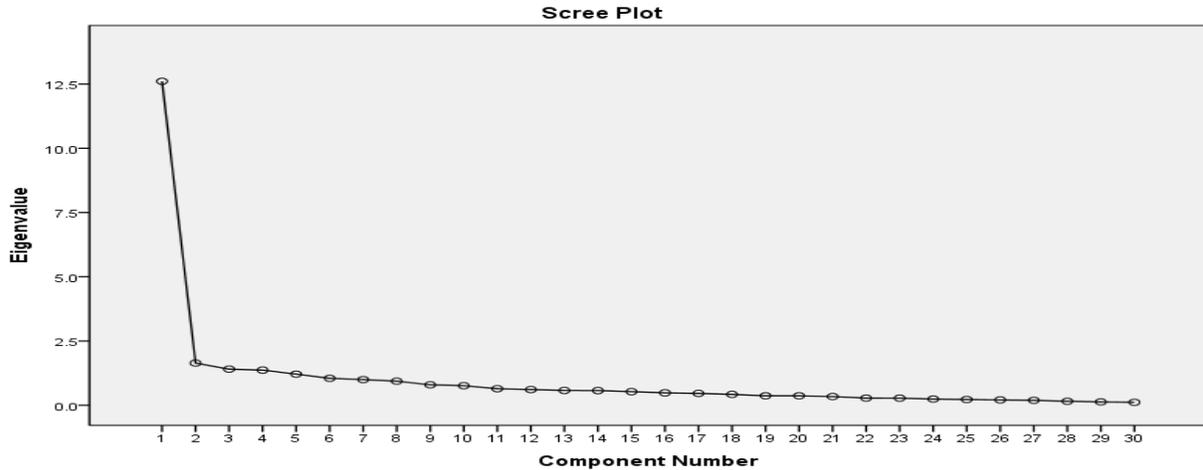
Life skills are essential for students' academic success, helping them think critically, solve problems, communicate effectively, and manage emotions. Various factors influence the development of these skills, including family support, school environment, peer interactions, and personal motivation. When students develop strong life skills, they can handle challenges better, stay focused, and perform well in academics. Understanding these factors can help create a well-rounded education system that supports both personal growth and academic achievement. In order to know the most influencing life skill for college students academic performance was measure by implementing Factor analysis.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.627
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2312.512
	Df	435
	Sig.	.000

Factors Influencing Life Skill for College Students Academic Performance	1	2	3
Self-Awareness			
I understand my academic strengths and weaknesses.	.603	-.345	-.052
I reflect on my past academic experiences to improve my future performance	.651	.008	-.031
I set realistic academic goals for myself	.518	-.072	.443
Critical Thinking			
I analyze academic problems from multiple perspectives before solving them.	.563	-.091	-.127
I apply logical reasoning when working on academic tasks.	.579	.122	.153
I enjoy discussions that challenge my viewpoints and enhance my understanding.	.581	.224	.372

Creative Thinking			
I enjoy brainstorming and developing innovative ideas for projects.	.677	-.402	.042
I find unique ways to approach academic challenges	.650	.261	-.031
I apply creativity in assignments, research papers, and presentations	.688	.117	.285
Decision-Making			
I seek advice from professors or mentors when making academic decisions.	.692	-.162	-.217
I balance my academic responsibilities with extracurricular activities wisely.	.603	.433	-.241
I evaluate different study techniques and choose the most effective one.	.654	.200	.138
Problem-Solving			
I can identify the root cause of academic difficulties and find solutions	.677	-.223	-.388
I try multiple approaches when solving academic problems.	.678	.304	-.258
I stay calm and rational when faced with academic challenges.	.698	.207	-.191
Coping with Stress			
I balance my academic responsibilities with self-care activities.	.624	-.114	-.393
I stay positive even under high academic pressure	.591	.329	-.201
I seek emotional support when academic stress becomes overwhelming	.646	.232	-.271
Time Management			
I allocate enough time for studying, revision, and self-improvement	.654	-.362	-.025
I use planners, to-do lists, or digital tools to manage my schedule	.643	.104	.130
I plan and organize my academic tasks effectively	.631	.241	.046
Resilience			
I bounce back quickly from academic failures or poor grades	.689	-.281	-.119
I learn from mistakes and use them to improve academically	.674	.028	.238
I stay motivated despite academic challenges	.655	.004	.181
Teamwork and Collaboration			
I enjoy working with others on academic projects	.683	-.388	-.072
I contribute actively to group discussions and teamwork	.704	.075	-.074
I respect the opinions and efforts of my group members	.706	.035	.153
Emotional Intelligence			
I can manage my emotions effectively in stressful academic situations	.648	-.382	.108
I remain calm when receiving academic feedback	.712	.035	.201
I maintain positive relationships with classmates and professors	.624	-.060	.300





The factor analysis identifies three major dimensions impacting college students' academic performance. Cognitive and Academic Skills include self-awareness, critical thinking, creative thinking, decision-making, problem-solving, and time management, with strong factor loadings such as reflecting on past academic experiences (0.651), brainstorming creative ideas (0.677), seeking academic advice (0.692), and allocating study time effectively (0.654). These skills enable students to analyze challenges, develop innovative solutions, and manage their studies efficiently. Emotional and Social Skills involve coping with stress, resilience, teamwork, and emotional intelligence, helping students handle academic pressure, collaborate effectively, and maintain emotional stability. Notable factor loadings include seeking emotional support during stress (0.646), bouncing back from academic failures (0.689), contributing to teamwork (0.704), and managing emotions in academic stress (0.648). Motivation and Self-Management focus on goal-setting, self-awareness, and organization, which contribute to persistence and academic performance. Key factor loadings include setting realistic academic goals (0.443), staying motivated despite challenges (0.655), and organizing academic tasks effectively (0.631). The high Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value (0.627) confirms the adequacy of the sample for factor analysis, while Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Chi-Square = 2312.512, df = 435, Sig. = 0.000) indicates significant correlations among variables. These findings suggest that enhancing cognitive, emotional, and self-management skills is essential for improving

students' academic success, resilience, and overall well-being.

VII. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Three Core Dimensions Identified:

The factor analysis revealed that college students' academic performance is significantly influenced by three primary skill dimensions:

- Cognitive and Academic Skills
- Emotional and Social Skills
- Motivation and Self-Management

Cognitive and Academic Skills:

This dimension showed the strongest association with academic success, supported by high factor loadings for abilities such as problem-solving, decision-making, critical thinking, and time management. Students who reflect on their experiences and manage their study schedules tend to perform better.

Emotional and Social Skills:

Students with resilience, emotional intelligence, and teamwork skills were more capable of managing academic stress and collaborating in learning environments. High factor loadings in this dimension underscore the importance of mental and emotional support mechanisms.

Motivation and Self-Management:

Skills like goal-setting, organization, and sustained motivation were also critical. Though this dimension had slightly lower factor loadings in some areas (e.g.,

0.443 for goal setting), its contribution to academic persistence and consistency remains significant.

Statistical Validity:

The KMO value of 0.627 confirms the sampling adequacy for factor analysis, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) supports the presence of valid interrelationships among variables.

VIII. SUGGESTIONS

- **Integrate Life Skills into Curriculum:**
Educational institutions should embed structured life skills training—such as time management, problem-solving, and emotional intelligence—into their academic curriculum or orientation programs.
- **Offer Workshops on Emotional Resilience:**
Colleges can organize regular workshops focusing on stress management, teamwork, and coping mechanisms to help students build emotional and social stability.
- **Promote Goal-Setting and Motivation Techniques:**
Academic advisors or counselors should provide guidance on setting realistic academic goals, staying motivated, and managing academic tasks effectively through personal development sessions.
- **Peer Mentorship and Counseling Support:**
Encourage peer mentoring systems where senior students support juniors in managing academic and emotional challenges. Access to mental health counseling should also be improved.
- **Monitor and Support Struggling Students:**
Institutions should identify students struggling in any of the three dimensions (especially motivation/self-management) and offer targeted interventions or coaching support.
- **Encourage Reflective Practices:**
Promote activities that allow students to reflect on their academic performance (e.g., journaling, feedback sessions) to enhance cognitive and decision-making skills.

IX. CONCLUSION

The study identifies three major dimensions Cognitive and Academic Skills, Emotional and Social Skills, and Motivation and Self-Management as significant

factors influencing academic performance among college students. Cognitive skills such as critical thinking, decision-making, and time management showed strong associations with effective academic functioning. Emotional and social abilities, including stress management and teamwork, enable students to navigate academic challenges collaboratively and with resilience. Motivation and self-management, though slightly lower in factor loading, still contribute meaningfully to academic persistence and task completion.

The statistical validity of the analysis is supported by a KMO value of 0.627 and significant Bartlett's Test results, confirming inter-variable correlations. These findings underscore the importance of a holistic educational approach that integrates academic, emotional, and motivational support systems to enhance student performance and well-being.

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