

Enhancement in Life Skills of Adolescent Girls through Intervention

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ABSTRACT The present study was undertaken with the objective to find out the impact of intervention on life skills of the adolescents. The data were collected from three randomly selected blocks (Bajjnath, Bhawarna and Panchrukhi) of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh, India. A total of 155 adolescent girls in the age group of 14-18 years were selected from these blocks. To collect the required data from the respondents, an interview schedule as well as scales on critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making, interpersonal relationships, stress and anxiety management, effective communication, self-esteem, empathy and creative thinking were administered on the respondents. The data were collected before intervention and the intervention was provided in the form of module on life skills as well as lectures, flash cards, handouts and puppets. The data were analyzed statistically using mean and SD values. The results of the study revealed that after providing intervention there was increase in the mean scores on all the life skills except on decision-making, empathy, communication and stress management.

INTRODUCTION

Life skills are the strategies or abilities one uses to get along with one's own personality, one's friends, family, the society and the environment as a whole. These strategies empower the young person to interact with society in which they live as effectively as possible. The World Health Organization 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."

The main goals of the life skills approach is to enhance young people's ability to take responsibility for making choices, resisting negative pressure and avoiding risky behavior. Through life skills education, learners acquire and develop skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making, interpersonal relationships, stress and anxiety management, effective communication, self-esteem and assertiveness. This approach is an interactive, educational methodology that not only focus on transmitting knowledge but helps the youth to explore their attitudes, feelings and values to face the everyday life challenges in efficient manner. To cope with the increasing pace and change of modern life, students need new life skills such as the ability to deal with stress and frustration. In a constantly changing environ-

ment, having life skills is an essential part of being able to meet the challenges of everyday life. Aparna and Raakhee (2011) investigated the importance of life skills, life skill education and the benefits of imparting life skill education in Indian curriculum.

Objectives

To enhance adolescent's ability to take responsibility for making choices, resisting negative pressure and avoiding risky behavior.

METHODOLOGY

A sample of 155 school going adolescent girls (14 to 18 years) was selected from three blocks that is, Bajjnath, Panchrukhi and Bhawarna of district Kangra of Himachal Pradesh. A total of five villages were selected from three blocks. The Senior Secondary Government schools located within the villages were selected, out of which efforts were made to select at least 30 girls between the ages 14 to 18 years from each school studying in 8th, 9th and 10th standards. The respondents were administered scales on different life skills. The data were collected and tabulated. In order to improve their life skills, interventions were given through a module prepared on life skills. The module consists of some small activities based on day to day life situa-

tions and participants are encouraged to actively involve in those activities through which they can develop various life skills. The intervention package in the form of flash cards, handouts and puppets on ten different life skills was also prepared.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As it is evident from the Table 1 on comparing the mean scores of pre-test and post-test on decision-making, no significant improvement has been observed in the mean scores of post-test. As most of the decisions of children regarding their study, marriage etc. were taken up by their parents and elders, so they hardly get chance to take decisions on their own. Intervention in this area is one of the important areas which should be taken care of. Dinesh and Belinda (2014) conducted a study with the objective to understand the major troubles of students in their education and the strategies which can be adopted to overcome those troubles with the hypothesis that life skills program for youth in schools and colleges will reduce the problems of young minds.

Table 1: Comparison of mean scores of different life skills during pre and post tests

Life skill	Pre test		Post test	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Decision-making	38.54	4.01	38.72	4.07
Interpersonal relationship	35.2	4.22	37.52	3.26
Communication skills	17.97	2.93	17.87	2.66
Self-esteem	17.72	4.56	17.78	4.53
Critical thinking	31.75	2.10	43.75	3.49
Creative thinking	18.66	1.77	18.66	1.77
Problem solving	31.75	2.08	32.18	2.10
Empathy	74.09	1.56	74.09	1.56
Stress management	40.30	1.39	40.30	1.39

Interpersonal skill is considered as one of the important skill of life skill education. Hence, emphasis was given on improving inter personal skills of rural girls so that they can be capable of maintaining a healthy relationship with their family as well as neighbors, friends and society as a whole. When data of interpersonal relationship were analyzed it was observed that improvement occurred in the mean scores after post testing.

Communication is considered as one of the most important life skill. Good communication

skill is considered essential in every sphere of life. While rural girls were tested for their communication skill it was observed that their performances were poor during pre-test level, but less mean scores were observed after intervention, during post-test level.

When mean scores of self-esteem during pre-test and post-test were studied though improvement in the mean scores was less but impact of intervention is still significant. Khera and Khosla (2012) studied the relationship between self-concept and core life skills of randomly selected 500 adolescents studying in secondary classes. The major findings of the study was that there was a positive co-relation between core affective life skill and self-concept of adolescents which means those who possess these essential skills had better confidence in all aspects.

To become successful while we have to take decisions in a critical situation, we must possess the capability how to think critically, so is the case with the rural girls. That is why rural girls were tested for their critical thinking ability, intervention had been given after the tests and post testing has also been done to measure the improvement. When data were analyzed it was found that in the area of critical thinking there is improvement in the mean scores after intervention.

When data of creative thinking were observed no improvement has been observed in the scores among rural adolescent girls after intervention. Table 1 further shows the mean scores differences at pre and post-tests in problem solving and the data shows improvement in problem solving skills at post-test level. In this area the adolescent girls need more intervention. Pujar and Hunshal (2014) investigated adolescent girls studying in 8th and 9th standards of Dharwad Karnataka. The girls were assessed for five life skills namely, problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, coping with stress and empathy by using self-administered checklist as a method of data collection. Post-test conducted after an intervention showed that majority of adolescent girls had high level of critical thinking (94.16%) followed by coping with stress (79.12%), problem solving ability (70%), creative thinking (50%) and empathy (57.5%).

Empathy is a difficult skill to understand, hence it is very difficult to teach this skill to rural girls. No such improvement in the mean scores was observed at post-test level. Yadav and Iqbal (2009) conducted study to see the im-

pact of life skill training on self-esteem, adjustment and empathy among adolescents. The results showed that subjects improved significantly in post condition on self-esteem, emotional adjustment, educational adjustment, total adjustment and empathy. Overall training was very effective as subjects improved in the post condition on all measures except one, thus showing that life skill training had positive results in bringing change in adolescent's attitude, thought and behavior by providing supportive environment to them.

In stress management a different trend has been observed. After intervention performance remains the same.

Parvathy and Renjith (2015) carried out experimental study method involving pre-post study with experiment-delayed group. Results revealed significant impact of life skills education training on adolescents.

CONCLUSION

Adolescents are to be considered as productive members of the society due to their intellectual and physical capacity. But most of them are not able to utilize their capacities up to the maximum due to unconducive environment. They become vulnerable and may lead to wrong path. In that case life skills can make them valuable and respected members of the society and torch bearers of tomorrow's faith and hope of the nation on the whole.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Efforts are needed to improve conducive environment of adolescents to speed up their lifestyle.
2. Interest based vocational interventions should be provided.
3. Required resource material should be developed for improving the life skills of the adolescents.
4. Need based counselling should be provided to adolescents and their family members.

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