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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIFE SKILLS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS AMONG HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The present study was subjected to determine the relationship of life skills with academic achievements among health and physical education students at the university level of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. **Methods:** The research sample consisted n=335 (265 (79.1%) males and 70 (20.9%) females from the discipline of health and physical education. In this regard, stratified random sampling was applied. A survey research design from a descriptive model was used. A self-made closed-ended questionnaire was properly developed and used for the collection of the required information. The collected data were evaluated using both descriptive and inferential statistical tests. **Results:** Results indicated that the overall level of academic achievement and the various life skills of participants are desirable. The findings also showed that life skills (decision-making skills, interpersonal communication skills, and identity development skills) have an important connection with academic achievement as well as having the required predictive capacity for determining the criterion variable of academic achievement. **Conclusion:** The results supported the hypotheses as the student from the university consider life skills development an important tool for the improvement of academic achievement of student.

Key Words: Exploring, Life Skills, Academic Achievement, University, Student-athletes

INTRODUCTION

Life skills are those techniques through which an individual successfully performs in different environments such as home, school, neighborhood, and community (Gould & Carson, 2008). Life skills are the basic features of self-confidence, self-esteem, hard work, and emotional management that the athlete develops and then transfers to non-sport settings (Lerner, Phelps, Forman, & Bowers, 2009). Physical, psychological, and leadership skills are life skills that

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enable people to have a safe and prosperous life (United Nations, International Children's Emergency Fund [UNICEF], 2003).

The rapid transition affects diverse aspects of life, such as schooling, the workplace, and domestic life, in global technology and economies. Learning life skills is one of the essential resources for overcoming these problems in these rapidly evolving scenarios (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). In this rising and new, chaotic world, students need to develop life skills to cope with tension and anger. Life skills growth allows students to discover new ways and means to overcome their learning issues (Webster-Stratton, Reid, & Hammond, 2005), preventing them from consuming cigarettes and liquor, develop confidence in addressing (Botvin, Griffin, Paul, & Macaulay, 2003). To tackle these new challenges, it is necessary to know how to cope. Personal and social competencies are an important way of addressing these problems in this respect (Cohen, 2006).

In various aspects of life, we must all have life skills. For example, we have to think that new risks and problems flood into the social, technological, and political spheres of individuals (Payton et al., 2000). Similarly, when discussing various situations and considering the ethical implications, we need logical analysis to find a way to fix the issues. From family, neighbors, parents, and teachers, children and young people will develop their life skills. In addition, they can learn life lessons from their role models. Therefore, an effort should be made to include an effective home, school, and community atmosphere in which they can develop life skills adequately. (Elias, Zins, Graczyk, & Weissberg, 2003).

The concept of academic attainment is referring to the capacity of students to achieve excellence in educations. The percentage, Cumulative Grade Percentage Average (CGPA), and complete educational benchmarks such as secondary school certification, high school certificate, master's degree, MS/M.Phil/Ph.D are academic achievements. Research showed that life skills play a significant part in inspiring learners to meet higher educational standards. Therefore, it is possible to include the incorporation of life skills when planning the framework at any tier of education (Turner, Chandler & Heffer, 2009). In contrast to the above, one study showed that implementing life skills had no significant impact on women's academic achievements. The same research also underlines that teaching skills tend to minimize the lurking of learners (Scent & Boes, 2014). To get a brief information on the relationship between life skills and academic achievement is required. Obtaining health and physical education students' information in respect of life skills and academic achievement can help develop more strategies of life skills development program.

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the differences between the high average scores of life skills (decision-making, interpersonal communication, and identity development) and students' academic achievement.
2. To analyze the relationship between various components of life skills (decision-making, interpersonal communication, and identity development) and students' academic achievement.
3. To assess the role of predictive variables in determining the criterion variable (students' academic achievement).

Hypotheses

Ha 1 There are significant differences between the high average scores of life skills (decision-making, interpersonal communication, and identity development) and students' academic achievement.

Ha 2 There is a significant relationship between various components of life skills (decision-making, interpersonal communication, and identity development) and students' academic achievement.

Ha 3 Predictive variables (decision-making, interpersonal communication, and identity development) have a significant role in determining the criterion variable (students' academic achievement).

Procedural Framework

The following flowchart is given to describe the procedural framework used in this study. The basic aim of the flowchart is to make the task easier to manage, break down the article writing process into the undermentioned steps.

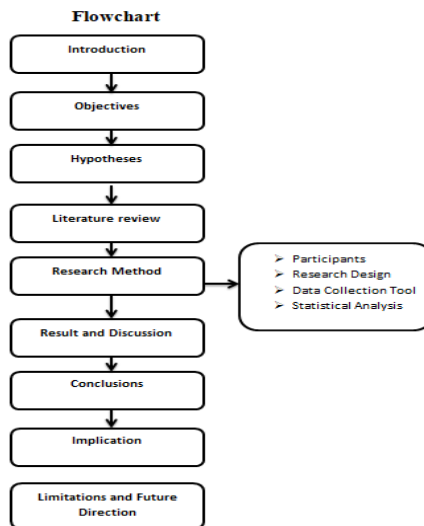


Figure 1. Flowchart is showing the procedural framework

LITERATURE REVIEW

Life skills are those skills that enable you to adapt and act constructively to overcome daily problems (World Health Organization, [WHO], 2003). The Life Skills Program (Reynaert, Bouverne-de-Bie, Vandeveld, 2009; Roose & Bouverne-De Bie, 2007) seeks to provide a way to achieve certain goals and encourage children and young people to grow well in their cultures. Participation in sport can acquire these life skills by watching their role models closely or even by observing an emotional encounter on the field of play. (Pierce, Gould, & Camiré, 2017). This study are hoped to be more useful for administrators, educators, curriculum designers, and other social workers in improving teaching-learning and personality development for students. (Arif, Khan, Shaikh, & Saba, 2020). Psychological conditions such as confrontation, mental distress, anger, and anxiety are estimated as host factors for high-risk substance addiction and alcohol use activity by teenagers (Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Friend, & Powell, 2009). It is identified that one of the important skills to motivate people to act wisely and stay away from high-risk actions is to develop life skills. It is believed that individuals with high mental maturity are less willing to intervene in unsocial high-risk actions, free of tension and free from unlike interactions and social influence (Wolfe, Jaffe, & Crooks, 2008). Education is recognized as one of the contributions of a successful human being. The importance of schooling can be understood on the premise that during school, the potential of humans evolves (Merriam & Baumgartner,

2020). The lack of schooling is classified as one of the major causes of every society's downfall. We will recognize, research scientifically, and then solve social, economic, and geopolitical problems with the aid of education. Providing adequate education not only allows people to train them for their future lives but is also perceived as one of the primary metrics for the general growth of every community (Wang & Noe, 2010).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Participants

The study's population is comprised of all those students who have been registered at Public and Private Sector Universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study sample from the selected population is comprised of 335 (265 (79.1 percent) males and 70 (20.9 percent) females selected from 18 separate Public and Private Sector Universities through the stratified technique of random sampling.

Research Design

A cross-sectional research design was necessary to achieve the study's intended goals. The researcher used the survey methodology to acquire the desired statistics, in which the data were obtained at one time from various students at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's private and public sector universities.

Data Collection Tool

The intended instrument for collecting data is a questionnaire comprised several skills such as decision-making skills, interpersonal communication skills, and identity development skills. Concerning the mentioned items, a question about evaluating the average results of learners has been listed so that to achieve the academic achievement of the participants on this ground.

Statistical Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency and Percentage were used to interpret and analyze the demographic attributes of the participants. Statistical tests such as the Independent Sample t-test, Pearson Correlation, and Multiple regression were used to test the set hypotheses of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Statistics

Table 1 States that 335 individuals participating in the analysis were discussed. As seen in table 4.1, the gender, race, mother tongue, and current sports in which the students participated were taken into consideration. As for the demographic gender distribution, the student distribution seen in Table 1 was 265 (79.1 percent) males and 70 (20.9 percent) females depending on their gender. out of 335 students 261 (77. %) were having Pakhtoon ethnicity, 60

(17. %) were Saraiki, 10 (3.0 %) were from Hindko and only 04 (1.2 %) were those who belong to any other ethnicity. Similarly, the mother tongue was analyzed from four categories, such as Pashto, Saraiki, Hindko, and any others; out of 335 students 254 (75.8 %) were speaking the Pashto language, 61 (18.2 %) were Saraiki speaking, 12 (3.6 %) were Hindko speaking and 08 (2.4 %) were those whose spoken other languages. Table 1 showed that the majority of the participants fell in the game of Cricket. Likewise, 64 (19.1%) participated in Football, 10 (3.0%) took part in Hockey, 64 (19.1%) played Volleyball, 54 (16.1%) participated in Badminton, 04 (1.2%) took part in Basketball, 22 (6.6%) participated in Table Tennis and 27 (8.1%) participated in athletics. The following table is presenting formats of sport the students participated in. Out of a sample of n=335 university students, 28.06 % identified as individual sports participants, and 71.94% identified as team sports participants.

Table 1: *Demographics characteristics of participants (n=375)*

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	265	79.1
	Female	70	20.9
	Total	335	100.0
Ethnicity	Pakhtoon	261	77.9
	Saraiki	60	17.9
	Hindko	10	3.0
	Any other	4	1.2
	Total	335	100.0
Mother Tongue	Pashto	254	75.8
	Saraiki	61	18.2
	Hindko	12	3.6
	Any other	8	2.4
	Total	335	100.0
Current Sports Participation	Cricket	103	30.7
	Football	64	19.1
	Hockey	10	3.0
	Volleyball	51	15.2
	Badminton	54	16.1
	Basketball	4	1.2
Format of Sport	Table Tennis	22	6.6
	Athletic	27	8.1
	Team	241	71.9
	Individual	94	29.1
	Total	335	100.0

Testing of Hypotheses

Ha 1 There are significant differences between the average scores of life skills (decision-making, interpersonal communication, and identity development) and students’ academic achievement

Independent sample t-test was used to assess the significant differences between the average scores of life skills and students’ academic achievement and the results are presented in table 2. The analyzed data indicated that obtained average scores difference in respect of various components of life skills such as decision-making, interpersonal communication, and identity development, and academic achievement are significant with hypothetical difference. This means that level of various components of life skills and academic achievement are higher than the hypothetical average. (3.65, 3.46, 3.34, and 3.54 > 3)

Table 2: *Differences between the average scores of life skills (decision-making, interpersonal communication, and identity development) and students’ academic achievement*

<i>Variables</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Hypothetical Average</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig .</i>
	33			31.6	33	.00
Decision Making Skills	5	3.65	3	7	4	2
Inter-personal Communication Skills	33			28.7	33	.00
	5	3.46	3	2	4	1
	33			27.8	33	.00
Identity Development Skills	5	3.34	3	1	4	0
	33			38.2	33	.00
Academic Achievement	5	3.56	3	7	4	0

Significant at the 0.05

Ha 2 There is a significant relationship between life skills (decision-making, interpersonal communication, and identity development) and students’ academic achievement.

Pearson correlation was applied to find out the association of life skills with the students’ academic achievement. The analyzed statistical inferences depict the significant correlation between the two variables because showing a significance of .624**, .591**, and .583** at 0.01 level (2-tailed) respectively for decision-making skills, interpersonal communication skills, and identity development skills.

Table 3: Pearson correlation coefficient among triple skills and academic achievement

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Correlation coefficient</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Decision Making Skills</i>	3.65			
<i>Academic Achievement</i>	3.56	335	.624**	.000
	3.46			
<i>Inter-personal Communication Skills</i>	3.56	335	.591**	.000
<i>Academic Achievement</i>				
	3.34			
<i>Identity Development Skills</i>	3.56	335	.583**	.000
<i>Academic Achievement</i>				

Significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed)

Ha 3 Predictive variables (*decision-making, interpersonal communication, and identity development*) have significant role in determining the criterion variable (students' academic achievement).

To assess the influence of different life skills (decision-making, interpersonal communication, and identity development) and students' academic achievement and the results are shown in Table 4. The p-value for all the criterion variables was noted as (decision-making =.001, interpersonal communication =.000, and identity development =.008). The p-values for all the variables were noted less than the standard value of .05 which indicated that there is a significant influence of different factors on the academic achievement of university's students

Table 4. Multiple regression analysis showing prediction of criterion through predictive

<i>Model</i>	<i>Unstandardized</i>		<i>Standardized Coefficients</i>		
	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>Sig</i>
<i>Constant</i>	1.249	.330		3.782	.000
<i>Decision Making Skills</i>	.282	.086	.246	3.267	.001
<i>Inter-personal Communication Skills</i>	.367	.045	.394	8.092	.000
<i>Identity Development Skills</i>	.159	.059	.127	2.681	.008

Dependent variable: Academic Achievement

DISCUSSION

This survey aimed to determine the relationship between life skills and academic achievements among university students of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The analyzed statistical inferences depict the significant correlation

between the two variables because showing a significance at 0.01 level (2-tailed) respectively for decision-making skills, interpersonal communication skills, and identity development skills (table 3). Likewise, the statistical inferences indicated that all variables have significant predictive power so that their predictability is lower than the significant level.05 (table 4). Research has established the acquisition of life skills either specifically related to academic performance or in related fields, such as school preparedness, or findings resulting from academic standards in some cases. Research showed that life skills play an important role in inspiring learners to meet higher academic standards. Therefore, it is possible to include the incorporation of life skills when planning the curriculum at any level of schooling (Turner, Chandler, & Heffer, 2009). The study highlighted that the key reasons that induce fatigue and emotional exhaustion are inadequate management copies. The elevated level of exhaustion and mental fatigue relates to academic failure. Life skills thus have a very good impact on the academic results of students (Flay & Allred, 2010).

The results of the present study might be interpreted with caution because each of the participants used in the analysis of life skills and academic achievement finished the study with one-time data collection. In this study, the sample size consisted of (n=335) having heterogeneous attributes such as age, gender, mother language, and formats of the sport. Besides, each participant was contacted one time for data collection, and a longitudinal study in which each participant produced data several times would have improved the validity of the data.

Compliance was one of the challenges faced by this report. Any of the individuals mentioned are not routinely trained in the sense of the learning of life skills by athletics. Similar studies have been found that athletes have documented many qualities such as teamwork workability, time management skills, careful preparation, ability to negotiate, self-efficacy, and leadership skills, but their coach has not specifically trained them to improve these skills (Parker & Boutelle, 2009; Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 1993). A study revealed that coaches have limited awareness, particularly in two main areas of sports nutrition and psychology. Sporting psychology treatment trainers and exercise trainers must then be coordinated and involved (Lemyre, Trudel, & Durand-Bush, 2007).

CONCLUSION

The results of the present study were supporting that development of life skills could promote a remarkable development in perspective of academic achievement among university students. The teaching skills of life could

therefore be viewed as an integral part of all Pakistani educational institutions. In order to achieve this, the educational curriculum of each discipline may include a minimum of 2 hours a week. Various life skills such as decision-making skills, communication skills and identity development skills were highlighted. Pakistani students are imperative for their academic efforts in order to make the correct decision at the right time, for proper communication and identity development. However, the researcher faced several limitations during study, if overcome these limitations, could obtain more desirable results in respect of the relationship between life skills and academic achievements among university's students of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

IMPLICATIONS

The study finds that women are less likely to participate in sport, one of the possible implications. This finding, therefore, draws the attention of staff and politicians to improve the participation of women in sport. The results of this and other studies like this show that life skills and academic development among students are a positive link. Therefore, these findings support the idea that life and the academic development of students are two disciplines that are essential and that they are both regarded as harmonized.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

One of the limitations of the present study was that the researcher geographically confined his study to a Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a province of Pakistan. The researcher believes that extending data by adding other geographical and socio-economic areas of the country would provide better results that could help in statistically examine the role of sport in the development of life skills and later on the transfer of these skills to other domains of life.

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