

## Relationship between knowledge of life skills and belief in future in students: Mediating role of achievement motivation

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### Abstract

**Aim:** Several factors can affect students' beliefs in future. This study was conducted to investigate the relationship between life skills and students' beliefs in future with the mediating role of achievement motivation. A multi-stage cluster sampling method was used to select 319 students. The findings revealed the good fit of the model. In addition, a positive and significant relationship was observed between life skills and belief in future. Also, life skills can predict students' belief in future through the mediating role of achievement motivation. In addition, achievement motivation has a positive and significant relationship with belief in future.

**Keywords:** *Achievement Motivation, Belief in the future, Life skills*

### Introduction

Belief in future is among essential and exciting topics in psychology, which has been discussed in scientific circulations since the late 1960s. Laftman et al. (2018) defined belief in future as people's thoughts, beliefs, plans, and hopes for the future. Although people's beliefs about the future form throughout their lives, but their thoughts and plans for the future are more specific and prominent during adolescence and early adulthood. Florin et al. (2017) discussed the positive relationship between life skills and belief in future. As students improve their life skills, they experience more faith in the future.

Needs of life along with rapid social and cultural changes have led to the formation of complex human relationships and the influx of information to people. As such, people are exposed to many psychological pressures, which mandates learning life skills to face life problems (Anwar & Mantasiah, 2022). Life skills, including coping skills and psychosocial abilities, have a significant impact on improving life. Psychological and social abilities help people deal effectively with life struggles and achieve success in life (Renger et al., 2013).

Furthermore, research has shown that achievement motivation is one of the factors influencing belief in future. Achievement motivation can be defined as a permanent personality trait that has been formed over the previous weeks, months, and years. Also, the achievement motivation is required for progress and an important determinant of people's aspirations, effort and persistence (Pathania, 2023). Moreover, life skills increase students' motivation for progress (Amirian, 2012). Hernando et al. (2021) reported that students' achievement motivation increased in line with improvements in life skills. The current research examines the relationship between life skills (as an external factor) and belief in future with the mediating role of achievement motivation.

### Methodology

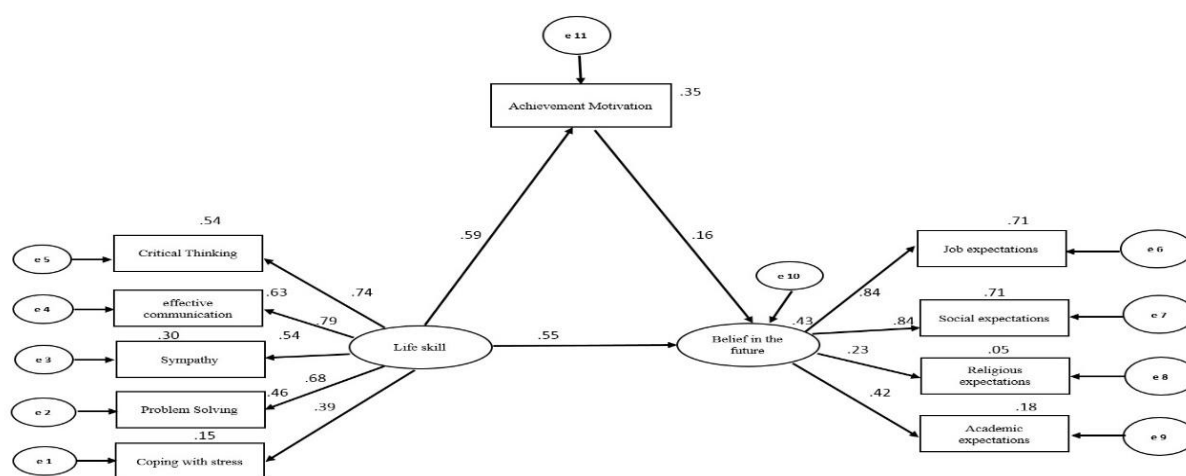
This research was an applied, descriptive, correlative study using structural equation model. The statistical population includes 1867 students of the Faculty of Engineering and Human Sciences of Kashan University in the academic year 2022-2023. Three hundred nineteen students were selected as the sample by multi-stage cluster sampling method. The tools used include Golzari life skills questionnaire (2007) with Cronbach's alpha of 0.83, belief in future questionnaire of Lerner et al. (2005) with Cronbach's alpha of 0.89, and Hermans' Questionnaire Measure of Achievement Motivation (1970), with Cronbach's alpha of 0.78.

## Results

Table 1 shows the fit indices of the structural model presented in this study.

**Table 1.** Model fit indices of the structural model

RMSEA	CFI	NFI	GFI	CMIN/df	P	DF	$\chi^2$
0.05	0.97	0.939	0.97	1.78	0.004	33	58.97



**Fig. 1.** Standardized path coefficients for the mediation model

The results showed that life skills can directly predict belief in future. Furthermore, belief in future was indirectly predicted by life skills through the perception of progress. Also, life skills can predict this progress. Fig. 1 presents the standardized path coefficients for the mediation model. The direct path of life skills to belief in future has a positive and significant coefficient of 0.55. The direct path of life skills on achievement motivation has a positive coefficient of 0.59. The direct path of progress motivation based on students' belief in future has a positive and significant coefficient of 0.16.

## Discussion and conclusion

Our findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between life skills and students' belief in future, which is consistent with the studies of Rochmat et al. (2022) and Cronin et al. (2023). People with high life skills also have a high belief in future; moreover, students valued their belief in future and evaluated and recognized the growth of their skills during the study. University students face many challenges that can harm their motivation, performance, and belief in future if these challenges are perceived negatively. Also, the results showed that life skills can improve achievement motivation, which is consistent with the studies of Feraco et al. (2022) and Liu et al. (2022). Students with higher achievement motivation strive to learn life skills and use all the resources and strategies they have to develop life skills. Furthermore, progress motivation has a positive relationship with belief in future. This finding is consistent with the findings of Chen et al. (2020) and Mendes et al. (2023). Students with low achievement motivation do not strive to achieve their goals and do not have a vision for their future. In addition, life skills have a positive relationship with belief in future through the mediating role of achievement motivation.

As such, belief in future and motivation to progress are boosted along with the increase in life skills. Given the importance of life skills, it is suggested that senior managers and decision makers of universities hold educational workshops, lecture sessions, conferences and competitions centered on life skills in order to improve individual's ability to use life skills. It is also suggested that the curriculum developers consider compulsory and optional credits and formulate content for course materials according to the need of the student community to learn life skills such that students receive more training regarding life skills.

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