



Journal for Social
Science Archives

Journal for Social Science Archives

Online ISSN: 3006-3310

Print ISSN: 3006-3302

Volume 3, Number 3, 2025, Pages 336 – 350

Journal Home Page

<https://jssarchives.com/index.php/Journal/about>



A Gender Based Analysis of Life Skills among Prospective Teachers in Universities of Pakistan

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received:	June	08, 2025
Revised:	July	21, 2025
Accepted:	August	05, 2025
Available Online:	August	17, 2025

Keywords:

life skills, gender, prospective teachers, higher education

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ABSTRACT

To strengthen teacher education in Pakistan, development of life skills among prospective teachers is vital irrespective of their gender. Therefore, this study envisioned a gender based analysis of life skills among prospective teachers in universities of Pakistan. Much literature exists on life skills development of teachers. However, there is little evidence regarding gender role in life skills development of prospective teachers. The present study bridges this gap in the current literature in teacher education. Using survey approach, data were collected from 1788 prospective teachers enrolled in teacher education departments in public sector universities of Pakistan. The researchers applied descriptive and inferential statistical data for analysis of the data. Life skills development scale having nine aspects were adopted and used as data collection tool along with demographic variable of gender. The study found a strong positive correlation between gender and life skills development of prospective teachers. The study further discovered a difference among respondents based on gender on three aspects of life skills such as communication skills, interpersonal relations and coping emotions. Whereas, no difference of opinion was found on decisions-making, problems-solving, empathy, self-awareness, creative thinking as well as critical thinking of the respondents. It is suggested that the results of this study may further be replicated or investigated in other contexts for further deeper understanding of the correlation between gender and life skills development.



Introduction

There is no denying the fact that life skills are vital for young prospective teachers as these skills make them fully equipped to prepare for their roles as competent teachers (Jamil et al., 2024). Life skills enhance the management skills of prospective teachers with the help of which not only they effectively manage student behaviour while fostering their well-being but these skills also help in promoting their own professional growth as teachers (Cronin et al., 2023). Researchers have considered life skills indispensable for teacher education as they not only equip educators with the necessary skills to effectively manage classrooms and engage students but also foster their own personal and professional growth with the holistic competencies (Shek et al., 2021).

Developing life skills of young people is one of the major goals of education. Development of life skills is not only important for students but is an essential requirement for teachers as it has a deep impact upon the instructional success of teachers in classroom, maintaining cordial relations with students and parents (Cabiles et al., 2022). Life skills refer to a number of important skills such as effective communication, making informed decisions, ability to solve problems, showing emotional regulation and resolving conflicts. These are considered important skills for teachers by using which they successfully create supportive learning atmosphere (Hasrat et al., 2024).

Teachers are role models for their students being important component of the overall educational eco-systems. They are expected to have strong life skills for managing the varying needs of the classroom situation, addressing needs of students and contributing to the ever changing requirements of teaching professionalism (Ahmad et al., 2024). Nonetheless, the development of these skills can be impacted by different factors including gender. Gender, being an important social construct has the ability to shape the experiences of peoples' behavior and their access to various life opportunities including the teaching professionalism (Yuen et al., 2021). According to researchers, perspectives of gender may have an influence on how male and female prospective teachers evaluate their life skills and its role in exposing their professionalism while joining teaching profession (Jacobs et al., 2022).

Studies have revealed that gender can affect life skills application of educators in different ways. There are expectations from society and parents about the best academic development of students. These expectations may exercise deeper social and emotional challenges for both male and female prospective teachers (Antony & Tripathy, 2023). Research has shown that female teachers exhibited more resilience to such pressures than male teachers (Anwar et al., 2025). Further, it was discovered that female teachers took interest to nurture the students as compared to male teachers. They demonstrated higher empathy towards the students in classroom interaction, while male teachers were more dominating and less accommodative (Osiesi, 2022). The level of emotional regulation among female teachers was observed to be higher than the male teachers. They provided more attention towards resolving conflicts among students and mediated between the groups. However, these behaviors were observed low among the male counterparts. Despite these efforts, less assertive leadership skills were observed among female than male teachers (Dey et al., 2022; Pradeep et al, 2022). Studies have reported that female teachers were found to possess less active skills of decision-making than male teachers. They were seen less interested in interpersonal interactions and problem-solving matters. Interestingly, other studies have found that the level of emotional intelligence was higher among female teacher than male teachers (Maqsood et al., 2021).

Research has suggested that there is a wider implications of professional development opportunities that are available for male and female prospective teachers. The training programs

may have varying effect upon the gendered approaches of the teachers towards different situation including the application of their own life skills in teaching learning as well as in different life situation including instruction (Freire et al., 2023). It has been found that female teacher faces numerous challenges in demonstrating their leadership roles in different contexts (D'Angelo et al., 2022). These barriers may restrict their confidence level and also affect the application of the learned life skills. These may also put a bar on their wider exposure to life skills development and its utilization in teaching process. Some studies have revealed that in comparison to female teachers, male teachers perform better in leadership roles and decision-making (Thippeswamy et al., 2025).

Studies have provided further understanding that creation of equitable atmosphere may provide better professional development opportunities for both genders to grow together and play effective roles in applying the learned life skills in the process of teaching and learning. Gender theories have highlighted the importance of gender role in human activities (Dejaeghere & Murphy-Graham, 2022). Human relation theory has explained that people may effectively use their personal skills and abilities to establish positive relations in groups which may have a positive effect upon the group performance. Gender related perspectives have also provided lenses to closely observe the important role of gender upon the actions of people. Educators may also get insights from these theories in order to effectively apply the life skills development and its effective application in teaching context (Ajayi et al., 2022).

Life skills development provide equal opportunity for both gender to use these skills for cultivating required abilities in students and promoting their overall well-being. These are necessary for the development and empowerment of learners and their personal growth. These are in line with the overall goals of education system which is the holistic development of academic and social skills among students and to prepare them for their future responsibilities. These efforts will empower the learners under the guidance of teachers to make progress and thrive holistically irrespective of gender role and differences (Ilham et al., 2025).

Literature Review

Teaching is a multidimensional profession. Quality teaching is not only associate with the delivery of knowledge and pedagogical skills rather it needs teachers to be emotionally sound (Keane, 2022). Several research studies have articulated this situation. In the present times, several rapid changes have occurred in teacher education which have led to reconsideration of curriculum changes and adoption of newer ways for the effective implementation of teaching procedures and programs. These developments have been influenced by many factors including gender (Uslu & Osgun, 2022). Due to the current globalization and fast industrialization, the role of man and woman has also undergone deeper transformations including in the domain of teaching and learning. They play a key role as work force in the society as well as educational institutions. In all sphere of life women are found to be largely engaged with men as counterpart and team player (Siddikov & Mahkamova, 2022). In the last many years, there have been tremendous increases in the education admissions in universities in terms of women students. This trend has also been seen in Pakistani context in all fields of education including teacher education. The number of female candidate is increasing day by day in the universities. There is a general belief that women have better life skills to deal with various life challenges. They are believed to be soft and emotionally sensitive as compared to male. Hence, they can easily adjust with children which has been one of the stronger factor for their increased enrollment in teacher education departments in universities as prospective teachers (Hasrat et al., 2024; Low et al., 2022). On the other hand, in some studies, men have been termed as symbol of power and strength. Their life skills have helped them to

express strong emotional exposure and confidence due to the prevailing social values in the society. Thus, they have been considered as a source of leadership having the right life skills such as effective communication, decision-making and interpersonal skills who could guide and support female in the society having the ability face and discharge in front of more stressful situations and challenges (Alharbi, 2024; Nqabeni & Ciske, 2023).

Studies have revealed that women have the life skills and capabilities to express their emotions broadly and are more empathetic than men in social dealings and situations. Few studies have reported that men have more confidence and optimism, flexibility and better abilities than females or coping with stressful situation during teaching (Lopez-Garcia, 2025). Other studies have found women having better skills to cope with stress and challenges as teachers. They were observed to demonstrate stronger life skills and sense of responsibility and resilience in difficult educational situations (Osiesi et al., 2022). Still few studies have reported that there was no major difference among male and female teachers in coping with challenges. Both equally dealt with the situations as per the need (Pradeep et al., 2022).

In many studies, women have been shown to have more empathetic attitude and social sensibility as women are generally believed to possess such traits. Some women were found to have better life skills such interpersonal and intrapersonal skills to cope with most challenging situations better than men (Morais-Freire et al., 2023). Numerous studies have declared men to possess better skills to adapt to new situations and demonstrate emotional strength as well as self-regulation skills as compared to women. They have been found to show strong self-control and coping strategies, strong toleration for stressful conditions and higher self-efficacy to maintain positive relationship with others. Many other researchers have stated that men have better emotional level than women as genders (Oz, 2022; Qeshmi et al., 2025). Other researchers have contrarily argued that female possessed greater emotional stability and refined life skills than male counterparts. Some scholars conclude that gender has no role in the demonstration of life skills as teachers. According to them these effects could be due to the influence of culture and socialization processes in life. In some societies, there are stereotyping about the role and responsibilities of male and female which greatly affect their social roles and application of learned life skills in different spheres of life. For example, in most of the developing societies, female is considered to be supportive, communicative and harmonious by nature. Whereas, men have been termed as aggressive and dominant in gender roles including teaching profession (Mayya et al., 2021). As a result, the relevance of gender becomes more prominent in social dealings. In this scenario, female is thought to have better life skills than men. This shows inconsistency in terms of possession of life skills and its demonstration in different situation including teaching (Hdyitulah et al., 2025).

Research has shown that females have better interaction and social skills than males. The study further revealed that females have stronger emotional skills than males and can handle situations more effectively (Anwar et al., 2025). Despite this, some researchers in other developed world context have discovered that females show higher interpersonal skills. They are socially accommodative by nature, have empathetic approach towards dealing with others especially youngsters. They display and demonstrate strong emotional stability and are more expressive in positive behaviour (Mehrabian, 2025).

On the contrary, other researchers have expressed their views that as compared to male, female show more hesitation in making decisions and managing stress. They argue that male have better skills to overcome problems effectively through strong leadership skills (Pradeep et al., 2022). It shows that few studies have favored female being strong in terms of demonstration of life skills than males (Freire et al., 2023). So, researchers have not reached a clear conclusion about the

effects of gender on life skills in the context of education (Qazi et al., 2022). Although, researchers have conducted investigations on life skills development among students and in-service teachers in school context, however, there is dearth of studies on the level of life skills among prospective teachers and how they demonstrate their life skills in process of teaching and learning. Gender has been observed to have a deep influence on human actions and behaviour. There are both male and female students in teacher education institutes of various public sector universities throughout Pakistan. However, there is lack of evidence in the existing literature regarding the level of development of life skills among these newly admitted prospective educators based on gender difference.

Rational of the study

The above mentioned literature showed that researchers have extensively studied the life skills development among people in different field of studies. These studies have generally focused one or two life skills and its application in social contexts (Ahmad et al., 2024). Few studies have looked into life skills which comprehensively cover all aspects of an individuals' life sphere. Most of the current research in teacher education relates to students of different discipline ranging from medical to engineering. Little evidence is available from the field of teacher education especially regarding prospective teachers. On the contrary, life skills have been considered by researchers as essential requirement for the teaching profession (Jamil et a., 2024). Many life skills such as communication skills, collaboration, ethical behaviour and social skills are important part of the standard for teacher education in Pakistan and are among the most demanded and coveted skills in the existing job market. Hence, prospective teachers are expected to possess these skills along with the ability to demonstrate them in the process of teaching. The scope of the current research is extended only to those prospective teachers who are currently enrolled in the Department of Education or teacher training institutes.

Problem Statement

The current research was designed to analyze life skills among prospective teachers in universities of Pakistan. A plethora of research exists on the life skills and its role in both global and local context in various fields. Recently, there has been an increasing interest shown by researchers in the field of education worldwide (Shek et al., 2021; Asal, et al., 2024). However, little has been reported from the educational context of Pakistan. This provides a gap to be filled by investigating the role of gender in influencing the life skills development among prospective teachers. Despite, extensive research literature on gender and its effects on teacher professional development, there is a clear gap in the understanding to what extent gender plays a role in pre-service teachers' life skills development.

Research Objectives

1. To find out level of like skills among prospective teachers of public sector universities.
2. To investigate the relationship between gender and level of like skills development among prospective teachers.
3. To compare perceptions of male and female respondents on life skills development of prospective teachers in public sector universities.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

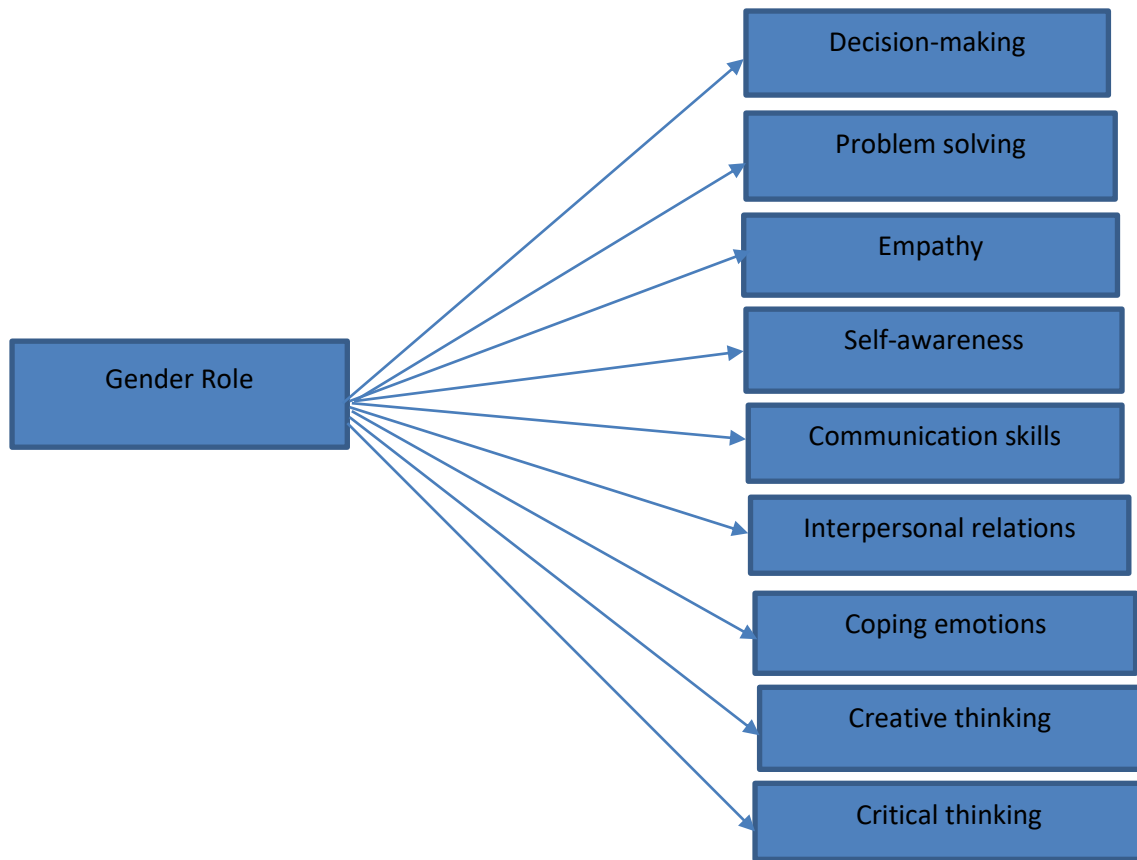


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Research hypotheses

- H01 There is a positive correlation between gender and *life skills development* of prospective teachers
- H02 Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion about the effect of gender on their *decision-making* (DM).
- H03 Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion about the effect of gender on their *problem-solving*. (PS)
- H04 Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion about the effect of gender on their *empathy* (EY)
- H05 Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion about the effect of gender on their *self-awareness* (SA)
- H06 Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion about the effect of gender on their *communication skills* (CS)
- H07 Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion about the effect of gender on their *decision-making skills. interpersonal relations* (IR).

- H08 Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion about the effect of gender on their *coping emotions (CE)*.
- H09 Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion about the effect of gender on their *creative thinking (CT)*.
- H010 Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion about the effect of gender on their *critical thinking (CRT)*.

Method and Procedures

This current study was conducted using a quantitative correlational method. In this type of study, researchers attempt to correlate the degree, direction and strength of relationships between or among variables. In this study, the relationship of gender was tested with different aspects of life skill development of prospective teachers in public sector universities.

Population

The population of this study consisted of all currently enrolled prospective teachers in all the teacher training institutes of general public sector universities throughout Pakistan.

Sample

The sampling was done in two stages. In the first stage, universities were selected. The universities were sampled based on simple random sampling technique. Using fish bowl technique names of all universities were written on separate piece of paper and then one by one names were taken out. In this way, based on population, five universities were selected from Punjab. Two universities were chosen from Sindh followed by four universities from KP, one university from Baluchistan, one university from Federal Territory and one AJK were chosen. Simple random sample gives chance to each member to be selected. Thus, a total of 15 universities were selected out of the 60 universities as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample of universities

Province	Punjab	Sindh	KP	Balochistan	Federal Territory	GB	AJK	Total
Total Universities	22	10	19	5	3	2	4	= 60
20% of each university	5	2	4	1	1	1	1	=15

Source: HEC

In second stage, research participants were sampled. According to websites of these universities, there were a total of 4098 pre-service teachers enrolled in the teacher training institutes of these universities. All the pre-service teachers enrolled in the selected universities were chosen as sample based on convenient sampling technique.

Data collection tool

For data collection, a standardized survey scale of life skills scale having 115 items developed by Vranda and Rao (2009) was applied for data collection. Gender was measured based on the demographic data tool. The instrument was based on 5 point Likert scale format with response rate. The instrument was piloted for reliability and validity checking. The reliability was checked through Cronbach's alpha test and content validity was checked through subject experts' opinion

(PhD in education) in the field of teacher education. Three experts were engaged for this purpose, and the instrument was finalized based on their feedback.

Data collection

For data collection, all the sample was approached through Google forms and survey questionnaire. However, out of the total 4098 sample, a total of 1788 responded positively. The response rate was 44% that was considered suitable for a survey study as a rule of thumb.

Data analysis

The level of life skills of participants was measured through Mean score, Standard Deviation, maximum, minimum, skewness and kurtosis, and Pearson's correlation was used as statistical techniques for measuring the effect of gender on dependent variable (life skills development).

Results

Objective 1: To find out level of like skills among prospective teachers of public sector universities.

Table 2: Summary of Statistics on Level of Life Skills among Prospective Teachers

Variables	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Level	Skew	Kurtosis
Decision-making (DM)	1	5	3.32	1.175	Av.	-.404	-.704
Problem solving (PS)	1	5	3.34	1.300	Av.	-.472	-.876
Empathy (EY)	1	5	3.44	1.180	Av.	-.569	-.478
Self-awareness (SA)	1	7	5.48	1.525	Hig.	-1.405	1.350
Communication skills (CS)	1	6	5.26	2.704	Hig.	1.389	2.577
Interpersonal relations (IR)	1	7	5.80	1.337	Hig.	-1.705	2.959
Coping emotions (CE)	1	7	5.84	1.270	Hig.	-1.711	3.311
Creative thinking (CT)	1	6	4.32	1.012	Hig.	1.009	1.246
Critical thinking (CRT)	1	7	4.31	1.001	Hig.	1.007	1.238

Table 2 indicates the descriptive assessment of the perceptions of respondents regarding the life skills in the life skills development measure. It can be observed that there was an average level of life skills as the sub-construct: *decision-making* (M= 3.32, SD= 1.175, Skewness = -.404, Kurtosis = -.704). There was an average level of life skills development as the sub-construct: *problem solving* (M= 3.34, SD= 1.300, Skewness = -.472, Kurtosis = -.876).

There was a high level of life skills development as the sub-construct: *self-awareness* (M=5.48, SD=1.525, Skewness= -1.405, Kurtosis = 1.350). There was a high level of life skills development as the sub-construct: *communication skills* (M= 5.26, SD= 2.704, Skewness = 1.389, Kurtosis = 2.577). There was a high level of life skills development as the sub-construct: *interpersonal relations* (M= 5.80, SD= 1.337, Skewness = -1.705 and Kurtosis = 2.959). There was a high level of life skills development as the sub-construct: *coping emotions* (M= 5.84, SD= 1.270, Skewness= -1.711, Kurtosis = 3.311). There was a fairly high level of life skills development as the sub-construct: *creative thinking* (M=4.32, SD = 1.012, Skewness = 1.009, Kurtosis = 1.246). There was a fairly high level of life skills development as the sub-construct: *critical thinking* (M= 4.31, SD = 1.001, Skewness = 1.007, Kurtosis = 1.238).

Objective 2: To investigate the relationship between gender and level of life skills development among prospective teachers. To achieve this objective, the correlation coefficient was calculated using the Pearson's r statistical technique as shown in Table 2.

Table 3: Correlation between gender and life skills development of prospective teachers

		Gender	Life Skills Development
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Life Skills Development	Pearson Correlation	.037	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.651

Table 3 indicates that correlation between life skills development and gender. The calculation was made based on Pearson r correlation coefficient indicating the level of direction, degree and strength of relationship between life skills development and gender. The table reports a good positively significant relation ($r=.651$, $p=.037$) between gender and life skill development of prospective teachers. Thus, the hypothesis "There is positive correlation between gender and life skills development of prospective teachers" was accepted.

Table 4: Correlations Matrix of Gender and Life Skills Development of Prospective Teachers

		Gen	DM	PS	EY	SA	CS
Gen	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
DM	Pearson Correlation	.020	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.312					
PS	Pearson Correlation	.039	.515**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.414	.000				
EY	Pearson Correlation	.003	.402**	.410**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.677	.000	.000			
SA	Pearson Correlation	.000	.479**	.466**	.366**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.989	.000	.000	.000		
CS	Pearson Correlation	.016	.258**	.210**	.207**	.179**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.475	.000	.000	.000	.000	

Table 4 indicates the correlation matrix based on all the aspects of the life skills development and gender. The calculation was made based on Pearson r correlation coefficient indicating the level of direction, degree and strength of relationship between life skills development and gender. It can be observed that there was significantly positive average correlation ($r=.312$, $p=.020$) between *gender* and *decision-making* of prospective teachers, a significantly positive average correlation ($r=.414$, $p=.039$) between *gender* and *problem-solving* of prospective teachers, a significantly strong positive correlation ($r=.677$, $p=.003$) between *gender* and *empathy* of prospective teachers, a significantly positive strongest correlation ($r=.989$, $p=.000$) between *gender* and *self-awareness* of prospective teachers and a significantly positive average correlation ($r=.475$, $p=.016$) between *gender* and *communication skills* of prospective teachers,

Table 5: Correlations Matrix of Gender and Life Skills Development of Prospective Teachers

		Gen	IR	CE	CT	CRT
Gen	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
IR	Pearson Correlation	.019	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.548				
CE	Pearson Correlation	.072*	.254**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.321	.000			
CT	Pearson Correlation	.093**	.220**	.676**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.403	.000	.000		
CRT	Pearson Correlation	.081**	.225**	.329**	.303**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.410	.000	.000	.000	

Table 5 indicates the correlation matrix about the relationship between life skills development and gender. The calculation was made based on Pearson r correlation coefficient indicating the level of direction, degree and strength of relationship between the remaining life skills development and gender. The table revealed that there was positively significant and stronger association ($r = .548$, $p = .019$) between *gender* and *interpersonal relations* of prospective teachers, a significantly positive average correlation ($r = .321$, $p = .072$) between *gender* and *coping emotions* of prospective teachers, a significantly strong positive correlation ($r = .403$, $p = .093$) between *gender* and *creative thinking* of prospective teachers, a significantly positive strongest correlation ($r = .989$, $p = .000$) between *gender* and *self-awareness* of prospective teachers and a significantly positive average correlation ($r = .410$, $p = .081$) between *gender* and *critical thinking* of prospective teachers.

Objective 3: To compare perceptions of respondents based on gender on life skills development of prospective teachers in public sector universities.

Table 6: Comparison of Perception among Prospective Teachers on Life Skills development based on gender

Variables	Male		Female		Independent. samples t-test	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-value	P. value
Decision Making	5.55	1.331	5.55	1.330	.022	.756
Problem Solving	4.49	1.865	4.14	1.871	.459	.553
Empathy	5.66	1.034	5.67	1.041	-.144	.622
Self-awareness	3.47	1.169	3.58	1.101	-1.284	.133
Communication Skills	3.41	1.157	3.22	1.281	2.083	.005
Interpersonal Relations	3.35	1.112	3.25	1.142	1.219	.008
Coping Emotions	3.52	1.241	3.70	1.331	-2.313	.009
Creative Thinking	5.85	1.221	5.79	1.031	.578	.337
Critical Thinking	5.82	1.134	5.88	1.421	-.317	.650

Table 6 indicates the comparisons of respondents about their perception on life skills development based on gender. The table calculated values of correlation between gender and *decision-making* ($M = 5.55$, $SD = 1.331$) for male and ($M = 5.55$, $SD = 1.330$) for female ($t\text{-value} = .022$ and $p = .756$) indicated that the hypothesis of this study “Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion about the effect of gender on their decision-making” was rejected. The table calculated values of correlation between gender and *problem-solving skills* ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 1.865$) for male and ($M =$

4.14, SD = 1.871 for female (t-value = 2.459 and $p = .553$) indicated that the hypothesis of this study “Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion *about the effect of gender on their problems-solving*” was rejected. The table calculated values of correlation between gender and *empathy* (M= 5.66, SD= 1.034) for male and (M= 5.67, SD = 1.041) for female (t-value = -.144 and $p = .622$) indicated that the hypothesis of this study “Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion *about the effect of gender on their empathy*” was rejected. The table calculated values of correlation between gender and *self-awareness* (M= 3.47, SD= 1.169) for male and (M= 3.58, SD = 1.101) for female (t-value = -1.284 and $p = .133$) indicated that the hypothesis of this study “Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion *about the effect of gender on their self-awareness*” was rejected. The table calculated values of correlation between gender and *communication skills* (M= 3.41, SD= 1.157) for male and (M= 3.22, SD = 1.281) for female (t-value = -2.083 and $p = .005^{**}$) indicated that the hypothesis of this study “Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion *about the effect of gender on their communication skills*” was accepted. The table calculated values of correlation between gender and *independent relations* (M= 3.35, SD= 1.112) for male and (M= 3.25, SD = 1.142) for female (t-value = -1.219 and $p = .008^{**}$) indicated that the hypothesis of this study “*There is a significant difference in the perceptions of prospective teachers about the effect of gender on their interpersonal relations*” was accepted. The table calculated values of correlation between gender and *coping emotions* (M= 3.52, SD= 1.241) for male and (M= 3.70, SD = 1.331) for female (t-value = - 2.313 and $p = .009^{**}$) indicated that the hypothesis of this study “Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion *about the effect of gender on their coping emotions*” was accepted. The table calculated values of correlation between gender and *creative thinking* (M= 5.85, SD= 1.221) for male and (M= 5.79, SD = 1.031) for female (t-value = .578 and $p = .337$) indicated that the hypothesis of this study “Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion *about the effect of gender on their creative thinking*” was rejected. The table calculated values of correlation between gender and *critical thinking* (M= 5.82, SD= 1.134) for male and (M= 5.88, SD = 1.421) for female (t-value = -.317 and $p = .650$) indicated that the hypothesis of this study “Pre-Service teachers have difference of opinion *about the effect of gender on their critical thinking*” was rejected.

Discussion

The current study aimed to analyze life skills of prospective teachers. The study further aimed to carry out comparative analysis of the prospective teachers based on gender. This study discovered that gender was correlated with life-skill development of prospective teachers. This finding supports the results of previous studies where gender has been found to have strong linkage with teachers’ professional development and life skills. Previous studies have termed gender an important influencing variable in human activities including teaching and learning (Lopez & Garcia, 2025). Researchers have argued that there are different social and psychological factors which affect the relations among people and their professional functioning. These factors are closely dependent on the role of gender and its functions (Osiesi, 2022).

Regarding the comparative analysis of the respondents’ views about the effect of gender on life skills development and its nine aspects, the current study found that there was no marked difference in the perceptions of respondents regarding decision-making, problem-solving, empathy and self-awareness, critical thinking, creative thinking and gender. This results correlates with previous findings where researchers have highlighted the role of gender in decision-making skills of people. In the same way, other studies have reported that there were no fundamental variations among men and women in terms of problem-solving abilities of teachers (Priyu et al., 2024). In the same context, female teachers were found to have better problem-solving skills than male. However, most studies have narrated no major differences among male and female in terms of

problem-solving skills among teachers at school level. In another study it was found that both male and female teachers were equally sharp in empathy demonstration towards learners. There were no distinctive variations among the teachers based on gender roles (Branquinho et al., 2023). In other studies, it has been mentioned that there were few differences among teachers with regard to gender in self-awareness at secondary level. Studies have further highlighted less variation among teachers of schools in terms of critical thinking skills based on gender (Pradeep et al., 2022). Few studies have reported little variation among critical thinking skills and teacher creativity based on gender roles. However, most of the studies have reported that there were no major differences among teachers relating to critical thinking and creativity (Dringó-Horváth et al., 2025)

On the contrary, this study found that there were differences among the prospective teachers regarding three aspects of life skills development and gender role such as communication skills, interpersonal relations and coping emotions. These findings are important because they do not come in line with previous research results. In former studies, no difference was reported regarding the role of gender in respect of communication skills, independent relations and coping emotions. However, the result of this study is unique as these findings may need further investigations and understanding and wider applications in the context of higher education. There could be other factors which may have affected and influenced the degree of communication skills, process of independent relations and level of coping emotions among prospective teachers in universities.

Conclusion

This study found a strong and positively significant association between gender and life-skill development of pre-service teachers. It was concluded that gender was positively correlated with all nine aspects of life skills in the context of teacher training departments of public sector universities of Pakistan. It was further concluded based on comparative analysis that pre-service teachers had a difference of opinions regarding the role of gender in three aspects of life-skill development such as communication skills, interpersonal relations and coping emotions. However, interestingly, there was no marked difference in the opinions of pre-service teachers in terms of gender role on six other aspects of life skills development such as decision-making, problem-solving, empathy, self-awareness, creative thinking and critical thinking.

Future Suggestions

1. It is suggested that further studies may investigate the effect of other demographic variables like age, living status, living background, province, CGPA on life skills development of prospective teachers.
2. Future studies study may study these variables as moderators or mediators among life skills development of prospective teachers and their professional development.
3. The result of this study may be replicated or studied in other contexts for having wider understanding of the role of gender on the life skills development of prospective teachers in universities.
4. The results of this study could be further evaluated using mixed methodological approaches for gaining comprehensive view of the issue at higher education level.

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