

The Results of Life Skills Assessment Criteria for Lower Secondary Students in Phanatnikhom District, Chonburi Province

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Abstract

The objectives of this survey research were to analyze the results of life skills assessment criteria, and to compare the results of life skills assessment criteria for lower secondary students in Phanatnikhom District, Chonburi Province, classified by genders, ages, and grade levels. A sample of 90 students was selected by random sampling. The research instrument used was the life skills assessment criteria for lower secondary school students by Kitjarat, Makmee, and Pradujprom (2018) using Google Forms to collect the data, which were analyzed by descriptive statistics such as arithmetic mean, standard deviation, percentage, Testing Group Differences using T-tests, ANOVA, and Nonparametric Measures. The results were shown as follows: 1) The results of the life skills assessment criteria for lower secondary students in Phanatnikhom District, Chonburi Province were composed of 10 elements, and overall life skills were at an excellent level, namely decision making, problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relationship, self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions, and coping with stress. 2) The life skills assessment criteria for lower secondary students comparison classified by genders, ages, and grade levels showed no significant difference between life skills levels.

Keywords: Assessment criteria/ Life skills/ Lower secondary students

Introduction

Life skills are social abilities that can help people deal with various situations in their daily lives effectively and adaptively in the future (World Health Organization. 1997, p. 1). Life skills help teenagers to bring out their ability and knowledge connected with attitude, analytical process, and make an appropriate decision. Furthermore, it can build up the abilities for the children to be able to join the society, be able to handle any problems, and behave appropriately. Thus, life skills are very important for everyone in the real-life practice.

According to the World Health Organization (1997, p. 1) concept, life skills consist of 10 essential skills, which are decision making, problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relationship, self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions, and coping with stress. All these skills can help humans in dealing with all situations effectively and adaptively in the future. Moreover, it can help teenagers to bring out their knowledge to connect with attitude through analyzing and decision making (National Institute for child and family. 2012).

Currently, lower secondary schools are mandatory education sessions with the age that has changed, especially between the ages of 12-16 years. Females reach adolescents quicker than males about 2 years and will develop until about the age of 18 to reach adulthood, which should be getting promoted about skills assessment criteria. It is a focusing time for students to explore themselves related to their ability and develop it in the future using life skills assessment criteria. Thus, the researchers are interested in studying life skills assessment criteria for lower secondary school students, which may help to assess whether lower secondary school students have the ability to make decisions or deal with problems. It, especially, would be a guideline for self-assessment and develop a personality in the future.

According to the literature review and related research studies, there are many researchers who are interested to study life skills. One of them had a study on the developing life skills measurement model of upper secondary school students (Erawan., 2010), but there are some major lacks on the results of assessment criteria for self-assessment and self-development in the future. The research also indicated

that the different genders had different life skills because of the physiological differences, ages, and other indicative experiences of life was over. The educational levels indicated that the skills and knowledge which could affect the efficiency of free time to develop life skills differently (Thabmal. 2016, p. 540). Thus, this research is to investigate the results of life skills assessment criteria for lower secondary students. The researchers used the life skills assessment criteria of Wiraya Kitjarat, Pattrawadee Makmee, and Piyathip Pradujprom (2018) to assess criteria for lower secondary students. The aims of using these assessment criteria is to create a guideline for self-development, decision making, and self-evaluation, and to improve the defect.

Objective of the Research

1. To analyze the results of life skills assessment criteria for lower secondary students in Phanatnikhom District, Chonburi Province.
2. To compare the results of life skills assessment criteria for lower secondary students in Phanatnikhom District, Chonburi Province, classified by genders, ages, and grade levels.

Scope of Research

1. Population and Sample

The population was 469 lower secondary school students studying in the 2nd semester of 2017 at Chalernuppathumpanyatorn Municipal School 4 in Phanatnikhom District, Chonburi Province.

Simple random sampling was used to randomize samples of 30 students for each grade selected from a group of 90 students.

2. Research Variables

2.1 There are 3 independent variables:

- 1) Genders divided into 2 groups: male and female.
- 2) Ages divided into 4 groups: Age of 13, 14, 15, and 16.
- 3) Lower secondary students divided into 3 levels: grade 7, 8, and 9.

2.2 The results of life skills assessment criteria for lower secondary students in Phanatnikhom District, Chonburi Province is a dependent variable. Ten life skills factors of World Health Organization (1997, p. 1) with 49 indicators and 60 assessment criteria, which are decision making (5 indicators), problem solving (6 indicators), creative thinking (5 indicators), critical thinking (4 indicators), effective communication (5 indicators), interpersonal relationship (4 indicators), self-awareness (5 indicators), empathy (5 indicators), coping with emotions (5 indicators), and coping with stress (5 indicators), were scored by providing 1 for implementation and 0 for non-implementation.

Research Methodology

This survey research is to have sufficient numbers of representatives, and to be able to compare the data quantitatively by using statistics of at least 10 percent of the population or a sample group of at least 30 persons. Gay (1996, p. 142) used simple random sampling for data selection from a total of 90 students, which consisting of 30 students in grade 7, 30 students in grade 8, and 30 students in grade 9.

Research Instrument

Life skills assessment criteria for lower secondary school students in Phanatnikhom District, Chonburi Province, with ten life skills factors of World Health Organization (1997, p. 1) with 49 indicators and 60 assessment criteria, which are decision making (5 indicators), problem solving (6 indicators), creative thinking (5 indicators), critical thinking (4 indicators), effective communication (5 indicators), interpersonal relationship (4 indicators), self-awareness (5 indicators), empathy (5 indicators), coping with emotions (5 indicators) and coping with stress (5 indicators), taken from Kitjarat et al. (2018). Quality inspection tools and content validity were to check for question quality, and the operational definition was to check the clarity in the language and content. The content validity index measured by 3 experts found that content validity index item via all quality criteria. CVI value was not less than 0.78 and the content validity index of the S-CVI value was at 0.96, which passed the criteria (Polit & Beck. 2007, p. 467). Quality inspection to achieve the reliability was done by using a questionnaire through an assessment of the direct linear content experts to try out with lower secondary that was not assigned to a sample of 30

people. To find the correct item of total correlation and selected questions of which the values had the power to classify the items that were positive from 30 questions above. Quality tools for reliable internal consistency checks were to find the Cronbach's alpha coefficient using the alpha coefficient was above 0.70. It found out that the alpha coefficient was 0.95 (Pallant. 2013, p. 104) by using a checklist form (Google form) as a research instrument, which helped create an online questionnaire to collect data easily and quickly without much cost. Extra precaution was implemented when the questionnaire was finished before initiating the survey. The test conditions were then properly and reliably tested to prevent errors that might happen later.

Data Collection

Researchers had collected the data through Google Forms from 90 lower secondary students from February 8th to 9th, 2018.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as arithmetic mean, standard deviation, percentage, and Testing Group Differences using T-tests, ANOVA, and Nonparametric Measures through SPSS.

The life skills assessment criteria of Kitjarat et al. (2018) were:

Answer	Scores
Have taken	1
No action	0

Results

Table 1. The number and percentage of lower secondary students.

Characteristics of Lower Secondary Students	Number (n=90)	Percent
Gender		
Male	45	50.00
Female	45	50.00
Age		
13 years	25	27.78

Table 1. (Cont.)

Characteristics of Lower Secondary Students	Number (n=90)	Percent
14 years	27	30.00
15 years	25	27.78
16 years	13	14.44
Grade		
Grade 7	30	33.33
Grade 8	30	33.33
Grade 9	30	33.34

Table 1 displays the number and percentage of lower secondary students. Results showed that there were 45 males (50.00%) and 45 females (50.00%). There were 25 subjects of the age of 13 (27.78%), 27 subjects of the age of 14 (30.00%), 25 subjects of the age of 15 (27.78%), and 13 subjects of the age of 16 (14.44%). There were 30 students in each grade selected from a group of 90 students.

Table 2. Results of life skills assessment criteria

Life Skills Assessment Criteria	Number of Questions	<i>M</i>	<i>S.D.</i>
Decision Making	5	.97	.10
Problem Solving	6	.97	.06
Creative Thinking	5	.95	.14
Critical Thinking	4	.98	.10
Effective Communication	5	.96	.11
Interpersonal Relationship	4	.96	.13
Self-Awareness	5	.98	.08
Empathy	5	.98	.11
Coping with Emotions	5	.97	.09
Coping with Stress	5	.98	.05

Table 2 shows the results of life skills assessment criteria. It was found that the overall life skills assessment criteria of lower secondary school students were at an excellent level.

Table 3. A comparative analysis of the effects of using life skills assessment criteria classified by genders

Gender	<i>n</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Male	45	88	.459	.65
Female	45			

Table 3 shows the comparative analysis of the effects of using life skills assessment criteria classified by genders. It was found that the genders of the lower secondary school students were not significantly different at .05 level.

Table 4. A comparative analysis of the effects of using life skills assessment criteria classified by ages

Source of variation	<i>Df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between samples (Treatments)	3	.001	.000	.053	.984
Within samples (Error)	86	.118	.005		
Total	89	.119			

Table 4 on the other hand displays the comparative analysis of the effects of using life skills assessment criteria classified by ages. It showed that the ages of the lower secondary school students were not significantly different at .05 level.

Table 5. A comparative analysis of the effects of using life skills assessment criteria classified by grade levels

Source of variation	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between samples (Treatments)	2	.010	.005	1.252	.302
Within samples (Error)	87	.109	.004		
Total	89	.119			

Table 5 displays the comparative analysis of the effects of using life skills assessment criteria classified by grade levels. It showed that the grade levels of the lower secondary school students were not significantly different at .05 level.

Conclusion

In overall life skills of the lower secondary school students in Phanatnikhom District, Chonburi Province were at an excellent level, with ten life skills factors that affected the life skills assessment criteria as follows:

1) Decision Making Skills: Students could make appropriate decisions to evaluate the success of their own choices by comparing the pros and cons of the alternatives.

2) Problem Solving Skills: Students had the ability to solve the problems that could be identified and then chose an approach to resolve the situation properly.

3) Creative Thinking Skills: Students could search for ideas or views which were innovative for everyday scenarios allowing them to create and innovate.

4) Critical Thinking Skills: Students have a process of thinking using judgment to make rational judgments around it. Reasons for analysis are used on issues.

5) Effective Communication Skills: Students could select appropriate communication methods by listening to others and comment appropriately.

6) Interpersonal Relationship Skills: Students were polite and friendly to adapt to others in various situations and were able to cooperate effectively with their own peers.

7) Self-awareness Skills: Students knew their abilities, self-esteem levels, strengths, and weaknesses, and they also had goals in life.

8) Empathy Skills: Students recognize and understand the differences in each person. They committed their attention to the feelings of others and expressed themselves appropriately.

9) Coping with Emotions Skills: Students had the knowledge and understanding of their own emotions. They could manage and control their emotions properly.

10) Coping with Stress Skills: Students can cope, prevent, and manage stress effectively.

In short, the lower secondary school students in Phanatnikhom District, Chonburi Province could possess the abilities in decision making and problem solving, to deal with pressure and stress, to adapt, and to correct any mistakes for self-development in the future.

Discussion

The effect of life skills assessment criteria for the lower secondary school students based on World Health Organization (1997, p. 1) consists of 10 essential skills, which are decision making, problem-solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relationship, self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions and coping with stress, were discussed as follows:

1) The results of life skills assessment criteria showed that the overall life skills of 90 samples were at an excellent level which was consistent with the research hypothesis. It was shown that lower secondary school students had the ability to use life skills to live and behave properly according to Teeboonma's (2013) study. This study founded that the overall life skills of 267 (70.08%) grade 12 students in Roi Et Province were at an excellent level, meaning that students had the ability to use life skills for making decisions and were able to handle stress with no problems. However, the results was not aligned with Sihokaeo (2015), which showed that the results from educational opportunities extended secondary school students' life skills should develop their life skills.

2) The comparison of life skills assessment criteria for lower secondary school student's results was not consistent with the hypothesis. The results showed that genders, ages, and grade levels were not significantly different in life skills, which was similar with Bussabokkhae (2018), meaning that a score of life skills between genders, ages, and grade levels were not different from each other. The score was consistent with Punya-apiwong (2015) meaning that the score of life skills between genders, group of learning, and GPA did not affect the life skills. The results showed that genders, ages, and grade level did not affect the use of life skills assessment criteria what so ever due to the fact that lower secondary school students in Phanatnikhom District, Chonburi Province had the ability to cope with any problems and behave appropriately, were not different in social and cultural context. The school aimed to develop students with morality, ethics, and good quality of life that was equally good. There were also activities that provide guidance that encourages students to have a strong ability to live their life, appropriately alter their behaviors, and effectively lead to solutions and have defined life skills the vital performance

that learners should develop. However, the results was not consistent with Thabmali and Madiloggovit (2016), which variables was correlated to the efficiency of leisure time used among lower secondary school students to develop life skills were parent's education levels, ages, genders, family income, and GPA. The results, again, showed that genders and ages were the factors that affect the development of life skills; whereas genders were a variable which affects the development of life skills. Due to physiological differences of the brain and hormones, when the hormones enter both male and female bodies, it can affect them differently. With age as a results of the experience, the older students will experience life more, and thus, have more life skills than younger people.

Suggestion for next Research

There should be a comparative study of the results of life skills assessment criteria for higher education students in different faculties. In addition, educational institutions should measure the life skills of each major study to be a guideline to correct any mistakes.

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