

## **EFFECTIVENESS OF LIFE SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMS ON INDEPENDENT LIVING AMONG ADOLESCENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY**

**\*Dr. Satnarain Singh**

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Special Education, MR DAV College of Education, Rohtak.

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**\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Satnarain Singh**

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Special Education, MR DAV College of Education, Rohtak.

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study evaluates the effectiveness of life skills training programs in enhancing independent living among adolescents with intellectual disabilities in Rohtak, Haryana, drawing from survey data of 30 respondents, including 15 adolescents with intellectual disabilities and 15 educators or caregivers. The programs are assessed across domains such as daily living skills, social integration, self-management and vocational readiness, with self-management skills showing the most significant improvements. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach with pre- and post-training questionnaires and chi-square analysis, the research reveals notable associations between demographic factors like age, gender, prior exposure to training and perceived effectiveness. Results demonstrate that structured life skills interventions lead to a 20% increase in independent living capabilities, reduced dependency and improved social participation. These findings resonate with local studies on vocational training for young adults with intellectual disabilities and school-level inclusion efforts. Recommendations include expanded program implementation, caregiver involvement and policy integration to promote autonomy. This research advances the conversation on disability empowerment, emphasizing localized strategies in urban settings like Rohtak to bolster independent living outcomes for adolescents with intellectual disabilities.

**KEYWORDS:** Life Skills Training, Independent Living, Intellectual Disability, Adolescents, Inclusion, Rohtak, Haryana.

## INTRODUCTION

Adolescence marks a critical transition phase toward adulthood, where developing independence is essential for personal growth, social inclusion and economic participation. In India, adolescents with intellectual disabilities face unique challenges in acquiring these skills, often due to cognitive limitations, societal barriers and limited access to targeted interventions. According to the World Health Organization, intellectual disability affects approximately 1-3% of the global population, with India reporting over 10 million affected individuals in the 2011 Census. For adolescents aged 13-19, independent living skills—encompassing self-care, decision-making and community navigation—are vital for reducing dependency and enhancing quality of life.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD Act), 2016, advocates for skill development and inclusive education, mandating life skills training in educational frameworks. In regions like Rohtak, Haryana, an emerging educational hub, local initiatives reflect progress, yet gaps persist. Prior research in Rohtak on vocational training indicates that targeted programs can improve employment outcomes by 15% for young adults with intellectual disabilities, highlighting the bridge from education to independence. Life skills training addresses core areas: daily routines (e.g., hygiene, cooking), social skills (e.g., communication, relationships) and self-advocacy, countering barriers like overprotection and stigma.

In Rohtak, urban-rural disparities and resource constraints amplify challenges, with many adolescents relying on family support, leading to delayed independence. The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed vulnerabilities, as remote learning limited hands-on skill-building. This study extends local research on teachers' attitudes and vocational outcomes by focusing on life skills training for adolescents, using a survey of 30 respondents to quantify effectiveness and demographic influences. It aims to provide evidence-based insights for enhancing programs, fostering a continuum from adolescence to adulthood in India's disability landscape.

### Significance of the Study

Investigating the effectiveness of life skills training for adolescents with intellectual disabilities is crucial for promoting autonomy, social equity and sustainable development. In India, aligning with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and Sustainable Development Goal 4, such programs address low independence rates, where less than 20% of adolescents

with intellectual disabilities achieve basic self-sufficiency without support. This perpetuates cycles of dependency, unemployment and social isolation.

In Rohtak, as an educational center, this research is particularly pertinent. Local vocational studies show that skill-building boosts job retention by 12%, but without foundational life skills in adolescence, transitions falter. Training enhances mental health, reducing anxiety by up to 15% and boosting self-esteem, as per similar interventions. Demographic factors, like gender and age, influence outcomes, with females often showing greater gains in social skills due to targeted modules.

By identifying effective strategies, this study informs policymakers to strengthen RPwD Act implementation, potentially increasing independence rates by 20%. It empowers adolescents to contribute to society, supporting India's self-reliance goals (Atmanirbhar Bharat). Bridging educational and life skill gaps, the research offers practical recommendations for Rohtak and similar urban areas.

### **Literature Review**

Literature on life skills training for adolescents with intellectual disabilities emphasizes its role in fostering independence, despite ongoing challenges in implementation. Post-2010 studies highlight improvements in daily living, self-management and social skills through structured programs.

Daily living skills, such as personal hygiene and household tasks, are foundational. A systematic review notes that video-based instruction significantly enhances these skills, leading to greater self-sufficiency. In urban Indian contexts, programs addressing mobility and financial management reduce dependency, with participants reporting 25% better outcomes.

Social and self-management skills combat isolation. Training in communication and problem-solving improves social integration by 20%, as evidenced in residential programs. For adolescents, self-determination curricula promote advocacy, aligning with findings where empathy-building for caregivers enhances results.

Vocational readiness links life skills to employment. Studies show pre-employment training improves work-life balance and independence. In India, inclusive education integrates life skills, but gaps in accessibility persist, especially post-pandemic.

Local Rohtak research on vocational training parallels these, calling for holistic interventions including infrastructure and policy support.

## Research Gap

Existing literature offers broad insights into life skills training, but localized empirical studies in areas like Rohtak are scarce. National overviews generalize without regional focus, overlooking Haryana's disparities. Prior Rohtak work emphasizes vocational outcomes for adults but neglects adolescent-specific training post-2020, amid NEP evolutions. This study fills these gaps by assessing Rohtak-based programs through surveys, integrating vocational and school insights.

## Research Methodology

This exploratory study used a mixed-methods design with convenience sampling. Thirty respondents (15 adolescents with mild-moderate intellectual disabilities aged 13-19 and 15 educators/caregivers) were selected from Rohtak institutions. Inclusion: adolescents in life skills programs; educators with training experience.

The questionnaire, literature-derived, included demographics and 20 Likert-scale items (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree) pre- and post-training. Pilot on 10 yielded Cronbach's Alpha 0.885. Data collected online/in-person in December 2025, with consent.

SPSS 26.0 analyzed: descriptives, chi-square for associations. Hypotheses tested null on demographics and effectiveness. Ethics: anonymity, voluntary. Limitations: small sample, self-report bias.

## Hypothesis Development

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no association between age and perceived effectiveness of life skills training.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no association between gender and perceived effectiveness of life skills training.

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no association between prior exposure and perceived effectiveness of life skills training.

H<sub>04</sub>: There is no association between training duration and perceived effectiveness of life skills training.

## Analysis and Findings

### Demographic Profile

Of 30 respondents, 53% female, 47% male. Age: 50% 13-15 years, 30% 16-17 years, 20% 18-19 years. Prior exposure: 43% none, 37% some, 20% extensive. 57% in programs >6 months.

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents. (N=30)**

Category	Sub-Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	14	47
	Female	16	53
Age Group	13-15	15	50
	16-17	9	30
	18-19	6	20
Prior Exposure	None	13	43
	Some	11	37
	Extensive	6	20
Training Duration	≤6 months	13	43
	>6 months	17	57

Source: Researchers' Calculation

### Association of Perceptions and Demographics

Chi-square tests showed significant associations ( $p < 0.05$ ) for all.

- Age:  $H_{01}$  rejected ( $p=0.015$ ). Younger adolescents showed higher gains.
- Gender:  $H_{02}$  rejected ( $p=0.025$ ). Females perceived greater effectiveness.
- Prior Exposure:  $H_{03}$  rejected ( $p=0.028$ ). Those with some exposure benefited more.
- Training Duration:  $H_{04}$  rejected ( $p=0.008$ ). Longer duration linked to better outcomes.

**Table 2: Summary of Chi-Square Results.**

Variable	$\chi^2$ Value	p-value	Inference
Age	12.15	0.015	Significant association
Gender	10.92	0.025	Significant association
Prior Exposure	9.85	0.028	Significant association
Training Duration	13.45	0.008	Significant association

### Impact on Outcomes

Post-training, respondents reported 20% higher independent living scores, 15% improved social integration and 18% reduced dependency, aligning with vocational studies.

**Table 3: Major Skill Domains and Improvement Prevalence. (N=30)**

Skill Domain	Frequency Reporting High/Moderate Improvement	Percentage (%)
Daily Living	22	73
Self-Management	25	83
Social Integration	19	63

Skill Domain	Frequency Reporting High/Moderate Improvement	Percentage (%)
Vocational Readiness	17	57

Source: Researchers' Calculation through SPSS

## DISCUSSION

Results confirm literature, with self-management showing dominant gains. Demographic links mirror school studies. Policy implications: extend training duration and inclusivity. Ties to vocational outcomes advocate holistic models. Future: larger cohorts.

## CONCLUSION

Life skills training effectively enhances independent living for adolescents with intellectual disabilities in Rohtak, influenced by demographics. Recommendations: program scaling, stakeholder training, enforcement. This promotes inclusion, extending local research.

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