

ISSN 2394 - 630X

Volume 2 | Number 2 | July 2016

INTERNATIONAL
JOURNAL OF
LIFE
SKILLS
EDUCATION



INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION

ISSN 2394 - 630X



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION

Volume 2 | Number 2 | July 2016



INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION

CONTENTS

Life Skills Interventions for Transgender Healthy Living: A Study of Gomitpur Ghetto - Ahmedabad	5
M. Roja Lakshmi	
Life Skills and Adjustment of University Students: a Correlational Study	19
Dr. Jasraj Kaur	
The Impact of Need Based Life Skills Intervention on Skill Development and Self- esteem Among adolescents of the Marginal group	26
Cicily & Gracy S. Jebastina	
A Study on Assertiveness, Social Anxiety and Life Skills of the Indian Youth	43
Dr. Ruchi Dubey Chaturvedi	
Influence of Life skills on study Skills in Enhancing Academic Performance in the Context of 21st Century Education	55
Daisy P.J.	
A Comparative Account of Attainment of Life Skills through Science Learning	68
Dr. Geetha G. Nair	
Strengthening of Life Skills for Career Choice among Youth: A study of college students	83
Rekha N. Mistry	
A Comparative Study of Life Skills Education in the Government, Government-Aided and Private Secondary Schools in Lucknow	92
Dr. Vinod Chandra	
Life Skills As Predictor Of Attitude Of College Students Towards Alcohol And Drug Abuse	113
Dr. Jagpreet Kaur & Khushgeet Kaur	
Temperament as Predictor of Social Skills	122
Veena Shahi, Shanti Balda and Nigam Rani	
A Study of Self Management Skills developed during the B.Ed course for Pre-service Teachers of Mumbai	131
Dr. Gauri P. Hardikar	
Amalgamation of Life Skill Education in core School Subjects: Curriculum design, Schemes, Challenges, Concerns, Issues and Solutions	142
Prashant Thote & L. Mathew	
Lack of Awareness on Reproductive Health Issues of Adolescent Girls and Role of Life Skills: A Study in Darrang District of Assam	154
Dr. (Mrs.) Jawahira Tabassum Azad	

Life Skills interventions for Transgender Healthy Living: A Study of Gomitpur Ghetto - Ahmedabad

M. Roja Lakshmi*

Abstract

A Transgender/hijra is an individual who is considered a eunuch, intersex, or transgender, and has chosen to live among other hijras in closed private communities. Increased discrimination towards hijras in the recent decades has left the community stigmatized as a lower caste. With no education or jobs, many hijras were forced to turn to sex work – an anti-theoretical behavior to their ascetic way of life. The aim of this study is to evaluate the socio-economic conditions, life style and their livelihood and the effect of life skills education and their practice on transgender personal health, safe sex education, tangible benefits, injustice and exploitation from stigmatized hetero sexual societies. A control group of 60 transgenders from Gomitpur Ghetto was interviewed for this study. Interventions included the use of personal health and hygiene, community health protection training, Gomitpur sanitation and toilet facility for transgender. *The researcher would like to examine how far these life skills are contributing towards the stakeholders' holistic approach which encompasses struggle against all forms of injustice, inequality, plight of sexual minorities and exclusion of transgender to improve their personal healthy living and safer sexual practices by life skills interventions.*

Key Words:

Life Skills, Healthy Living Habits, Transgender Health and Gomitpur Sanitation

* Assistant Professor, CSSM, Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar

Introduction

In India, the transgenders better known as Hijras are not like the counterparts elsewhere in the world. Indians consider them as sacred, touch by God, their blessings are auspicious and generally accompany by their signature clapping. They are often invited to bless new borns and newlyweds. In fact, most Hijras make their living by exchanging blessings for cash at traffic signals, in rails and at crowded public transport places. The term 'transgender' is used to describe people who may act, feel, think or look different from the gender that they were assigned by society based on their biological sex. The word transgender is used for many groups who share one important trait as a way of felling and behaving. The common trait for transgender people would be that they call themselves as transgender and feel that their sex assigned at birth does not accurately describe them as a person. Anonym of the term transgender is cisgender (relating to a person whose self-identity conforms with the gender that corresponds to their biological sex).

The 'hijra' in India are born physically male but live as a woman, including dressing and socializing as female. Many of these people call themselves as 'hijari' but some now call themselves as transsexuals and transgender women. The role of hijari in society is complex and varied throughout the nation. A Transgender woman is a transgender person who was assigned as a male at birth but whose gender identity is that of a woman. The label of transgender woman is not always inter-changeable with that of transsexual woman. The transgender people experience a mismatch between their gender identity or gender expression and their assigned sex. Many transgender people experience a period of identity development that includes gaining better understanding of their self-image, self-reflection and self-expression. The degree to which individuals feel genuine, authentic, and comfortable within their external appearance and accept their genuine identity is referred to as 'transgender congruence'. Being transgender (TG) is independent of sexual orientation. They may identify as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual and asexual or may consider conventional, inadequate or inapplicable sexual orientation. TG also includes persons who intend to undergo Sex Re-assignment Surgery (SRS) or have undergone SRS to align their biological sex with their gender identity in order to become male or female. They are generally called transsexual persons. Further, there are persons who like to cross-dress in clothing of opposite gender, i.e. transvestites. TG Community comprises of Hijras, eunuchs, Kothis, Aravanis, Jogappas, Shiv-Shakthisetc. and they, as a group, have got a strong historical presence in our

country in the Hindu mythology and other religious texts. The Concept of tritiyaprakrtior napunsakahas also been an integral part of Vedic and puranic literatures. The word ‘napunsaka’ has been used to denote absence of pro-creative capability.

In a verdict on April 15th 2014, India’s Supreme Court for the first time recognized a third gender category, giving transgender individuals formal recognition, legal status, and protection under the law. The Court also directed India’s federal and state governments to designate transgender people as constituting a legally recognized marginalized group and which offers them access to social welfare programs and affirmative action in university admissions and state employment. Transgender individuals remain severely marginalized throughout the world. The transgenders (TG Community) are neither treated as male or female, nor given the status of a third gender and are they being deprived of many of the rights and privileges which other persons enjoy the citizens of this country.

TGs are deprived of social and cultural participation and hence restricted access to education, health care and public places which deprives them of the Constitutional guarantee of equality before law and equal protection of laws. Further, it was also pointed out that the community also faces discrimination to contest election, right to vote, employment, to get licenses etc. and, in effect, treated as an outcast and untouchable. Even the State cannot discriminate them on the ground of gender, violating Articles 14 to 16 and 21 of the Constitution of India. Many transgenders who identify as women in India are forced into sex work, though they go for begging since they are unable to obtain employment in other sectors of society. They vary with wide range of different races, ethnicities, ages, socio-economic status and identities. What binds them together as social and gender minorities are common experiences of stigma and discrimination, the struggle of living at the intersection of many cultural backgrounds and trying to be a part of each, specifically with respect to health care, a long history of discrimination and lack of awareness of health needs by health professionals. As a result, TG people face a common set of challenges in accessing competent health services and achieving the highest possible level of healthcare. Here, the researcher focused on the life skills intervention on TG’s personal and sexual health. The work has been carried out by in-depth discussions on health disparities affecting TG groups from their perspective; and outline steps clinicians and health care organizations can take to provide access to patient-centered care for their TG patients.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the transgenders occupational livelihood and community level barriers
- To examine the transgender native and health care system barriers
- To elucidate the role of life skills intervention for transgender personal and sexual health
- To find out how the life skills education training contributed towards the stakeholders holistic development

Review of Literature

Ilan H Meyer (2001) in his article ‘Why Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Public Health?’, emphasize on how public health has begun to address the concerns of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) populations. They are vary in socio-demographic characteristics such as cultural, ethnic, or racial identity; age; education; income; and place of residence. They are also diverse in the degree to which their LGBT identities are central to their self-definition, their level of affiliation with other LGBT people, and their rejection or acceptance of societal stereotypes and prejudice. Despite the many differences that separate them, LGBT people share remarkably similar experiences related to stigma, discrimination, rejection, and violence across cultures and locales. In the United States, gay men and lesbians are subject to legal discrimination in housing, employment, and basic civil rights. Sodomy laws, which brand gays and lesbians as criminals in 16 states, are often the basis for harassment and discrimination. Transgender individuals are stigmatized, discriminated against, and ridiculed in encounters with even those entrusted with their care. Finally the design of public health prevention and intervention programs, led the development of standards of care access to care, and the provision of culturally sensitive care.

Sari L.Reisner& Ralph Veters (2014) in their article ‘Mental Health of Transgender Youth in care at an Adolescent Urban Community Health Center: A Matched Retrospective Cohort Study’, explains about the risk for negative mental health of a vulnerable transgender youth such as depression, anxiety, self-harm, and suicidality. A retrospective cohort study of electronic health record data from 180 transgender patients aged 12 to 29 years seen between 2002 and 2011 at a Boston-based community health center was performed. Mental health outcomes were extracted and analyzed using conditional logistic regression models. Logistic regression models compared FTM with MTF youth on mental health outcomes. Compared with

cisgender matched controls, transgender youth had a twofold to threefold increased risk of depression, anxiety disorder, suicidal ideation, suicide attempt, self-harm without lethal intent, and both inpatient and outpatient mental health treatment. Lastly the conclusion of the study has been come out with Transgender youth were found to have a disparity in negative mental health outcomes compared with cisgender youth, with equally high burden in FTM (Female to Male) and MTF(Male to Female) patients. Identifying gender identity differences in clinical settings and providing appropriate services and supports are important steps in addressing the health disparity.

Arnold H Grossman & Antony R.D. Augelli (2006) in their article 'Transgender Youth: Invisible and Vulnerable', focused on three focus groups to explore factors that affect the experiences of youth (ages 15 to 21) who identify as transgender. These focus groups were designed to probe transgender youths' experiences of vulnerability in the areas of health and mental health. This involved their exposure to risks, discrimination, marginalization, and their access to supportive resources. Three themes emerged from an analysis of the groups' conversations. The themes centered on gender identity and gender presentation, sexuality and sexual orientation, and vulnerability and health issues. Most youth reported feeling they were transgender at puberty, and they experienced negative reactions to their gender atypical behaviors, as well as confusion between their gender identity and sexual orientation. The respondents noted four problems related to their vulnerability in health-related areas such as the lack of safe environments, poor access to physical health services, inadequate resources to address their mental health concerns, and a lack of continuity of care giving by their families and communities.

Kevin L & Harvey J Makadon (2011) in their study 'Improving the health care of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people: Understanding and Eliminating Health Disparities', emphasized that the LGBT community is diverse. These people identified as of different races, ethnicities, ages, socioeconomic status and gender minorities. They experience a long history of discrimination and stigma specifically with respect to health care. As a result they face highest level of challenges in healthcare provision and deny the access to patient centered care. The study concluded that the success of health-care organizations is the provision of cost-effective treatment to LGBT patients in behavioral health, HIV prevention, and transgender care. The health care should modify policies such as environments to be inclusive, educate LGBT about the health issues, and reflect upon personal attitudes that might prevent them from providing the kind of affirmative care that

LGBT people need and indeed all their patients attain the highest possible level of health.

Christy A. Rentmeester & Ryan K Sallans (2015) in their article 'Transgender Health - Eliminating Inequalities and Strengthening Clinician-Patient Relationships', considers healthcare experiences of transgender patients on their transition journeys. They focus specifically on clinicians' affective orientation toward a transgender patient and how it can influence the patient's general and mental healthcare experience. When the respondents expressed in healthcare contexts, binary dominance exacerbates the vulnerabilities of transgender patients and reinforces trends of under service to members of this community. Generally, clinicians tend to lack knowledge about the medical and mental health needs of transgender patients, and clinicians and office staff tend to lack cultural humility regarding the multi-dimensional challenges of being transgender in a binary-dominant society. The study suggest a five-point model as A patient "comes out" as transgender to a healthcare Professional; A patient is in need of general healthcare in a medical setting; A patient is ready to begin cross-sex hormone therapy; A patient requests a physician's letter to enable changing legal documents, such as driver's licenses, birth certificates, and passports and A patient requests a physician's referral and/or a letter for a transition-related surgery.

Methodology

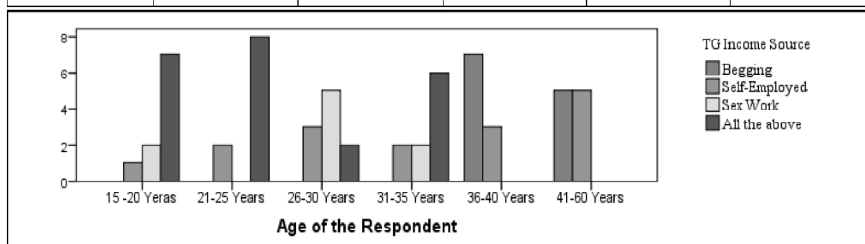
The researcher has taken the sample size of 60 transgender respondents from different age groups, those who are actively engaged in different livelihood activities including begging, self-employed and sex work. In this study, it has been used a combination of observation, interview and document materials from NAZ Foundation (India) Trust. I have applied random and snowball sampling techniques to identify the transgenders and the research carried out by personal interviews of respondents, Vihaan and Chuvad NGO staff, and with ORW (out reach workers) team members. The data collected were duly tabulated and analyzed by using SPSS16 software. The field work had been conducted from 20th October - 30th December 2015 in three phases. Secondary information has been collected from various journal articles, NGO reports, magazines, daily newspapers, as well as from the existing literature to understand the concept of LGBT and Transgender community and the role and interventions of Life Skills Education training for their personal and sexual health care and in their holistic development (such as human rights, legal rights and the basic rights of being Indian citizen) in the dominant hetero-sexual society.

Field Analysis

Table: 1

Transgender Age and Occupational Income Source

Age of the TG Respondent	Transgender Occupational Income Source				Total
	Begging	Self-Employed	Sex Work	All the above	
	0	1	2	7	10
15 -20 Years	.0%	10.0%	20.0%	70.0%	100.0%
	0	2	0	8	10
21-25 Years	.0%	20.0%	.0%	80.0%	100.0%
	0	3	5	2	10
26-30 Years	.0%	30.0%	50.0%	20.0%	100.0%
	0	2	2	6	10
31-35 Years	.0%	20.0%	20.0%	60.0%	100.0%
	7	3	0	0	10
36-40 Years	70.0%	30.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	5	5	0	0	10
41- 60 Years	50.0%	50.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Total	12	16	9	23	60
	20.0%	26.7%	15.0%	38.3%	100.0%

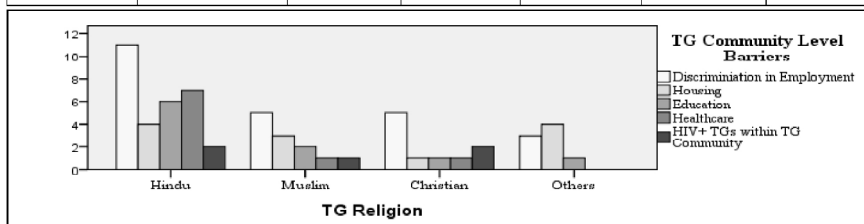


The table 1 explains the age of the transgender respondent and their occupational income source. As most of the transgenders engaged with begging and turned to an alternative livelihood source as sex work. As age increasing from 35 to 60 years they are depending on only begging and self-employment. The young transgender from the age group of 15 to 35 years (teenage to middle age) are not adopted begging profession, in fact majority of 38.3% are engaged in begging, self-employed and indulge in sex work, followed by 26.7% have started with their small pan shops, chocolate shops and book shops. Lastly, around 20% still depends on begging and 15% are engaged with sex work as their major source of income for their living.

Table: 2

Transgender Religion and Community level barriers

Transgender Religion	Community Level Barriers					Total
	Discrimination in Employment	Housing	Education	Healthcare	HIV+ TGs within TG Community	
Hindu	11	4	6	7	2	30
	36.7%	13.3%	20.0%	23.3%	6.7%	100.0%
Muslim	5	3	2	1	1	12
	41.7%	25.0%	16.7%	8.3%	8.3%	100.0%
Christian	5	1	1	1	2	10
	50.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Others	3	4	1	0	0	8
	37.5%	50.0%	12.5%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Total	24	12	10	9	5	60
	40.0%	20.0%	16.7%	15.0%	8.3%	100.0%

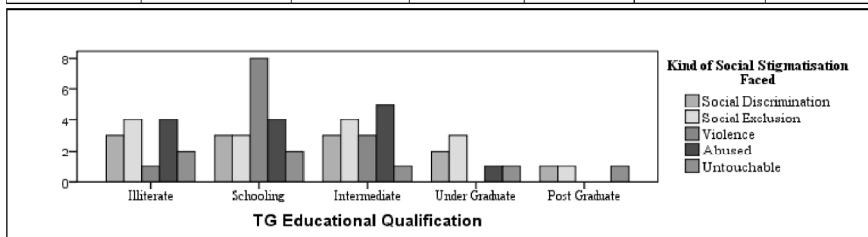


The table 2 enumerates the respondent’s religion and the community level barriers which they had come cross in their life. Irrespective of their religion majority of 40% faced discrimination in employment opportunities, though they are good in computer skills and writing accounts denied to provide employment due to gender minority. About 20% have faced housing facility denied house owners to provide home for rent, with the pre-notion that the TGs are not clean and hygiene as well as no status in the society. Around 16.7% respondents neglected in the educational institutions followed by 15% faced inferior services in the healthcare system of both public and private hospitals. Lastly, 8.3% had faced doubly excluded within the TG community as they are identified as HIV+. Since the Life Skills training gave a new hope to life and their peer group treating them in a empathetic way. As their TG friends realized that they themselves are stereotypic in the world.

Table: 3

TG Educational Qualification and Kind of Social Stigmatization faced

TG Educational Qualification	Kind of Stigmatization faced					Total
	Social Discrimination	Social Exclusion	Violence	Abused	Untouchable	
Illiterate	3	4	1	4	2	14
	21.4%	28.6%	7.1%	28.6%	14.3%	100.0%
Schooling	3	3	8	4	2	20
	15.0%	15.0%	40.0%	20.0%	10.0%	100.0%
Intermediate	3	4	3	5	1	16
	18.8%	25.0%	18.8%	31.2%	6.2%	100.0%
Under Graduate	2	3	0	1	1	7
	28.6%	42.9%	.0%	14.3%	14.3%	100.0%
Post Graduate	1	1	0	0	1	3
	33.3%	33.3%	.0%	.0%	33.3%	100.0%
Total	12	15	12	14	7	60
	20.0%	25.0%	20.0%	23.3%	11.7%	100.0%

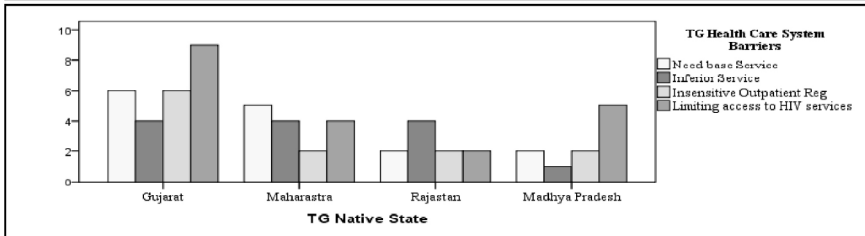


The table3 explains the stakeholder educational qualification and the kind of social stigmatization they faced from the dominant heterogeneous society. The respondents are divided from illiterates to postgraduate level of education; despite their educational qualification all the TGs faced humiliation in the public places. Majority of 25% feel the social boycott and exclusion from the first two genders in social gatherings, such as weddings and in some family ceremonies. Around 23% of the respondents face discrimination in the complaints against to them in the police station and insulting and criminalize them by keeping wrong theft cases on them. Around 20% equally reported that they face violence by police as well as general public against them such as beating and ill treated. Lastly, 12% face the public never accepted them as human beings always treat them as outcasts and untouchables. If they offer something the people will never accept from their hands.

Table: 4

TG Native State and TG Health Care System Barriers

TG Native State	TG Health Care System Barriers				Total
	Need base Service	Inferior Service	Insensitive Outpatient Registration	Limiting access to HIV services	
Gujarat	6	4	6	9	25
	24.0%	16.0%	24.0%	36.0%	100.0%
Maharashtra	5	4	2	4	15
	33.3%	26.7%	13.3%	26.7%	100.0%
Rajasthan	2	4	2	2	10
	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Madhya Pradesh	2	1	2	5	10
	20.0%	10.0%	20.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Total	15	13	12	20	60
	25.0%	21.7%	20.0%	33.3%	100.0%

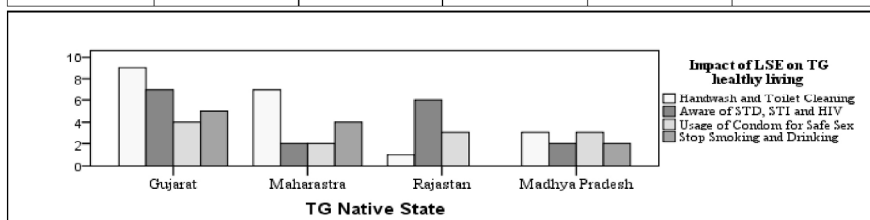


The table4 enumerates the respondents experience with the healthcare system and the barriers which they faced in both public and private hospitals from the state of Gujarat and its neighboring state respondents. All these neighboring state TGs are migrated to Gujarat as the Gujarat government is providing 2000 rupees pension for registered TGs. The respondents from all the states opined that majority of 33.3% are limiting the access to HIV TG patients, followed by 25% demanding the need based services which should be patient centered treatment. Around 21.7% expressed their deepest grief about the inferior services in all PHCs, public and private hospitals. Lastly, 20% respondents are depressed and disappointed with the insensitive outpatient registration and deny providing the medical ward based on the gender for inpatient treatment. Most of the time medical professionals neglect them in providing timely treatment and make fun of them during treating them.

Table: 5

TG Native State and Impact of LSE on TG healthy living

TG Native State	Impact of LSE on TG Healthy Living				Total
	Hand wash and Toilet Cleaning	Aware of STD, STI and HIV	Usage of Condom for Safe Sex	Stop Smoking and Drinking	
Gujarat	9	7	4	5	25
	36.0%	28.0%	16.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Maharashtra	7	2	2	4	15
	46.7%	13.3%	13.3%	26.7%	100.0%
Rajasthan	1	6	3	0	10
	10.0%	60.0%	30.0%	.0%	100.0%
Madhya Pradesh	3	2	3	2	10
	30.0%	20.0%	30.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	20	17	12	11	60
	33.3%	28.3%	20.0%	18.3%	100.0%

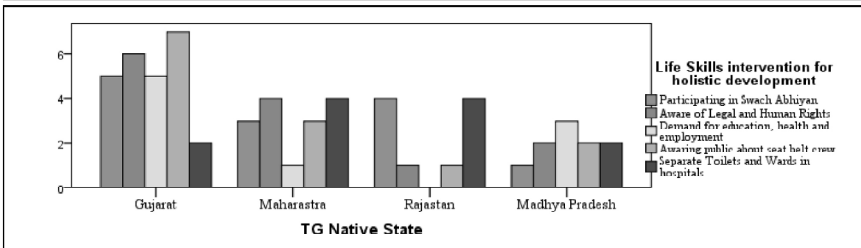


The table5 solicits from the TG respondents about the impact of Life Skills Education training program on their personal healthy living. Irrespective their state background all the TGs tried to adopt and practice of healthy habits for their personal as well as sexual health. Majority of 33.3% have adopted hand wash before taking food and after using Toilets and wash-rooms; they are also started regular toilet cleaning, as they come to know half of the diseases will spread from toilet and, washroom and with stag-nated water. Around 28.3% TGs are aware of STDs, STIs and HIV how to prevalence them and adopted safe sex methods. The TGs of middle age turned to sex work as their major livelihood, started using condom for healthy sexual practice and to avoid the clients STDs and STIs. Lastly, around 18.3% TGs stop smoking, chewing gutka and tobacco and drinking alcohol. As they realized for healthy living they should check and stop bad habits; in turn they seek for respect and employment from the society by avoiding drinking and smoking.

Table: 6

TG Native State and LSE intervention for holistic Development

TG Native State	LSE interventions for holistic development					Total
	Participating in SWACH Abhiyan	Aware of Legal and Human Rights	Demand for education, health and employment	Awaring public about seat belt crew	Separate Toilets and Wards in hospitals	
Gujarat	5	6	5	7	2	25
	20.0%	24.0%	20.0%	28.0%	8.0%	100.0%
Maharashtra	3	4	1	3	4	15
	20.0%	26.7%	6.7%	20.0%	26.7%	100.0%
Rajasthan	4	1	0	1	4	10
	40.0%	10.0%	.0%	10.0%	40.0%	100.0%
Madhya Pradesh	1	2	3	2	2	10
	10.0%	20.0%	30.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	13	13	9	13	12	60
	21.7%	21.7%	15.0%	21.7%	20.0%	100.0%



The table6 enumerates the respondents’ holistic development based on the interventions of life skills education. Majority of 63.2% TG respondents started coming out and participated in SWACH Bharat Abhiyan program, aware of legal and human rights which the Indian Constitution provides equally to all its citizens. They raise voice against their basic rights of housing, good sanitation, and awaring public about the seat belt crew at traffic signals. Around 20% respondents are demanding for separate toilets and medical wards in hospitals. Lastly, 15% TGs demand for their education, health as well as employment opportunities. They are really happy and celebrated when the Supreme Court declared them as third gender by identifying their rights and equal opportunities. Most of them are aware of Section 377 and the importance of winning it before law

Conclusion

The study concludes that most of the transgenders have faced discrimination, humiliation and scared of threat being shunted from the general public

as well as police. The growing enthusiasm about the attention to LGBT populations in public health system must not blind us to the risks. For a stigmatized minority, this institutional control could prove limiting, but the same social forces, including homophobia, heterosexism, and sexism, which have previously led to exclusion might now lead to inappropriate and even damaging the transgender life. Placing sexuality, sexual orientation, and gender under a public health lens may lead to their medicalization and public healthification and to the institutionalization of negative attitudes. But the community hospitals should ensure unbiased medical care and on providing need based care as well as patient-centered services to transgender patients that optimizes quality clinical and cost effective treatment.

The efforts of NGOs and Life Skills Education interventions have been fruitful as today many transgenders realize the importance of cleanness through the life skills training program and participation in public campaigns with the help of outreach workers of different NGOs. The transgender women play skits, street plays and aware the public about the seat belt crew at traffic signals and march against the stereotypes which they are facing at all societal levels. Now the TG women are aware about their legal as well as basic human rights, related to education, health and employment. These TGs stakeholders are much more aware about the bad habits of smoking, chewing Gutka and tobacco and drinking alcohol disrespects human beings and stop taking them in order to get respect, honour and dignity in the society. They helped many women passengers in train journeys from arrogant passengers by providing information to railway police. They organize street plays about the consequences of illegal relationships, alcoholism, safe sexual practices and healthy habits of hand wash, regular toilet cleaning practice, equality and inclusion of all human beings, social acceptance of transgender. The stakeholders have brought some positive thoughts among the people's attitude such as avoid smoking in public places, usage of dust-bins, Family Planning, and importance of Girl Child, Lastly, with the life skills interventions and NGOs support they are dealing effectively the cops filing case against them, arranging meeting with public hospital doctors for the non-biased treatment, fighting against injustice, police harassment, confronting extortion and challenging stereotypes. The life skills education has brought remarkable changes in the transgenders life, livelihood up gradation, good health and ready to face the day to day challenges of life which in turn led to promote the dignity of transgender.

References

- Moran, L. & Sharpe, A. (2004). Violence, identity and policing: The case of violence against transgender people. *Criminal Justice*, 4(4), 395-417.
- Grossman, A. H. & D'Augelli, A. R. (2006). Transgender youth: Invisible and vulnerable. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 51(1), 111-128.
- Sari L. Reisner, Sc.D., M.A, Ralph Veters, M.D., M.PH., M. Leclerc, M.PH. Shayne Zaslow, M.A., M.S., Sarah Wolfrum, M.PH., Daniel Shumer, M.D., and Matthew J. Mimiaga, Sc.D., M.PH. (2015). Mental Health of Transgender Youth in Care at an Adolescent Urban Community Health Center: A Matched Retrospective Cohort Study. ELSEVIER: *Journal of Adolescent Health*. XXX, 1-6.
- Lombardi, E. (2001). Enhancing transgender health care. *American Journal of Public Health*, 91, 869-872.
- Bailey, J.M., & Zucker, K.J. (1995). Childhood sex-typed behavior and sexual orientation: A conceptual analysis and quantitative review. *Developmental Psychology*, 31, 43-55.
- Ilan H. Meyer (2001). Why Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Public Health? *American Journal of Public Health*. 91(6), 856-859.
- Kevin L Ard MD, MPH, & Harvey J Makadon.MD., (2011). Improving the Health Care of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People: Understanding and Eliminating Health Disparities. The Fenway Institute report. 1-12.
- Christy A. Rentmeester & Ryan K. Sallans (2015). Transgender Health - Eliminating Inequalities and Strengthening Clinician-Patient Relationships. *Journal of Ethics in Mental Health*. 1, 1-6.
- Conner Gorry (2010). Transgender Health in Cuba: Evolving Policy to Impact Practice. *MEDICC Review*, 12(4), 5-9.
- Fitzpatrick, K. K., Euton, S. J., Jones, J. N., Schmidt, N. J. (2005). Gender role, sexual orientation, and suicide risk. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 87, 35-42.

www.nazindia.org

www.gsnppplus.org

Life Skills and Adjustment of University Students: A Correlational Study

Dr. Jasraj Kaur*

Abstract

The present paper aims to study the relationship between dimensions of life skills and the adjustment of university students. Life skills are an effective tool to promote pro-social behavior. By introducing life skills, the abilities of students to cope with different and varied situations can be enhanced. The study was conducted among 100 college students from Patiala. The life skills were assessed using Life Skills Skills Assessment Scale and adjustment was assessed using Revised Adjustment Inventory (RAI). The study shows that there is positive correlation between life skills and adjustments.

Key Words

Life skills and adjustments

* Department of Education and C.S., Punjabi University, Patiala

Introduction

Life Skills are considered as an effective tool to promote pro-social behaviour. It is a set of psycho-social skills which are socially acceptable learned behaviour that enables individual to interact in ways that elicit positive responses. Nutbeam (1998) viewed life skills as fundamental building blocks for the development of personal skills for health promotion. Maghsoudi et al. (2010) stated that life skills education can promote the social adjustment of the kids and adolescents. Cronin (1996) explained life skills as those tasks that contribute to successful, independent functioning of an individual in adulthood. Zahra et al. (2013) explained that life skills training is effective in enhancement of social adjustment of students. Monroe (1990) stated that the term adjustment is often used as a synonym for accommodation and adaptation. Every individual from the time he or she steps out of the family and goes to school makes a long series of adjustment with the environment.

Life skills enhance social competence. Danish et al. (2004) viewed life skills as those skills that enable individuals to succeed in the different environment in which they live such as school, home and in their neighbourhood. Ouane (2002) explained the generic understanding of life skills from the dual angle of personal fulfillment and realization of social responsibility includes both empowerment and self-fulfillment and the capacity to be a part of a heterogeneous group and strive for common goals. According to Oden and Asher (1997) social skills of children are effective to participate in games, communicate, cooperate and helping others. Life skills refer to the skills usually associated with managing and living a better quality of life, they help us to accomplish our ambitions and live to our full potential. Mctavish (2000) viewed life skills include individual and social skills which adolescents should learn about and ultimately be able to treat themselves and other people of the whole society in an appropriate manner effectively and safely

Aghajani (2002) viewed that knowledge of suitable life skills would provide an opportunity for individuals to act normally in their daily life and positively conform to social environment. Lang and Grewig (1989) conceptualised life skills as the development of skills that help youth to cope with a changing world full of social pressures. As it is mentioned in the report of World Health Organization (1999) that the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the challenges of everyday life. Hendrics (1996) defined life skills as those skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life. Yarham et al. (1979) viewed life skills as personal competencies whereas Tinnari (1998) viewed life skills as ponders for the tools and techniques to improve interpersonal

relations. Francis (2007) explained life skills are personal and social skills required for young people to function confidently and competently with themselves and Jones and Lavallee (2008) expressed that life skills are needed in everyday life for everybody.

Rezayat and Nahid (2013) examined self-efficacy after life skills training: a care control study among 251 nursing students. Results revealed that life skills training programs did not affect self-efficacy of nursing students. Sheikhzade (2013) studied the efficacy of training life skills ‘ on educational achievement and social acceptance among 619 students. The results had shown that the skill of self understanding and excitement had influence in students’ educational achievement but communication skill had no effect on students’ educational achievement. The skills of decision making and problem solving had effect on students’ social acceptance.

Al-qassem (2014) studied the degree of having life skills among 855 Hashemite University students. Results revealed that there were no significant differences in the possession degree of life skills among the Hashemite University students ascribed to the variable of gender and there were significant differences in the possession of degree of communication skills and academic skills among Hashemite University students ascribed to the variable of academic level. Vernofaderani (2014) studied the effectiveness of life skills training on enhancing the self-esteem of hearing impaired students in inclusive schools among 54 students with hearing impairment. Results had shown that training life skills to students with hearing impairment promote their self-esteem. In other words, life skills training was effective for enhancing the self-esteem of hearing impaired students in inclusive schools. Onyuru (2013) investigated the psychosocial predictors of adjustment of 452 secondary school students of Nigeria. The results showed that self-concept significantly predicted adjustment of secondary school students.

Thilagavity (2013) studied adjustment and emotional intelligence of 250 high school teachers of Tamil Nadu. The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant difference between adjustment of male and female teachers, rural and urban teachers. Adjustment and emotional intelligence of school teachers had a positive linear relationship. Life skills education plays a very vital role to increase the awareness among the youth about all social problems and to alleviate social evils from the society. It helps the individual to improve the decision making skills, improving mental health, ability to take everything in the right sense and also improving their contribution to the society.

Objective of the study

- To study the relationship between dimensions of life skills and adjustment of university students.

Hypothesis

- There is no significant difference between dimensions of life skills and adjustment of university students.

Limitation of the study

- The study was confined only to the students of Punjabi University, Patiala.

Tool used

- Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) (2010) by Nair et al.
- Revised Adjustment Inventory (RAI) by Parmod Kumar (2002).

Results

Life Skills of University Students in Relation to Their Adjustment

The correlation between Life Skills and adjustment is computed by Pearson product moment.

Table 1

Correlation between Life Skills and Adjustment of University Students (N=100)

Variables	Correlation
Life Skills/ Adjustment	0.07
Self-Awareness/ Adjustment	0.15*
Empathy/ Adjustment	0.29*
Effective Communication/ Adjustment	0.62**
Inter-Personal Relationship/ Adjustment	0.52**
Decision Making/ Adjustment	0.54**
Problem Solving/ Adjustment	0.06
Creative Thinking/ Adjustment	0.44**
Critical Thinking/ Adjustment	0.08
Coping with Emotions/ Adjustment	0.09
Coping with Stress/ Adjustment	0.06

** Significant at 0.01 level, * Significant at 0.05 level

The table 1 shows the correlation between life skills and adjustment of students comes out to be 0.07 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This shows there is no significant relationship between life skills and adjustment of students. The correlation between self awareness and adjustment of university students comes out to be 0.15 which is significant at 0.05 level. This means there is positive relationship between self awareness and adjustment of university students. Self aware person is able to recognize his own abilities and shortcomings. The person who knows about his abilities and shortcomings is able to attain adjustment because he sharpens his abilities and tries to improve shortcomings. The correlation between empathy and adjustment of university students comes out to be 0.29 which is significant at 0.05 level. This shows positive relationship between empathy and adjustment of university students. The person who has ability to see others' emotions as his own is able to solve others problems and his own problems. By helping the other persons, he is able to attain adjustment in social contacts.

The correlation between effective communication and adjustment of university students comes out to be 0.62 which is significant at 0.01 level. This means there is positive relationship between effective communication and adjustment of university students. The correlation between inter-personal relationship and adjustment of university students comes out to be 0.52 which is significant at 0.01 level. This shows positive relationship between inter-personal relationship and adjustment of university students. The person who is capable to deal with other persons effectively and make social relationships, is able to attain adjustment. The correlation between decision making and adjustment of university students comes out to be 0.54 which is significant at 0.01 level. This means there is significant relationship between decision making and adjustment of university students. This is because persons with good adaptation have positive thinking, clear ideas and positive attitude towards life. So they have good decision making ability. The correlation between problem solving and adjustment of university students comes out to be 0.06 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This shows no significant relationship between problem solving and happiness. Now day students are totally depended on the parents and teachers, when even a small problem arise before them they come into tension. So they are not able to be adjust in such situations.

The correlation between creative thinking and adjustment of university students comes out to be 0.44 which is significant at 0.01 level. This means positive relationship between creative thinking and adjustment of students. The person, who has creative thinking, has original and new ideas and new

thoughts. He/ She can generate new things and invent new invention which is useful for others. By doing this he attain internal calmness and happiness so adjust in different situations. The correlation between critical thinking and adjustment of students comes out to be 0.08 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This shows no significant relationship between critical thinking and adjustment of students. Students are not given proper training to analysis the things by their own. They are not able to analysis the things properly, so they get in trouble. The correlation between coping with emotions and adjustment of students come to be 0.09 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This means there is negative relationship between coping with emotions and adjustment of students. The emotions like anger, fear and jealousy are widely spread in the students. They are not able to get rid from these emotions. There is also lack of counseling of students in schools. With these emotions they are not able to get calmness. The correlation between coping with stress and adjustment of students comes out to be 0.06 which is not significant at 0.05 level. So there is no significant relationship between coping with stress and adjustment of students. Now days, stress is much in the all ages, in works and even in the families. Students are not able to get rid of stress. The cause of stress may be loneliness of the child in home and watching useless programmes on the T.V. and on Internet. So students feel maladjusted in different situations.

References

- Al-Qassem, Lina Z., Ahmad M. Mohasneh, Omar, M. Mahasneh, Zohair H. Al- Zoubi and Omar T. Batayeneh (2014) degree of having Life Skills among the Hashemite University Students. *Review of European Studies*, 6 (1), 180.
- Cronin, M. E. (1996) Life Skills Curricula for Students with Learning Disabilities: *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 29 (1), 53-68.
- Danish, S. J., Forneris, T., Hodge, K. and Hehe, I. (2004) Enhancing Youth Development Through Sport. *World Leisure*, 3, 38-39.
- Francis, J. Leslie, Yaacov, J. Katz, YaccovYablon, Mandy, Robbins (2004) Religiosity, Personality and Happiness: A Study among Israeli Male Undergraduates. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 5 (4), 315-333.
- Hendricks, P. A. (1996) Developing Youth Curriculum using Targeting Life Skills Model: Incorporating Developmentally Appropriate Learning Opportunities to Assess Impact of Life Skill Development. Iowa State University: University Extension.
- Lang, C. L. and Grewig, J. L. (1989) The Ever-Growing Clover. *NAE4-H News and Views*, 42 (4), 6-8.
- Maghsoudi, J. ,N. Hashemisabour, M. Yazdani and T. Mehrabi (2010) The Effects of Acquiring Life Skills through Humor on Social Adjustment Rate of Female Students. *Iranian Journal of Nursing and Midwifery Research*, 15 (4), 195-201.

- McTavish, S. (2000) *Life Skills: Activities for Success and Well-Being*. New York: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins.
- Monroe, P. (1990) *International encyclopedia of education*. New Delhi: Cosmo Publications.
- Nutbeam, Don (1998) Health Promotion Glossary. *Health Promotion International*, 13 (4), Oxford University Press.
- Ouane, A. (2002) Key Competencies in Lifelong Learning. Institutionalizing Lifelong Learning, Creating Conducive Environments for Adults Learning Asian Context, UNESCO Institute for Education, Hamburg.
- Onyкуру, B.U.D. (2013) Psychosocial Predictors of Secondary School Students Adjustment to School. *European Scientific Journal*, 9(17), 303-311.
- Tinnari (1998) Enabling Adolescents to Build Life Skills, Part I Virtual Knowledge. Retrieved from [www.endvawnow.org/.../enabling%](http://www.endvawnow.org/.../enabling%20life%20skills)
- Thilagavathy, T. (2013) Adjustment and Emotional Intelligence of High School Teachers in Tiruvarur District. *International Journal of Teacher Educational Research*, 2(5), 1-6.
- Yarham, JW, Alston CL, Craig K, Poulton J, Brierly C, Park SM (1979) Improvement in Visual Spatial Short Term Memory Skills in Children. Retrieved from www.neuroscience.com.ac.uk

The Impact of Need Based Life Skills Intervention on Skill Development and Self- esteem among Adolescents of the Marginal Group

Cicily & Gracy S. Jebastina*

Abstract

Life skill based education provides a holistic approach to education where there is intellectual and basic skill development in the child and therefore enhances their self esteem and help them cope up with competition and daily life situation. Hence this paper aims at studying the impact of need based life skill intervention on skill development and self esteem among adolescents of the marginal group. The hypothesis states that there is a positive influence of need based life skill training on skill development and self esteem. The sample of this study is 30 adolescents of the lower socio economic background. Since this paper incorporates the mixed methodology the results obtained from statistical analysis will be substantiated by personal experience of the adolescents. The results from the quantitative analysis shows that there is no significant impact of need based life skills intervention on skill development and self esteem. The theme that emerged from the qualitative analysis is: fun based class, self awareness, a skill which interrelates to emotional aspects, adolescent issues, experimenting learning in relation to emotions and so on. Therefore though there is no significant impact on skill development need based life skills intervention has enabled the adolescent to enhance self awareness and deal with emotion and daily life situations.

Keywords: Need based life skills, Skill development, Self esteem

* Psychologist, Sukrut Psychotherapeutic clinic, Bangalore

Introduction

Indian constitution has provided its citizens the right to education. Since most of the Indian population constitute of lower socioeconomic status, the families cannot afford to provide education for their children. Hence the government has provided free education for children of lower socioeconomic status along with free food. When the government is taking care of physical health and cognitive improvement they rarely focus on their mental well being. Therefore most of the students absent themselves from school as they are not equipped to handle the daily problems they encounter at their home environment, which leads to dropouts.

Adolescence

Adolescents constitute the major part of the Indian population. According to the WHO the period of adolescence is between the age 10 to 19 years, and they experience a transition from childhood to adulthood. During this period they are becoming more independent, and begin to look at the future in terms of career, relationships, families, housing, etc. The individual wants to belong to a society and fit in.

This is a major stage in development where the child has to learn the roles he/she will occupy as an adult. It is during this stage that the adolescent will re-examine his/her identity and try to find out exactly who he or she is. Erikson suggests that two identities are involved: the sexual and the occupational.

According to Bee (1992), what should happen at the end of this stage is “a reintegrated sense of self, of what one wants to do or be, and of one’s appropriate sex role”. During this stage the body image of the adolescent changes. Erikson claims that the adolescent may feel uncomfortable about their body for a while until they can adapt and “grow into” the changes. Success in this stage will lead to the virtue of fidelity.

Fidelity involves being able to commit one’s self to others based on accepting others, even when there may be ideological differences. During this period, they explore possibilities and begin to form their own identity based upon the outcome of their explorations. Failure to establish a sense of identity within society (“I don’t know what I want to be when I grow up”) can lead to role confusion. Role confusion involves the individual not being sure about themselves or their place in society.

In response to role confusion or identity crisis an adolescent may begin to experiment with different lifestyles (e.g. work, education or political activi-

ties). Also, pressuring someone into an identity can result in rebellion in the form of establishing a negative identity, and in addition to this feeling of unhappiness.

Adolescence of the lower socioeconomic strata does not have a reinforcing environment and hence fail to develop a healthy identity. Research shows that adolescents of lower socioeconomic status tend to develop lower self esteem.

Self esteem

Self-esteem is your overall opinion of yourself — how you feel about your abilities and limitations. When you have healthy self-esteem, you feel good about yourself and see yourself as deserving the respect of others. When you have low self-esteem, you put little value on your opinions and ideas. You might constantly worry that you aren't good enough.

Factors that shape and influence self-esteem

Self-esteem begins to form in early childhood. Factors that can influence self-esteem include:

- own thoughts and perceptions
- How other people react to you
- Experiences at home, school, work and in the community
- Illness, disability or injury
- Culture or religion
- Role and status in society
- Media messages

Relationships with those close to you — parents, siblings, peers, teachers and other important contacts — are important to your self-esteem. Many beliefs you hold about yourself today reflect messages you've received from these people over time. If your relationships are strong and you receive generally positive feedback, you're more likely to see yourself as worthwhile and have healthier self-esteem. If you received mostly negative feedback and are often criticized, teased or devalued by others, you're more likely to struggle with poor self-esteem.

Still, your own thoughts have perhaps the biggest impact on self-esteem — and these thoughts are within your control. If you tend to focus on your weaknesses or flaws, you can learn to develop a more balanced, accurate view of yourself.

Ranges of self-esteem

Self-esteem tends to fluctuate over time, depending on your circumstances. It's normal to go through times when you feel down — or good — about yourself. Generally, however, self-esteem stays in a range that reflects how you feel about yourself overall. Consider how to recognize the extremes of your self-esteem:

- **Low self-esteem.** When you have low or negative self-esteem, you put little value on your opinions and ideas. You focus on your perceived weaknesses and faults and give scant credit to your skills and assets. You believe that others are more capable or successful. You might have difficulty accepting positive feedback. You might fear failure, which can hold you back from succeeding at work or school.
- **Healthy self-esteem.** When you have healthy self-esteem it means you have a balanced, accurate view of yourself. For instance, you have a good opinion of your abilities but recognize your flaws.

When self-esteem is healthy and grounded in reality, it's hard to have too much of it. Boasting and feeling superior to others around you isn't a sign of too much self-esteem. It's more likely evidence of insecurity and low self-esteem.

Life skills based education

Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. In particular, life skills are a group of psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others, and cope with and manage their lives in a healthy and productive manner. (WHO, Skills for Life, Geneva: 2001, Pp.8).Essentially, there are two kinds of skills - those related to thinking termed as “thinking skills”; and skills related to dealing with others termed as “social skills”. While thinking skills relate to reflection at a personal level, social skills include interpersonal skills and do not necessarily depend on logical thinking. It is the combination of these two types of skills that are needed for achieving assertive behavior and negotiating effectively. “Emotional” can be perceived as a skill not only in making rational decisions but also in being able to make others agree to one’s point of view. To do that, coming to terms first with oneself is important. Thus, self management is an important skill including managing/coping with feelings, emotions, stress and

resisting peer and family pressure. Young people as advocates need both thinking and social skills for consensus building and advocacy on issues of concern.

The Ten core Life Skills as laid down by WHO are:

- 1. Self-awareness** includes recognition of ‘self’, our character, our strengths and weaknesses, desires and dislikes. Developing self-awareness can help us to recognize when we are stressed or feel under pressure. It is often a prerequisite to effective communication and interpersonal relations, as well as for developing empathy with others.
- 2. Empathy** - To have a successful relationship with our loved ones and society at large, we need to understand and care about other people’s needs, desires and feelings. Empathy is the ability to imagine what life is like for another person. Without empathy, our communication with others will amount to one-way traffic. Worst, we will be acting and behaving according to our self-interest and are bound to run into problems. No man is an island, no woman either! We grow up in relationships with many people – parents, brothers and sisters, cousins, uncles and aunts, classmates, friends and neighbors. When we understand ourselves as well as others, we are better prepared to communicate our needs and desires. We will be more equipped to say what we want people to know, present our thoughts and ideas and tackle delicate issues without offending other people. At the same time, we will be able to elicit support from others, and win their understanding. Empathy can help us to accept others, who may be very different from ourselves. This can improve social interactions, especially, in situations of ethnic or cultural diversity. Empathy can also help to encourage nurturing behavior towards people in need of care and assistance, or tolerance, as is the case with AIDS sufferers, or people with mental disorders, who may be stigmatized and ostracized by the very people they depend upon for support.
- 3. Critical thinking** is an ability to analyze information and experiences in an objective manner. Critical thinking can contribute to health by helping us to recognize and assess the factors that influence attitudes and behavior, such as values, peer pressure and the media.
- 4. Creative thinking** is a novel way of seeing or doing things that is characteristic of four components – fluency (generating new ideas), flexibility (shifting perspective easily), originality (conceiving of something new), and elaboration (building on other ideas).

5. **Decision making** helps us to deal constructively with decisions about our lives. This can have consequences for health. It can teach people how to actively make decisions about their actions in relation to healthy assessment of different options and, what effects these different decisions are likely to have.
6. **Problem solving** helps us to deal constructively with problems in our lives. Significant problems that are left unresolved can cause mental stress and give rise to accompanying physical strain.
7. **Interpersonal relationship skills** help us to relate in positive ways with the people we interact with. This may mean being able to make and keep friendly relationships, which can be of great importance to our mental and social well-being. It may mean keeping, good relations with family members, which are an important source of social support. It may also mean being able to end relationships constructively.
8. **Effective communication** means that we are able to express ourselves, both verbally and nonverbally, in ways that are appropriate to our cultures and situations. This means being able to express opinions and desires, and also needs and fears. And it may mean being able to ask for advice and help in a time of need.
9. **Coping with stress** means recognizing the sources of stress in our lives, recognizing how this affects us, and acting in ways that help us control our levels of stress, by changing our environment or lifestyle and learning how to relax.
10. **Coping with emotions** means involving recognizing emotions within us and others, being aware of how emotions influence behavior and being able to respond to emotions appropriately. Intense emotions like anger or sadness can have negative effects on our health if we do not respond appropriately.

Need based life skills training

In this study, we have incorporated need based life skills training where we have selected some topics from the WHO and modified the activities based on the need of the students. A life skill education should be culturally appropriate (WHO, 1997). therefore it was decided based on the interaction and observation of the students in their classroom, playground and also with the interaction with the teachers and other stakeholders in the school that the life skills sessions have to be tailor made to address the issues of the students and to empower them with practically scientific knowledge and its

application in daily life. Based on the interaction with the students and teachers we came up with the themes that would follow the life skills approach to empower the students. The different themes that emerged through the discussion were Anger management, understanding my emotions, compassion with self, compassion with school, compassion with our society, creativity, peer pressure, gratitude, friendship, relationships, abuse, decision making, procrastination, unity, trusting one another, study skills, knowing myself, coping with stress, and so on.

Age appropriate changes were also made to the basic module so that the program could be implemented to students according to their level of understanding. The sessions were designed to enable students to practice skills progressively. The sessions included an ice-breaker, an activity which stimulates students thinking by providing an opportunity to make learning an experience followed by a interactive session on the experiences and relating it to the daily life situations. The sessions involved group work, individual work, debate, role-play, short films and documentations, movies and practical community projects.

Operational definitions

Need based life skills: It is a tailor made programme that caters in developing skills that the adolescents need to deal with oneself and his society

Self esteem: it is a subjective judgment and an overall emotional evaluation about the individual's own self worth

Skill development: the development of basic skills such as decision making, creativity, rational thinking and so on which require for daily life events.

Statement of the problem

The study focuses on the effect of need based life skill intervention on skill development and self esteem among the adolescent of the marginal group

Objectives

The objectives of this study are as follows;

- To study whether need based life skills intervention has an effect on skill development
- To find whether there is a relationship between need based life skill intervention and self esteem

Rationale

Adolescence is a period of turmoil and confusion. This is a period where they are establishing their identity. Therefore it becomes important to provide safe and reinforcing environment. There are many research studies done to make this stage of development more significant. Research has shown that life skill training has a positive effect on the overall development of the adolescents. But most of the studies have used the W.H.O. module and not tried to modify based on the need of the adolescents. Therefore this paper aims to study the impact of need based life skills intervention on skill development and self esteem among adolescents of lower socioeconomic strata.

Significance of the study

This study will be significant for the mental health professionals, life skill trainers and the education sectors. By studying the impact of life skills intervention on skill development and self esteem among adolescents we can try and modify the life skills module based on the need of the students. We can also make life skill classes compulsory in schools to enhance the overall development of the students.

Review of literature

A study on the impact of life skills intervention training on emotional intelligence of college adolescents was done by Tarundeep Kaur. The study was designed with as a need survey in the area of emotional intelligence. The study was carried out to examine the effects of an intervention program on the emotional intelligence of college adolescents. A pre-posttest design was used for the current study. The current study comprised of 60 college students male and female falling in the age group of 18 to 20 yrs. generalized self-efficacy scale, sevenfold emotional intelligence scale and cooper smith self-esteem inventory were used for pre and posttest. The students who were low on test norms were selected for the EQ development program for three months. The results were analyzed using paired sample t test to examine pre-posttest mean difference which revealed a significant increase in the scores of EQ.

Shwetha B. C also studied the role of life skills training in developing emotional maturity and stress resilience among adolescents. The present study focuses on the impact of Life Skill Training Program on Emotional Maturity and Stress Resilience among adolescents. To examine the same the sample of 30 adolescents were given the Life Skill Training and 30 adolescents

didn't receive any Life Skill Training and both the groups were administered with Emotional Maturity Scale and The Resilience Scale. The research findings indicated that there is a significant difference between the experimental and control group; experimental group which received Life Skill Training had high Emotional Maturity and high stress resilience compared to untrained group.

Another study by Reiner Hanewinkel¹, and Martin Aûhauer was on Fifteen-month follow-up results of a school-based life-skills approach to smoking prevention. The life-skills approach to smoking prevention was tested in this study. In total, 1024 pupils (mean age 11.4 years, SD = 0.90) from Austria, Denmark, Luxembourg and Germany were recruited as an experimental group, and a sample of 834 matched pupils served as a control group. While the pupils from the control group received no specific intervention, the pupils in the experimental group participated in an intervention programmer which was based on the life-skills approach and consisted of 21 sessions. The aims of the programmer were to promote fundamental social competencies and coping skills. In addition, specific information on cigarette smoking was given and skills for resisting social influences to smoke were rehearsed. The programmer was conducted by trained school teachers during a course of 4 months. Anonymous questionnaires were administered (1) before the programmer was implemented and (2) 15 months after the programmer had started. Teachers as well as pupils showed a high level of satisfaction with the programmer idea and the materials. With regard to the outcome variables, the programmer had no differential effect on current smoking (4-week prevalence). The programmer showed a weak effect ($P < 0.1$) on lifetime smoking prevalence and experimental smoking. There was also an effect of the programmer on smoking knowledge, on the social competences of the pupils as well as on the classroom climate. No effects were found on susceptibility to smoking among never-smokers, attitudes towards smoking and the perceived positive consequences of smoking. The results indicate that prevention programmers that are run for only a few months can have a positive impact on variables considered to be protective with regard to smoking uptake.

Pooja Yadav and Naved Iqbal studied the impact of life skill training on self-esteem, adjustment and empathy among adolescents. The aim of the present study was to see the impact of life skill training on self-esteem, adjustment and empathy among adolescents. Total sample comprised of 60 students (30 males and 30 females) from the Hans Raj model school, Punjabi Bagh who has received life skill training from the team of expressions India. Self-

esteem inventory (school form), adjustment inventory for school students (AISS) and the empathy quotient (EQ) were administered in a group session one by one in two or three days both before training was given and after training. In the post condition, test scores were obtained after 5 months of training. The result showed that subjects improved significantly in post condition on self-esteem, emotional adjustment, educational adjustment, total adjustment and empathy. However, no significant difference was found on social adjustment in pre and post condition. Overall training was very effective as subjects improved in the post condition on all measures except one, thus showing that life skill training do show positive results in bringing change in adolescent's attitude, thought and behavior by providing supportive environment to them.

A study by BharathSrikala and Kumar K. V. Kishore was on "Empowering adolescents with life skills education in schools – School mental health program: Does it work?" The aim of the study was Mental Health Promotion among adolescents in schools using life skills education (LSE) and teachers as life skill educators is a novel idea. Implementation and impact of the NIMHANS model of life skills education program studied. The impact of the program is evaluated at the end of 1 year in 605 adolescents from two secondary schools in comparison to 423 age, sex, and socioeconomic status-matched adolescents from nearby schools not in the program. The adolescents in the program had significantly better self-esteem ($P=0.002$), perceived adequate coping ($P=0.000$), better adjustment generally ($P=0.000$), specifically with teachers ($P=0.000$), in school ($P=0.001$), and prosocial behavior ($P=0.001$). There was no difference between the two groups in psychopathology (P - and adjustment at home and with peers ($P=0.088$ and 0.921). Randomly selected 100 life skill educator-teachers also perceived positive changes in the students in the program in classroom behavior and interaction. LSE integrated into the school mental health program using available resources of schools and teachers is seen as an effective way of empowering adolescents.

Magnani R. et.al. studied the impact of life skills education on adolescent sexual risk behaviors in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The purpose of the study was to assess the impact of exposure to life skills education by youth in KwaZulu-Natal Province (KZN, South Africa) on knowledge and behaviors associated with the spread of HIV/AIDS. Data come from a panel study of 2222 youth from several population subgroups in KZN. The youth were aged 14-24 years when interviewed in 1999 and 2001. The intervention was a full coverage life skills education program for all students in

middle and secondary schools. Impact was measured as net dose-response relationships between life skills exposure and outcomes. Econometric methods were used to control for nonrandom exposure to life skills education. Outcomes included sexual behavior and condom use indicators. Significant effects, albeit modest in magnitude, were observed on selected areas of sexual-reproductive health knowledge and perceived condom self-efficacy, along with larger effects on condom use at first and last sex. No consistent effects on age at sexual initiation, secondary abstinence, or partnering behaviors were observed among these youth. School-based life skills education appears capable of communicating key information and helping youth develop skills relevant to reducing HIV risk. However, the South African national program has yet to be fully implemented, and whether this initiative will result in sustained behavior modification among youth on a sufficient scale to affect the HIV/AIDS epidemic is uncertain.

A study of core life skills of adolescents in relation to their self concept developed through yuva school life skill program by Sandhya Khera, et.al investigated the relationship between self concept and core life skills selected randomly 500 adolescents studying in secondary classes of sarvodaya schools situated in south Delhi under gone for YUVA (SLP). The Major findings of the study that there is a positive correlation between Core Affective Life Skill and Self Concept of adolescents which means those who possess these essential skills are better confidence in all aspects.

Hypothesis

Since the research studies shows that life skills have significant influence on the overall development of adolescents this paper aims to study the impact of need based life skills intervention on skill development and self-esteem using the hypothesis mentioned below

- Need based life skills intervention has a significant impact on the skill development
- There is a positive correlation between self esteem and skill development

Methodology

Population

- The population of this study was students between the age group of 11 years to 17 years belonging to lower socio economic status from the city of Bangalore.

Participants

- The participants of this study are between the age 16 to 17 years from a non-profitable school which provide free education to them. The participants had taken up a pretest and were part of need based life skills training for about 4 years.

Sampling techniques

- The participants of this study were selected from a non-profitable school which provide free education where life skills' training was provided. Therefore, purposive sampling was used to select the participants. Through randomization technique participants were selected for the semi structured interview.

Research Design

- This paper is a longitudinal study which follows the mixed research design to obtain multi dimensional perspective to study the effect of need based life skill training on skill development and self-esteem among marginally grouped adolescents. In the quantitative paradigm, we have used quasi experimental method which included pre -test and post - test data to evaluate the impact of need based life skill intervention on skill development.
- A correlation method was used to study the relationship between need based life skill training and self esteem. In the qualitative paradigm, we are using thematic approach to understand the impact of need based life skills training on skill development and self esteem through semi structured interview.
- Triangulation method was used to integrate the data obtained from both quantitative and qualitative.

Variables

- **Independent Variable:** the independent variables in this paper is Need based life skills intervention
- **Dependent variable:** The dependent variables are self esteem and skill development

Tools

This research study used certain tests and methods to study the relationship between the variables. They are as follows:

Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale.

- Dr. Morris Rosenberg developed this scale of self esteem in the year 1966. It is a uni-dimensional scale consisting of 10 items which includes both positive and negative statements that measure the global self worth of a person. It is designed in a likert scale format with four options ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. Internal test consistency and test retest reliability was established and the scores were found to range from .77 to .88 and .82 to .85 respectively. The scores in the criterion validity were found to be .55. In the construct validity this test correlated to .64 with anxiety, .54 with depression and .43 with anomie.

Life Skills Assessment Scale

- Dr. Radhakrishnan Nair et.al. developed this scale of life skills. It is a multidimensional scale consists of 100 items in the form of statements in-built with a 5-point scale which includes both positive and negative statements that measures ten dimensions of life skills and a global score for life skills. It is a 5 point likert scale format with five options ranging from "very true of me" to "not true of me". The split-half reliability score is 0.82, test-retest reliability is 0.91, Cronbach's Alpha reliability is 0.84. The validity of the test indicated 89 % concurrence.

An open- Ended Questionnaire designed by the researchers was used to study the effect of need based life skills on skill development and self esteem among marginally grouped adolescents

Procedure

Life skills assessment scale was administered on 30 participants who were between the ages of 12 to 13 years which was selected through purposive sampling technique. These students were under need based life skills intervention for 4 years where they dealt with different themes such as anger management, compassion, creativity, peer pressure, gratitude, friendship, relationships, abuse, decision making, coping with stress, and so on. After 4 years of intervention the life skills assessment scale and Rosenberg's self esteem scale were administered.

Through randomization techniques 10 participants were selected and interviewed using semi structured interview method to obtain multi dimensional perspective on the impact of need based life skills intervention on skill development and self esteem.

Analysis of data

Statistical measures were applied to analyze the data that were obtained from different tests. Wilcoxon signed rank test was used to analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire that measure the skill development of both pre and post test to evaluate the impact of need based life skills intervention on skill development. Spearman correlation was used to study the relationship between need based life skill intervention and self esteem.

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data obtained from the semi structured interview on their opinion on need based life skills intervention and its impact on skill development and self esteem.

Ethical consideration

- The participants of the study are selected based on the informed consent.
- Permission would be taken from the school to collect the data.
- The results of the study will be given to the participants if they are interested in it.

Results

Table 1

Wilcoxon signed rank test for skill development in students who attended need based life skill intervention

Variables	Skill development	Mean	Mean Rank	Z	Sig.
Need based life skills intervention	Pre test	320.1667	15.67	-.051c	.959
	Post test	320.5000	15.33		

ns not significant

The skill development of the students in the pre-test and post-test results ($Z = -.051c$, $p > .05$) shows that there is no significant effect of need based life skill intervention. Therefore hypothesis 1 “Need based life skills intervention has a significant impact on the skill development” was rejected.

Table 2
Correlation between self esteem and skill development

Variables	Correlation coefficient	Significance
Skill development Self esteem	.515	.004

ns Not Significant

The correlation coefficient of self esteem and skill development is 0.515 with a significant value of 0.004 which shows that there is no significant correlation between skill development and self esteem. Therefore the hypothesis 2 which stated that “There is a positive correlation between self esteem and skill development” was rejected.

Discussion and Conclusion

This paper aimed at studying the impact of need based life skill intervention on skill development and self esteem among adolescents of marginal group through mixed methodology.

From the quantitative analysis of the data the results shows that there is no significant impact on need based life skill intervention on skill development and self esteem. From the qualitative analysis the themes that emerged are: Interesting and fun based ,increases self awareness ,improves interpersonal relationships, Increased awareness about the surrounding, interrelates to emotional aspects, adolescences issues, experimenting the learning’s in relations to emotions, Loss of sensitivity and self-awareness, Lack of consistency leading to old pattern of behaviors, resistance to change, Ignorance of the sessions, Lack of realization on the importance of life skill session.

The data clearly states that students need “Fun based session”, which are interesting and helps them to be attentive and involve themselves. Looking at their home environment and living conditions, their curriculum is quite stressful from to deal with henceforth need based life skill intervention gave an opportunity for to vent out their over whelming emotions in a safe setting. It was relaxing as the sessions were conducted through activities.

Apart from the fun they had through activities they have also found that life skills sessions are useful in “increasing self awareness “ , which helps them to improve their interpersonal relationships, increases awareness about their surrounding , aware of coping strategies and enhance decision making skills. The sessions that the students are benefited the most were “Peer Pressure, Anger management, compassion and relationship”. These themes addressed the adolescent’s issues and are interrelated to the emotional aspects of the students as they can easily relate themselves emotionally. Therefore, they have experimented the learning’s pertaining to the above themes as they are challenged at their immediate surroundings. They are very clear that if life skills sessions were not delivered to them they would have “loss of sensitivity and self awareness which leads to fear and anxiety.

Being aware of the importance of the life skill session when it comes to practicing the learnt skills they are very inconsistent, leading to old pattern of behaviors as they are not reinforced positively in their environment and there is also “resistance to change” as their focus is to deal with the situation neutrally is predominant than focusing on skill enhancement. Few participants also expressed that they have shown ignorance to the life skill sessions, and lack of realization on the importance of life skill session have made them not to develop the skills.

However, looking at the scores of few participants it shows that there is skill development due to need based life skill intervention. The data obtained from qualitative data shows that these participants were low on resistance to change and have implemented the techniques learnt from need based life skill sessions. These participants have also obtained high scores on self esteem scale.

Although there is no significant impact on skill development and self esteem need based life skill intervention has enabled the participants to enhance self awareness and deal with their emotions.

Limitations

- The intervention was for a longer period which resulted in lack of importance towards the sessions.

Future Implications

The intervention can be provided for a shorter period

Reference

- Bee, H. L. (1992). *The developing child*. London: HarperCollins.
- BharathSrikala and Kumar K. V. Kishore (2010) *Empowering adolescents with life skills education in schools – School mental health program: Does it work?* Indian J Psychiatry. 2010 Oct-Dec; 52(4): 344–349. doi: 10.4103/0019-5545.74310
- Building self-esteem: A self-help guide*. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Building-Self-Esteem-A-Self-Help-Guide/SMA-3715>. Accessed May 6, 2014.
- Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York: Norton.
- Magnani R, Macintyre K, Karim AM, Brown L, Hutchinson P, Kaufman C, Rutenburg N, Hallman K, May J, Dallimore A (2005) *The impact of life skills education on adolescent sexual risk behaviors in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa*. J Adolesc Health. 2005 Apr;36(4):289-304
- Seaward BL. *Managing Stress: Principles and Strategies for Health and Well-Being*. 6th ed. Sudbury, Mass.: Jones and Bartlett Publishers; 2009:147.
- Self esteem FAQ*. National Association for Self-Esteem. <http://www.self-esteem-nase.org/faq.php>. Accessed May 6, 2014.
- WHO, *Skills for Life, (Geneva: 2001, Pp.8)*.5 WHO, *Skills for Life, (Geneva: 2001, Pp.8)*.

A Study on Assertiveness, Social Anxiety and Life Skills of the Indian Youth

Dr. Ruchi Dubey Chaturvedi*

Abstract

In this paper an attempt was made to study the interactions between Assertiveness, Social Anxiety and Life Skills in the youth. A sample of 100 college students were selected from three colleges of Mumbai. The scales of Assertiveness, Social Anxiety and Life Skills was administered on them. The results showed that the participants were moderate in their assertiveness. They did not suffer from social anxiety. They were in the range of moderate to high in all the five dimensions of life skills, namely, Taking Initiatives, Managing Conflicts, Problem Solving, Interacting with others and Following Instructions. Statistical analysis revealed assertiveness had significant negative correlation with social anxiety. Only two dimensions of life skills were showing significant positive correlation with assertiveness – Taking Initiative and Managing Conflicts. Social anxiety was insignificantly correlated to all the five dimensions of life skills.

Key words

Assertiveness, Social Anxiety, Life Skills, Dimensions of Life Skills - Taking Initiatives, Managing Conflicts, Problem Solving, Interacting with others, Following Instructions.

* Assistant Professor, Dept of Psychology, Jai Hind College, Mumbai

Introduction

Many researchers have demonstrated the benefits of Assertiveness. Salter (1949) had written about it many decades ago and his concept was empirically demonstrated by Hersen et al. (1973). He observed that Assertive training had reduced anxiety among his participants. The benefits of Assertive training has also been noted in individual's with psychological problems and those facing major conflicts. Assertive training increased their self-esteem and positivity and reduced their social anxiety and sexual deviant behaviors: (sexual deviant behaviors: Stevenson and Wolpe, 1970; Edwards, 1972; Lazarus, 1971), (marital problems: Fensterheim, 1972), (social anxiety: Hedquist and Weinhold, 1970), (chronic schizophrenic symptoms: Weinman et al., 1972). Thomas et al. had also observed the benefits of Assertiveness in Conflict resolution situations.

Kelly et al. examined the social impact of assertive versus unassertive behavior and a probable gender difference in it. Results indicated that while Assertive Models were viewed as skilled and capable, they were given lower ratings on measures of Likeability than the Unassertive Models. Further, interaction effects indicated that Assertive behavior exhibited by Females resulted in more negative evaluations than the identical behavior in Males.

Brecklin & Ullman investigated the relationship between assertiveness training in self-defense and women's physical and psychological responses to subsequent rape attacks. They observed that victims who had received pre-assault training could resist their assaulters better, reported experiencing feelings of anger rather than fear. They continued to have high regard and standard for themselves.

Hurlbert used his Hurlbert Index of Sexual Assertiveness to examine the role of Assertiveness in female sexuality. He observes that Sexually Assertive women reported higher frequencies of sexual activity and orgasms; they rated themselves as having greater subjective sexual desire; reported higher marital and sexual satisfaction.

Essau et al. presented the relationship between Social Fear and Social phobia among adolescents. They reported that 1.6% of the adolescents met the criteria for Social Phobia. Prevalence was more among girls than boys, and its frequency increased with age. However, only a small number of adolescents had received professional help. The lifetime frequency of Social Fears was much higher than that of Social Phobia. The most common types of feared social situations was the fear of doing something in front of other

people and speaking in public. Social phobia comorbid highly with Depressive Disorders, Somatoform Disorders and Substance use disorders.

Aktekin et al. (2008) assessed Psychological changes in medical students in Antalya, Turkey during their undergraduate education. The results indicate that there was a decrease in the Psychological health of these students due to inadequacies in their Social activities.

Daryl et al. (1988) studied the life-course of childhood shyness across 30 years. Using archival data from the Berkeley Guidance Study (Macfarlane, Allen, & Honzik, 1954), they identified individuals who were shy and reserved in late childhood and traced the continuities and consequences of this behavioral style across the subsequent 30 years of their lives. They reported that Shy boys delayed their entry into marriage, parenthood, and stable careers; they attain less occupational achievement and stability; are late in establishing stable careers; experience lesser marital stability. While the Shy girls were more likely than their peers to follow a conventional pattern of marriage, childbearing, and homemaking.

Wittchen et al. reported that social phobia was quite prevalent in 14–24 year-olds. Relative to the Non-Generalized social phobia, the Generalized subtype of Social Phobia was found to be more persistent, impairing and it also co-morbid.

Kawachi et al. studied whether there is any association between Anxiety and fatal coronary heart disease. Their data suggested that there was a strong association between Anxiety and fatal coronary heart disease, in particular, sudden cardiac death.

Wilkinson (2006) studied the Psychosocial impact of less social support due to ones low social status. He observed that people with low income levels and low socio-economic strata encounter more violence, less interpersonal trust and less social cohesiveness. Hence, people with low social status suffer the brunt of greater violence, disrespect, shame, poor social relations, and depression. This builds feelings of inferiority, insecurity, poor emotional attachment in early childhood and also impaired patterns of friendship.

Stein (2008) gave a complete understanding of Social Anxiety Disorder and its consequences. He said that Social Anxiety Disorder is the most common form of Anxiety Disorder. It has an early age of onset of around 11 years. Social Anxiety Disorder shows comorbidity with Depression and Substance Abuse. It increases the activation in Amygdala and Insula parts of their brain. Such individuals are also high in the personality trait of Neuroticism.

Nicki & Gary (1993) assessed school children on their feelings of Loneliness, Social Anxiety, Social Avoidance, and their attributions for social outcomes. Results show that children's feelings and attributions varied as a function of peer status, gender and grade. The results showed that the rejected children reported higher levels of Loneliness and were more likely to attribute relationship failures to external causes. Children's feelings were also significantly related to their attributions about social events. Popular, average, and controversial status children, who were socially distressed, exhibited a non-self-serving attributional style; the Distressed rejected children exhibited a self-serving attributional pattern; the Neglected children who were distressed exhibited elements of both of these attributional styles.

Acarturk et al. studied the effects of Psychological treatments on Social Anxiety Disorder. They observed that Psychological treatments were effective in adults, but their effectiveness was lesser in people with more severe form of this disorder.

Turk et al. studied Social Anxiety Disorder and Generalized Anxiety Disorder in terms of heightened intensity of subjective emotional experience, poor understanding of emotion, negative reactivity to emotional experience and the use of maladaptive emotion management strategies. They observed that the individuals with Social Anxiety Disorder were less expressive of their positive emotions; were paying less attention to their emotions and also had difficulty in describing their emotions.

Life Skills

World Health Organization (W.H.O) has defined life skills as, "the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life". UNICEF defines life skills as, "a behavior change or behavior development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: Knowledge, attitude and skills". Life Skills are the "Personal and social skills required for young people to function confidently and competently with themselves, with other people and with the wider community" (TACADE, UK). Life skills are the skills necessary for successful living. Essential life skills include such things as being able to recognize and describe one's feeling, giving and receiving feedback, recognizing assumptions, setting realistic and attainable goals and employing problem-solving strategies. In other words Life skills are abilities that facilitate the physical, mental and emotional well-being of an individual and competence in young people as they face the realities of life. Life The Department of Adult and Continuing Education (2006) organized an International Work-

shop on life skills Education for Youth Development in at the University of Madras. The objective was to develop life skills in adolescents to enable them to translate knowledge, attitude and values into health behaviors that improve their lives in general.

Sharma (2003) measured life skills of adolescents in a secondary school. She concluded that most of the teachers were not aware of the concept of life skills. Healthy Life Skills were associated with factors like, maternal education, connectedness and family support.

Macaulay et al. (2003), Zollinger et al. (2003), Baker, et.al (1984), conducted studies on evaluations of school-based tobacco prevention and substance use control programs via Life Skill based intervention programs. They reported that those students who had attended such programs were not currently abusing any substances and intended to stay that way.

According to the WHO papers on mental health (Hendren, BirellWeisen and Orley, 1994), 'nearly one in five children will have an emotional/behavioural disorder at some time during their youth regardless of where they live or how well to do they are'. Emotionally disturbed children exhibit their impairment in a variety of ways such as failing academically, having poor self-images, having poor peer relationships and additionally, they may have little respect for the law of their society and adults (Hendren et al, 1994). Academic failure and social rejection have a lasting consequence, as a failure to learn in school limits a person's chance to succeed in the future. 'The improvement of mental health of children and prevention of childhood emotional problems is a very important part of any mental health programme. This can partly be done by teaching the school children the essentials of mental health and giving training in life skills.' (Srinivasa Murthy and Wig, 2003). This will enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life'.

Life skills education has been developed by different organisations with different objectives, for example, prevention of substance abuse (Perry and Kelder, 1992); prevention of bullying and prevention of AIDS (WHO, 1994). However, Orley (1997) argues that learning life skills is a desirable activity on its own as it helps individuals to deal effectively with everyday demands and does not have to be justified as preventing anything. Nor is it necessary to introduce a life skills education programme only when and where there are mental and behavioural disorders (WHO, 1999). Effective application of life skills can influence the way children feel about others and themselves, which in turn can contribute to the children's self-confidence and self-esteem.

Bandura's (1977) Social Learning theory and Modelling concepts can be used to teach new behaviour. Moreover, modelling can facilitate learning life skills in the safe environment of the school and family. Cognitive development occurs in the children through the child's conversations, interactions and problem-solving experiences via the process of Scaffolding, with a parent or teacher and also a sibling or peer (Vygotsky, 1978, 1987).

Lolaty et al. studied the effect of Life Skills Training on Emotional Intelligence of the Medical Sciences Students in Iran. The students had moved from high school to university and were exposed to many stressful events, like, creating new relationships, changing past relationships with family and friends, learning new study habits according to the new learning environment and acting as an independent and mature individual. These stressful factors were effecting the academic performances of these students.

Aparna & Raakhee (2011) reported that Adolescents are considered to be the productive members of a society due to their physical and intellectual capacity. But unfortunately most of the adolescents are unable to utilize their potential due to inappropriate environment. To make life of adolescents valuable and to convert them to individuals with high potential, educational system should be reformed giving due importance to life skill education.

Objective of the study

- To study the interaction between Assertiveness, Social Anxiety and Life Skills in the Indian Youth

Hypotheses

1. Assertiveness and Social Anxiety will be negatively correlated
2. Assertiveness will show positive and significant correlations with Life Skills
3. Social Anxiety will show negative correlation with Life Skills
4. All the five Life Skills will be positively and significantly correlated to each other.

Methodology

Independent Variables

- Assertiveness
- Social Anxiety

Dependent Variable

- Five Life Skills: Taking Initiative, Problem Solving Ability, Managing Conflicts, interacting with others and Following Instructions

Sample

100 students were randomly selected from three colleges of Mumbai city. Their age ranged from 17 years to 22 years. Everyone belonged to Middle Class and Upper Middle Class socioeconomic strata.

Tools

- Self report measure of Assertiveness (Connor, Dann &Twentyman, 1982)
- The Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale (Liebowitz, 1987)
- The Life Skills Assessment Scale (Kennedy, Pearson, Brett-Taylor and Talreja, 2014)

Procedure

All the participants were personally contacted. After getting their consent, the three scales to measure Assertiveness, Social Anxiety and Life Skills were administered on them. After that all the participants were thanked. Data was tabulated and Statistical Analysis was carried out.

Results and Discussion

Table 1:
The Mean and SD of Assertiveness, Social Anxiety and Life Skills (N=100)

S No.	Scale	Mean	SD
1	Assertiveness	37.84	6.29
2	Social Anxiety	28.95	4.66
3	Taking Initiative	12.64	2.31
4	Problem Solving Ability	11.83	1.99
5	Managing Conflicts	12.1	2.53
6	Interacting with others	11.22	2.89
7	Following Instructions	11.95	2.06

Table 2:
Correlation Values between Assertiveness and Life Skill Dimensions (N = 100)

S No.	Assertiveness Scale	Life Skill Dimension	Correlation value	Level of Significance
1	Assertiveness	Interacting with others	r = - 0.15	Not Significant
2	Assertiveness	Problem Solving	r = - 0.14	Not Significant
3	Assertiveness	Taking Initiative	r = 0.28**	p < 0.005
4	Assertiveness	Managing Conflicts	r = 0.23*	p < 0.02
5	Assertiveness	Following Instructions	r = - 0.07	Not Significant

As observed from Table 2, Assertiveness is showing positive and significant correlations only with two dimensions of Life Skills, namely, Taking Initiative and Managing Conflicts. Hence, it leads to only partial support for H2.

Table 3:
Correlation Values between Social Anxiety and Life Skill Dimensions (N = 100)

S No.	Social Anxiety Scale	Life Skill Dimension	Correlation value	Level of Significance
1	Social Anxiety	Interacting with others	r = - 0.04	Not Significant
2	Social Anxiety	Problem Solving	r = 0.07	Not Significant
3	Social Anxiety	Taking Initiative	r = 0.03	Not Significant
4	Social Anxiety	Managing Conflicts	r = 0.06	Not Significant
5	Social Anxiety	Following Instructions	r = 0.16	Not Significant

Table 3 shows that Social Anxiety has no effects on Life Skills. Hence, all the dimensions of Life Skills are independent of Social Anxiety. So H3 is rejected completely.

Table 4:
Correlation Values between Assertiveness and Social Anxiety (N = 100)

S No.	Assertiveness Scale	Social Anxiety Scale	Correlation value	Level of Significance
1	Assertiveness	Social Anxiety	r = - 0.41**	p < 0.005

Table 4 shows that Assertiveness and Social Anxiety are negatively and significantly correlated to each other. Hence, an increase in Assertiveness will show a decrease in Social Anxiety. Hence, H1 is accepted.

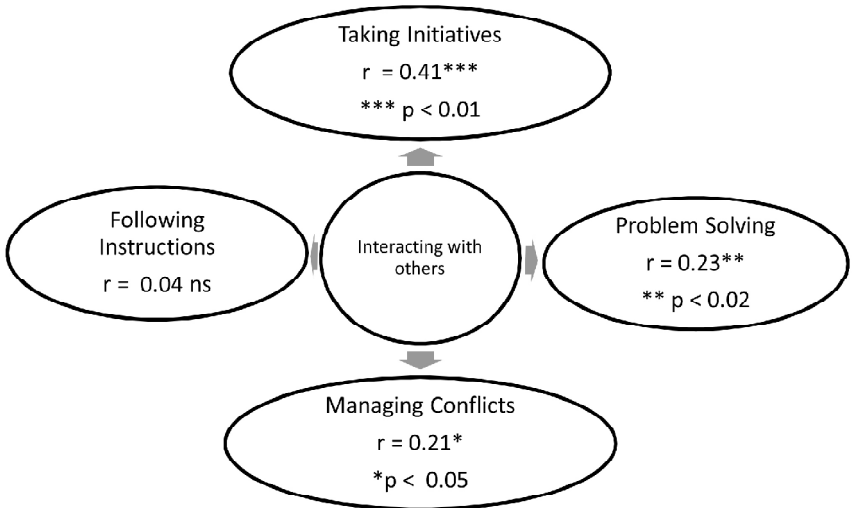


Fig 1: Correlation values of four Life Skills dimensions with 'Interacting with Others' (N= 100)

As observed from Fig 1, the Life Skill Dimension- Interacting with others, has significant and positive correlations with only three other Life Skills dimensions: Problem Solving, Taking Initiative and Managing Conflicts.

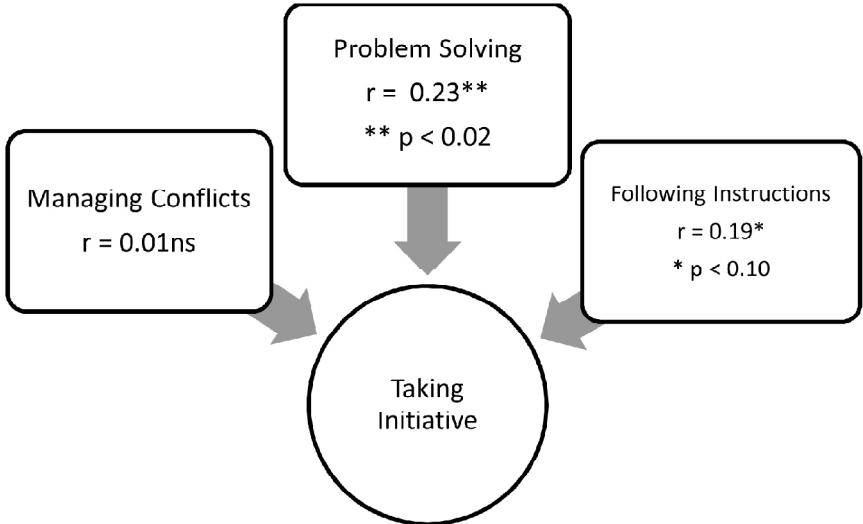


Fig 2: Correlation values of three Life Skills dimensions with 'Taking Initiatives' (N= 100)

As observed from Fig 2, the Life Skill Dimension- Taking Initiative, has significant and positive correlations with only two other Life Skills dimensions: Problem Solving and Following Instructions.

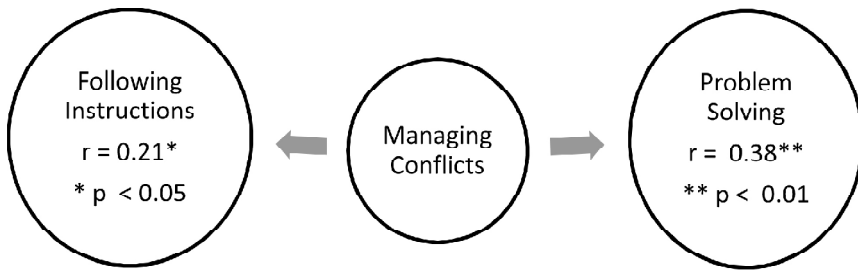


Fig 3: Correlation values of two Life Skills dimensions with ‘Managing Conflicts’ (N= 100)

As observed from Fig 3, the Life Skill Dimension- Managing Conflicts has significant and positive correlations with only two other Life Skills dimensions: Problem Solving and Following Instructions.

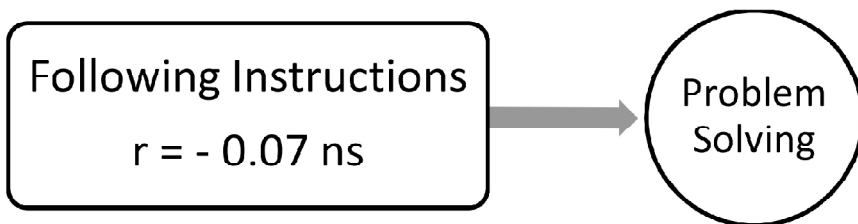


Fig 4: Correlation values of one Life Skills dimension with ‘Problem Solving’ (N= 100)

As observed from Fig 4, the Life Skill Dimension- Problem Solving has no correlation with the Life Skills dimension - Following Instructions. These figures lead to the conclusion that there is only partial support for H4.

Conclusions

Assertiveness is a desirable trait which impacts individuals at both, the personal and social levels. It helps individuals in enhancing two major Life Skills: Taking Initiatives and Managing Conflicts. It also helps to reduce Social Anxiety. The youth are moderate in this trait. Hence, they need to undergo Assertive training sessions.

Social Anxiety hampers personal growth and development. An individual who has Social Anxiety will suffer mental distress as he will lack Assertiveness and will not possess the required Life Skills to cope with day-to-day commitments. The participants do not suffer from Social Anxiety and are mentally healthy.

The interactions among the five dimensions of Life Skills are complicated. The Indian youth possesses moderate to high levels of Life Skills. To enhance ones 'Problem Solving Life Skill', it is imperative that the individual 'Takes Initiatives', 'Learns to Manage Conflicts' and maintains healthy 'Interaction with others'. For taking the right kind of 'Initiatives' the individuals has to learn to 'follow Instructions while interacting with others' and develop appropriate 'Problem Solving tactics'. For successfully 'Managing Conflicts' people need to 'Interact with others, learn to follow Instructions and develop Problem Solving strategies'. However, in situations where a person is required to 'solve a problem' at hand, he need not always follow the 'instructions given by others'. He needs to also think independently and use his discretion. Further, at times of 'major conflicts', it is best not to take 'bold initiatives'. Rather the individual needs to 'listen to others and learn from their problem solving skills'.

Scope for further research

1. Research can focus on developing Life Skill programs for different age groups to enhance their physical and mental health.
2. Assertiveness Training programs must be developed to strengthen self-efficacy and self-confidence in people.
3. Research must focus on culture bound environmental stressors and ways to reduce it to promote healthy living.
4. Studies need to investigate the combined impact of Life Skills and Social Support to reduce psychological and physiological disorders.
5. Researches can also study the impact of Social Phobias and Social Anxiety on Self-concept, Self-reliance and self-esteem.

Limitations

1. The study was restricted to only the city of Mumbai
2. The sample size was small, hence results can not be generalized
3. The factor of gender was not considered in this study

References

- Aguero, Joseph E., Laura Bloch, and Donn Byrne. (1984). "The Relationships among Sexual Beliefs, Attitudes, Experience and Homophobia." *Journal of Homosexuality* 10:95-108.
- Baer, Douglas, Edward Grabb, and William Johnston. (1990). "The Values of Canadians and Americans: A Critical Analysis and Reassessment." *Social Forces* 68:693-713.

- Bajpai, N. (2011). Research Methodology. New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd.
- Baron R.A. and Branscombe N.R. Social Psychology: For the University of Mumbai. Ed.Gopa Bhardwaj. Delhi: Pearson, 2011.
- Chauhan, S. (2012). Research Methodology In Education. New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd.
- Ewen, S. (2001). Captains Of Consciousness: Advertising And The Social Roots Of The Consumer Culture. New York: Basic Books.
- Kumar, R. (2005). Research Methodology. New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd.
- Minium, E. W., King, B. M., & Bear, G. (2008). Statistical Reasoning In Psychology And Education. New Delhi: Rajiv Book Binding House.
- Fischer, Joel and Kevin Corcoran. Measures for Clinical Practice and Research. London: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/journals/journal/jcr.html>
- <http://www.sagepub.com/marks3/Online%20Readings/chapter%208.4.pdf>
- <http://www.kon.org/urc/v8/sanders.html>
- http://academicjournals.org/article/article1380458063_Ramnarain%20and%20Govender.pdf
- http://www.vsrjournals.com/MBA/Issue/2011_6_June/3_Vivek_Kr_Pandey_Research_Article_June_2011.pdf

Influence of Life skills on study skills in Enhancing Academic Performance in the context of 21st Century Education

Daisy P.J.*

ABSTRACT

Contextual factors influencing the development of study skills appear to include not only experiences within the school curriculum and the extra-curricular programs, but also the infusion of the concepts of life skills in the curriculum. Learning to learn is essential in the 21st century as there is an information explosion. The challenge is to access the right information and in analyzing them to construct knowledge leading to meaning. This paper is a grapple in understanding the study skills in the context of life skills. As life skills is understood to be the ability for adaptive and positive behavioural approach in addressing the challenges of life with intelligence and creativity. Children's cognitive, social and emotional skills may be negatively affected when they grow up in disadvantaged learning contexts without proper life skill competency.

Key words

Life Skill; Study Skill; Cognitive Development; Learning to Learn

* Research Scholar, Assam Don Bosco University, Guwahati

Introduction

21st Century is undergoing a revolutionary change in terms of its socio-economic and cultural pattern initiating new forms of skills including learning. It is possible to disseminate information widely, inexpensively, almost effortlessly across the globe to anyone who has the technology to receive it, and for others to respond at their convenience using the same technology. Information traffic has proliferated in response to these technological advances, a tribute to human beings' insatiable desire to communicate with one another and construct knowledge out of this new and old information. This rapid advance in Information and Communication Technology) has created unprecedented opportunities and challenges in the field of education and in particular in the area of study skills among the young. India is home to more than 243 million individuals aged between 10-19 years which accounts for 20% of the total population of the country. In spite of having such a large adolescent population, the health and educational status of adolescents in India is not very promising (Yanky, 2011). The recent researches indicate that the life skills competencies in the young are not adequate to address the challenges of 21st century (Deffenbacher, Lynch, Oetting & Kemper, 1996; Crede & Kuncel, 2008; Rao, 2011; Schady, 2014). Six children commit suicide daily due to academic stress. The growing stresses among Indian adolescents are indicative of the lack of life skill competency as in the National Crime Records Bureau (2013).

Life Skills Education

The term life skill is open to wide interpretations based on one's understanding of the concept. According to WHO (1996), life skills are 'the abilities and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life'. Life skills refer to 'the ability to maintain the state of mental and physical wellbeing while interacting with others within the local culture and environment (Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO, 2001). UNICEF (2002) defines life skills as psychosocial and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions, communicate effectively, and develop the coping and self-management skills needed for a healthy and productive life. Life skills are applicable to the actions that are directed to self, others or the local environment. The objectives of life skills are to develop health and wellbeing at all levels.

In literature, life skills are presented as a solution for many of life's ills (UNICEF, 2007b). They are said to enable economic and political participation and enrich gender inequalities (UNICEF/ROSA, 2005), enhance the

quality of parenting (Olen, 1994), and reduce antisocial behaviour and crime (Botvin, Griffin, & Nichols, 2006; Deffenbacher, Lynch, Oetting, & Kemper, 1995). In countries such as the United States, life skills-based programs have been said to reduce the use of alcohol and tobacco use among adolescents (Botvin, Griffin, Paul, & Macaulay, 2003). Research indicates that Life skill education has reduced substance abuse and gang related crimes (Griffin, Botvin, Nichols, & Doyle, 2003; Botvin et al., 2006).

WHO (1999) in their 'Guidelines; Life skills education curricula for school Canada' stated that in order to develop self-confidence and self-esteem in children and adolescents, they need to be provided with opportunities to practice life skills in meaningful situations. Constancy in positive reinforcement is essential for modifying their behaviour. Life skill intervention program called ABLE (attribution, behaviour, life skills education) has shown significant improvement in adolescents' self-concept, physical appearance and total self-concept (Hay, Byrne & Butler, 2000).

Components of Life Skills

Life Skills-based education can be defined as basically being a behaviour change or behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas - knowledge, attitude and skills (UNICEF, 2002). WHO (1996a) has categorized a core set of life skills into the following three components:

- a. Thinking skills:** includes self-awareness, social awareness, goal setting, problem solving, and decision-making. To be able to think critically, information should be provided in order to make informed decisions and choices. The skills to think critically can also be developed if the teenagers are given the opportunity to look at different perspectives of an issue, the pros and the cons of making one decision over the other and making them realize the negative consequences of making hasty, unplanned decisions.
- b. Social skills:** include appreciating or validating others, working with others and understanding their roles, building positive relationships with friends and family, listening and communicating effectively, and taking responsibility and coping with stress. Social skills enable the adolescents to be accepted in the society and to accept social norms, which provide a foundation for adult social behaviour.
- c. Coping/Negotiation skills:** means not only negotiating with others but with oneself as well. For effectively negotiating with others, one

need to know what one wants in life, is firm on one's values and beliefs and can therefore say "no" to harmful behaviour and risky temptations. Effective coping strategies that help one to balance with one's own emotions and stress effectively.

According to the internal policy paper by the Ministry of Youth, New Zealand a young person's positive skills should include the following: Self-confidence, ability to cope with challenges, help seeking behaviour, productive work habits, desire to learn, involvement in sports, supportive group of friends, healthy behaviour or lifestyle, involvement with cultural groups, good social skills, sound identity, and hobbies, skills, interests (Adolescence Education Newsletter, 2001).

There is considerable evidence suggesting children's cognitive, social and emotional skills can be negatively affected when they grow up in disadvantaged learning contexts (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Schady et al., 2014). Furthermore, recent evidence suggests that the stress associated with growing up in poverty negatively affects children's brain development and brain functioning in adulthood (Angstadt et al., 2013). Life skills programmes, therefore, have significant scope to enhance social, emotional and thinking skills among schoolchildren. It can help to navigate their challenging environments leading to better academic performance and social mobility.

History of study skills

In the early 1900s, the acquisition and use of study skills, primarily in the form of reading and note-taking skills were important issues for U.S. educators (Moore et al., 1983). Although this focus on reading and comprehension continued until the 1940s, new research on learning skills comprehension became almost non-existent during the 1950s and 1960s (Tierney & Cunningham, 1980). Starting in the 1970s and continuing into the 1980s, researchers began to identify themes within study skills that allowed students to excel (Richardson et al., 2010). The primary additions to study skills research were the inclusion of motivation, self-monitoring/regulation, and metacognition as crucial elements of effective study skills practices (Gardner, 1979; Knowles, 1975; Metzner & Bean, 1987; Richards, 1975). During the late 1980s and 1990s, researchers shifted from emphasizing study skills in traditional environs (e.g., libraries, classrooms) to focusing on computer-based study skills (Richardson et al., 2010). However, this continued concentration on computer and web-based learning skills, although common in recent literature, did not negate the importance of traditional study skills. Instead, researchers argued that the skills used in traditional environs, such

as libraries and classrooms, could be used and adapted by students for digital- and web-based activities (Eveland&Dunwoody, 2002). Although the emphasis of study skills research has been on the individual skills themselves, there was an increase in research during the late 1990s through the 2000s that shifted focus from individual skills to the effect of these skills on academic success factors (Crede&Kuncel, 2008).

Study Skills: A Definition

Study skills have been of interest to researchers across the globe since the beginning of the 20th century, no single, universally accepted definition of study skills exists within the literature. For example, Harris and Hodges (1995) defined study skills as “the techniques and strategies that help a person read or listen for specific purposes with the intent to remember” (p. 245).Lenz, Ellis, and Scanlon (1996) distinguished between study tactics (i.e., the procedures and methods used when learning) and study strategies (i.e., the individual’s method for choosing the best tactic for each learning task). According to Crede&Kuncel (2008), this distinction has been mirrored in several studies over the last 20 years. Gettinger& Seibert (2002) elaborated on this difference by asserting that study strategies are comprehensive in scope, including a person’s thoughts and actions both before and during the study process. It is this difference in terminology that helps explain how study skills (i.e., strategies) can remain unchanged and applicable over time, whereas study behaviours (i.e., tactics) change with both the individual and environment (Richardson et al., 2010).

Study skills and its effects on learning

Students in all classes and at all levels of education might struggle in school—not because they lack the ability to excel, but because they lack competence in study skills (Nicaise&Gettinger, 1995). Moreover, many authors have reported a statistically significant positive relationship between study skills and the short-term elements of academic success (i.e., semester GPA and self-perception)(Al-Hilawani&Sartawi, 1997; Crede&Kuncel, 2008;Kartika, 2007).However, only recently have researchers shifted focus from short-term elements to more long-term elements, primarily retention rates, as indicators of academic success (Al-Hilawani&Sartawi,1997;Kartika, 2007;Crede&Kuncel, 2008; Urciuoli&Bluestone, 2013). This focus on short-term elements of academic success (i.e., GPA, self-perception) seems to have limited the scope of study skills to only one criterion of academic success, providing few studies that centre upon long-term criteria. Further, the present authors could not identify any studies wherein the relationship between study skills and graduation rates was analysed.

Life skills and its effect on learning

Aparna & Raakhee Iqbal (2011), in their article, “Life Skills Education for adolescents: its relevance and importance”, explained the effectiveness of life skills education for adolescents. In order to make life of adolescents valuable and convert them to individuals with high potential, educational system should be reformed giving due importance to life skill education. Life skills empower young people to take positive action to protect them and promote health and positive social relationships. It also entails being able to establish productive interpersonal relationships with others.

Paul & Mahendran (2012) investigated the impact of self-monitoring on positive behaviour and to understand ways to help learning disabled students to manage their own positive behaviour. The samples of 30 learning disabled students were taught to self-monitor their behaviour for approximately for 20 minutes every day. Data were taken on self-monitoring record sheets. The results suggested that majority of students practiced self-monitoring became aware of their behaviour and followed positive behaviour pattern in their academic and home environment.

Hamideh et al. (2012) examined the effect of the life skills training on the emotional intelligence of the medical sciences students in Iran. In this experimental study, the subject were selected by random sampling and allocated into two groups. Case group (N=20) and control group (N=19); they matched for gender, experience of stressful life events in the past six months, level of interest in the field of study and level of emotional intelligence. The pre-test and post-test method was used. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics including chi-square test, paired and independent t-tests. Result showed that case group, the scores of emotional intelligence after life skills training were significantly improved while no significant difference was observed in the control group. By performing programs such as life skills training, the levels of emotional intelligence of the students could be increased, which itself could lead to academic success, reduced substance abuse and increased stress tolerance in the students.

Fallachai(2012), dealt on the, “Effectiveness of Academic and Life Skills Instruction on the Freshmen Academic Achievement” based on the study conducted to examine the effectiveness of instruction of academic and life skills on the freshmen academic achievement. Research procedures used semi-experimental with pre-test and post-test design with control groups. Sample of included (n170) freshmen were randomly selected and assigned in experimental and control groups. An examination consisted of three stages:

administering pre-test, applying variables, and administering post-test. Throughout the examination process, all the members of the experimental group were first trained in sessions of 90 to 120 minutes for 9 weeks, and finally post –test was administered for both experimental and control groups. The administering variables consists of teaching academic study and life skills such as studying and learning method, note taking techniques, stress management, problem solving, decision making, communication skills, critical and creative thinking.

Analysis was conducted to determine whether there was any difference between the two groups. Primary result shows that the experimental group shows higher performance than the control group. This result arrived at the conclusion that the students who had received academic and life skills training. The statistical results also obtained from analysis of covariance testing showed the educational program was significant after controlling the effects pre-test, that is, teaching students life skills was effective on their knowledge and grades. In order to get more in depth understanding, the study suggested that such study should be repeated with larger sample.

Mostafa(2013),explored, “The efficacy of training life skills’ on educational achievement and social Acceptance”, examined the relationship between learning life skills and academic achievement. The main purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of teaching life skills on educational achievement and social acceptance of middle school (Grade VI-IX) students of Boukan town, Iran. The aim of the project is to enhance psychological, social abilities and prevention from causing harmful behaviour for health and safety. Therefore, research was conducted to assess the effectiveness of this program. Method of feedback with two groups of experiment and certification of sample amounts 619 people in each group were selected. Research tools consist of questionnaires of life skill, social acceptance and questionnaire of individual and personal background information. The findings indicated that the skill of knowing oneself and excitements have influences on students’ educational achievement. Teaching communication skills was effective on problem solving among the students and in return it improves their academic achievement, whereas decision making skill has no effect on the academic achievement of the students. In general, the result shows that teaching life skills leads to improvement of educational performance among students.

Hence, taking above studies into an account, it can be reported that life skills education helps an adolescents in abstaining from substance abuse, protecting against HIV/AIDS, boosting self- confidence, managing stress and

strengthening interpersonal relationships. Life skill education has been recognized as a critical area in the development process of adolescents where intervention planning is being done in India for a decade as part of curriculum planning, but what is being implemented is still a question. Studies and successful intervention programmes reveal that, when developing in-school life skills-based education, it is important to place it in the context of wider education sector reforms. Ultimately, to be effective, life skills must be taught in schools that are inclusive, child-friendly, adequately resourced and provisioned, staffed by trained and motivated teachers, and which utilize participatory and experiential methods (including continuous assessment). It should begin in the junior grades and continue through the higher ones, applying life skills, over time, to more sensitive and complex issues (Rao, 2011).

Life Skills Vs Study Skills

Life skills competencies are necessary for the total development of students. The competencies are the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour that students need to possess to become healthy and well-balanced individuals. Schools will need to appreciate the inextricable link between physical, cognitive, psycho-social and psycho-sexual development and to adopt a balanced approach that pays attention to these dimensions in their students (Jigger, 2005). The acquisition of these life skills will result in more fulfilling experiences and happier students: hence, preparing them better to face the challenges of work and life in this modern but complicated world.

The primary focus of any school improvement effort is the enhancement of educational offerings for all students. While each school community must formulate its own vision for students based upon core values, this vision - to be viable and exciting - must take into consideration the social context in which this generation of students is coming of age. Much has been written about the emerging demands of life and work for the 21st century. It is clear that we will have not only to work “smart” but also to learn “smart” in an environment in which the only constant is change.

Students’ success is most frequently measured by standard yardsticks such as test grades, report cards, class rank, achievement test scores, and so forth. Rarely does assessment of student success involve the learner in thinking about his or her own competence. Even education reform efforts seem predicated on the notion that teachers can find a way to create “success for all students” (that is, guarantee high scores for all) through “reaching hard-to-teach students.” Among the more notable instructional theories addressing this goal are mastery learning, learning styles, multiple intelligences, and accelerated learning.

Teachers cannot make students successful; students must achieve this for themselves. According to Goleman (1996), the most critical variable in student performance is student self-efficacy, “the belief that one has mastery over the events of one’s life and can meet challenges as they come up”. Goleman cites the work of Albert Bandura whose research confirms that “ability is not a fixed property”... “People’s beliefs about their abilities have a profound effect on those abilities”.

The culture of schools and classrooms also greatly affect student self-efficacy. In classrooms where curiosity reigns where questions are valued as much as answers and students are enabled to take charge of their learning. Such classrooms encourage risk taking and experimentation, thereby allowing students to learn from failures as well as successes and thus to stretch their abilities (Infante, 2001).

The development of Life Skills determines what the learner can do and not so much what the learner knows. The process, by which learning occurs, is more important than the learning content that is developed. The emphasis will be placed on the ability or what the learner has learned to perform and not just the acquisition of knowledge (Rooth, 2000). By acquiring Life Skills, the learner will gain knowledge about oneself, others and the subjects. It leads the learner, cultivate opportunities to broaden the potential to develop more productively and thus be involved in the community effectively. As the learner develops more Life Skills, he/she can handle problems better and can even avoid other problems. According to Rooth (2000), these Life Skills are skills needed for effective living and communication. The greater the number of skills that the learner has developed and has at his/her disposal, the better alternatives and opportunities are available with which the learner can equip him/herself in any field (Pigozzi, 2004).

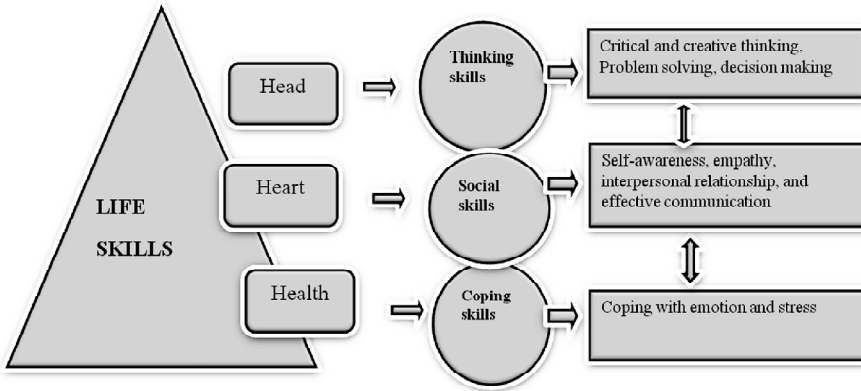
Life skills in the process of learning

Life skills competencies are necessary for the total development of students. The competencies are the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour that students need to possess to become healthy and well-balanced individuals. Schools will need to appreciate the inextricable link between physical, cognitive, psycho-social and psycho-sexual development and to adopt a balanced approach that pays attention to these dimensions in their students (Infante, 2001).

Life skill education provides knowledge, skills, values and attitudes through the four pillars of learning: learning to know, learning to do, and learning to live together and with others and learning to be (Delors et al. 1996). Life

skills enhance human capabilities and prepare the young for the survival and participation in an increasingly skill-based global economy. Life skill lays foundation for lifelong learning, enabling people to access and process information both in formal and non-formal setting leading to better quality of life.

Following diagram shows that how life skills can promote study skills:



Thinking skills -Skills for critical and creative thinking, - Decision-making /problem solving and motivation	Social skills - Skills for increasing internal locus of control, -Cooperation and teamwork	Coping skills -Skills for managing feelings
1. Analyzing peer and media influences 2. Analyzing attitudes, values, social norms and beliefs and factors affecting these 3. Identifying relevant information and information sources 4. Information gathering skills 5. Evaluating future consequences of present actions for self and others 6. Determining alternative solutions to problems 7. Analysis skills regarding the influence of values and attitudes of self and others on motivation	1. Self-awareness skills including awareness of rights, influences, values, attitudes, rights, strengths and weaknesses 2. Self-esteem/confidence building skills 3. Goal setting skills 4. Self-evaluation / Self-assessment / Self-monitoring skills 5. Expressing respect for others' contributions and different styles 6. Assessing one's own abilities and contributing to the group	1. Anger management 2. Dealing with exam anxiety 3. Coping skills for dealing with loss, abuse, trauma 4. Time management 5. Positive thinking 6. Relaxation techniques

Conclusion

The research indicate that the learning of different aspects of life skills directly relates to academic development and in particular the dimension of learning to learn (study skills) in the context of 21st century. The contextual factors influencing the study skills include besides curriculum the different dimensions of life skill. Life skill becomes essential in preparing a student to the ever rapidly changing economic, technological and social world. The effective study skills churned out of life skills will enable the student to harness the best of the immediate, extended and virtual world.

References

- Adolescence Education Newsletter (2001).December).*New insights into promoting young people's sexual and reproductive health*.4 (2), 20-22. Ministry of Youth Affairs, New Zealand.
- Al-Hilawani, Y. A., &Sartawi, A. A. (1997). Study skills and habits of female university students. *College Student Journal*, 31, 537–544.
- Aparna, N. &Raakhee, A.S. (2011).Life Skills Education for adolescents: its relevance and importance. *Education Science and Psychology*. No.2 (19), pp. 3-6.
- Botvin, G.J., Griffin, K.W., Paul, E., & Macaulay, A.P. (2003). Preventing Tobacco and Alcohol use Among Elementary School Students through Life Skills Training. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Substance Abuse*, 12(4), 45-50.
- Botvin, G.J., Griffin, K.W., & Nichols, T.R. (2006).Preventing youth violence and delinquency through a universal school-based prevention approach.*Prevention Science*, 7, 403-408.
- Crede, M., &Kuncel, N. (2008). Study habits, skills, and attitudes: The third pillar supporting collegiate academic performance. *Perspective on Psychological Science*, 3, 425–453. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111=j.1745-6924.2008.00089.x>
- Deffenbacher, J., Lynch, R., Oetting, E., & Kemper, C. (1996). Anger reduction in early Adolescents.*Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 41(2), 149-157.
- Delors, J. et al. (1996). Learning: The Treasure within. Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century. Paris: UNESCO. http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/15_62.pdf
- Educational Statistics*. (2014).Government of India Ministry of Human Resources Development Bureau of Planning, Monitoring & Statistics New Delhi.
- Eveland, W. P., & Dunwoody, S. (2002). An investigation of elaboration and selective scanning as mediators of learning from the web versus print.*Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 46(1), 34-54http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15506878jobem4601_3
- Fallahchai, R. (2012). Effectiveness of Academic and Life Skills Instruction on the Freshmen Academic Achievement.*Journal of Life Science and biomedicine*. Vol 2 (4), pp 137-141.

- Gardner, K. (1979). Summary and conclusions. In E. Lunzer & K. Gardner (Eds.), *The effective use of reading* (pp. 299-313). London, England: Heinemann Educational Books, Ltd.
- Gettinger, M., & Seibert, J. K. (2002). Contributions of study skills to academic competence. *School Psychology Review, 43*, 350-366.
- Goleman, D. (1996). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* London: Bloomsbury.
- Griffin, K.W., Botvin, G.J., Nichols, T.R., & Doyle, M. (2003). Effectiveness of a universal drug abuse prevention approach for youth at high risk for substance use initiation. *Preventive Medicine, 36*, 1-7.
- Hamideh, A.L., Ghahari, S., Tirgari, A., & Fard, J.H. (2012). The Effect of Life Skills Training on Emotional Intelligence of the Medical Sciences Students in Iran. *Indian Journal of Psychol. Med., 34*(4), 350-354.
- Harris, T. L., & Hodges, R. E. (1995). *The literacy dictionary: The vocabulary of reading and writing*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Hay, I., Byrne, M., & Butler, C. (2000). Evaluation of a conflict-resolution and problem. http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_focus_lifeskills.html.
- Infante, F. (2001). *Five open questions to resilience: A review of recent literature*. Prepared for the Bernard van Leer Foundation.
- Jigger, N. A. C. (2005). *Parents' school involvement and students' life skills*, Saint Columbian College, Pagadian City.
- Kartika, A. (2007). Study skills training: Is it an answer to the lack of college students' study skills? *International Journal of Learning, 14*(9), 35-43.
- Knowles, M. S. (1975). *Self-directed learning: A guide for learners and teachers*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Lenz, B. E., Ellis, E. S., & Scanlon, D. (1996). *Teaching learning strategies to adolescent and adults with learning disabilities*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.
- Metzner, B., & Bean, J. P. (1987). The estimation of a conceptual model for non-traditional undergraduate student attrition. *Research in Higher Education, 27*(1), 15-38. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/BF00992303>.
- Moore, D. W., Readance, J. E., & Rickelman, R. J. (1983). An historical exploration of content area reading instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly, 18*, 419-438. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/747377>
- Mostafa, S. (2013). The efficacy of training life skills' on educational achievement and social Acceptance. *World of Science Journal*, pp 87-100.
- Nicaise, M., & Gettinger, M. (1995). Fostering reading comprehension in college students. *Reading Psychology, 16*, 283-337. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0270271950160302>
- Olen, D. (1994). *Parenting for the first time (Getting off to a healthy start)*. Milwaukee, WI: Joda.
- Paul, I., & Mahendran, P. (2012). Impact of Self-Monitoring on Positive Behaviour in Learning Disabled Children. *Proceedings of 4th International Conference on Life Skills Education*. New Delhi: Excel India Publisher, 374-378.

- Pigozzi, E.D. (2004). Group on Life Skills in EFA. www.unesco.org. Retrieved on August, 20' 2015.
- Rao, C. (2011). Depression in adolescents with chronic medical illness. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*, 23(3). <http://doi.org/10.1515/ijamh.2011.045>.
- Richards, C. S. (1975). Behaviour modification of studying through study skills advice and self-control procedures. *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 22, 431-435. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0077151>
- Richardson, J. S., Robnolt, V. J., & Rhodes, J. A. (2010). A history of study skills: Not hot, but not forgotten. *Reading Improvement*, 47, 111-123.
- Richardson, J. S., Robnolt, V. J., & Rhodes, J. A. (2010). A history of study skills: Not hot, but not forgotten. *Reading Improvement*, 47, 111-123.
- Rooth, E. (2000). *Life Skills: A resource book for facilitators*. Cape Town: Nolwazi.
- Schady, N. (2014). Wealth gradients in early childhood cognitive development in five Latin American countries, *Policy Research Working Paper*, No. 6779, The World Bank, Washington.
- Shonkoff, J.P. & Phillips, D.A. (2000). *From Neurons to Neighbourhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development, National Academies Press, Washington, D.C.
- Tierney, R. J., & Cunningham, J. W. (1980). *Research on teaching reading comprehension* (Tech. Rep. No. 187). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, Centre for the Study of Reading.
- UNESCO & Indian National Commission for Co-operation with UNESCO (2001). Life skills in non-formal education: A Review.
- UNICEF. (2002). HIV increasing among young Europeans. *The Lancet*, Volume 360, Issue 9337, Page 927.
- UNICEF. (2007a). *Basic education and gender equality*. Retrieved August 19, 2007 from http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_focus_lifeskills.html.
- UNICEF/ROSA. (2005). Life skills-based education in South Asia: A regional overview. Accessed November 11, 2007 from http://www.unicef.org/rosa/Life_skillsbased_education_in_south_asia.pdf.
- Urciuoli, J. A., & Bluestone, C. (2013). Study skills analysis: A pilot study linking a success and psychology course. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 37.
- W. H. O. (1999). *Partner in life skills education: Conclusions from a United Nations inter-agency meeting*, Geneva. Retrieved from http://www.wh6.int/mental_health/media/en/30j.pdf.
- W. H.O. (1996). LifeSkills: Planning for research. Geneva.
- Yanky, T. (2011). Impact of Life Skills Training on psychosocial parameters: a study of Tibaten refugee adolescents studying in India. (Thesis submitted for Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology, the Maharaja Syajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara.

A Comparative Account of Attainment of Life Skills through Science Learning

Dr. Geetha G. Nair*

Abstract

An attempt has been made in the present work to teach life skills of thinking, solving and self-awareness through the teaching of scientific concepts in the disciplines of Botany and Zoology. Science modules with life skills integrated into topics of Botany and Zoology have been employed for assessing attainment of life skills. The results thereof have been studied in terms of a comparative account of life skills attainment of a sample /cross-section of students with respect to their intelligence or rpm scores. Attainment of Life skills of Creative thinking, Critical thinking, Problem solving and Self awareness along with a pair of sub -skills each have been studied along with rpm scores . The data so obtained have been subject to statistical analysis. The sub skills of each life skill do not correlate with each other. Amongst the four life skills studied, creative thinking has been found to be correlated to intelligence or rpm scores.

Key words: creative thinking, critical thinking, problem solving, self-awareness, life skills attainment, rpm scores, statistical analysis

* Professor in Botany, Department of Education in Science and Maths, Regional Institute of Education, Mysore – 6. E-mail: geethagnair59@yahoo.com

Introduction

Learning Science can be fun if directed properly. Science or veda or verily knowledge is difficult to assimilate unless the mind is prepared to receive it. This preparation of the mind for receiving knowledge is a much neglected phenomenon at the primary stages of schooling and can be achieved through the development of life skills.

Life skills need to be developed through simple play way methods of thinking, learning and solving processes and through the inculcation of specific mores and values in day to day life. The ten generic life skills as mentioned by WHO(1994,1997) are Solving, Thinking, Relationship, Understanding and Coping Skills. At the primary stage life skills can be taught through brain-teasers, riddles, quizzes, puzzles and mathematical problems. With the advancements in Science we have now an entire range of mind games developed the world over(www. mindlab Europe.com). A number of digital games developed and played on the computer are real mind benders. Values of long standing when developed in children through story telling, anecdotes and situational analysis etc. develop coping, relationship and understanding skills. The stage for learning science can be set when life skills are learnt through life skill teaching techniques both at the primary and secondary levels(Nair, 2014a).

Literature Review

Not much work has been done so far in integrating life skills with Science except for some efforts made by NIOS and by Nair (2014a). NIOS in 2009 has taken an informed decision to undertake an innovative pilot project to integrate life skills in selected lessons and subjects in its secondary curriculum(Science being one of them).Plenty of modules pertaining to life skills are available in the above areas of adolescent, vocational, health and population education and mental health programmes. A mention has been made by NIOS about life skills integration in Science but the materials are yet to be made available. UNFPA's (United Nations Population Education Fund) supports integration of life skills in the secondary curriculum of National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS).The learning materials in NIOS are popularly known as 'teachers in print.' NIOS is working towards integration of life skills across all the lessons (a total of approximately 150 lessons) in the five subjects (Social Sciences, Home Science, Science, Hindi and English) and the revised learning materials in the 5 subjects were to be made available to all the learners by the academic year 2012-2013.

VIMHANS also is making some efforts in this direction.VIMHANS has developed comprehensive modules based on the ten core guidelines laid

down by World Health Organisation. VIMHANS has developed comprehensive modules for enhancing and empowering the students, parents and teachers to deal more effectively with the challenges of growing up (school interactive programmes). Keeping in mind the increasing complexity of present day life, VIMHANS has developed comprehensive modules after critical evaluation of latest research in specific developmental areas and are developed along the guidelines provided in the CCE programme of the CBSE. It is based on the ten core guidelines laid down by WHO (childissues@vimhans.com; childadol.services@vimhans.com).

According to NPE(1986), Science education programmes will be designed to acquire problem solving and decision making skills and to discover the relationship of Science with health, agriculture, industry and other aspects of daily life.

Content analysis exercise undertaken by NCERT- textbooks have integrated adolescent education issues in various scholastic subjects. There are additional inputs being made under the National Population Education Programme, one of the major thrust being Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health. These concerns have been encapsulated in an emerging curriculum.

Although efforts are on to ensure integration of these concerns in the content and process of school education and teacher education, the inputs are primarily being made separately from subject curricula. Training and resource materials have also been developed under the National Population Education Project of the NCERT(AEP, 2010) but these are pertaining to life skills in day to day life and not pertaining to content development of Science.

NCERT is carrying out research in life skills as an important focal theme but has not consented to introduce it in the school curriculum perhaps because of transactional difficulties and the constraints of time in the curriculum. Life skills are being taught by educational organisations like BASE(www.baseedu.) which provide coaching to +2 students for competitive exams as an N-Skills programme. I-point consultancy in Bangalore has developed play way teaching methods of life skills for students till the 6th standard for learning life skills. An entire digital expensive package has been developed for teaching life skills. And efforts are on to evolve more material for the higher standards of school till the secondary level. Skilling and apprenticeship has been made highly rewarding by the Ministry of Skill Development to improve employability and productivity and thereby economic development (<http://www.skilldevelopment.gov.in>). As many fields of work entail preliminary and basic knowledge of Science and Scientific concepts , therefore it is necessary that Science is integrated at all levels with generic

life skills of solving, thinking, relationship, understanding and coping skills. To illustrate this, a man working in an industry or paper mill has to know the process of manufacture of various industrial products whether it be steel, cement, rubber or paper. And for this he needs basic knowledge of ores, minerals, plant sources of natural rubber, and the knowledge of plant anatomy and cell structure. Steel is obtained from iron ores, rubber from the plant *Hevea brasiliensis* and paper from the cellulose of plant cell walls. All this entails learning of Science. We in India have a huge manpower in Science which has to be channelised in the right direction for the economic development of the country through Skilling.

Learning of life skills integrated into Science will facilitate the whole process of economic empowerment of the country not only for scientific manpower and its sustenance, prevention of brain drain but also for skilled manpower and prevention of skill drain. And therefore the present humble effort for integrating life skills in Science Curriculum and studying the results thereof in terms of a comparative account of life skills attainment of a sample /cross-section of science students with respect to their IQs.

An attempt has been made in the present work to teach life skills of thinking, solving and self-awareness through the teaching of scientific concepts in the disciplines of Botany and Zoology and compare the acquisition or attainment of life skills taught through science modules.

Materials and Methods

The concepts were selected carefully from the XI standard Biology (NCERT, 2006) textbooks. These were osmoregulation, ploidy levels, digestive system of frog, lung capacity etc. The entire process of collection of data was done over classroom teaching learning processes. The methodology of research was one of experimental survey. The tools used were modules and questionnaires. The entire teaching process involved three sessions.

In the first session, the chapters on the above topics were taught to a sample size of students of 30 CBSE students of Mysore. The process of teaching involved interventions for teaching science such as projects, activities and experiments.

The second session started with interventions for teaching life skills integrated in the outlined concepts. Modules on life skills and the concepts and their interventions was prepared and finalized) and life skill interventions were taught using the module. This enabled students to understand and grasp the life skills involved. The third session was to assess the assimilation of life skills through simple questionnaires and observation schedules

(Nair,G.G.,2013 a and b; Nair,2014 b and c;Nair,2015a and b).

As a corollary to life skill development exercises and their assessment , the XI Standard students were tested for IQ using Raven’s Standard Progressive Matrices(2004). The test was administered during the regular class hours . Percentile IQ was calculated using Raven’s Manual(2004) Standardised Table No. 19. The IQ was correlated with obtained scores statistically.

Results

A comparison of the acquisition of life skills of problem solving , creative thinking, critical thinking, and self awareness through percentage attainment analysis shows the following value ranges—Problem solving attainment is 15-40%, self awareness attainment is 8-34%, creative thinking attainment is 18-50%, and critical thinking attainment is 14-51%. It is obvious that learning of Science through life skills integration has promoted the thinking processes rather than the solving and understanding skills. Science is a subject requiring tremendous thinking and solving capacities of the brain. Remedial interventions in Life Skills would enhance the attainment of all skills including problem solving and understanding. In a sample of 39 students, of the age group of 15-17 years and with IQ ranging from Intellectually superior to above average to average, life skill attainment has a high of only 50% and goes as low as 8% in self awareness. The results of the study along with data analysis are presented in Tables 1-5.

Data Analysis and Interpretations

Correlations: Table 1: Creative thinking

		skill1	skill2	skilltot	rpm
skill1	Pearson Correlation	1	.323	.760**	.331
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.062	.000	.056
	N	34	34	34	34
skill2	Pearson Correlation	.323	1	.860**	.258
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.062		.000	.141
	N	34	34	34	34
skilltot	Pearson Correlation	.760**	.860**	1	.355*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.039
	N	34	34	34	34
rpm	Pearson Correlation	.331	.258	.355*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.056	.141	.039	
	N	34	34	34	34

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Skill 1 Divergent thinking Skill 2 Elaboration Creative Thinking

- Correlations between S1 and S2 are not significant at .062 level i.e. divergent thinking and elaboration skills are not interrelated.
- Correlations between S1 and total skills are highly significant at .000 level
- Correlations between S2 and total skills are highly significant at .000 level i.e. sub skills of divergent thinking and elaboration do influence the life skill of creative thinking.
- Correlations between S1 and rpm are not significant at .056 level.
- Correlations between S2 and rpm are not significant at .141 level i.e. both the sub skills of divergent thinking and elaboration are not dependent on intelligence or rpm scores.
- Correlations between total skills and rpm raw scores are significant at .039 level i.e. there is a relation between creative thinking and intelligence or raw scores.

Correlations

Table 2 Critical thinking

		skill1	skill2	skilltot	rpm
skill1	Pearson Correlation	1	.015	.591**	.073
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.929	.000	.671
	N	36	36	36	36
skill2	Pearson Correlation	.015	1	.789**	.343*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.929		.000	.040
	N	36	36	36	36
skilltot	Pearson Correlation	.591**	.789**	1	.302
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.074
	N	36	36	36	36
rpm	Pearson Correlation	.073	.343*	.302	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.671	.040	.074	
	N	36	36	36	36

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Skill 1 Intelligence Skill 2 Objectivity Critical Thinking

- Correlations between S1 and S2 are not significant at .929 level i.e. intelligence and objectivity are not inter-related.
- Correlations between Skill 1 and total skills are highly significant at .000 level.
- Correlations between Skill 2 and total skills are highly significant at .000 level i.e. the sub -skills of intelligence and objectivity do influence the life skill of Critical Thinking.
- Correlations between S1 and rpm are not significant at .073 level i.e. the sub skill of intelligence is not dependent on rpm scores.
- Correlations between S2 and rpm are significant at .040 level i.e. the sub-skill of objectivity is dependent on rpm scores.
- Correlations between total skills and rpm are not significant at .074 level i.e. there is no relation between critical thinking and intelligence or raw scores.

Regression

Table 2: Variables Entered/Removed^a

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	skill2	.	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove >= .100).

a. Dependent Variable: rpm

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.343 ^a	.118	.092	13.73244

a. Predictors: (Constant), skill

ANOVA^a						
	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	857.033	1	857.033	4.545	.040 ^b
	Residual	6411.717	34	188.580		
	Total	7268.750	35			

a. Dependent Variable: rpm

b. Predictors: (Constant), skill2

Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	69.773	4.123		16.924	.000
	skill2	.351	.165	.343	2.132	.040

a. Dependent Variable: rpm

Excluded Variables^a						
Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics
						Tolerance
1	skill1	.068 ^b	.417	.679	.072	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: rpm

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), skill2

Skill2 of objectivity contributes 9.2% to Intelligence

Correlations: Table 3: Problem Solving

		skill1	skill2	skilltot	rpm
skill1	Pearson Correlation	1	.138	.722**	.024
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.445	.000	.896
	N	33	33	33	33
skill2	Pearson Correlation	.138	1	.652**	.080
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.445		.000	.656
	N	33	33	33	33
skilltot	Pearson Correlation	.722**	.652**	1	.100
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.579
	N	33	33	33	33
rpm	Pearson Correlation	.024	.080	.100	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.896	.656	.579	
	N	33	33	33	33

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Skill 1 Analytical thinking/ability Skill 2 Self-knowledge Problem Solving

- Correlations between S1 and S2 are not significant at 0.445 level i.e. analytical ability and self-knowledge are not inter-related.
- Correlations between S1 and total skills are highly significant at .000 level
- Correlations between S2 and total skills are highly significant at .000 level i.e. the sub-skills of analytical ability and self-knowledge do influence the life skill of problem solving
- Correlations between S1 and rpm are not significant at .896 level i.e. the sub-skill of analytical ability is not dependent on intelligence or rpm scores.

- Correlations between S2 and rpm are not significant at .656 level I.e the sub-skill of self-knowledge is not dependent on intelligence or rpm scores
- Correlations between total skills and rpm are not significant at .579 level i.e. there is no relation between problem solving and intelligence or rpm scores

Correlations: Table 4: Self Awareness

		skill1	skill2	skilltot	rpm
skill1	Pearson Correlation	1	.114	.785**	.066
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.542	.000	.725
	N	31	31	31	31
skill2	Pearson Correlation	.114	1	.704**	.210
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.542		.000	.256
	N	31	31	31	31
skilltot	Pearson Correlation	.785**	.704**	1	.187
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.314
	N	31	31	31	31
rpm	Pearson Correlation	.066	.210	.187	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.725	.256	.314	
	N	31	31	31	31

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Skill 1 Objectivity Skill 2 Introspectionability Self Awareness

- Correlations between S1 and S2 are not significant at .542 level i.e. objectivity and introspectionability are not inter-related
- Correlations between S1 and total skills are highly significant at .000 level
- Correlations between S2 and total skills are highly significant at .000 level i.e. the sub-skills of objectivity and introspectionability do influence the life skill of self-awareness
- Correlations between S1 and rpm are not significant at .725 level i.e. the sub-skill of objectivity is not dependent on intelligence or raw scores.
- Correlations between S2 and rpm are not significant at .256 level i.e. the sub-skill of introspectionability is not dependent on intelligence or raw scores.
- Significance between total skills and rpm are not significantat .314 level i.e. there is no relation between self-awareness and intelligence or raw scores.

Correlations: Table 5 Total

(Creative thinking+CriticalThinking+ProblemSolving+Self Awareness)

		skill1	skill2	skilltot	rpm
skill1	Pearson Correlation	1	.120	.719**	.141
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.166	.000	.104
	N	134	134	134	134
skill2	Pearson Correlation	.120	1	.747**	.213*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.166		.000	.014
	N	134	134	134	134
skilltot	Pearson Correlation	.719**	.747**	1	.245**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.004
	N	134	134	134	134
rpm	Pearson Correlation	.141	.213*	.245**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.104	.014	.004	
	N	134	134	134	134

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Skill 1 Divergent thinking, Intelligence, Analytical ability, Objectivity

Skill 2 Elaboration, Objectivity, Self-knowledge, Introspectionability

Skill tot skill 1 + skill 2

- Correlations between Skill 1 and Skill 2 are not significant at .166 level
- Correlations between Skill 1 andSkilltot are highly significant at .000 level
- Correlations between Skill 2 and Skilltot are highly significant at .000 level
- Correlations between Skill 1 and rpm are not significant at .104 level
- Correlations between Skill 2 and rpm are significant at .104 level
- Correlations between total Skills and rpm are highly significant at .004 level

Regression: TOTAL

(Creative thinking+CriticalThinking+ProblemSolving+Self Awareness)

Variables Entered/Removed ^a			
Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	skill2	.	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove >= .100).

a. Dependent Variable: rpm

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.213 ^a	.045	.038	13.74678

a. Predictors: (Constant), skill2

ANOVA ^a						
	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1182.491	1	1182.491	6.257	.014 ^b
	Residual	24944.561	132	188.974		
	Total	26127.052	133			

a. Dependent Variable: rpm

b. Predictors: (Constant), skill2

Coefficients ^a						
	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	73.071	2.360		30.965	.000
	skill2	.236	.094	.213	2.501	.014

a. Dependent Variable: rpm

Excluded Variables ^a						
Model	Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics	
					Tolerance	
1	skill1	.117 ^b	1.374	.172	.119	.986

a. Dependent Variable: rpm

b. Predictors in the Model: (Constant), skill 2

Skill 2 of Elaboration, Objectivity, Self-knowledge and Introspectionability contributes 3.8% to rpm or intelligence scores

Oneway

Descriptives					
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
skill1	1.00	34	33.1765	9.67493	1.65924
	2.00	36	25.8056	10.80957	1.80160
	3.00	33	40.3333	12.16724	2.11804
	4.00	31	24.1935	11.07977	1.98999
	Total	134	30.8806	12.57761	1.08654
skill2	1.00	34	30.5882	12.33403	2.11527
	2.00	36	20.8333	14.10268	2.35045
	3.00	33	17.2121	8.74556	1.52241
	4.00	31	17.3548	9.72128	1.74599
	Total	134	21.6119	12.63300	1.09132
skilltot	1.00	34	31.8824	8.98404	1.54075
	2.00	36	23.3889	8.87461	1.47910
	3.00	33	29.0606	6.77744	1.17980
	4.00	31	20.7419	7.76732	1.39505
	Total	134	26.3284	9.20671	.79534
rpm	1.00	34	78.0882	15.12647	2.59417
	2.00	36	77.0833	14.41106	2.40184
	3.00	33	80.0000	12.43734	2.16506
	4.00	31	77.5806	14.36842	2.58065
	Total	134	78.1716	14.01585	1.21078

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
skill1	Between Groups	5441.337	3	1813.779	15.116	.000
	Within Groups	15598.752	130	119.990		
	Total	21040.090	133			
skill2	Between Groups	3961.974	3	1320.658	9.945	.000
	Within Groups	17263.847	130	132.799		
	Total	21225.821	133			
skilltot	Between Groups	2573.653	3	857.884	12.819	.000
	Within Groups	8699.899	130	66.922		
	Total	11273.552	133			
rpm	Between Groups	164.019	3	54.673	.274	.844
	Within Groups	25963.034	130	199.716		
	Total	26127.052	133			

skill1 (Divergent thinking 1+ Intelligence 2+Analytical ability3+Objectivity 4)				
Duncan				
group	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
		1	2	3
4.00	31	24.1935		
2.00	36	25.8056		
1.00	34		33.1765	
3.00	33			40.3333
Sig.		.549	1.000	1.000

3 has highest score ; 1,2 and 4 have lower scores

skill2 (Elaboration+Objectivity+Selfknowledge+Introspectionability)				
Duncan				
group	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
		1	2	
3.00	33	17.2121		
4.00	31	17.3548		
2.00	36	20.8333		
1.00	34			30.5882
Sig.		.230		1.000

1 has low scores ; 2,3 and 4 have highest scores

Skill tot				
Duncan				
group	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
		1	2	
4.00	31	20.7419		
2.00	36	23.3889		
3.00	33			29.0606
1.00	34			31.8824
Sig.		.188	.161	

No difference in scores between 4 and 2, and 1 and 3

Table 2

Results of Pearson's Product moment correlation between objectivity, introspectionability, self awareness and intelligence.

Variable		introspect_percent	selfaware_percent	rpm_percentile
objectivity_percent	Pearson Correlation	.164	.745**	.102
	Sig.	.312	.000	.548
introspect_percent	Pearson Correlation		.770**	.023
	Sig.		.000	.891
selfaware_percent	Pearson Correlation			.090
	Sig.			.597

** Sig at .01 level

- Percent scores of objectivities and introspectionability are not significant at .312 level
- Percent scores of objectivity and self awareness are highly significant at .000 level
- Percent scores of objectivity and rpm percentile are not significant at .548 level
- Percent scores of introspectionability and self-awareness are highly significant at .000 level
- Percent scores of introspectionability and rpm percentile are not significant at .891 level
- Percent scores of self awareness and rpm percentile are not significant at .597 level

Conclusions

1. Though the two sub-skills of creative thinking do not influence each other,they significantly influence the process of creative thinking and creative thinking in turn is influenced by intelligence or raw scores.
2. Though the two sub-skills of critical thinking do not influence each other, they do influence the process of critical thinking and critical thinking is not influenced by intelligence or raw scores.
3. Though the two sub-skills of problem solving do not influence each other, they do influence the process of problem solving and problem solving is not influenced by intelligence or raw scores.
4. Though the two sub-skills of self-awareness do not influence each other, they do influence the life skill of self awareness ; and self awareness is not influenced by intelligence or raw scores.

5. Objectivity contributes to intelligence.
6. Total skill attainment and intelligence or rpm scores are highly related.

Acknowledgements

The above work was carried out as part of field work at JNV, Mysore. My thanks to Dr. Lancy D'Souza, Associate Professor in Psychology, Maharaja's college, University of Mysore, Mysore for statistical consultancy.

References

- AEP.2010. Conceptual Framework. Adolescence Education Programme. NCERT, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi-16.
- childadol.services@vimhans.com
- childissues@vimhans.com
- http://ncert.nic.in/ncert/aerc/Curricular_Approach.html
- http://ncert.nic.in/ncert/aerc/pdfs/CONCEPTUAL_FRAMEWORK.pdf
- http://ncert.nic.in/ncert/aerc/UNFPA_MHRD.html
- <http://www.mindlabeurope.com>
- <http://www.nos.org/>
- <http://www.unfpa.org>
- Nair,G.G. 2014 b. Assessment of Life Skill of Creative Thinking through Biology Teaching in XI Standard. *Journal of Research, Extension and Development*, Vol.2, No. 8,pp.84-88.
- Nair ,G.G. 2014 c. Assessment of critical thinking in Biological Sciences in XI Standard students of JNV,Mysore. *Journal of Research, Extension and Development*, Vol.3, No., pp. 133-136.
- Nair, G.G. 2014a.PAC Report. Development of Source Book in Life Skills Education through teaching learning of Science in Science Streams for Senior Secondary Level. RIE, NCERT,Mysore-6
- Nair, G.G. 2015 b.Assessment of Problem Solving Skills in Biological Sciences amongst XI Standard CBSE students of Mysore. In Proceedings of 6th International Conference of Life Skills Education entitled" Skill Development and Competency Building of Youth Through Life Skills", (Eds.)A.Radhakrishnan Nair, R.J.Solomon, Shreelatha Solomon, S.Kumaravel,pp.79-80, IALSE,Excel India Publishers, New Delhi.
- Nair, G.G. 2015a. Assessment of the life Skill of Self Awareness through Biological Sciences amongst Senior Secondary School students of Mysore. *Journal of Research, Extension and Development* , Vol.3,No.6,p.111-116.
- Nair, G.G..2013b.Training Package for Life Skills through teaching of Biology-Part II. *JRED*,Vol.2,No.1,p.90.
- Nair,G.G.2013a.Training Package for Life Skills through teaching of Biology-Part I. *JRED*,Vol.1, No.12,p.59.

NCERT,2006. Biology Textbook for Class XI. Secretary, NCERT, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi-16.

NPE . 1986."National Policy on Education, 1986 (As modified in 1992)" (*PDF*). HRD Ministry.

Raven,J.,Raven,J.C. and Court,J.H. 2004. Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices. Manual,Section 3, Table No. 19, SPM89. NCS Pearson, Inc.

World Health Organisation. 1994. Life Skills Education for children and adolescents in schools. Division of Mental Health, Geneva.

World Health Organisation. 1997. Life Skills Education for children and adolescents in schools. Programme on Mental Health, Geneva.

www.base-edu.in

Strengthening of Life Skills for Career Choice among Youth: A study of College Students

Rekha N. Mistry*

Abstract

Today's generation of young people is the largest in the history. Over 3 billion people – nearly half of the world's population are under the age of 25. Almost 90% of all young people live in developing countries. India with 356 million youth population has privileged to harvest its "dividend" for economic and social progress. "How we meet the needs and aspirations of young people will define our common future," the UN report said. To maximise the dividend, countries must have equipped their young working-age populations to seize opportunities for jobs and other income-earning possibilities. The higher rate of unemployment among educated youth (ILO) can have serious repercussions in terms of social instability which, in turn, may affect governance and growth adversely. According to various reports on unemployment, skill mismatch is the main cause for unemployment among educated youth in India. This undermines their rights and creates significant social and economic costs to society. The present study was conducted with an objective to understand the need for career guidance among college students. The structured questionnaire was administered on large size of sampling (n=106) selected through stratified sampling method. The findings of the study implied that youth are not focused about their future career goals. The paper converse the significant suggestions made by college youth to move smoothly on the career path. It further discusses the road map for strengthening required set of skills of decision making and self awareness among youth and role of school and family as the socializing agent in guiding youth on the path of career as well.

Key Words: Life Skills, Decision making, Self awareness, Socializing agents, Career

* Assistant Prof, MSW Program, Sociology Department, V N S G University, Surat-395007, Gujarat, India

Introduction

The term - nation building or national development, is usually used to refer to a constructive process of engaging all citizens in building social cohesion, economic prosperity and political stability in an inclusive and democratic way. The idea of national development is just a myth without principal focus and active participation of youth in it. Youth are the main social actors of change and prime recipients of national development.

Youth overlaps with, but is distinct from adolescence, as it extends into adulthood. Adulthood, from the sociological approach is viewed as the stage where an individual assumes the economic role of an earner-provider and familial role of husband-father.

United Nations defines youth as persons of 15 to 24 years. The government of India defined youth as persons in the age group of 15 to 35 years of age by Ministry of youth and Sports Affairs 2003 and this age bracket has been changed to the age group of 15-29 in 2014 youth policy.

With 356 million 10-24 year-olds, India has the world's largest youth population, "Demographic Dividend", despite having a smaller population than China, a latest UN report said. "Young people are the innovators, creators, builders and leaders of the future. But they can transform the future only if they have skills, health, decision-making and real choices in life. "How we meet the needs and aspirations of young people will define our common future," UNFPA Executive Director BabatundeOsotimehim said.

Whether India can transfer this demographic dividend to a potential economic growth would depend on the readiness of India's young working-age populations to participate meaningfully in the production process by seizing opportunities for jobs and other income-earning possibilities. Hence to understand India's future growth potential we must look at the issue of education, skill formation and employment among youth in India.

Modern education and educational institutions are producing large numbers of graduates and technically skilled manpower every year (Singh Amarjeet M., 2002). Gore (1977) opines that our education system does not tackle directly or successfully either anxiety relates to sex or the other relating to choice of occupation. The anxiety relating to occupation is more commonly recognized but very little by way of providing information and advice is done by institution of education. Overall the occupational perspective of the Indian student is limited.

India has seen a surge in graduate unemployment in the past two years –

one in three graduates up to the age of 29 was unemployed, according to the Labour Ministry's Youth Employment-Unemployment Scenario (2012-13). By 2016, the youth unemployment rate is projected to remain at the same high level (International Labor Office, 2012).

Skill Mismatch

There are multidimensional factors causing unemployment among youth. It may be a classic case of a mismatch between the type of workers demanded in the labour market and the types that are supplied by our educational/training institutions. A study by Murthy and Paul (2003) indicated that more than 80 per cent of corporate entities report vacancies at managerial level because of skill-shortages. Problem areas include lack of job-specific skill, absence of basic abilities and unsuitable personal traits to occupy managerial positions. Blom and Saiki (2011) present a similar story for engineering and technical graduates. It is reported that 25 per cent of the employers are not happy with the skill level of their graduate engineers/technologists. Majority lack the basic problem solving skills and mind application quality-a direct fall out of our rote education system. Communication and team working skills are also absent in one-fourth of the engineers and more than one-fifth lack such simple qualities like mathematical, science and technological knowledge- a field which they were specifically trained in. A report on national audit of employability of 3-year Bachelor's Degree graduates prepared by Aspiring Minds (2013) draws inferences from data of over 60000 graduates' found that 47% graduates in India are not employable for any industry role. One of the reason found was bad career matching.

It is thus amply clear that there is a serious mismatch between the skill set possessed by Indian youth and the skill that are demanded by the employers in the labour market. This calls for immediate relook at our training /education system and adjusting them to match the skilled demand of current times.

Life skills and Career choice:

The ability to navigate the complex life and work environments in the globally competitive information age requires students to pay rigorous attention to developing adequate life skills.

Research questions:

The questions arise, whether adolescence and youth are provided with learning opportunity for developing basic life skills at juncture of career path? Are they aware about market demand skills? Do they have enough career education to understand available options for study and jobs? Who must play

role for imparting knowledge about available career? Are youth aware about self strength and weakness?

Keeping in mind the research question the present study aimed (a) To understand availability and utility of career guidance services and (b) To assess the need for career guidance services at various levels of education.

Research design and Methodology:

The study was explorative in nature, conducted among the colleges affiliated to Veer Narmad South Gujarat University from the city of Surat, Southern part of Gujarat. The structured questionnaire with closed and open ended questions was framed to collect primary data. The students, boys and girls studying in the final year/ final semester of the under-graduation courses of Self Financed and Grant in Aid colleges were selected through multi stage stratified sampling method from various courses like BBA, BCA, B Ed, B Com, B A, and BSC. The total universe was 2120 and the researcher opted for 5 % of the universe, 106 total numbers of samples was included in the present study. The collected quantitative data was analyzed through SPSS and qualitative data through content analysis.

Results and discussions:

Data findings reveal that out of 106 total respondents, 62.90 percent (67) of respondents attended Career Guidance Program (CGP) and 37.10 percent (39) of respondents never attended CGP in their education life.

Table 1:

Distribution of standard at which respondents attended Career Guidance Program

Standard at which attended CG	Frequency*	Percent
1. Before 10th Std.	30	44.77
2. Between 11 th and 12 th Std.	55	82.09
3. During college years	44	65.67

N=129 * Multiple responses hence percentages do not add to 100.

Table –1 reveals that only 44.77 percent (30) of respondents attended CG program before 10th standard, 82.09 percent (55) percent of respondents, majority of respondents attended CG program between 11th and 12th standard, and 65.67 percent (44) of respondents attended during college years.

Further less than 50% of them found usefulness of such program. In depth content analysis of usefulness of CGP revealed that it was useful in imparting information related to setting up of life goals, scope of subjects for future career, coming up of new courses, selection of a right career direction, better study habits, it helped in selection of present course of study. Further some respondents found useful information related to starting up of own business, scope of job and job consultant. Knowledge about competition and new technology was very useful. Thus, those who found usefulness of CGP, able to develop abilities requires for career planning.

Further, study tried to understand career decision making factors through multiple choices.

Fig. 1

Influencing Factors for the present course of study

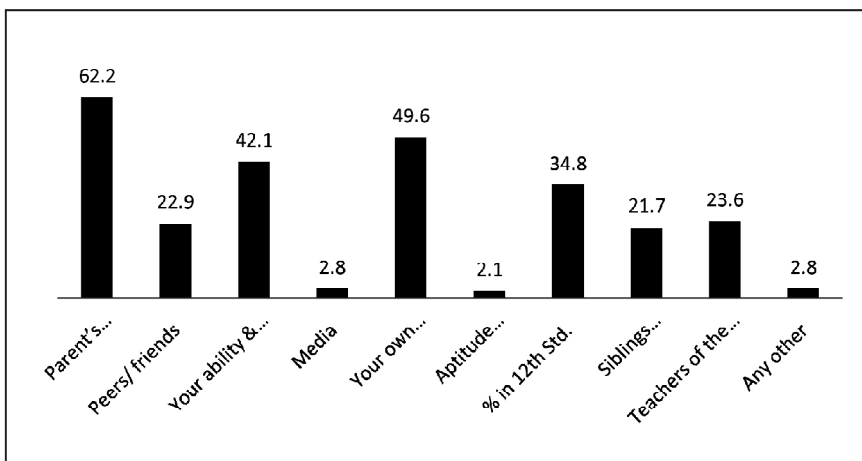


Fig-1 indicates the significant extent of various influencing factors. 62.20 percent of respondents said that it is parents' ambition which was motivating factor for selection of present course of study. 49.60 percent of respondents had their own ambition to select, 42.10 percent of respondents said that it is because of their own ability and interests. This indicates that youth are not actively involved in decision making about own life or they do not have developed capability to share own likings about their future career. It is further noticed that very meager percentages (2.1%) of respondents made decision based on Aptitude test report. Hence, it implies that in majority cases parents are deciding career without understanding own child's potential through scientific method. They might be deciding based on their own success or failure, or popularity of course or social value of the course. This may further lead to mismatch of skills in the education and work.

Table 2

Reasons for not securing admission in first choice of course

Various Reasons	Frequency	%*	
1. Lack of knowledge about admission procedure	25	21.92	}45.60%
2. Lack of information on availability of course.	27	23.68	
3. Could not qualify minimum criteria	38	33.33	
4. required for admission			
5. Higher level of fees structure	42	36.84	
6. Insufficient effort	23	20.17	
7. Parent did not allow to opt for	25	21.92	

N=266 * Multiple responses hence percentages do not add to 100.

As it can be seen that majority of respondents 45.60% could not get admission in the first choice of course due to lack of knowledge about admission procedure, lack of information on availability of course.

Further probing was done to understand whether information on career options would have made any difference in selection of course, data revealed that 57.40 percent of respondents felt that detail information on available career options would have made difference in their choice of course as the majority (67.55%) felt that they had limited knowledge about career options after 12thstd.

Study further assessed need for Career Guidance Services in community, 93.10 percent (99) of respondents expressed strong need for availability of Career Guidance Services in community at various levels.

Table – 3

Distribution of level at which Career Guidance Services required by respondents

Level at which CG services required	Frequency	Percent*
1. At secondary level	35	35.35
2. At higher secondary level	52	52.53
3. At undergraduate level	27	27.27

N=114 *Multiple responses hence percentage do not add to 100

Majority of respondents felt that Career Guidance Services should be available at all the levels but majority felt that it should be available at higher secondary level of education, i.e. after 12th standard as it is a crucial turning point on career path.

Respondents were asked suggestions on their expectations from Career Guidance Programs. They **suggested that CGP should include:**

- (a) Information related to available courses, names of the institutions, requirements for admission, fee structure of the courses, sources of monetary assistance.
- (b) Information related to scope of study in job market, preparation for job interviews. Some suggested to provide information on how to start business, how to handle obstacles in future business and job
- (c) Fundamental Career Education for parents should be organized to understand and guide youth choices.
- (d) Training on Self- assessment techniques, career planning road map according to abilities, should clear our doubts in relation to career path. Program further can help by teaching ways to reach set targets and stress management techniques.

Implications of findings and strengthening Life skills for Career Choice:

Study findings also implied the need for organization of many CGP to equip youth with available career options. Organization of aptitude test session is required for directing detail career road map which will enhance youth to answer “who am I?” “What are my strength and weakness”? And like many other questions and difficulties to come on career path.

Road Map:

To ripe “Demographic dividend” and to prevent “demographic disaster” requires multifaceted tasks to assist, direct youth for skill match.

- (a) Government should frame policy on career guidance: Government should start Centers at schools and colleges and in the community by (a) Private practitioners and (b) Government Centers by trained counselor to administer the test and able to handle the management of wide range of services. This can be managed by organization of seminars, talks, exhibitions and many other ways.
- (b) Guideline of NCERT and UGC centers encourages Teachers and Parents to be actively involved in career education to strengthen the role of family and school in guiding youth on planning and achieving career goal.

- (c) Role of NGO also becomes very vital those who are working with youth and family can impart soft skills training.
- (d) Professional social workers can play multidimensional role while working with parents and youth under the shelter of family and child welfare setting

Conclusion:

Over the last several decades, the industrial economy based on manufacturing has shifted to a service economy driven by information, knowledge and innovation. “Economic success is increasingly based on the effective utilization of intangible assets, such as knowledge, skills, and innovative potential as the key resource for competitive advantage.” —Economic and Social Research Council, 2005.

To fight back the problem of huge youth unemployment mainly caused by skill mismatch, especially educated unemployment, process of youth development is prime need through which young people acquire the cognitive, social and emotional skills and abilities required to navigate life. These build-ings of skills are prerequisite for better nation and higher goals of social development with the goal of social inclusion and main streaming of youth constructively. As youth may begin to make commitments at work in linking career preparations which make them to explore diverse career and life options. Deciding vocational goal itself is a very difficult and an important decision. The nature of decision at this stage will either make or mar one’s career.

“Let’s assist youth to take right decision at the right time”

References

- 4th Annual Report, 2013-2014, Labour bureau ministry of labour& employment government of India, Chandigarh.g2
- Blom, Andreas and Hiroshi Saeki (2011) - Employability and Skill Set of Newly Graduated Engineers in India, Policy Research Working Paper No. 5640, The World Bank South Asia Region Education Team, [available from <http://elibrary.worldbank.org/content/workingpaper/10.1596/1813-9450-5640> accessed on 12/12/2015
- Gore, M.S., (1977). *Indian Youth*, Lecture Series: 3, Pg. 64-67, VishwaYuvak Kendra, New Delhi.
- Mistry Rekha, 2012, ‘Identification of Life skills program for enhancing Pedagogic Achievement and career perception’, 4th International Conference On life skills Education, Rajiv Gandhi national Institute of Youth development, Sriperumbudur

Murti, AshutoshBishnu and Bino Paul GD (2013) - Labour Market Flexibility and Skill Shortage: An Exploration of Key Indicators, LMRF Discussion Paper Series, Discussion Paper No. 16, Tata Institute of Social Sciences [available from http://www.atlmri.org/index.php/downloads/doc_download/41-lmrf-discussion-paper-18, accessed on 12/12/2015]

R. Gibson and Mitchell, 2008, Introduction to Counseling and Guidance, Prentice Hall, New Delhi

Singh, Amarjeet (2002). *A sociological study of educated unemployed youth of Imphal East and West districts of Manipur Shillong*; North Eastern Hill University.

UNICEF: Module 1, 2010, Adolescence Education in India, retrieved on 15/12/2015

Comparative Study of Life Skills Education in the Government, Government-Aided and Private Secondary Schools in Lucknow

Dr. Vinod Chandra*

Abstract

Life skills education is a very important and integral part of educational system worldwide. In Indian schools however, life skills education is yet to be fully initiated and recognized as an integral part of the curriculum. School is the platform for learning for the student. The teacher focuses on the overall development of the students. Apart from reading, writing and arithmetic skills it is the duty of the teacher as well as school setting to enable the students to face challenges in life. It is the generic life skills like self-awareness, empathy, effective communication, inter personal relationship, problem solving, decision making, creative and critical thinking, coping with stress and emotions that help the students to overcome challenges in real life. In this study the researcher aims to identify the importance of life skills education in school setting and identifying the gap in providing the life skills to students through school setting, content of the curriculum and the teaching methodology that is adopted in the classrooms. It is a qualitative and exploratory study whereby the researcher will survey private and government-aided and government run schools and explore the views of class VIII students regarding life skill education. The study aims at comparing the level of education in life skills provided to the Government, Government-Aided and Private Secondary School students in different types of school settings. The objective is to identify the relationship between content, methods in teaching process and school atmosphere and life skill education and to identify the gap in its implementation in the school setting. It also aims to explore the kind of practical experience and exposure the students receive in core life skills to facilitate them to apply these skills in their daily living.

Key words: Life Skill Education, Teachers, School setting

* Associate Professor of Sociology, J N Post Graduate College, Lucknow

Life Skills: Concept & Meaning

The kinds of knowledge and skills which should appear as learning outcomes have varied over time and place and are reflected in many different notions, sometimes for the same general areas. These have been defined in generic (general) rather than specific (diversified) terms, i.e. determined independent of individual learner backgrounds and needs. The most comprehensive – and fluid – term is perhaps “life skills” since, in terms of learning outcomes, it includes both learners’ expected specific learning outcomes or cognitive skills (in e.g. literacy and numeracy) and expected behaviour and attitudes or non-cognitive skills (often also termed psychomotor skills or soft skills). In this understanding, education is mandated to do more than provide knowledge and skills for economic growth or poverty reduction as reflected in the notions of skills for work or skills for jobs, income generation skills, entrepreneurship skills, and technical and vocational skills.

Life skills or skills for life are perhaps captured in the simplest and deepest way in the four pillars of learning of the Delors report (Delors et al. 1996), with outcomes of education relating to four crucial areas affecting a self-fulfilling life and contribution to societal development. They are (1) learning to know (i.e. to master the instruments of knowledge); (2) learning to do (i.e. to apply knowledge in practice); (3) learning to live together and living with others (i.e. to prevent and resolve conflicts, and promote peace and respect for other people, their cultures and spiritual values); and (4) learning to be (i.e. to ensure all-round development of each individual). Two additional pillars have since been suggested at the first World Forum on Lifelong Learning held in Paris in 2008: learning for change and transformation; and learning to become (Ouane 2008), precisely because of the rapid changes which are taking place in countries, regions and the world in general and in the life of individuals throughout their lifetime. Following on from the Faure report (Faure et al. 1972), life skills in this interpretation emphasise both whole person development (the “complete man”) and a life-long learning perspective, i.e. learning throughout life.

In current discussions life skills are often conflated with so-called ‘21st-century skills’. This is particularly the case in contexts which emphasise individual competences to successfully meet varied, complex demands. In wealthier, high- and middle-level income countries, such as in member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and emerging economies, such as China, 21st-century skills and competences include “psychosocial resources, including knowledge and skills,

motivation, attitudes, and other social and behavioural components” (Schleicher 2007, p. 349) to build the capacity or activate the innate ability of individuals to research and innovate and be flexible in order to sustain the construction of knowledge-based economies and societies.

Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Described in this way, skills that can be said to be life skills are innumerable, and the nature and definition of life skills are likely to differ across cultures and settings. However, analysis of the life skills field suggests that there is a core set of skills that are at the heart of skills-based initiatives for the promotion of the health and well-being of children and adolescents. These are viz. Decision making, Problem solving, Creative thinking, Critical thinking, Effective communication, and Interpersonal relationship skills, Self-awareness, Empathy, Coping with emotions and Coping with stress.

Life Skills have been defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as “abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life”. Basically, this perspective of life skills focuses on empowering “young people to take positive steps to promote health outcomes, and positive social relationships, and positive contributions to society” (Jacobs Foundation 2011, p. 9).

They signify the psycho-social skills that resolve around valued behaviour and include reflective skills like problem-solving, critical thinking. Practice of life skills can bring qualities like self-esteem, sociability and tolerance, action competencies to the contemporary secondary school students and can generate enough capabilities among them to have the freedom to decide what to do in a special situation.

Teaching Life Skills in Schools

The common characteristic of youth worldwide is that they are in a transition stage between childhood and adulthood, meaning that they must both take control of their personal lives and assume social commitments (UNESCO 2004a, p. 4) or, to put it another way, this is the time which “can offer most valuable opportunities to learn life skills and ground self-identity” (Perret-Clermont 2004). With time, secondary education curriculum reformers are including definitions of life skills which reflect the term’s original and broader meaning as espoused in life skills education literature, namely focusing more on developing skills which are more generic and adaptive, to meet the demands of the 21st-century world of work and ensure that young people can manage their lives more productively. This widening of the defi-

nition is partly due to the economic relevance argument having weakened as a result of difficulties encountered by secondary education in providing technical/vocational skills for employability. Increasingly, secondary school curriculum objectives are emphasising social, emotional and thinking skills as part of the set of skills young people need to live productively in the 21st century and contribute to society's development.

Life skills have already been taught in many schools around the world. Some initiatives are in use in just a few schools, whilst in other countries, life skills programmes have been introduced in a large proportion of schools, and for different age groups. In some countries, there are several important life skills initiatives, originating in different groups in the country, e.g. non-governmental organizations, education authorities, and religious groups.

Life skills education is highly relevant to the daily needs of young people. When it is part of the school curriculum, the indications are that it helps to prevent school drop-out. Furthermore, once experience has been gained in the development and implementation of a life skills programme for schools, this may help with the creation and implementation of programmes for other settings.

Apart from the impact on child health, there may be other benefits for the school as an institution. For example, evaluative studies of life skills programmes suggest that the methods used can help to improve teacher and pupil relationships (Parsons et al., 1988), and there are indications that life skills lessons are associated with fewer reports of classroom behaviour problems. There are also research indications of improved academic performance because of teaching life skills (Weissberg et al., 1989). Other positive effects include improved school attendance (Zabin et al., 1986), less bullying, fewer referrals to specialist support services and better relationships between children and their parents.

Review of Literature

A study titled 'An Exploration of Teachers' Attitude towards Life Skills Education: A Case of Secondary Schools in Thika West' was conducted by Susan and Gathanwa¹The purpose of this study was to explore the attitude of teachers towards teaching life skills education as a way of developing the practice of morality through secondary schools in Kenya. The researchers used research objectives with the aim of establishing the extent to which life

¹Journal of Education and Practice www.iiste.org
ISSN 2222-1735 (Paper) ISSN 2222-288X (Online)
Vol.5, No.34, 2014

skills education was being taught in secondary school, how life skills education training had equipped teacher to teach it in schools and to identify challenges teachers were facing in implementing life skills education. In addition to recommend measures to be undertaken to improve practice of morality in secondary schools.

The researchers sampled 12 public secondary schools which constitute 30% of all public secondary schools Thika West District. The target population was the head teachers and teachers. Purposive sampling technique was used to sample teachers and a total number of 60 respondents were sampled. Data for the study was collected using questionnaires which had both open and closed question. The data collected was then analysed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The research findings revealed that majority of secondary schools in Thika West District were offering life skills education but allocating a single lesson in a week. This implied that very little time was spent on it and thus the coverage was very little.

The conclusion was that the learners are not well prepared and equipped with psychosocial competencies that would help them to manage their social-moral lives in a healthy and productive manner. The research findings also revealed that some schools had no time allocation for the subject and had to teach it after regular classes or any other available time. The conclusion then was that life skills education was not given enough attention as it should to equip the learners with adaptive skills that would enable them to deal effectively with the demands of everyday life. According to the majority of the teachers, this was due to heavy workloads due to understaffing and had to make good mean score and therefore utilized the lesson to teach other examinable subjects. The implication was that the learners were inadequately prepared to deal with demands and challenges of every day's life. This could be the reason why most secondary schools students are resorting to risky behaviors such as drug abuse, riot, violence, student's dropout and pre-marital sex among others. The study recommended that the government through the Ministry of Education put strategies for effective implementation of the programme in secondary schools in Kenya.

'Life Skills Education in Kenya: An Assessment of the Level of Preparedness of Teachers and School Managers in Implementing Life Skills Education in Trans- Nzoia District Kenya' was done by Francis ABOBO¹, John Aluko ORODHO². Though Life Skills Education (LSE) has been made a compulsory component of basic education by the Ministry of Education in

²IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 19, Issue 9, Ver. II (Sep. 2014), PP 32-44 e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845. www.iosrjournals.org

Kenya, effective teaching is hampered by several factors. The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of preparedness by teachers and school managers in implementing the Life Skills Education in secondary schools in Trans-Nzoia West District. To achieve this purpose, the study was guided by three fold objectives, namely) to determine teachers' training on LSE, ii) find out teachers' and students attitudes towards implementation of LSE in secondary schools, and iii) to establish the level of availability and adequacy of teaching/learning resources for implementing LSE in secondary schools. A descriptive survey design was used for the study. From the target population of 1800 students, 150 teachers and 37 principals in 37 public secondary schools in the district, stratified random sampling technique was adopted to draw 15 principals, 30 teachers and 180 students yielding 225 subjects.

Questionnaires were used to collect data from teachers and students while interview schedules were used to collect data from the principals. Quantitative data from questionnaires were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) while qualitative data from interviews were analysed thematically. The main findings were that most teachers had not been trained on Life Skills Education hence indicating low level of preparedness by teachers. It was established that while teachers had negative attitude towards teaching of LSE, students portrayed a positive attitude towards learning of LSE. Regarding the level of availability and adequacy of teaching and learning resources, the study found that although the critical teaching/learning resources were available, they were grossly inadequate in most secondary schools studied. It was concluded that the level of preparedness by teachers and school managers was fairly low and this hampered effective implementation of the educational component in schools visited. It was recommended that teachers should be trained on Life Skills and appropriate instructional resources put in place to facilitate effective implementation of life skills not in the study locale, but also in other schools in the county with similar experiences.

A study of life skills of pupil teachers was done by Rakesh Sandhu³. The investigator has tried to find out the life skills of pupil teachers. A sample of 300 pupil teachers was taken. Descriptive survey method was applied. A standardized scale on life skill assessment was administered to the entire sample. The result reveals that majority of the students have just average level of life skills which are not adequate. There is a need to train the teachers and consequently develop the life skills among the students. There was

³Indian Journal of Fundamental and Applied Life Sciences ISSN: 2231-6345 (Online) An Open Access, Online International Journal Available at <http://www.cibtech.org/jls.htm> 2014 Vol. 4 (3) July-September, pp.389-395/Sandhu

no significant difference in life skills between male and female pupil teachers as well pupil teachers belonging to urban and rural area. However, a significant difference was found between science and arts pupil teachers. Science pupil teachers were found to possess higher level of life skills as compared to arts pupil teachers.

A study on 'Life Skills Education in School Setting' was done by Veena Suresh and Vivek Subramoniam⁴. School is the platform for learning for the student. The main objectives of school are to build a productive generation in the future. The teacher focuses on the overall development of the students. Teacher builds reading writing and arithmetic skills among students. Apart from these skills it is the duty of the teacher as well as school setting to enable the students to face challenges in life. It is the generic life skills like self-awareness, empathy, effective communication, inter personal relationship, problem solving, decision making, creative and critical thinking, coping with stress and emotions that help the students to overcome challenges in real life. In this study the researchers aims to identify the importance of life skills education in school setting and identifying the gap in providing this life skills in school setting.

The researcher visited many schools, collected the opinion of teachers as well as students regarding life skill education. Major findings of the study were majority of the schools focus on development of arithmetic, writing and reading skills. They feel that improvement in marks of the students will increase their reputation. The teachers in the school are concentrated on training the students to score high in their respective subject. The transition in this focus of education created much impact in the life of student. They are not able to satisfy their psycho social needs, unable to communicate with others, inability to identify risk factors, unable to make good decisions and finally ended up in frequent failures and suicidal attempts.

Through this study researchers described the importance of life skill education in school setting. The main objective is to identify the relationship between principles and methods in teaching process and life skill education and to identify the gap in the implementation level of the process of teaching and learning in school setting. Major findings of the study are the perception on life skill education among teachers varies according to their interest and attitude towards teaching process. Some teachers are aware about the relevance of life skill education in handling the issues faced by students but hesitate to apply this because of time constraint and lack of support from school and parents. Another section of teachers consider it as non-aca-

⁴Indian J Psychiatry. 2010 Oct-Dec; 52(4): 344-349.

democratic activity with less importance and unwilling to change from the approach of teacher centred classroom teaching to child centred. School authorities are worried about the discipline of school while engaging in participatory learning approach and due to excess consumption of time they cannot finish their syllabus on time will affect their result. The conclusion is that before integrating life skill education we must handle the perception of teachers and school authorities regarding the benefits of this type of teaching.

A Study titled 'Reconceptualised life skills in secondary education in the African context: Lessons learnt from reforms in Ghana' was conducted by Kwame Akyeampong.⁵ Early notions of life skills in Africa did not consider the importance of a flexible and portable set of skills that would enable youth to adapt to changes in the world of work and lay the foundations for productive well-being and behaviour. Rather, life skills education in many secondary education curricula in Africa started with an emphasis on developing specific technical vocational skills considered essential for employability or self-employment. Using Ghana as an example, this paper shows how secondary education curriculum reformers recommended shifts that embraced a new interpretation of life skills focused on 21st-century skills. This gradual move also reflected the difficulty that secondary education in general has had in networking with the world of work to provide work experience that would lead to the development of work-related skills and enhance employability. The author's main argument is that although the reconceptualization of life skills in secondary education to reflect 21st-century skills is a welcome shift in the African context, this need to be accompanied by reforms in teacher education. Classroom teaching and learning need to be adapted in a fundamental way to ensure that youth fully benefit from the inclusion of 21st-century life skills in secondary education curricula. Such reforms must include pedagogical practices which nurture communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking skills.

The Present Study

The present study is titled 'A Comparative Study of Life Skills Education in the Government, Government-Aided and Private Secondary Schools in Lucknow'. In this study the researcher aims to identify the importance of life skills education in school setting and identifying the gap in providing the life skills to students through school setting, content of the curriculum and the teaching methodology that is adopted in the classrooms. It is a qualita-

⁵Published online: 30 March 2014_ Springer Science +Business Media Dordrecht and UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning 2014
Int Rev Educ (2014) 60:217–234
DOI 10.1007/s11159-014-9408-2

tive and exploratory study whereby the researcher will survey private and government-aided and government run schools and explore the views of class VIII students and their teachers regarding life skill education. The study aims at comparing the level of education in life skills provided to the Government, Government-Aided and Private Secondary Schoolstudents in different types of school settings. The objective is to identify the relationship between content, methods in teaching process and school atmosphere and life skill education and to identify the gap in its implementation in the school setting. It also aims to explore the kind of practical experience and exposure the students receive in core life skills to facilitate them to apply these skills in their daily living.

Methodology

The procedure adopted was in- depth individual interviews and conversations with the students and teachers of Class 8 of Private, Government and Aided schools and through the content analysis of the books used for this standard in different Boards. The study basically used a qualitative and phenomenological methodology of research. This was done through open informal conversational interview with them, which was tape recorded. The teachers and students were contacted on individual basis to find out the extent to which education is being imparted in various aspects of Life Skills. Whole proceedings of the conversation were tape recorded with due permission of the respondent, for subsequent content analysis.

Questions were specifically focussed on 6 important Life Skills viz. Problem Solving, Decision Making, Self-Confidence/Self-Awareness, Empathy, and Communication/Interpersonal skills. Some questions were based on exploring the teaching methodologies of teachers for teaching different subjects, teaching of moral science and other extracurricular activities that take place in schools and classrooms. The interviews were then transcribed and analysed in a tabular form. Books (especially Hindi, English, Social Studies and Moral Science) of these schools (3 Boards i.e. ICSE, CBSE and U.P. Board) were content analysed and interpretation was done accordingly. The aim was to explore the types of Life Skills that are being emphasized in every chapter of these books through its content and through the activities provided at the end of each chapter and how far does the teachers engage the students in such activities.

Discussion & Interpretation of Data

The researcher visited many schools, collected the opinion of teachers as well as students regarding life skill education. The data was analysed in

three forms viz. the content analysis of the books, the interview responses of teachers and interview responses of the students' class 8 of the sampled schools. As far as content analysis of the books are concerned, specifically Hindi, English, Social Studies i.e. Civics and Moral Science books if any being followed were analysed.

Comparative Analysis of the Content of Books of different Boards for Life Skill Education

English, Hindi, Civics and Moral Science books of ICSE, CBSE and U.P. Board were analysed to identify the level of Life Skill Education being emphasized through their content.

As far as books of ICSE Board are concerned every chapter in the English book has exercises related with Listening, speaking and writing skills. For example, in the 3rd chapter on 'The Gift of the King' the speaking exercise the assertiveness quality of the character in the story has been discussed with the students and how the students can also develop this skill in them. There are different situations given and the students are asked to express their determination. Such an exercise will help in developing communication skills in students.

Chapter 5 After Twenty Years has a very good exercise at the end. It asks the student to think and express as to where will they be after 20 years. What job will they be doing? Such an exercise can be used to help the students to understand the importance of goal setting, about short term and long term goals. Rabindra Nath Tagore's wonderful poem Where the mind is without fear is a great opportunity to talk with students about being fearless and to be truthful and to try ones best to be knowledgeable. The writing exercise to share one's idea of a perfect world can instigate creativity in students. The poem If in Chapter 21 is a beautiful opportunity to inspire students to develop determination, fearlessness and to have self-confidence. It will motivate students to have faith in their qualities and potential. Chapter 22 is a good opportunity to build empathy in students, to understand the pain of others in adverse conditions. Thus, overall every chapter focuses on important life skills i.e. self-awareness, empathy, interpersonal relationships, creativity and problem solving.

Comparatively each chapter in the English book 'Rainbow' of U.P. Board has some or the other life skill that can be inculcated in the children like empathy, communication skills, self-awareness, self-confidence, interpersonal skills, decision making etc. Every chapter and poem in the book apart from practice in Word Power, Language practice, developing speaking skills

has many activities under Let's Do or Let's Discuss heading where by the students can be encouraged to work in teams. They can be made to practice communication skills through discussion and speaking drills. The chapters also have activities which can make the students aware about important things. For example chapter 4 Guru Dronacharya; the chapter has an activity Let's Discuss which says that Discuss with your teacher about a few more men, women who were experts in any sports event. The next Chapter 5 The Wicked Moneylender has an activity viz. Try to find out persons like Kanhaiya Lal around you. Write a few lines advising your friends to avoid them. If the students are seriously made to do such an activity the students will become alert, learn skills to recognize wicked people around them and also they will learn skills to avoid such people.

There are 24 chapters in Hindi Book Medha in ICSE. Some stories, some poems, letters, some essays and some biographies. Apart from the values inherit in the content of every chapter, there are number of activities related with every chapter that can develop thinking and imagination skills in children. Every chapter has activities at the end apart from question and answers and fill in the blanks etc. For example, in the first chapter that is a poem or a prayer, there is an activity wherein the students are asked to discuss among their friends their morning and evening routine activities and which time of the day they like most. In chapter Aprajita through an example of a handicapped girl, the girls can be made sensitive towards handicapped people, their uniqueness of personality, their acceptance in society and thus through more side stories they can be helped to change their attitude to more positive. Through Chapters like Aprajita the authors have emphasized self-awareness and uniqueness of a personality. Thus, the different activities at the end of each chapter are helpful to develop life skills, creativity and imagination power of students if these activities are undertaken seriously.

In U.P. Board there are 22 chapters in Hindi Book Manjari. Some stories, some poems, some essays and some biographies. Apart from the values inherit in the content of every chapter, there are number of activities related with every chapter that can develop thinking and imagination skills in children. Every chapter has activities under heading Vicharaaur Kalpana andKuchKarneko. These activitiesare helpful to develop creativity and imagination power of students if these activities are undertaken seriously.

There are 33 chapters in the book MaanVyaktitvain U.P. Board. The objective of this book and its content is to make the students aware about great personalities in India from time immemorial. The chapters highlight the im-

portant characteristics of these personalities to inspire the young generation to inculcate these characteristics in themselves. The main qualities emphasized through these personalities are service to the nation, patriotism, dedication and hard work. They had so much of tolerance which our generation does not have today. They had so much of love and compassion, sensitivity and empathy for people of their country, that they sacrificed everything for their welfare.

The only drawback in this book is the number of chapters which is large in number. 33 chapters is too much a number for children to understand and remember. If few selected chapters regarding great personalities would have been included it would have been much useful from the point of view of inculcating life skills in children like decision making, problem solving, self-awareness, interpersonal skills, empathy, and self-confidence.

Every chapter related to civics in ICSE can inspire students to inculcate and build up values to become a contributing member of their society and the country at large. Every chapter has a project work related to it and activities where by the students must use their imagination. For example, chapter 16 on Environmental concerns there is a project work related to pollution and environmental degradation. If the students are made to work on it they can become aware about the effects and consequences of pollution. There is an activity in which they must imagine that their city is the most polluted and thus they have to give their suggestions. Such kind of activity can sensitize the students on such grave problems.

Life skill of empathy and sensitivity can be inculcated through the chapter on Overpopulation and poverty. The project work on observing how pavement dwellers and families in slums live and to report on the observations on their living conditions is a very useful exercise to build empathy in children. The picture study in which the students have to express the emotions on the children's face again will help the students to associate with the deprived children. The exercise where they have to use their imagination power can develop their creative power, thinking skills and problem solving skills.

In U.P. Board there is no Moral Science book prescribed however in ICSE there is a separate Moral Science Book and it has number of chapters and exercises that are helpful in inculcating morals and like skills in students.

It can thus be concluded that the content in every subject in different Boards is quite good and sufficient to inculcate Life skills in students although in some subjects the syllabus is too much. There are very interesting activities and small project works related with every chapter in all the books that can

create interest and awareness in students regarding important issues.

Comparative analysis of the interviews with students and teachers

The interviews would be analysed under the Core Life Skills that were decided by the researcher to be identified in the school environment and the teaching methodology in different schools.

I. Problem Solving

Problem solving helps us to deal constructively with problems in our lives. Significant problems that are left unresolved can cause mental stress and give rise to accompanying physical strain.

The students of both Private and Government aided schools were inquired about the kinds of problems they face at this stage of their life. The students mostly answered that the problems were related more with their academics i.e. they had subject related problems. Like to quote one of the girls' verbatim "Problems related with friends, subjects. Sometimes family problems. I feel bad at times". When they were asked that whom do they approach when they have problem, they answered that usually when they have any personal problem they generally approach their parents, mostly their friends. For problems related with their subjects they approach their teachers.

However, when the teachers were asked about their observation about the kind of problems the students of this age group are facing their view was much more detailed and descriptive. They said "Students are not concerned with books or whatever the teacher is saying; for them more important is group formation, they behave as per the group, individual look is different. Only 5% are attentive. They are lacking in discipline. They have lot of competition among themselves, comparison problems. Parents are not paying attention to them.

One of the teachers emphasized that children are more confident these days as compared to the by gone days. They are very text savvy. But there is marked difference when it comes to obedience. Earlier they were more obedient. These children have become too sensitive to criticism. For small things they start cutting themselves, get angry. "We notice marks on their bodies. They do not have much interaction with parents and so teacher's role has increased manifold. Children feeling depressed. I have come across such children". The teacher reported few cases and new problems of child abuse. Children are more aware about their sexuality. There is too much exposure through Net. Children feel that it's a disgrace if you do not have a boyfriend.

Even the teachers of Government-aided schools feel the same. They opined that 8-9 years back girls were very submissive, introvert, and were not comfortable in sharing their thoughts. Now they are very frank and open. They share of course not with all teachers but with those who are friendly. Home atmosphere is not good; girls in such schools come from very low status. They are not able to share anything at home neither with parents not with siblings. One of the very senior teachers in the government aided school said, “I have seen many changes. First children used to stay in joint families. Today they are being influenced by T.V. Internet; they have no respect, no sincerity. Only 10% children are good. Many have family problems.”

Teachers both of Private and Aided schools accepted that students approach them with their problems but most of the time they come up with the subject related problems. They feel more comfortable to share their worries with their friends. Teachers in Private school said that students’ problems are discussed openly in the Moral Science Class. “Sometimes they want to talk separately. So we give them time. Some who are not open, introvert, teachers have to be more vigilant.” Another important point to be noted is that the Private schools have a school counsellor that aided schools do not have. Having a counsellor in the school is too much of a help, quoted few teachers of a private school. “Many cases I have seen children come and tell I have been healed. Counsellor was able to help the girls.”

In comparison to this the Aided schools do not have a counsellor. Teachers whenever they have time discuss some topics or issues with the students. Few teachers are approachable i.e. students can approach them freely with their problems. The teacher-taught relationship is overall good but the teachers in the school are concentrated more on teaching their respective subject as the course is also too much. Teachers who really wish to help the students or discuss issues apart from the course do not get sufficient time. The transition in this focus of education created much impact in the life of student. They are not able to satisfy their psycho social needs, unable to communicate with others, inability to identify risk factors, unable to make good decisions and finally ended up in frequent failures and suicidal attempts as some cases were reported by few teachers.

However, it was also explored that since teachers are not professionals or trainers and so they are not able to teach students useful problem solving strategies with the help of which they can face the challenges of their lives. Their explanation is in a very general sense about facing problems in a strong manner. No special lectures either in Private or aided schools are arranged for the students so that they can be taught this important life skill.

II. Empathy

To have a successful relationship with our loved ones and society at large, we need to understand and care about other peoples' needs, desires and feelings. Empathy is the ability to imagine what life is like for another person. Without empathy, our communication with others will amount to one-way traffic. Worst, we will be acting and behaving according to our self-interest and are bound to run into problems. When we understand ourselves as well as others, we are better prepared to communicate our needs and desires. Empathy can help us to accept others, who may be very different from ourselves. This can improve social interactions, especially, in situations of ethnic or cultural diversity. How far the students are helped to develop sensitivity and empathy in themselves was identified in the answers of the students and teachers. When students were asked that when they see someone in need what do they do, almost all the students whether from the private or aided school answered that they try their level best to help the person out. Like a girl of an aided school answered, "Like people laugh when they see any handicap person. It should not be done. I feel bad, how they might be living. Feel sad for them. Yes Mam. I think I have everything, food house, money but these people have nothing, sitting on road, begging. I feel like helping them."

Thus, mostly students or children no matter where they study have the altruistic tendency in them and try their best to be of help. Children in schools can be helped to develop sensitivity and empathy towards downtrodden and deprived people in the society if they are brought face to face with the real situations. However, as far as the school system is concerned, the aided schools when asked that whether the students are made to visit orphanages, old age homes or slum areas, the teachers and the students replied in negative. They are not taken for any visits. On the other hand one of the private schools take the students at least twice in a year to such places where the whole day the students are involved with the people in these centres, they entertain them, tell them stories, listen to their stories. Teachers told that students become attached with them and even visit these places with their parents.

However, there are other Private schools where students are simply made to collect money for such deprived people through raffle collection or by collecting clothes, food items etc. They are neither taken to visit such places nor shown any documentaries on these people so that they can understand their pathetic conditions.

Thus, here we can say that it is not the type of school that matters in building empathy in students rather it all depends on the authorities and teachers as to how far they consider it important to sensitize the students on this issue.

III. Anger/Stress Management

Coping with stress means recognizing the sources of stress in our lives, recognizing how this affects us, and acting in ways that help us control our levels of stress, by changing our environment or lifestyle and learning how to relax. Coping with emotions means involving recognizing emotions within us and others, being aware of how emotions influence behaviour and being able to respond to emotions appropriately. Intense emotions like anger or sadness can have negative effects on our health if we do not respond appropriately. As reported by most of the teachers and proved by many researches that adolescents are becoming aggressive and intolerant day by day. They have become so touchy to little things that they indulge in suicidal attempts, violence, abuse and harming themselves and others. It is the need of the hour to empower our students both girls and boys to handle difficult situations in life and to become more tolerant. As far as the content of the books is concerned we saw that the chapters, whether in English, Hindi, Social Studies or Moral Science books in ICSE and CBSE Board, have number of effective exercises and activities which if followed seriously can help our students to understand their emotions. But the predicament is that the teachers do not have enough time to take up these activities and moreover majority of the teachers are not bothered about it. The research findings also revealed that some schools had no time allocation for the subject like moral science and had to teach it after regular classes or any other available time. The class teacher whenever she gets time discusses some issues with the students that too in a very general manner.

As far as children of Government aided schools are concerned they come from very low economic status families. These families have too many children to look after and so the physical, social, emotional and psychological needs of these children are basically deprived of. When needs are frustrated such children are sure to become frustrated and aggressive. When asked children told that their parents beat them “Papa beats sometimes”.

When children were asked how do they handle or cope with their anger, they replied, “I suppress. Go alone and sit down and cry.” “I sit alone, cry a lot and then ask Mummy why it happened.” “I shout at people.” Such replies show that children have no other option than to suppress their negative emotions because they are basically not being guided neither at home not in

schools how to cope with their stress or emotions. They need to be trained in this important life skill.

Children of Private schools because they come from elite families they are many times over pampered but parents have no time to interact with their children which makes them negative. But in Private schools the Assembly time is very important where the school Principal discuss important issues with the students, some real life cases are discussed example of Cyber Crime etc. Also in Moral Science period students are made to do activities or express their emotions. In private schools children have classes I Physical activity and sports which act as a means to bring out their negative energy. This opportunity lacks in aided schools.

IV. Communication/Interpersonal Skills:

Interpersonal relationship skills help us to relate in positive ways with the people we interact with. This may mean being able to make and keep friendly relationships, which can be of great importance to our mental and social well-being. It may mean keeping, good relations with family members, which are an important source of social support. It may also mean being able to end relationships constructively. Effective communication means that we can express ourselves, both verbally and non-verbally, in ways that are appropriate to our cultures and situations. This means being able to express opinions and desires, and needs and fears. And it may mean being able to ask for advice and help in a time of need.

When students were asked whether they can express themselves freely in front of others, they replied, "I feel nervous, I feel afraid." I speak but mostly in front of my friends. I feel afraid in front of others." There were many students who accepted that they feel confident in speaking and expressing their emotions but majority of the students feel nervous. Their expression ability is poor as the researcher could also observe from their way of communication. They are not provided with many opportunities to express themselves or to shirk their publicspeaking fear. It is a rare phenomenon that students are engaged in Games or PT. Apart from subject teaching other activities that take place in schools are music, dance, some art and craft work, sometimes discussion on some topic etc. There are no specific lectures for students on topics, like communication skills, problem solving strategies or how to manage your stress or anger. This is the picture of the Government and Government Aided schools.

However, as far as the students of the Private schools are concerned their communication skill is comparatively much better. The school has number

of activities and various types of opportunities are provided to the students whereby they can express themselves and their communication ability is improved. Like in Private schools the Assembly time is in itself an important period when every day a student has to speak on a topic. This has to be done by even the weakest student. Then there are debates, discussions, competitions, House activities, club activities in which every student according to their talent and potential take part in these activities and build up their confidence. One of the teachers in a private school said, “Assembly important time. Complete every student must speak. Principal stands beside the child. There is constant grooming. Lot of confidence is seen in children”.

V. Self-Confidence/Self Awareness

Self-awareness encompasses emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment and Self-confidence. Self-awareness is the skill of being aware of and understanding your emotions as they occur and as they evolve. Effective self-assessment of feelings and emotions will help to improve your confidence and self-esteem.

The findings are that it hardly matters what type of school it is whether Government or private. In general students are much exposed to the world outside and thus have confidence in themselves. In fact teachers opined that they are over confident. Earlier the students were submissive, did not talk much but today they are ready to talk on any issue and share anything good or bad. Yes this is true that Private schools do provide opportunities to students to bring out their talent, to expose themselves to the outer world. These schools in the Moral science period discuss with students about their qualities both positive and negative as it was told by the teachers of a private school. But the aided schools firstly they have no such period, whatever opportunities are provided to the students it is very rare and there is hardly exposure of students to the outside world.

IV. Decision Making

Decision making helps us to deal constructively with decisions about our lives. This can have consequences for health. It can teach people how to actively make decisions about their actions in relation to healthy assessment of different options and, what effects these different decisions are likely to have.

Again as discussed in detail under different heads above it is clear that the students of the Private schools are more confident in taking decision al-

though there are some children who are introvert and need a push. These children don't speak much, do not express their feelings and are poor decision makers. When children were asked whether they can take decision easily, they replied "It is difficult sometimes." "Many times I am not able to understand". When teachers were asked whether the students are allowed to take decisions in small matters in the class like today they want to study this chapter, teachers replied that sometimes it so happens, they are so overloaded with the syllabus that it is not possible many times."

Conclusion

Major findings of the study were that majority of the schools focus more on the development of arithmetic, writing and reading skills. The private schools are in a better position. They have number of extracurricular activities through which students are given opportunities to develop leadership qualities, team building, decision making, developing creativity, developing critical analysis, communication skills etc. In such schools the Assembly time itself is so productive as far as the development of students are concerned that even the weakest student is motivated to express him or herself. Teachers share more positive relationship with the students and are more open and friendly with them. There is a separate Moral Science period where in there are some separate topics on Life Skills. Students have Moral Science period thrice a week. Lot of useful and learning exercises and productive lessons are discussed with the students. There are frequent visits to places like orphanages, slum areas and old age homes to build sensitivity in the students.

Through this study the researcher described the importance of life skill education in a school setting. The main objective is to identify the relationship between principles and methods in teaching process and life skill education and to identify the gap in the implementation level of the process of teaching and learning in school setting. Major findings of the study are the perception on life skill education among teachers varies according to their interest and attitude towards teaching process and their own individual nature. Some teachers are aware about the relevance of life skill education in handling the issues faced by students but feel limited to apply this because of time constraint, work load and lack of support from school and parents. The conclusion is that before integrating life skill education we must handle the perception of teachers and school authorities regarding the benefits of this type of teaching.

References

- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Botvin, G.J., Eng, A. and Williams, C.L. (1980). Preventing the onset of cigarette smoking through Life Skills Training. *Preventive Medicine*, 11, 199-211.
- Botvin, G.J., Baker, E., Botvin, E.M., Filazzola, A.D. and Millman, R.B. (1984). Alcohol abuse prevention through the development of personal and social competence: A pilot study. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 45, 550-552.
- Caplan, M., Weissberg, R.P., Grober, J.S., Jacoby, C. (1992). Social competence promotion with inner city and suburban young adolescents: effects on social adjustment and alcohol use. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 60 (1), 56-63.
- Delors, J., et al. (1996). *Education: The treasure within*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Errecart, M.T., Walberg, H.J., Ross, J.G., Gold, R.S., Fielder, J.F. Kolbe, L.J. (1991). Effectiveness of Teenage Health Teaching Modules. *Journal of School Health*. 61(1).
- Gonzalez, R. (1990) Ministering intelligence: a Venezuelan experience in the promotion of cognitive abilities. *International Journal of Mental Health*, 18 (3).5-19.
- Faure, E., Herrera, F., Kaddoura, A.-R., Lopes, H., Petrovsky, A. V., Rahnema, M., et al. (1972). *Learning to be: The world of education today and tomorrow*. Paris: Fayard/ UNESCO.
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Olweus, D. (1990). A national campaign in Norway to reduce the prevalence of bullying behaviour. Paper presented to the Society for Research on Adolescence Biennial Meeting, Atlanta, December 10-12. '
- Parsons, C, Hunter, D. and Warne, Y. (1988). *Skills for Adolescence: An Analysis of Project Material, Training and Implementation*. Christ Church College, Evaluation Unit, Canterbury, UK.
- Pentz, M.A. (1983). Prevention of adolescent substance abuse through social skills development. In Glynn, T.J. et al. (Eds.) *Preventing adolescent drug abuse: Intervention strategies*, NIDA Research Monograph No 47 Washington DC/NIDA, 195-235.
- Perry, C.L., Kelder, S.H. (1992). Models of effective Prevention. *Journal of Adolescent Health*. 13 (5), 355- 363.
- Prutzman, P, Stern, L. Burger, M.L., and Bodenhamer, G. (1988) *The Friendly Classroom for a Small Planet: Children's Creative Response to Conflict Program*. New Society Publishers, Santa Cruz, USA.
- Schinke S P (1984) Preventing teenage pregnancy. In Hersen, M., Eisler, R.M. and Miller, P.M. (Eds.) *Progress in behaviour modification*. New York: Academic Press, 31-64.
- Scripture Union. (undated). *All the Right Moves: Life skills for an Aids-free Generation: Twelve to fifteen year programme*. Scripture Union, POB 291, 7700 Rondcbosch. South Africa.
- TACADE (1990). *Skills for the Primary School Child: Promoting the Protection of Children*. Salford, UK.

- Weissberg, R.P, Caplan, M.Z. and Sivo, P.J. (1989).A new conceptual framework for establishing school-based social competence promotion programs.In Bond.L.A. and Compas. B. E. (Eds.) Primary prevention and promotion in schools. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- WHO/GPA. (1994) School Health Education to Prevent AIDS and STD: A Resource Package for Curriculum Planners. World Health Organization/Global Programme on AIDS, Geneva.
- Zabin, L.S.. Hirsch, M.B., Smith, E.A., Streett. R. and Hardy.J.B. (1986).Evaluation of a pregnancy prevention programme for urban teenagers.Family Planning Perspectives, 18.119-126.

Life Skills as Predictor of Attitude of College Students Towards Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Dr. Jagpreet Kaur* & Khushgeet Kaur**

Abstract

Youth are considered as the most productive members of the society, due to their physical and intellectual capacity. But now a day's large number of youth is engaged in antisocial problems like alcoholism, drug abuse, sexual abuse, smoking etc. These habits deteriorate their physical and intellectual capabilities and seem to be a burden to the society. The present study focused on exploring life skills as predictor of attitude of college students towards alcohol and drug abuse. The data was collected from 300 male and female students of government and private colleges of Solan district of Himachal Pradesh. There was significant and negative relationship between 'self-awareness', 'empathy', 'effective communication' and 'coping with emotions' dimensions of life skills and attitude of college students towards alcohol and drug abuse. The results of step-wise multiple regression analysis revealed that 'coping with emotions' dimension of life skills emerged to the most significant predictor of attitude of college students towards alcohol and drug abuse. Second and third variables to enter the regression equation were 'problem solving' and 'effective communication' dimensions of life skills, respectively. Implications of the results are discussed.

Key words: Life Skills, Attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse, college students

* Assistant Professor, Dept. of Education & Community Service, Punjabi University, Patiala

** Research Scholar, Dept. of Education & Community Service, Punjabi University, Patiala

Introduction

Youth are considered as the most productive members of the society, due to their physical and intellectual capacity (Francis, 2007). But it is sad to recognize the fact that most of the youth are unable to utilize their potential in an appropriate way due to lack of guidance and motivation. Now a days a large number of youth engaged in antisocial activities which create a lot of social problems like alcoholism, drug abuse, sexual abuse, smoking etc. and deteriorate their physical and intellectual capabilities and also seem to be a burden to the society (Özmete, 2011). Alcoholism, being one of these, has long been known as a risk factor for disease. The 1990 Global Burden of Disease (GBD) study (Murray and Lopez 1996) identified alcohol as one of the major global risk factors, accounting for 1.5% of global deaths, 2.1% of years of healthy life lost owing to premature mortality, 6.0% of years of life lost owing to disability and 3.5% of disability-adjusted life years (DALYs). Alcohol-attributable disease burden is expected to further increase in the future. This is due partly to increases in consumption in developing and emerging economies in south-east Asia and partly to shifting patterns of morbidity and mortality, the increased significance of chronic diseases and injuries related to alcohol. This trend, however, could be reversed quickly; as much of the disease burden of alcohol is almost immediately preventable (40% of the overall alcohol-attributable burden is from acute conditions). While a total ban on alcohol is not realistic, there are other alcohol policy measures that could be implemented to reduce the resulting disease burden (Rehm et al., 2004).

In this connection life skill education plays a very vital role to increase the awareness among the youth about all social problems and to alleviate social evils from the society. Life skill education helps the individual to improve the decision-making skill, ability to take everything in the right sense and improve their contributions to the society (Spence, 2003; Francis, 2007). Life skills are behaviours used appropriately and responsibly in the management of personal affairs. They are a set of human skills acquired via teaching or direct experience that are used to handle problems and questions commonly encountered in daily human life. Life skills have been defined by World Health Organization (WHO, 1997) as “the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.” WHO (1997) included decision making, problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, inter-personal relationship, self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions and coping with stress in the list of life skills.

The concept of life skill education is gaining momentum and rightfully so, it is an important way to perpetuate psycho-social competence among young students. In current context, where much emphasis is given to academics, life skill education needs to be stressed heavily upon, and consciously followed in the delivery of the school curriculum (Shroff, 2012). It is not sufficient to give young people knowledge and information. Attitudes, values, social influences, self-esteem and awareness of alternative behavior, are also important. Equally important are the personal and social skills that they need to translate their knowledge into behavior in a way that will enable them to make healthy and responsible choices and decisions. Life skills help to develop psychosocial competence and empower young people to have control over what they do (Chalmers & Townsend, 1990). Through a series of research studies, the life skills training (LST) approach was demonstrated to be effective in preventing alcohol use (Botvin et al., 1990; Botvin et al., 1995), marijuana use (Botvin et al., 1984; Botvin et al., 1990, 1995), and polydrug use (Botvin et al., 1995; Botvin et al., 1997). Furthermore, prevention effects have been shown to be both robust and durable. The results of a large-scale randomized trial found that prevention effects were evident more than six years later (Botvin et al., 1995; Botvin et al., 2000). Because of its emphasis on competence enhancement and the development of generic personal and social skills, it would appear to offer potential application to a younger population.

Objectives of the study

The study had the following specific objectives in view:

1. To study life skills among college students.
2. To study life skills in relation to attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse.
3. To study life skills as predictor of attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse among college students.

Methodology

The study was conducted through descriptive method of research.

Sample

The sample of the present study consisted of 300 male and female students of government and private colleges of Solan district in Himachal Pradesh. Sample was selected through stratified random sampling technique giving due weightage to gender and locale. Out of 300 of sample of students, 150 students (75 girls and 75 boys) were taken from two Government colleges

of Solan and 150 students (75 girls and 75 boys)) were taken from two private colleges of Solan.

Tools

The following tools were selected and used by the investigators in the present study:

- i. Life Skills Assessment Scale (Nair et al., 2010): Life Skills Assessment Scale by Nair et al. (2010) was used to measure life skills among college students. It is a 100 item scale that contains 10 items each for the ten core life skills i.e. self awareness, empathy, interpersonal relationship, effective communication, critical thinking, creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, coping with stress and coping with emotions. The scoring for Life Skills Assessment Scale was based on the five point scale ranging from “always true of me” to “not at all true of me”. The numerical value of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 was given to the positive statements and reverse scoring was done for the responses of negative statements of this highly reliable and valid scale.
- ii. Alcohol and Drug Attitude Scale (Saini and Singh, 2010): The scale gives an estimate of attitude towards alcohol and drug use of an individual. This 28 item rating scale is highly reliable and valid. The numerical value of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 was given to positively worded statements from response pattern ranging from ‘strongly agree’, ‘disagree,’ ‘can’t say’, ‘agree’ and ‘disagree’. The scoring was reversed for the negative items.

Results and Discussion

The data collected for the study were recorded in a tabular form for the statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics namely Mean, Median, Mode and Standard Deviation was used to study life skills among adolescents. Correlation was used to study life skills in relation to attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse among college students. Regression was used to study life skills as predictor of attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse among college students.

Life skills among college students: A description

The table 1 shows the frequency distribution of life skills among college students.

Table 1

Life Skills among college students (N=400)

S. No.	Class interval	Frequency	Percentage	cpf
1.	401-420	9	3.00	100.00
2.	381-400	10	3.33	96.99
3.	361-380	47	15.67	93.66
4.	341-360	34	11.33	77.99
5.	321-340	52	17.33	66.66
6.	301-320	90	30.00	49.33
7.	281-300	37	12.33	19.33
8.	261-280	21	7.00	7.00
	Total	300	100.00	100.00

Mean=327.35; SD=36.70; Median=321.00; Mode=319.00; Skewness=.11; Kurtosis=.77; Range=182; Minimum=242; Maximum=424

The table 1 shows that the Mean in case of total life skills among college students turned out to be 327.35 with SD of 36.70. It further shows that and 49.33% college students were below average level on total life skills, 33.33% college students were above average level on total life skills. However, only 17.33% college students were found to possess an average level of total life skills. It was concluded that the sample of college students under study were below average on total life skills.



Figure 1: Frequency distribution of total life skills among college students

Life skills in relation to attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse

The co-efficient of correlation between life skills and attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse are given in the table 2.

Table 2**Life skills in relation to attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse among college students**

S. No.	Dimension of Life Skills	Attitude towards Alcohol and Drug abuse
1.	Self awareness	-.114*
2.	Empathy	-.125*
3.	Effective communication	-.136*
4.	Interpersonal relationships	-.107
5.	Creative thinking	.043
6.	Critical thinking	-.026
7.	Decision making	-.013
8.	Problem solving	.045
9.	Coping with emotions	-.175**
10.	Coping with stress	.075
	Total Life Skills	-.10

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

The table 2 shows that the value of correlation co-efficient between ‘self-awareness’, ‘empathy’, ‘effective communication’ and ‘coping with emotions’ dimensions of life skills and attitude of college students towards alcohol and drug abuse came out to be -.114, -.125, -.136, and -.175, respectively. This indicates that there was significant and negative relationship between ‘self-awareness’, ‘empathy’, ‘effective communication’ and ‘coping with emotions’ dimensions of life skills and attitude of college students towards alcohol and drug abuse. Further, the value of correlation co-efficient between total life skills and attitude of college students towards alcohol and drug abuse came out to be -.10 which is not significant even at 0.05 level. This indicates that there is negative relationship between total life skills and attitude of college students towards alcohol and drug abuse, though not significantly so.

The results are in line with the studies of Botvin et al. (2001), Zollinger et al. (2003), Botvin et al. (2004), Griffin et al. (2006), Spoth et al. (2008), Moradi et al. (2009), Moshki et al. (2014), which confirmed the positive impact of life skills training on cutting significantly the adolescent tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana use initiation; reduce inhalant and polydrug use; and prevent and immoderate alcohol use. In addition to reducing substance use, LST was reported have a direct, positive effect on the cognitive, attitudinal, and

personality factors thought to play a part in substance use among adolescents.

Life skills as predictor of attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse among college students

The table 3 shows the results of step-wise multiple regression analysis of life skills as predictor of attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse among college students.

Table 3
Life skills as predictor of attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse among college students

S.No.	Predictor	R	R ²	R ² Change	% Variance	F-value
1.	Coping with Emotions	0.175	0.031	0.027	2.7 %	9.38**
2.	Problem Solving	0.214	0.046	0.040	4.0 %	7.15**
3.	Effective Communication	0.248	0.061	0.052	5.2 %	6.47**

*pd^{0.05}; **pd^{0.01}

The results of step-wise multiple regression analysis revealed that ‘coping with emotions’ dimension of life skills emerged to the most significant predictor of attitude of college students towards alcohol and drug abuse accounting for 2.7% variance in attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse among college students. Second and third variables to enter the regression equation were ‘problem solving’ and ‘effective communication’ dimensions of life skills, accounting for 1.3% and 1.2% variance in attitude towards alcohol and drug abuse among college students, respectively.

Educational Implications

- I. The results of the present study revealed that the college students possessed below average level on life skills. Hence, the students should be provided opportunities for enhancing life skills. This could be done by professionals, teachers and parents.
- II. As suggested by the results of the present study, life skills education can promote self-awareness, empathy, effective communication and coping with emotions skills and lead to more social acceptability, which in turn reduce drug abuse tendency. Therefore, it is recommended to plan and

perform constant LST workshops as effective tools of drug abuse prevention in colleges and universities.

- III. In the present study, ‘coping with emotions’ dimension of life skills emerged to the most significant predictor of attitude of college students towards alcohol and drug abuse. Enabling college students to have a better understanding of their emotions and channelizing these in positive ways develops anti-drug attitudes and norms, as well as helps them to resist peer and media pressure to use drugs. Hence, more focus should be on developing these life skills among college students.
- IV. The teachers should be trained in life skills during pre-service and in-service training programs so that they can provide proper counseling services and life skills training to their students.
- V. Life skills program should be introduced in the curriculum of college students.
- VI. Life skills trainings and workshops should be arranged in colleges to enhance and improve the life skills of the students.

References

- Botvin, E. M., Botvin, G. J., Renick, N. L., Filazzola, A. D., & Allegrante, J. P. (1984). Adolescents' self-reports of tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana use: Examining the comparability of videotape, cartoon, and verbal bogus pipeline procedures. *Psychological Reports, 55*, 379-386.
- Botvin, G. J., Baker, E., Dusenbury, L., Tortu, S., & Botvin, E. M. (1990). Preventing adolescent drug abuse through a multimodal cognitive-behavioral approach: Results of a three-year study. *Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology, 58*, 437-446.
- Botvin, G. J., Baker, E., Dusenbury, L. D., Botvin, E. M., & Diaz, T. (1995). Long-term follow-up results of a randomized drug abuse prevention trial in a White middle-class population. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 273*, 1106-1112.
- Botvin, G. J., & Griffin, K. W. (2004). Life skill training: Empirical finding and future direction. *Journal of Primary Prevention, 25*, 211-218.
- Botvin, G. J., Schinke, S. P., Epstein, J. A., Diaz, T., & Botvin, E. M. (1995). Effectiveness of culturally-focused and generic skills training approaches to alcohol and drug abuse prevention among minority adolescents: Two-year follow-up results. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors, 9*, 183-194.
- Botvin, G. J., Epstein, J. A., Baker, E., Diaz, T., Ifill-Williams, M., Miller, N., & Cardwell, J. (1997). School-based drug abuse prevention with inner-city minority youth. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Substance Abuse, 6*, 5-19.
- Botvin, G. J., Griffin, K. W., Diaz, T., Scheier, L. M., Williams, C., & Epstein, J. A. (2000). Preventing illicit drug use in adolescents: Long-term follow-up data from a randomized control trial of a school population. *Addictive Behaviors, 25*, 769-774.
- Botvin, G. J., Griffin, K. W., Diaz, T., & Ifill-Williams, M. (2001). Drug abuse prevention among minority adolescents: Posttest and one-year follow-up of a school-based

- prevention intervention. *Prevention Science*, 2(1), 1-13.
- Chalmers, J. B., & Townsend, M. A. R. (1990). The effects of training in social perspective taking on socially maladjusted girls. *Child Development*, 61, 178-190.
- Francis, M. (2007). *Life skills education*. Retrieved January 1, 2016 from changingminds.org/articles/articles/Life%20Skill%20Education.
- Griffin, K. W., Botvin, G. J., & Nichols, T. R. (2006). Effects of a school-based drug abuse prevention program for adolescents on HIV risk behaviors in young adulthood. *Prevention Science*, 7, 103-112.
- Moradi, M., Heydarinia, A. R., Babayi, G. R., & Gehangiri, M. (2009). Stage-based interventions for drug abuse prevention among petrochemical workers in Assaluyeh. *Medical Sciences Journal of Islamic Azad University, Tehran Medical Branch*, 19, 246-255.
- Moshki, M., Hassanzade, T., & Taymoori, P. (2014). Effect of life skills training on drug abuse preventive behaviors among university students. *International Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 5(5), 577-583.
- Murray, C. J. L., & Lopez, A. (1996). Quantifying the burden of disease and injury attributable to ten major risk factors. In Murray C. J. L. & Lopez A., (Eds.), *The global burden of disease: A comprehensive assessment of mortality and disability from diseases, injuries and risk factors in 1990 and projected to 2020*. Global Burden of Disease and Injury, Vol. I. Harvard School of Public Health on behalf of WHO, Cambridge, MA.
- Nair, R.A., Subasree, R., & Ranjan, S. (2010). *Manual for life skills assessment scale*. Spriperumbudur: RGNIYD.
- Özmete, E. (2011). Building life skills for empowerment of young people: A conceptual analysis. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyolojik Araştırmalar e-Dergisi*, 28, 1-10
- Rehm, J., Room, R., Monteiro, M., Gmel, G., Graham, K., Rehn, N., Sempos, C. T., Frick, U., & Jernigan, D. (2). Alcohol Use. In M. Ezzati, A. D. Lopez, A. Rogers & C. J. L. Murray (Eds.), *Comparative quantification of health risks: Global and regional burden of disease attributable to selected major risk factors* (pp. 959-1108). Geneva: WHO.
- Saini, S., & Singh, S. (2010). *Alcohol and drug attitude scale*. New Delhi: Prasad Psycho Corporation.
- Shroff, M. P. (2012, July 15). Life skills training for holistic development. *DNA*. Retrieved from <http://www.dnaindia.com/analysis/column-life-skills-training-for-holistic-development-1715286>.
- Spence, S.H. (2003). Social skills training with children and young people: Theory, evidence and practice. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 8(2), 84-96.
- Spoth, R. L., Randall, G., Trudeau, L., Shin, C., & Redmond, C. (2008). Substance use outcomes 5½ years past baseline for partnership-based, family school prevention interventions. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 96, 57-68.
- World Health Organization (WHO) (1997). *Life skills education for children and adolescents in schools*. Geneva: Programme on Mental Health.
- Zollinger, T.W., Saywell, R. M. Jr, Muegge, C. M., Wooldridge, J. S., Cummings, S. F., Caine, V. A. (2003). Impact of the life skills training curriculum on middle school students' tobacco use in Marion County, Indiana, 1997-2000. *Journal of School Health*, 73, 338-346.

Temperament as Predictor of Social Skills

Veena Shahi*, Shanti Balda** & Nigam Rani***

Abstract

Childhood age is an important period for psychosocial development as children participate in activities with others outside of their families. The early years of schooling are utmost important, as children's social skills set the stage for interactions with peers and adults. Social skills are considered as one of the important life skills. This contributes to children's sense of competence and wellbeing for healthy living. Temperament is relatively consistent, basic dispositions inherent in a person that underlie and modulate the expression of activity, reactivity, emotionality and sociability.

The present study was carried out in Hisar city of Haryana state. From Hisar city, four schools were selected and from each school 40 children in the age-group of 6-8 years were randomly selected. Total sample constituted of 160 children and their mothers. Mothers' rated their children's temperament on Malhotra Temperament Schedule (Malhotra and Malhotra, 1988). Social competence of children was assessed with the help of Social Problem-Solving Test (Rubin, 1988).

Results revealed that temperamentally highly sociable, highly emotional and highly rhythmic children were socially more competent as these children obtained greater quantitative scores and suggested greater proportions of non-forceful and lesser proportions of forceful strategies in interpersonal social problem-solving tasks. While on the other hand, distractible children were poor problem solvers and they were likely to obtain lesser quantitative scores and suggested greater proportions of forceful strategies. Sociability, positive emotionality and rhythmicity are indicators of easy temperament.

These results indicate that temperament of children is a predictor of social competence; together these qualities are indicators of healthy relationships with others that results in healthy living. Findings of the present study have implications for children, parents, teachers and child care professionals.

Key words: Temperament, social skills and healthy living

* Subject Matter Specialist, KVK, Rajendra Agricultural University, PUSA, Bihar

** Professor, Human Development and Family Studies, CCS HAU, Hisar

*** Ph.D Scholar, Human Development and Family Studies, CCS HAU, Hisar, IC College of Home Science, CCSHAU, Hisar, Haryana - 125004

Introduction

Temperament refers to relatively consistent, basic dispositions inherent in a person that underlie and modulate the expression of activity, reactivity, emotionality and sociability (Goldsmith et al., 1987). Thomas and Chess (1977) identified nine main dimensions of temperament which encompass those described by Goldsmith et al. (1987). These are the activity level of the child; the regularity of bodily functioning including sleep, hunger and bowel movements; adaptability to changes in routine; response to new situations; level of sensory threshold to produce a response to external stimulation; the general degree of distractibility and the degree of persistence and attention span. On the basis of a profile on these dimensions, a child can be described by certain temperamental styles as easy, difficult or slow-to-warm-up.

At times, majority of children display difficult behaviour. Often there will be no need for parents to intervene because the behaviour will pass without significant disruption to a child's life. A child has less ability to control emotions when difficult temperamental issues are involved. Issues of difficult temperament include: high energy level, poor adaptability, high distractibility, high impulsivity, sensitivity, negative mood, intensity, and poor social skills.

Almost all children with a difficult temperament demonstrate poor social skills. Difficult children's inability to read social cues and their impulsive behaviour to become part of the peer group, when in fact they are often emotionally unable to do so, will lead them to exhibit inappropriate social behaviour. Some of the impulsive behaviours such as, pushing in, calling names, making inappropriate comments and acting in strange and sometimes violent ways, could lead to peer rejection (Powell & Inglis-Powell, 2016). Emotionally difficult children may not 'fit' with siblings and the peer group. This may also contribute to the inability to make close friends. Many children with a difficult temperament can be observed trying hard to become part of the general 'group'. Thus, temperament is likely to affect social skills of children and interfere with healthy living.

The present research was conducted to assess the temperament of 6-8 years old children and to examine its relationship with social skills and competence.

Methodology

Sample

The present study was carried out in Hisar city of Haryana state. From

Hisar city, four schools were selected and from each school 40 children in the age-group of 6-8 years were randomly selected irrespective of their sex. Total sample constituted of 160 children, 84 boys and 76 girls. Families of these children were personally visited and mothers were requested to participate in the study for assessment of temperament of their children.

Measures

The temperament schedule developed by Malhotra and Malhotra (1988) was used to assess mothers' perception of their children's temperament. This schedule can be used on all child population whether normal or abnormal within an age range of 5-14 years of both the sexes and of any socio-economic class.

Interpersonal social competence includes not only behavior but also cognitive skills which direct and facilitate children's social behavior. To assess the interpersonal social competence of the children, the social problem solving test (SPST) developed by Rubin (1988) was used. Five stories of object acquisition were used to assess interpersonal social competence. The characters in the stories wish to gain access to a toy or material in another child's possession. These stories aim to assess children's cognitive repertoire of strategies for obtaining access to an object. Picture cards were used to depict the stories.

Strategies suggested by children were grouped under non-forceful and forceful categories. Scores were also computed for the total number of strategies suggested by each child in all the five stories. Scores were also developed for each child for relevancy of the strategies and within-story flexibility in use of strategies.

Results

Maternal perception of children's temperament

The mean scores of children's temperament as perceived by mothers against standard mean scores are presented in Table 1. As presented in table, the mean scores of different dimension of children's temperament were 11.60 for sociability, 6.16 for emotionality, 6.54 for energy, 3.15 for distractibility and 3.54 for rhythmicity respectively.

Table 1:
**Means scores of children's temperament as perceived
by mothers against standard mean scores (n= 160)**

Temperamental dimensions	Mean scores of children	Standard mean scores
Sociability	11.60	11.84
Emotionality	6.16	6.10
Energy	6.54	6.61
Distractibility	3.15	3.15
Rythmicity	3.54	3.50

Table also shows standard means scores of Malholtra's temperament schedule. It can be interpreted from these findings that mean scores of target sample were similar to standard mean scores given by Malhotra and Malhotra (1988).

Distribution of children in different categories of temperamental dimensions

Children were divided into three categories- low, intermediate and high categories of different temperamental dimensions on the basis of obtained scores in different dimension of temperament. High sociability indicates that the child is quite responsive to the environment, adjustable, adaptable and uninhibited. For emotionality dimension of temperament, high in emotionality indicates that the child is positive and happy in mood. High in energy dimension indicates that child exhibits high physical and psychological energy. High distractibility describes that the child is highly distractible. High on rythmicity dimension indicates that child is regular and predictable in biological functions.

Table 2:
**Frequency distribution of children in different
categories of temperamental dimensions (n= 160)**

Temperamental dimensions	Categories of temperamental dimension		
	Low	Intermediate	High
Sociability	36 (22.5)	75 (46.9)	49 (30.6)
Emotionality	08 (5.0)	29 (18.1)	123 (76.9)
Energy	61 (38.1)	85 (53.1)	14 (8.8)
Distractibility	11 (6.9)	99 (61.9)	50 (31.2)
Rythmicity	3 (1.9)	61 (38.1)	96 (60.0)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

As depicted in Table 2, in sociability dimension of temperament, 46.9 percent children belonged to intermediate category and 30.6 percent belonged to high category. Majority of children (76.9%) belonged to high category of emotionality. Fifty three percent of children fell in intermediate category of energy dimension of temperament. In distractibility dimension of temperament, 61.9 percent children belonged to intermediate category. Sixty percent of children belonged to high category of rhythmicity dimension.

These results indicate that about half of children belonged to intermediate category of sociability and energy. Majority of children belonged to high category of emotionality and rhythmicity. About sixty percent of children belonged to intermediate category of distractibility.

Relationship between temperament and interpersonal social competence

Correlation coefficients were run to examine relationship between temperament of children and scores of interpersonal social skills. Quantitative scores included total number of strategies suggested by children in five stories, total number of relevant strategies suggested by children (i.e relevancy score) and total within story flexibility score.

Temperament dimensions included sociability, emotionality, energy, distractibility and rhythmicity.

As shown in Table 3 sociability was significantly positively correlated with total number of strategies suggested by children, $r = .72$, $p < .05$; total relevancy score, $r = .44$, $p < .05$; and total within-story flexibility score, $r = .66$, $p < .05$.

Emotionality was significantly positively correlated with total number of strategies, $r = .37$, $p < .05$; total relevancy score, $r = .28$, $p < .05$; and total within-story flexibility score, $r = .35$, $p < .05$.

Distractibility was significantly negatively correlated with total number of strategies, $r = -.26$, $p < .05$; total relevancy score, $r = -.27$, $p < .05$ and within-story flexibility score, $r = -.29$, $p < .05$. Rhythmicity was significantly positively correlated with total number of strategies $r = .49$, $p < .05$; total relevancy score, $r = .29$, $p < .05$; and total within-story flexibility score, $r = .40$, $p < .05$. A negative trend was observed between energy and quantitative scores.

Table 2 also shows that sociability was significantly positively correlated

with non- forceful strategies, $r = .70$, $p < .05$ and significantly negatively with forceful strategies, $r = -.24$, $p < .05$. Emotionality was significantly positively correlated with non-forceful strategies, $r = .36$, $p < .05$; A negative trend was observed between emotionality and forceful strategies. A negative trend was observed between energy and non-forceful strategies. Energy was significantly and positively correlated with forceful strategies, $r = .16$, $p < .05$. Rhythmicity was significantly positively correlated with non-forceful strategies, $r = .47$, $p < .05$. A negative trend was observed between rhythmicity and forceful strategies.

Table 3:

Correlations between temperamental dimensions and quantitative scores of interpersonal problem-solving tasks (n= 160)

Quantitative scores	Temperamental dimensions				
	Sociability	Emotionality	Energy	Distractibility	Rhythmicity
Total number of strategies	.72*	.37*	-.10	-.26*	.49*
Total relevancy score	.44*	.28*	-.10	-.27*	.29*
Total within-story flexibility score	.66*	.35*	-.12	-.29*	.40*
Qualitative scores					
Non-forceful	.70*	.36*	-.13	-.08	.47*
Forceful	-.24*	-.12	.16*	.02	-.15

Note: * Significant at 5% level

It can be interpreted from these results that highly sociable, highly emotional and highly rhythmic children suggested greater number of strategies. These children also suggested highly relevant strategies and were more likely to suggest flexible alternatives in the stories. On the other hand, distractible children were less likely to obtain greater quantitative scores. Further, findings revealed that highly sociable, emotional and rhythmic children suggested greater proportions of non-forceful and lesser proportions of forceful strategies.

Discussion

Temperament refers to relatively consistent, basic dispositions inherited and manifested very early in life and which might be influenced by the environment. It incorporates those parts of personality that relate to how a person behaves, including activity level, reactivity to stimuli, emotionality and sociability. Children can be categorized in any one of the three temperamental styles: easy, slow-to-warm-up, and difficult. Children with easy temperament are easy going, happy, positive in mood, adaptable to new situations,

and are regular in their habits. Children in slow-to-warm-up temperament category are slow to adapt, respond to new situations and to changes in routine with mild resistance, and are moody and quite active. Children with difficult temperaments are highly active, energetic, irritable and irregular in their habits. They react strongly to changes in routine and are slow to adapt to new situations.

Results of present study revealed that mean scores of selected children were similar to standard mean scores given by Malhotra and Malhotra (1988). Results indicated that about fifty percent of children fell in intermediate category of sociability and energy and majority of children belonged to high category of emotionality and rhythmicity. These are indicators of easy temperamental style. Malhotra and Malhotra (1988) also reported similar findings. These findings also get support from Balda et al. (2009). These authors found that majority of boys and girls fell in the easy temperamental style.

Results of the present study also showed that highly sociable, highly emotional and highly rhythmic children suggested greater number of strategies. These children also suggested highly relevant strategies and were more likely to suggest flexible alternatives in interpersonal dilemmas. On the other hand, distractible children were less likely to obtain greater quantitative scores. These results get support from the literature reviewed.

Balda and her colleagues examined relationship between temperament and social problem-solving skills of preschool children. Balda and Irving (2000) in an Australian study, Balda et al. (2000) and Balda (2001) in different studies with preschool-aged children found that adaptability, approach and persistence dimensions of temperament were positively correlated with number of strategies in object acquisition, friendship initiation and avoiding anger problem-solving tasks. Children who were easy to adapt, more approachable and persistent were more likely to suggest different strategies in social problem-solving task areas. These children were also more flexible in providing alternate solutions in all the three task areas- object acquisition, friendship initiation and avoiding anger. Also, they were more likely to suggest relevant solutions in all the three task areas. Results also revealed that distractible children suggested less number of strategies in object acquisition, friendship initiation and avoiding anger problem-solving tasks. They were also less able to suggest different strategies in all the three task areas and were also less flexible in providing alternate solutions across all the three task areas. Also, distractible children were less likely to suggest relevant solutions in hypothetical problem-solving tasks. Finally, the study showed

that there are relations between temperament dimensions, particularly four dimensions- adaptability, approach, distractibility and persistence, and social problem-solving skills. Highly distractible children are poor problem solvers, whereas, children who are adaptable, approachable and persistent are good problem solvers.

In another study, Paswan (2011) studied temperament and social problem-solving skills of children. Highly distractible children suggested less number of strategies in object acquisition tasks. They were less flexible in providing alternate solutions and suggested irrelevant solutions in hypothetical problem solving tasks.

Results of this study also revealed that highly sociable, emotional and rhythmic children suggested greater proportions of non-forceful and lesser proportions of forceful strategies, while reverse was true for children who were low on sociability, emotionality, rhythmicity and high on distractibility and energy dimensions of temperament. High sociability, emotionality and rhythmicity are indicators of easy temperament. While high distractibility and energy, and low sociability, emotionality, rhythmicity are indicators of difficult temperament. These findings also get support from previous literature indicating that children with difficult temperament tend to be more aggressive in peer interactions (Sterry et al., 2010; Paswan, 2011).

Previous research has demonstrated that temperament makes independent contributions to behavioral problems commonly associated with poor social skills and competence including peer ratings and observed pro-social behavior (Diener & Kim 2004; Sanson et al. 2004; Eisenberg et al. 2000; Walker et al. 2001). Baer et al. (2015) reported that children identified as ‘high-risk’ based on their temperament profile could be provided with intervention services aimed at the development of pro-social behaviors.

It can be concluded that temperament is one of the predictors of social skills of children. Children with qualities of easy temperament are good in interpersonal problem solving skills, while children with difficult temperament are poor in social competence and social skills. Poor social skills lead to maladaptive behavior in children and poor interpersonal relationships with others. Children with poor social skills are likely to be either rejected or neglected by the peer group. For healthy living it is important that children develop healthy relationships with others and get accepted by their peer group and act in accordance with group norms. Temperamentally difficult child if identified early, parents and caregivers can work together with children and help these children grow in peaceful and supportive environment.

Parents need to adapt their parenting strategies to fit well with their children's temperament so that there is good fit between child's temperamental attributes and parenting style and promote healthy living for both children and their parents.

References

- Baer, J., Schreck, M., Althoff, R.R., Rettew, D., Harder, V., Ayer, L. et al. (2015). Child temperament, maternal parenting behavior, and child social functioning. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, **24**: 1152–1162.
- Balda, S. (2001). Temperament and social problem-solving scores of preschool children. *Journal of Family Ecology*, **3** (2): 65-68.
- Balda, S., Duhan, K., and Irving, K. (2009). Gender differences in temperament of preschool children. *International Journal of Family and Home Science*, **5**: 89-92.
- Balda, S. and Irving, K. (2000). Temperament and social competence of Australian children. *Praachi Journal of Psycho-cultural Dimensions*, **16**: 25-32.
- Balda, S., Irving, K., and Catherwood, D. (2000). Temperament and social cognitive scores. *Anthropologist*, **2**: 87-92.
- Diener, M. L., and Kim, D.Y. (2004). Maternal and child predictors of preschool children's social competence. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, **25**, 3–24.
- Eisenberg, N., Guthrie, I. K., Fabes, R. A., Shepard, S., Losoya, S., Murphy, B. C., et al. (2000). Prediction of elementary school children's externalizing problem behaviors from attentional and behavioral regulation and negative emotionality. *Child Development*, **71**, 1367–1382.
- Goldsmith, H. H., Buss, A. H., Rothbart, M. K., Thomas, A., Chess, S., Hinde, R. A., and McCall, R. B. (1987). Roundtable: What is temperament? Four approaches. *Child Development*. 58: 505-29.
- Malhotra, S. and Malhotra, A. (1988). Malhotras Temperament Schedule (M T S).
- Paswan, S. 2011. An exploratory study of sociometric status of 6-8 years old children. Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, BanasthaliVidyapeeth, Banasthali, Rajasthan, India.
- Powell, P and Inglis-Powell, B. (2016). *Raising Difficult Children*. Pastoral Counselling Institute: Australia. Retrieved from <http://difficultchildren.org/chapter-2-temperament-social-skills-and-self-esteem/>
- Rubin, K. H. (1988). Social problem-solving test. Unpublished manuscript, University of Waterloo, Department of Psychology, Ontario, Canada.
- Sanson, A., Hemphill, S. A., and Smart, D. (2004). Connections between temperament and social development: A review. *Social Development*, **13**, 142–170.
- Sterry, T.W., Reiter-Purtill, J., Gartstein, M.A., Gerhardt, C.A., Vannatta, K. and Noll, R.B. (2010). Temperament and Peer Acceptance: The Mediating Role of Social Behavior. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, **56** (2):189-219.
- Thomas, A. and Chess, S. (1977). Temperament and development. New York, Brunner/ Mazel.
- Walker, S., Berthelsen, D., and Irving, K. (2001). Temperament and peer acceptance in early childhood: Sex and social status differences. *Child Study Journal*, **31**, 177–192.

A Study of Self Management Skills developed during the B. Ed course for Pre-service Teachers of Mumbai

Dr. Gauri P. Hardikar*

Abstract

Recognizing the importance of psychosocial and adaptive skills for dealing with the challenges of life for adolescents, teaching of Life Skills is a part of the curriculum of secondary schools. Teachers are key players in facilitation of social and emotional skills in students. Teachers are trained in imparting these skills to the students. However, the irony is that there is no input given to the teachers themselves, at the pre-service or in service training to develop these skills. The aim of the present study was to assess the domains of self management of pre-service teachers, pursuing the B. Ed course. Five sub skills in the domain of self management skills, viz Self Esteem, Self Confidence, Self Awareness, Goal Setting and Self Monitoring are studied. These sub skills were assessed by administering the Life Skill Scale constructed and validated by the researcher. Survey method was used for the study. The sample was 148 male and female student teachers pursuing the B. Ed course in colleges affiliated to Mumbai University. Pre-test and post test results were compared to analyze the development of life skills during the B. Ed course. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to determine the level of sub skills in the domains of self management. The findings suggest that while skill of Self awareness increased during the B. Ed course, skills of Self confidence and Goal setting did not show a significant difference. An interesting, but alarming finding is that the skill of Self esteem and Self monitoring showed a significant decrease during the B. Ed course. The findings provide a foundation for designing a course to facilitate the development of these life skills in pre-service teachers.

Key words: Life Skills, Pre-service teachers, Self Management skills, Teacher education.

* Assistant Professor, Smt. KapilaKhandvala College of Education, Juhu Road, Santacruz (W), Mumbai

Introduction

Life skills refer to the range of cognitive, emotional and psycho social abilities which are needed for living a productive and fulfilling life. These skills are learnt informally through the environment and formally through interaction with significant others. These skills were passed on from generation to generation, and imbibed through the socio-cultural interactions. However, in recent times, the rapid pace of change, changing family structures, and advances in technology have led to the need to learn psychosocial skills which will help in adapting and flourishing in a time of rapid transition.

India is expected to be the nation with the highest youth population by the year 2022. India's 0.8 billion population is in the productive age group. This is a great resource, as well as a great challenge for provision of the right skill sets to the youth. The India Skills Report (2016) points out that only 33% of the youth in India are employable. This is an alarming situation. Rampant unemployment in youth leads to psychological problems like depression at the individual level, and increasing crime and conflict in the social context. Equipping the youth with the skills needed to live a productive life is thus a crucial need at this stage.

The skills for a productive life include cognitive as well as non-cognitive skills. While cognitive skills are a focus of formal education, non-cognitive skills generally take a back seat in the academic preparation of our youth. But it is these non-cognitive skills while a form the predictors of success in personal and professional life. Research suggests that non-cognitive skills are important for an array of outcomes, ranging from schooling to labour market success (Carnerio et. al 2011). A survey of the skills which employers find important for employees include adaptability, communication and interpersonal skills (India Skills Report, 2011). This prepares a strong case for inclusion of these skills in the education. Thus, non-cognitive skills are included in the curricula at various educational levels, under the umbrella of life skills.

Concept of Life Skills:

A skill is a learned ability to do something well. Life Skills are skills that enable individuals to live a fruitful life. Life Skills are subject to interpretation and there is no single definition of life skills. UNICEF defines Life Skills as "A behavior change or behavior development approach designed to address a balance of three areas, knowledge, attitude and behavior." The International Bureau of Education defines Life Skills as "personal management and social skills that are necessary for adequate functioning on an

independent basis.” World Health Organization (WHO) defines Life Skills as, “The abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.” According to WHO life skills consist of personal, interpersonal, cognitive and physical skills that enable people to control and direct their lives and to develop the capacity to live with and produce change in their environment.

Life skills involve the processes of thinking, feeling and acting that develop an attitude favoring positive change, knowledge revealing how to change and skills in realizing the desired change. (Tung, 2002). Classification of life skills is done on the basis of the perspective through which life skills are viewed. The World Health Organization (2003) groups life skills into the following three categories;

- i. Communication and interpersonal skills
- ii. Decision making and critical thinking skills
- iii. Coping and self-management skills

The present study considers the domains of self management skills. Self-management skills are the skills to assume responsibility for the quality of one’s life and the competence to assess and make the required changes for positive development of self, i. e. the skills to increase internal locus of control. Individuals differ in their perception of control over their lives. Rotter (1966) asserts that individual differences exist in perceived responsibilities for one’s own actions and the individual’s sense of personal control and reinforcement. He defines locus of control as a generalized expectancy of internal self-initiated change orientation versus external change attributed to a source or power outside of the person over behavior outcomes. Internal locus of control results in fulfilling the basic need of autonomy, which leads to well-being for individuals (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Need of the study:

Life Skills have been integrated in the curriculum across the different school boards in India. Teachers are expected to integrate as well as evaluate the learners in terms of Life skills. This necessitates teachers themselves to be proficient in Life Skills as well as in the methods of Life Skills Education. The fast-changing environment in education, the advent of technology and changes in family structures leads to several challenges, which pre-service teachers need to be trained to face. At the individual level, the pre-service teachers themselves are largely in the age group of 22 – 35, and need the skills required for young adults to cope with the developmental tasks of their age group.

Self management skills are the skills to increase internal locus of control. Research evidence shows that locus of control is significantly related with well-being, work place reliability and lower rates of depression and suicidal thoughts (Bazylewicz-Walczak, 1985; Burger, 2006). Skills for increasing internal locus of control increase control that individuals experience over their lives by increasing the expectation that a person's actions can influence the outcomes. Prospective teachers trained in increasing internal locus will develop a realistic self perception, an acceptance of aspects of self which cannot be changed. These teachers would show an increase in the sense of personal power and personal responsibility to influence outcomes, confidence and motivation to set and achieve goals.

The pre-service teacher training course aims to impart the skills required for personal and professional development of student teachers. However, the irony is that there is no input given to the teachers themselves, at the pre service or in service training to develop these skills. The assumption may be that the teachers have the requisite life skills . It may also be assumed that the B.Ed course will inculcate these skills in spite of there being no focused training in this area. Thus there is a need to investigate the level of self management that prospective teachers are equipped with, and also to ascertain the domains of self management which are developed during the course of pursuing the B.Ed course.

Since self management skills are of paramount importance at the personal and professional level, there is a need to study the self management skills developed through the pre-service education program.

Objectives of the study:

1. To study the level of self management skills of pre-service teachers of University of Mumbai.
2. To study the levels sub skills in the domain of self management skills of pre-service teachers developed during the B. Ed program.
3. To compare the level of self management skills of pre-service teachers of University of Mumbai with respect to gender.

Operational Definitions:

The operational definitions of the variables considered in this study are:

- *Self management Skills:*

Self-management skills are the skills to assume responsibility for the

quality of one's life and the competence to assess and make the required changes for positive development of self, i. e. the skills to increase internal locus of control.

Adapted from the categories of life skills for skills based health education given by WHO, component skills of the skill of increasing internal locus of control, their definitions as conceptualised for the present study are given below:

1. *Self esteem*: The skill of developing and sustaining the disposition to experience oneself as being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life, and as being worthy of happiness.
2. *Self confidence*: The skill of developing and sustaining realistic confidence in one's own judgment, ability and power.
3. *Self awareness*: The skill for developing and sustaining awareness of rights, influences, values, attitudes, strengths and weaknesses
4. *Goal setting*: The skill of establishing specific, measurable, realistic and time targeted goals.
5. *Self monitoring*: The skill of looking at oneself objectively in order to assess aspects that are important to one's identity.

Pre-service teachers:

Graduates of any stream, admitted to the B.Ed. Course in a teacher education institution affiliated to the University of Mumbai. .

B. Ed course:

One year pre-service teacher education course offered by University of Mumbai.

Method and Materials:

The **sample** for the study was 148 student teachers of two B.Ed colleges in Mumbai (N=148). The age of the participants ranged from 21 years to 32 years. The study included 62 male and 86 female student teachers.

Stratified random sampling method was used for the study. A list of B.Ed. colleges in Mumbai was obtained and these were classified into two strata based on the type of college as Aided and Unaided. From each group, two colleges were selected randomly using lottery method.

The **tool** used for the study was the Life Skills Assessment Scale developed

by the researcher. The multidimensional scale consists of statements with a five point Likert type scale. The scale has test retest reliability coefficient 0.8, and Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient 0.84. Face and content validity of the scale is established.

Survey method was used for the study. The pre-test was given to the sample at the beginning of the B. Ed course, while the post test was administered at the end of the course. The duration between the pre-test and post test was seven months. The data collected was analysed to determine the level of self management skills.

Results and Discussion:

The quantitative analysis of the data was carried out using quantitative and inferential statistics. SPSS version 19 was used for the analysis of data.

Parametric tests were used for testing hypothesis in the present study. Use of parametric techniques requires the fulfillment of certain conditions like random sampling, sample size more than 30, normal distribution and equal variances. All these conditions were satisfied in this study. Independent samples t-test was used to test hypotheses in this study. In the present study, the critical value of t from the table for N-2 degrees of freedom is

At 0.01 level = 2.58

At 0.05 level = 1.96

The hypotheses arising from the objectives of the study were tested by using t-test for independent samples. The hypotheses were framed in the null form.

The results are discussed below:

Development of Self management skills during the B.Ed course:

In order to ascertain the development of self management skills during the B.Ed course, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H₀-1: There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test self management skills scores of pre-service teachers.

The results of the t-test are tabulated below:

Table No.1

Test	N	Mean	SD	df	t
Pre-test	148	173.45	20.04	294	1.34**
Post-test	148	171.35	20.01		

Thus the difference in self management skills scores between the pre-test and the post-test was not statistically significant, $t(294) = 1.34, p < 0.05$.

Hence the null hypothesis is accepted. There is a no significant difference in the self management skills of pre-service teachers before and after the B.Ed course.

Component life skills developed during the B.Ed course:

H₀2: There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test scores of the component life skills in the domain of self management skills for pre-service teachers.

The results for the five component life skills viz Self esteem(SE), Self confidence (SC), Self awareness (SA), Goal setting (GS) and Self monitoring (SM) are tabulated below:

Table No.2

Component Life Skill	Test	Mean	SD	df	t
SE	Pre-test	34.19	5.835	294	3.71
	Post-test	31.82	5.135	294	
SC	Pre-test	32.63	5.389	294	-0.72
	Post-test	33.1	5.963	294	
SA	Pre-test	32.91	7.332	294	-2.23
	Post-test	34.78	7.051	294	
GS	Pre-test	38.17	5.645	294	1.43
	Post-test	37.27	5.124	294	
SM	Pre-test	35.55	4.193	294	2.18
	Post-test	34.39	4.999	294	

The difference in scores between the pre-test and the post-test of SE, SA and SM was statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Since the pre-test means of SE and SM are higher than the post-test means, the level of these skills after undergoing the B. Ed course is lesser than the level before beginning the B.Ed course. The pre-test mean of SA is lower than the post-test mean, hence the level of SA skills after the B.Ed course is

higher than that before the B.Ed course.

The difference in the pre-test and post-test scores of SC and GS is not statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is retained. Thus, there is no difference in the level of SC and GS before and after the B.Ed course.

Analysis of the level of Self Management skills with respect to gender:

H_0 -3: *There is no significant difference in the self management skills developed in student teachers during the B.Ed course with respect to gender.*

The male and the female pre-service teachers were matched on pre-test, and no significant difference was found in the self management skills before the B.Ed course.

The post-test scores were then compared using t-test. Results are tabulated below:

Table No. 3

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t
Male	62	171.93	11.66	146	0.47
Female	86	170.89	10.33	146	

The difference between the scores of male and female pre-service teachers is not statistically significant, $t(146) = 0.47, p < 0.05$. Hence, the male and female teachers have equal levels of self management skills after the B. Ed course.

Discussion:

The findings of the study reveal that there was no significant difference in the self management skills of pre-service teachers after doing the B. Ed course. Self management skills are skills which increase internal locus of control and help the teachers to take responsibility of their lives. These skills are also the key to the teacher's beliefs in their capacity to bring about a desirable change. Jeloudar and Goodarzi (2012) found a significant and positive relationship in the teacher's internal locus of control and job performance. They also report that teachers with higher degrees show higher internal locus of control. Hence, measures need to be taken to ensure that the B. Ed course develops self management skills in the pre-service teachers.

Findings regarding the component sub-skills of self management skills show that the B. Ed course did not result in an increase in the skills of Self confidence and Goal setting. The B. Ed course is designed to equip the pre-service teachers with the skills required to fulfill their future role as educators. It is expected that being equipped with these skills will lead to an increase in the self confidence of the teachers. But the findings of this study do not support this expectation. There could be many reasons for the levels of self confidence not increasing after the B. Ed course. The course is of 1 year duration, and packed with a host of activities. The pre-service teachers handle many activities simultaneously and may not get enough time to practice the skills required, thus resulting in not feeling confident about their acquired skills. Goal setting is the foundation of pedagogical practice, to ensure student learning. Research findings suggest that setting goals increases motivation and achievement (Mitchell, 1982; Locke and Latham, 2002). The finding that the B. Ed course does not lead to an increase in the goal setting skills is a matter of concern.

The findings of the study reveal that the skill of Self Awareness increased during the B. Ed course. The B. Ed course offers opportunities for pre-service teachers to explore and showcase their skills in curricular as well as co-curricular arenas. This may have led to the increase in the skill of self awareness. The course involves practice and feedback for the pre-service teachers in pedagogical skills, this also may contribute to an increased awareness of individual strengths and weaknesses.

The skills of self esteem and self monitoring decreased after the B. Ed course. Kohn (1994) argues that the construct of self-esteem is difficult to measure as it mostly involves self-report measures. Research evidence suggests that self-esteem may have cultural underpinnings (Kohn, 1994; Schmitt & Allik, 2005) [16, 17]. Cai, Brown, Deng and Oakes (2007) [18] investigated the underlying cause of reported lower levels of self-esteem in people from the East Asian countries as compared to their Western counterparts. Their study revealed that the cause may be cultural differences in norms of modesty. As Asian cultures place a great value on modesty, the participants may be reluctant to rate themselves high on self-report measures of self-esteem. This observation is also applicable to the Indian culture. Another reason could be that though the entry requirements for the B. Ed course are not very stringent, once the student teacher is admitted to the course, s/he is expected to handle academic as well as practicum tasks which demand a high level of competency. Student teachers who lack this competence may face repeated negative feedback, resulting in lowering of self esteem.

The skill of self monitoring is also not focused upon in the course, the student teachers are exposed to strict and externally imposed set of instructions and deadlines. This could result in a decrease in their skills of self monitoring.

The study found no difference in the male and the female teachers with respect to their development of self management skills. Research findings indicate the influence of gender on development of self management skills (Chlebowy,2013) these mainly pertain to self management in the context of health. The male and female pre-service teachers undergo similar experiences in the B. Edcourse, this may lead to this finding. A matter of concern is that the self management skills of both male as well as female teachers are lower after the B.Ed course.

Conclusion:

Teaching is recognized as one of the most important and demanding occupations in society (Vesely, Saklofske, & Leschied, 2013). Self management skills help the teachers to confidently play their role as change agents and role models for the youth. The present study highlights that the B. Ed course does not develop self management skills in pre-service teachers with an exception of the skill of self awareness. This presents a strong case for inclusion of a life skills training program in the pre-service education curriculum. Such a program would contribute to the development of the pre-service teachers at a personal and professional level, and the development of the future generations.

References

- Baum, A. C., & King, M. A. (2006). Creating a climate of self-awareness in early childhood teacher preparation programs. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 33(4), 217-222.
- Cai, H., Brown, J. D., Deng, C. & Oakes, M. A. (2007). Self esteem and culture: Differences in cognitive self evaluations or affective self regard? *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 10(3), 162-170.
- Chlebowy, D. O., Hood, S., &LaJoie, A. S. (2013). Gender differences in diabetes self-management among African American adults. *Western journal of nursing research*, 0193945912473370.
- Durlak, J. A. (2015). *Handbook of social and emotional learning: Research and practice*. Guilford Publications.
- Jeloudar, S. Y., &Lotfi-Goodarzi, F. (2012). Predicting Teachers' Locus of Control and Job performance among MA and BA Teachers Senior Secondary Schools. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2(12), 248-252.
- Kohn, A. (1994). The truth about self-esteem. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 76, 272-272.

- Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (2002). Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation: A 35-year odyssey. *American psychologist*, 57(9), 705.
- Mitchell, T. R. (1982). Motivation: New directions for theory, research, and practice. *Academy of management review*, 7(1), 80-88.
- Schmitt, D. P. & Allik, J. (2005). Simultaneous administration of the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale in 53 nations: exploring the universal and culture-specific features of global Self-esteem. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 89(4), 623.
- Vesely, A. K., Saklofske, D. H. & Leschied, A. D. (2013). Teachers—The Vital Resource The Contribution of Emotional Intelligence to Teacher Efficacy and well-being. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, 28(1), 71-89.
- WHO, (1999) *Partners in Life Skills Education. Conclusions from a United Nations Inter-agency Meeting*. Geneva, WHO.
- UNESCO (2004) *Report of interagency working group on life skills in EFA*, UNESCO, Paris retrieved from http://www.unicef.org/eapro/IATT-UNESCO_LifeSkillsReport.pdf on 12/06/2008
- UNICEF. (2005). *Life skills-based education in South Asia, A regional overview prepared for the South Asia Life skills-based education forum*, . UNICEF Regional office for South East Asia.
- UNICEF. (2012). *Global evaluation of life skills education programmes*. New York: Evaluation office United Nations Children's fund.

Websites:

<https://wheebox.com/logo/ISR-2016-small.pdf> retrieved on 12/12/15

<https://hilt.harvard.edu/files/hilt/files/settinggoals.pdf> retrieved on 18/12/15

Amalgamation of Life Skill Education in Core School Subjects: Curriculum Design, Schemes, Challenges, Concerns, Issues and Solutions

Prashant Thote and L. Mathew*

Abstract

Life skill education is value addition programme which aims to provide students with strategies to make healthy choices that contribute meaningful life. Today more emphasis is given on life skill education which should be central focus of the education. In the context to present day, it is not enough for teachers to merely give information and knowledge. Amalgamation of life skill education with other core school subjects becomes very important to achieve optimum results. In the present paper attempt is made to study the amalgamation of life skill education with language teachings in terms of curriculum design, scheme of implementation, challenges and their possible solutions. The present study conducted in a Private English medium school in Central India. Snow ball sampling method was employed to draw the sample. Data was collected through questionnaire, interview, document analysis and classroom observation. Curriculum designed, classroom management, choice of learning materials, learning assessment and selection of teaching pedagogy are the challenges faced by the teachers during amalgamation of life skill education with English language teaching (ELT). To make amalgamation of life skill education with English Language Teaching few suggestions were also made. To grill the life skill education in proper way some recommendations are also suggested.

Key words: Life skill, Education, Amalgamation and curriculum design.

* GyanodayaVidya Mandir, Narsingarh

Introduction

The amalgamation of the life skill education with core subjects of the school is a matter of debate and research also. Life skill programme effectively implemented in CBSE school from 2010 onwards for secondary classes. Due to its importance life skill education implemented for Primary and Secondary classes also. Life skill education has been great concern among policy makers, researchers and now school teachers also. The number of research study has been carried out to find out way to develop life skills. The findings reveal that not all projects have always successful for the implementation of life skill education.

The teaching is helping/showing someone to learn how to do something's or helping someone to learn or giving instructions or guiding in the study or providing knowledge, we may say that it is the actions of person imparting skills or knowledge or instructions. Language teaching is to help learners in any way that motivates them to work with language . It is not only imparting/ transferring knowledge on the part of learners but also developing language skills too .Language skill may be acquired through :-

- Practicing the language
- Audi –lingual method
- Grammar translation
- Communication language teaching

Knowledge of language is another important element in language teaching. Students not only use language grammatically correct but also socio- linguistically appropriate. The aim and objectives of language teaching vary from time to time, place to place. Most widely accepted belief is for communication. To develop communication competence is the main aim of language teaching in schools. Language learning is also to develop knowledge, skills to understand and participate in a wide range of practical communication activities. There are four different components that build the communication skills. They are:

1. Grammatical competence
2. Discourse competence
3. Socio –linguistic competence
4. Action competence

For this study, the researchers have formulated life skills in to following four categories for amalgamation with teaching of language for classes VI to VIII.

Personal Skills	Social Skills	Academic Skills	Vocational Skills
Having Noble morals	Working in groups	Scientific skills/attitude/thinking	Farming, Rising animals, automobiles, business skills ICT skills
Understanding one self	Demonstrating social responsibility	Thinking strategically	
Believing in one self	Interaction with community	Life long learning skills	
Rational thinking	Participation in local and global culture	Communicating skills	Good attitude for work environment
Respecting one self	Responsible for managing emotions	Scientific / technological skills	
Human with morals	Developing physical potentials	Critical, creative, independent thinking, decisionmaking, problem solving	
Reaching individual to optimum potentials	Disciplines, co-	Skills for research/exploration	

Amalgamation of life skills education with language education. Language curriculum which is integrated with the life skills to develop communicative competence on the part of the language. The acquisition of life skills go simultaneously with language skills. Amalgamation should follow the four pillar of learning

1. Learning to know
2. Learning to do
3. Learning to be
4. Learning to live together

Amalgamation of life skills education must be integrating all the elements of teaching simply called 5M

- Materials: Learning materials to life skills education
- Methods: Techniques and learning activities
- Media: Type of life skills
- Measures: Assessment and evaluation tool
- Management: Support for acquisition of language and life skill
- Man: Teachers as role models

The teachers must develop the approach to meet the goals of language learning

- Thematic based language leaning
- Sheltered content language instructions
- Skill based instructions
- Team- teach approach

To select the learning materials for content based language teaching is based on the kind of content being taught. If we want to teach responsibility, then material should have reflected responsibility in term of its in topic or language content. Teacher should develop own learning material. The content selection should considered

- Students physical, cognitive, emotional development
- Relevant to their need
- Appropriate with existing time and resources
- Relevant to student culture

By the process, it means practicing life skills education during teaching-learning process in the classroom settings. Example: To develop the interpersonal skills among students. Students are grouped to work together among their peers. They are not directly taught these skills but in structured learning experiences designed by teachers. The students may be subconsciously learn interpersonal skills since the material they study must content subject as reading comprehension or writing letter. The teacher may use the following instructions

- Activity based teaching
- Interaction/participation
- Reinforcement
- Brain storming
- Role playing
- Debate
- Story telling/Poem recitation
- Games
- Content analysis
- Decision mapping/Problem tree
- Story/situation analysis \

Media: Life skill education amalgamation with teaching English languages. Teaching play an important role in implementation of life skill education in school. Success and failure is depending upon teachers participations I implementation of life skill education in school. Life skill education teachers display good discipline, coming on time, wearing official dress, leaving school as scheduled.

Classroom management: It is t make to teaching learning process successful. It ranges from self discipline, to preventing misbehavior from reducing class of friction to providing student with rewards and punishment. The amalgamation of life skill education through class room management reflect in sitting arrangement, rewards, punishment, students, stress reduction, U shape and O shape sitting are central in developing social as well as personal skill. Reward and punishment are important to develop several personal skills such as confidance, discipline and self esteem.

Assessment: A basic indicator of amalgamation through learning assessment for both language learning and life skill learning. To develop reliable and valid assessment tool for both language and life skill is major challenge.

Methodology

Research design: The survey method was employed. The most appropriate research design was qualitative research was employed.

Sample: Snow ball sampling method was employed. It begins from small unit and never gets along with run.

Tool: Data was generated through interview, observation and document analysis. The teacher interview is focused on

- Type of life skill integrated with English Language Teaching (ELT)
- Strategy to integrate life skill in English Language Teaching (ELT)
- Problem encounter during implementation

The researcher was the Principal and conducted the observation every week for nine weeks. The observation was terminated when general pattern is conceptually formulated. Document analysis was carried out to know the kind of life skill integrated with ELT, kind of teaching material used, kind of assessment used, teaching media and general steps in teaching.

Table-1
Type of life amalgamation in ELT

No	Kids of life skills	Lesson plan	Interview	Classroom observation	Σ
		F	f	f	
1	Trustworthiness	02	02	01	05
2	Respect	02	-	-	02
3	Diligence	02	-	-	02
4	Courage	01	01	03	05
5	Responsibility	02	01	-	03
6	Confidence	02	01	02	05
7	Discipline	02	02	02	06
8	Creative thanking	02	01	-	03
9	Curiosity	01	-	-	01
10	Hard work	01	-	-	01
11	Self reliance	01	-	10	11
12	Collaborative working	01	01	-	02
13	Problem solving	02	03	-	05
14	Critical thinking	02	02	-	04
15	Communication skills	02	02	12	16
16	Self confidence	02	-	-	02
17	Caring	02	02	-	04
18	Decision making	02	03	04	09

Table-2
The strategies to amalgamation life skill education

No	Strategies	Never	Some times	Often	Very often	Always
1	Methods				✓	
2	Materials		✓			
3	Media	✓				
4	Management of classroom				✓	
5	Measurement	✓				

Table-3**The integration through Management of classrooms**

No	Management of classrooms	Potential life skills	Classroom observations	Total
1	Structuring classroom	Communication Interpersonal Relationship	01,03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 09 10 and 11	09
2	Reminding jury time	Discipline	01, 06, 09, 11	04
3	Appreciating students work/performance	Self confidence	01, 05, 06, 07, 11 and 12	06
4	Encouraging students to come forward voluntary	Confidence courage	04	01

Table-4**The problem evident during the Implementation**

No	Type of problem	Classroom observations	Total
1	Incomplete communication task execution	01, 02, 03, 05, 06, 07, 9 and 11	08
2	Poor monitoring	01, 05, 07, 09	04
3	Incomprehensible inputs	03, 04, 05	03
4	Life skill intelligence	01, 06, 08	03
5	Unclear instructions	06 and 07	02
6	Poor time management	03	01

Table-5**Teacher satisfactions with the existing model**

No	Type of problems	Respondent	Total
1	Requiring more facilities	01. 07, 06, 09,11 02. and 15	08
2	Requiring an extra preparation	08, 10, 12, 16 and 10	05
3	Conflicting with teachers teaching goal	01, 11 13 and 15	04
4	Inappropriate with student's local condition	12, 13 and 15	03

Result and discussions

- The type o life skills integrated with English Language Teaching

Total 15 lesson plans prepared. Total 18 life skill were identified by using brain storming sessions. Total 11 types of life skill were indentified for integration with English Language Teaching. Total 7 types of life skill indentified through classroom observation (Table-1) collaborative working and communication are the two life skills most appropriately integrated with lesson plan and empirically evident during classroom observation most of the life skills conceptually integrated in ELT.

- Strategies of Integration

Teacher applied different ways /plans/approach of integration of life skill education into core subjects. Most of the teachers applied integration of life skill education through organizing activities relevant to life skills. Life skills integration through process only few teachers integrated life skill through central content. Document analysis and classroom observation did not approve at all. Tale-2 Represented the teachers' strategies to integrated life skill in ELT as it is evident from interviews, classroom observations and document analysis.

- Method of Integration

The integration methods e.g. techniques and learning activities was confirmed by 70% teachers. The exploration to the classroom sessions strengthen their claims. 60% teachers integrated life skill by organizing group discussions, 17% teacher by pair work, 8% teachers by student's reflections and 7% teachers by students' presentations. By considering the above data safe strategies mostly used by the teachers to integrated the life skill education in ELT. Most of the teachers recommend that group discussions most useful method. It can be used to nurture social as well as academic skills. Personal skill may be nurtured through and rhetoric association, exemplification and imitation. Life skill may also be nurtured by presentation, demonstrated and think.

- Materials

Learning goals are achieved through learning materials. Selections of materials depends up on the kind of life skill are nurtured among the students. Life skill integration as approached from the content. Lesson plan analysis did not reveal that the title selected do not reflected of life skill developed. Lesson plane 03 considered for the life skill respected

and titled selected is Lesson plane 06 considered life skill self confidence and titled selected. The content analysis and teachers questioning does not reflected the kind of life skills developed.

- Media

Drawing, pictures, graphs, diagram,were most commonly used as teaching media during classroom sessions. An exploration f the existing media did not reflect kind of life skills developed. During the classroom sessions, the teachers never integrated life skill through teachingmedia.

- Management of Classrooms:

The teachers do not make purposeful efforts to integrate the life skill education through management of classroom. Teachers spontaneous activities leads to acquire life skill among students. Data from the table-3 shows that teachers very often made integration of life skills through management of classroom.

- Measures

Document analysis reveal that not a single document identified as specific life skill developed and assessed. Life skills formulations was indentified as more general as social, personal and academic. The lack of clarity teachers unable to develop skills effectively. One specific activity was observed during the document analysis of the observations sheet do not indentified how evaluation was developed. Lesson plan as a document analysis do not contain from of assessment of life skill but on language assessment. Hence life skill assessment is missing from both teachers' activities and their lesson plan. The lack of life skill assessment maybe due to teachers do not have specific objectivities to develop life skills. To develop life skills with objectivities as minimum level of learning then out of learning must be assess through proper assessment. This might help teachers to evaluate their learning results. The students learning progress of the life skills developed may be evaluated over time.The life skills may be assessing through variety of model such as observations, journal, logs, performance test, pen paper test, check list and anecdotal record.

Problems and Challenges

The amalgamation of the life skill education in core subjects of the school was a study taken by the researchers and works as planned by the teacher's. Teachers faced some problem /challenges during the implementation. The

present paper r focus on life skill education with ELT. The classroom session reveals that the following findings (Table-4).

The incomplete communication task accomplishment is the major problem faced. The solution to this problem is that teachers should have well define objectives of teaching for acquisitions of the language skills and life skill too. The acquisition of the language skills is indicating to with ability to create text. In this context gender based instructions to create strongly the recommendations since the instructions gradually guide the teachers to develop students' communication competence through creation of different texts. this solution is also applicable for the fourth problem also.

The second problem is poor monitoring and mentoring. It should be intensified by approaching an individuals' students group task execution. The third problem is incomprehensible imputes, solution is the same as problem is put forward by teacher above Fifth problem is unclear instructions both written and verbal instructions. The solution is the time keeper may appoint during the teaching session.

As per the students' feedback during the classroom observation is that amalgamation of life skill education in ELT is claimed positively. 81% students' opinion that amalgamation facilitate the work collaboratively. 42% students' opinion that it helps to express their ideas. 30% students' opinion that they fell more confidence in learning English. 4% students able to build togetherness to learn from others and to be more responsible. This finding also confirm by 20% teachers too. 38% students are not satisfied with the model in existing status. Table-5 shows the dissatisfaction with existing model. They also suggested that amalgamation required extra preparation also.

There is confident between teachers' teachings goals with students' local condition. Teacher and principal should prepare budget allocation to provide more facilities. There set priority for resources procurement. Both academic work and administrative work need prefect balance. Teachers should set balance for the same.

Regarding 3rd problem faced by teachers is that kind of life skills that can integrated in ELT. Teachers must analysis language competence indicator and amalgamation life skills as it is possible. By doing this target language teaching and life skill integration is fully realize. The last problem is selection of appropriate teaching materials and setting task with their current abilities. It is generally assumed that quality teaching material ad task are one level above current ability.

Conclusion

In the brainstorming session, total 18 life skills are identified that may amalgam with language teaching. Total 07 life skill out of 18 empirically amalgam with ELT are

1. Trustworthiness 2. Courage, 3. Discipline 4. Collaborative work 5. Decision making 6. Communication skills 7. Critical thinking

There are 04 type of life skills unintentionally integrated with ELT. There potential develop on the part of students during their engagement in the classroom session. The various model was proposed and developed by the teachers to integrate life skill in ELT. The most common technique was group discussion, cooperative learning and competitive learning. There technique was most effective to develop communication skills, interpersonal skill and social skills. There are several challenges faced by the teachers during implementation such as

- Require more facilities
- Need extra preparation
- Conflict with teaching goal
- Inappropriate with students' local condition
- Incomplete communication task execution
- Poor monitoring and mentoring
- Unclear infractions
- Poor time management

The solution to the problem:

- Building communication and coordination with school leadership and other staff of the schools.
- Work sharing with other staff of the school
- Selection of life skill with competence of the students
- Develop more comprehensible teaching –learning material
- Setting more structured minimum level of learning
- More structured activities to develop communication skills
- Intensify monitoring and mentoring
- Setting clear objectives for teaching language and Life skills
- Develop written and verbal instructions in detail
- Keeping classroom time keeper

Recommendations

- The amalgamation can have done more effectively if covers both materials of teaching and others elements of teaching such as media, assessment
- Language should not sacrifice for the life skill education
Teachers should develop a collaborative work among their peers and school staff.

References

- Prashant Thote and L.Mathew (2011) A study of preference of Life Skill in the school Students. India Journal of Life Skills
- Prashant Thote and L.Mathew (2011) A Study of Preference of Life Skills among School Teachers.Journal of Research, Extension and Development.
- Prashant Thote and L. Mathew (2012) An Impact of Co-scholastic domain on scholastic domain among secondary school students.Review of Research Journal.
- Prashant Thote (2012) Effectiveness of Life Skill grading on academic performance of Secondary school students. Journal of Golden Research Thought.
- Prashant Thote and L. Mathew (2013) The Study of Life Skill awareness among secondary school teachers. Prathamesh Publishers Nanded
- Prashant Thote (2014) Study of Prevalence of empathy as life skill in secondary school students in Central India. Research, Extension and Development.
- Prashant Thote (2014) Blending yoga and life skill education in school curriculum.Journal of Research and Development.
- Prashant Thote (2015) Study to assess the factors affecting implementation of life skill education curriculum in secondary school of Chambal Division in Madhya Pradesh. UnpublishedM. Ed thesis
- Prashant Thote L. Mathew and D.P.S. Rathour (2015) A Study of Our March towards Life Skills Education: An Overview Journal of Human Welfare and Ecology 9(9)562-598
- Prashant Thote and L. Mathew (2015) Symbiosis of Life Skill Education and Human Rights Education in Senior Secondary Curriculum. Accepted for the Publication by Laxmi Publication, Solapur
- Prashant Thote (2015) Impact of Life skill education of secondary school students: An Analysis Journal of Research, Extension and Developmentvol04, No 01 pp 19-21
- Prashant Thote and L Mathew (2015) *Gender Equality through Life Skill Education: An overview Accepted for the publication By Laxmi Publication, Solapur*

Lack of Awareness on Reproductive Health Issues of Adolescent Girls and Role of Life Skills: A Study in Darrang District of Assam

Dr. (Mrs.) Jawahira Tabassum Azad*

Abstract

Early marriage, early pregnancy, pre-mature delivery and neo-natal death are the factors associated with reproductive health issues among adolescent girls that has crippled the rural social structure of Assam, specially in the Muslim minority dominated districts. Traditions and Customs prove to be an obstacle to access information, skills and services related to sexual and reproductive well-being. The present study was undertaken in ten (10) Muslim minority dominated villages under Darrang district of Assam to assess the awareness among adolescent girls on reproductive health issues and factors associated with it. Educational Programmes on Life Skills were taken up after conduction and analysis of the survey. The study is entirely based on Purposive Sampling Method and Self Standardized Data Blank, Questionnaire, Interview and observation were the major available tools for data collection. Record from local health centres has also been taken into consideration. Discussion with family members of girls has also been done. The results revealed that the adolescent girls have limited awareness on sexual problems, reproductive cycle, birth control techniques, sexually transmitted diseases and other allied reproductive health factors including pregnancy and childbirth. The study pointed out the various causes responsible for lack of awareness. It has also been found that the level of education of the girls are very poor and majority of the sample are school drop-outs. Life Skills practices for alleviation of the socio-economic and traditional causes that hinders the reproductive and sexual well being of adolescent girls has been recommended based on the findings.

Key words: Awareness, Reproductive Health, Adolescent, Life Skills

* Principal, Maryam Ajmal Women's College of Science & Technology, Hojai, Assam

Introduction

The transition from childhood to adulthood occurs during adolescent period which is characterized by major biological changes like physiological growth, sexual maturation and psychosocial development. During this phase of growth the girls first experiences menstruation and related problems which is marked by feelings of anxiety and eagerness to know about the natural phenomenon of sexual development (Singh et. al, 1999). The health and well-being of adolescent is closely intertwined with their physical, psychological and social development (Friedmann, 1994). However, the traditional Indian society regards such topics as taboos and discourages proper reproductive health education programmes and discussions due to which the girls lack appropriate knowledge. This leads to culmination of expression of feelings which can cause intense mental stress (Singh et. al, 1999). Much of the information imparted to a young girl is in the form of restrictions on her movement and behavior (Khanna et. al, 2005).

Young people generally, thus, lack adequate knowledge about their own development and information on how to get help (Friedmann, 1994). The educational programmes and routine health services do not have provision for adequate care of adolescent reproductive health problems (Singh et. al, 1999). Those who could help are rarely trained for adolescent and services designed for them remain within the realms of policies (Friedmann, 1994)

Traditions, customs and economic backwardness of the Muslim minority society in the remote rural areas of Assam impede access to information, skills and services and limit control over sexual and reproductive health. This leads to early marriage with adverse reproductive outcomes. Early marriage results in early or unwanted pregnancy and childbirth or hazardous abortion, may sometimes resulting in sexually transmitted diseases. The present study was undertaken in ten (10) Muslim minority dominated villages under Darrang district of Assam to assess the awareness among adolescent girls on reproductive health issues and factors associated with it. Knowledge and basic life skill practices on reproductive health issues were provided as a nascent initiative with a hope that the study will bring some betterment in the prevailing status.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To enumerate the educational level, economic condition and socio-demographic pattern of the adolescent girls of the Muslim Minority dominated villages taken for the study.

2. To assess the awareness on reproductive health issues of the adolescent girls with specific details of sexual problems, reproductive cycle, birth control techniques, sexually transmitted diseases.
3. To provide knowledgeable reproductive health issues and basic life skill practices for alleviation of the factors associated with lack of awareness.

Significance of the Study:

The findings of the study may provide valuable knowledge and be helpful for the adolescent girls to maintain their sexual well being and promote reproductive health.

Delimitation of the Study:

The study is delimited to the Muslim minority dominated villages of Darrang district of Assam and is a part of voluntary service of a few teachers, students towards the community along with a Women SHG of Mangaldai.

Methodology:

Sample: In the present study, purposive survey method is used for collection of data. Ten (10) Muslim minority dominated villages of Darrang district, namely Lalpool, Bechimari, Dalgoan, Kharupetia, Dhula, Kalaigoan, Salmara, Singimari, Nagarbahi, Sipajhar were selected for the study. Quantitative research was carried on adolescent girls between the ages 15-19 years. The sample of the study was comprised of 200 girls (20 randomly selected from each village).

Scale: Self developed questionnaire was prepared for the girls and parents separately in local language and it was used as the instrument of the study. It was ensured that all items are related to the study (Koul, 2009) and comprised of factors such as parental income, facilities, transportation, level of education, knowledge of reproductive health issues, sources of information. In addition, health centre authorities were consulted for the purpose.

Data Collection and Representation: Data was collected directly from respondents in a flexible environment and was ensured to be kept confidential. The collected data was analyzed keeping in view of the objectives. The data were sorted and arranged according to their characteristics. Simple tabulation and graphical representations were done to categorize the data so that they could be easily understood.

Results

The data represents the analysis and interpretation of the educational level,

economic condition socio-demographic pattern and the awareness on reproductive health issues of the adolescent girls related to sexual problems, reproductive cycle, birth control techniques, sexually transmitted diseases and the factors associated with it of the adolescent girls of the Muslim Minority dominated villages taken for the study.

Figure I Shows that 12% of the girls have no formal education, 53 % are drop out at different levels and only 10% completed their secondary education.

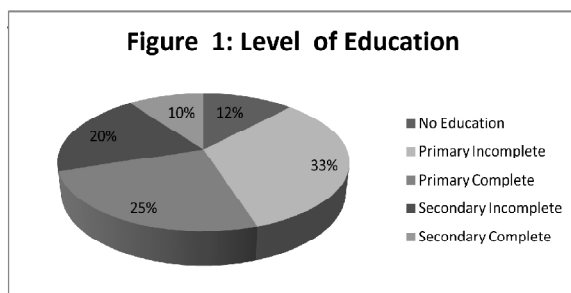


Table 1
Economic condition of Girls under study

FACTORS	%
Parental Income	
Very Low	60
Low	20
Average	15
High	5
Facilities Available	
Safe Drinking Water	15
Electricity	20
Gas	10
Telephone/ Mobile Phone	25
Transportation for going to school	15
Sources of Information	
Radio	10
Television	5
Newspaper	2
Cable Television	5
Health Worker	15
Friends/ Relatives	60
Internet	0

Table 1 shows that the economic condition of the girls taken for the study is very poor as evidenced from the level of income of their parents. The socio-economic status of the household and the facilities available to them for maintenance of their physical health, proper development and education are not optimum. They have very limited sources of information as they are acquainted with only a few media / network programmes and mainly depend on their friends and relatives to gather knowledge and/ or removal of their curiosities.

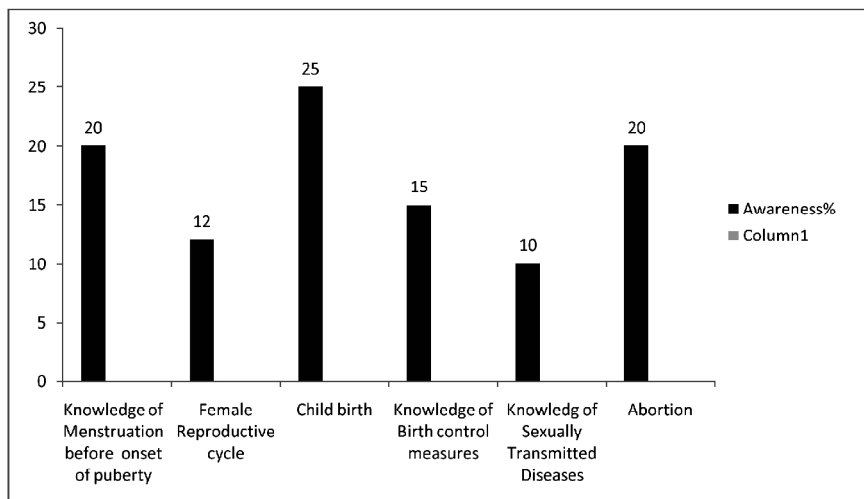


Figure 2 shows the awareness of the girls on various issues related to reproductive health and allied factors. Only 20% had knowledge of menstruation before the onset of puberty while only 12%, 15% and 10% had gathered information of female reproductive cycle, birth control measures and sexually transmitted diseases from their friends and relatives. Women of these areas have least access to medical assistance during pregnancy and parturition; hence the girls had information on childbirth and abortion.

Table 2
Cumulative status of social and traditional pattern

PARAMETER	SCORE AS PER DATA OBTAINED
Preference of Female Child	12%
Average Age of Marriage of Girls	17-20 years
Provision of Medical Facilities for girls with respect to sexual health issues	10-15%
Provision of Medical facilities during pregnancy	10%
Provision of Medical facilities during childbirth	10%

Table 2 depicts a cumulative status of the social and traditional pattern of the villages taken under the study as obtained from the interaction with parents and health care authorities. It has been thus observed that the female had no access to proper health care during their life time even during pregnancy and childbirth. The traditional customs are being followed in the society and so adolescent reproductive health issues are not taken care of for overall development of the girl child.

Discussion:

The primary objective of the study was to assess the lack of awareness of minority Muslim girls of the rural areas of Darrang District of Assam on reproductive health issues and to evaluate the factors associated with it. The findings shows that the girls of the villages taken for the study has no knowledge of reproductive health problems, reproductive cycles and issues of child birth, birth control measures as well as sexually transmitted diseases. Similar studies conducted in Pakistan and Bangladesh among Muslim minority dominated youth have shown that adolescent girls lack knowledge and awareness which leads to incomplete personal development and they are ill equipped to face the reproductive burden they face (Barkat and Majid,2003; Bokhari, 2006). Adolescent is the time when most of youth become curious to know about their bodily changes but most of the girls in our study felt embarrassed at the survey sessions due to their lack of awareness. Khanna et. al (2005) have presented a regressive analysis on the reproductive health problems of adolescent girls in Rajasthan which points out that schooling, residential status, parent's income, exposure to media, false perceptions and traditional beliefs are the factors associated with it as evident in the present study.

Moreover, maternal age of the girls in these villages has been recorded to be very low as per the traditional practices. The study corroborate with that of Fraser et.al (1995) which showed relationship of maternal age with ad-

verse reproductive outcome attributed by low educational level, adequate parental involvement (Ngom et. al, 2003) and socio-demographic environment. The girls lack basic life facilities that had been a major cause of their imbalanced physical, psychological and reproductive development (Freidmann, 1994). Gender discrimination was evident from the fact that parents do not prefer a female child in most cases. As a result the girls face a feeling of burden, restricted and helpless (Bokhari, 2006) and even education is not adequate to empower themselves (Khan, 2000). The study also pointed out that adolescent girls has very little access to medical assistance during reproductive health problems and even medical help is not sought during pregnancy or childbirth as evident from the survey. Traditional beliefs, misconception and social restrictions has been the main causes for such backwardness (Khanna et.al; 2005)

The importance of educating adolescent girls about reproductive health is gaining momentum in our country during the last few years. The desired effect of health education cannot be achieved in absence of active interaction between the source and recipients (Singh et.al, 1999; Spiezer, et.al 2003). It is necessary to impart community awareness on reproductive health to motivate use of more health care services to reduce complications during the reproductive time span (Gogoi et.al, 2014). Family life education has been recognized as an important component of addressing reproductive health issues including topics on normal physiological aspects, reproductive cycles, menstruation and pregnancy. Parents should also be trained on reproductive health issues so that they can educate their children (Singh et.al, 1999).

In accordance with the studies of several workers on the importance of reproductive health education among adolescent girls, especially in rural areas, the present study has arranged training sessions with the help of health educators, medical professionals and NGO workers after seeking adequate permission from the village authorities.

Life skills like coping with stress, decision making and problem solving have been designated to be intimately linked with dropping out of school, marriage (Bokhari, 2006) and to relieve depression and anxiety during monthly cycles (Bardone et.al, 1998). To this effect the team tried to develop basic life skill practices for overall development of the girls. The most difficult area was to overcome the stress during the transition from childhood to adulthood and exposure to sexual activities, pregnancy and childbirth at an early age after marriage. To combat stress a number of activities like singing, poem recitations, group games which are feasible within their limited resources were suggested. Decision making and problem solving are critical factors which govern early marriage as the girls accept the traditional practices of arranged marriage. The decision to drop out of school was also governed by social discriminations as evident during the study. The research team had tried to induce decision making and problem solving abilities in the girls by exposing them to various hypothetical situations. However, further research is needed in these areas, mythical barriers has to be broken and policy makers should advocate in revamping existing laws.

References

- Singh, M.M., Devi, R and Gupta, S.S (1999). *Awareness and health seeking behavior of rural adolescent school girls on menstruation reproductive health problems*. Indian J. of Med.Sci. Vol 53 (10).439-443.
- Friedmann, H.L. (1994). *Reproductive Health in Adolescent* in World Health Statistics Quarterly Rapport Trimestrial, Vol 47 (1), 31-35.
- Khanna, A, Goyal, R.S and Bhawser, R. (2005). *Menstrual Practices and Reproductive problems: A study of adolescent girls in Rajasthan*. Journal. of Health Management. Vol 7 (1).91-107.
- Lokesh K. (2009). *Methodology of Educational Research*. Vikash Publishing House Pvt Ltd (New Delhi).
- Barkat, A. and Majid, M. (2003). *Adolescent Reproductive Health in Bangladesh: Status, Policies, Programmes and Issues*. Policy Project, USAID (2000).
- Bokhari, A. (2006). *Situational Assessment of Adolescents for Life Skills and HIV Prevention in selected districts of Pakistan*. In Report of National Aids Control Programme under National Institute of Health, UNICEF and Ministry of Health, Government of Pakistan.

- Fraser, A.M, Brockert, J.E and Ward, R.H (1995). *Association of young Maternal Age with adverse reproductive outcomes*.New England Journal.of Medical. Vol 332 . 1113-1118.
- Ngom, P, Magadi, M.A and Owver, T. (2003). *Parental presence and adolescent reproductive health among Nairobi Urban poor*.Journal.of Adolescent Health. Vol 33 (5).369-377.
- Khan A. (2000).*Adolescent Reproductive Health in Pakistan: a literature review*. In: Body, Mind and Spirit in Sexual Health: National Conference Report, Islamabad, Pakistan.
- Speizer, I.S, Magnani, R.J and Colvin, C.E. (2003). *The effectiveness of adolescent reproductive health interventions in developing countries :a review of the evidence*.Journal.of Adolescent Health. Vol 33 (5).324-348.
- Gogoi, M., Unisa, S. and Pausty, R. (2014). *Utilization of Maternal health care services and reproductive health complications in Assam, India*.Journal.of Public Health. Vol 22 (4).351-357.
- Bardone, A.M, Moffit, A, Caspi, A and Dickson, N. (1998). *Adult physical health outcomes of adolescent girls with conduct disorder, depression and anxiety*.Journal.of American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Vol 37 (6).594-601.



INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION

Door No. 17/13, 16th Avenue, Ashok Nagar
Chennai - 600 083. Tamil Nadu, India.
www.ialse.net



ISSN 2394 - 630X