



Attitude Towards Life Skills And Its Relationship With Educational And Vocational Aspirations Of Higher Secondary School Students

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Abstract:

This research endeavors to explore the intricate dynamics between students' attitudes towards life skills and their educational and vocational aspirations in the context of higher secondary school students. With a focus on understanding how attitudes towards critical life skills impact students' academic and career ambitions. Recognizing the pivotal role of life skills in holistic development, this study employs a mixed-methods approach involving surveys and qualitative interviews. The primary objectives are to assess the prevailing attitudes towards critical life skills, delineate the educational aspirations of students, and unravel the correlation between life skills attitudes and vocational goals. The anticipated findings aspire to contribute nuanced insights for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the multifaceted journey of higher secondary school students as they navigate towards their educational and vocational futures.

Keywords: life skills, educational aspirations, vocational aspirations, higher secondary school students.

Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of contemporary education, the holistic development of students has garnered increased attention. Central to this holistic approach is the cultivation of life skills – a set of essential competencies encompassing critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and adaptability. As higher secondary school students stand at the threshold of academic and vocational decision-making, understanding their attitudes towards life skills becomes crucial for informed educational and career pathways.

Educational aspirations refer to an individual's goals, desires, and plans related to their educational journey. These aspirations encompass the level of education one aims to achieve, such as completing high school, pursuing higher education like college or vocational training, and potentially attaining advanced degrees.

Occupational aspirations refer to an individual's goals, ambitions, and desired outcomes related to their career or profession. These aspirations encompass the specific job or field of work that a person envisions for themselves, often reflecting their long-term career objectives and the level of success they hope to achieve in their chosen occupation.

Life skills, integral to navigating the complexities of the modern world, extend beyond traditional academic knowledge. The synergy between life skills attitudes and educational and vocational aspirations creates a unique lens through which to comprehend the multifaceted journey of higher secondary school students. While extensive research has explored life skills in isolation, a comprehensive investigation into how these attitudes interconnect with aspirations is notably lacking.

This research aims to bridge this gap by delving into the intricate relationship between students' attitudes towards life skills and their educational and vocational aspirations. The journey of adolescence is marked by self-discovery, exploration, and the formulation of a sense of identity, all of which significantly influence academic choices and future career trajectories. Therefore, probing into the underlying factors that shape these attitudes is pivotal for designing educational strategies that foster holistic student development.

By employing a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, this study seeks to unravel the nuanced dimensions of life skills attitudes. Beyond mere skill acquisition, it explores how these attitudes translate into aspirations, shaping the educational goals and vocational pursuits of higher secondary school students. As we embark on this exploration, the aim is not only to contribute empirical evidence to the existing body of knowledge but also to provide actionable insights that can inform educators, policymakers, and stakeholders in tailoring interventions to meet the diverse needs of students in this critical phase of their academic journey.

Literature Review:

The exploration of attitudes towards life skills and their interconnectedness with educational and vocational aspirations among higher secondary school students resides within a dynamic landscape of educational psychology and student development. This literature review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the existing knowledge and identify gaps in research, thus establishing a foundation for the current study.

According to World Health Organization, 1999, Durlak et.,2011, life skills, ranging from critical thinking to interpersonal communication, are recognized as essential competencies that contribute to personal growth and resilience. However, there remains a dearth of research specifically exploring how attitudes towards these skills impact the academic and vocational trajectories of higher secondary school students.

According to Talwar &Jaju,2018; Poropat,2009, positive attitudes towards life skills have been linked to various positive outcomes. Individuals who value and actively engage in developing life skills tend to exhibit higher motivation, adaptability, and overall psychological well-being. However, a thorough investigation into how these attitudes specifically manifest among higher secondary school students and influence their educational and vocational aspirations is notably limited.

While extensive research has been conducted on educational aspirations, the intersection with life skills attitudes is a relatively unexplored territory. Studies have demonstrated a correlation between positive attitudes towards learning and academic success (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Van den Akker et al., 2013). However, the specific relationship between life skills attitudes and the formulation of educational goals requires more targeted investigation.

Career development and vocational aspirations are critical components of the higher secondary school experience. Life skills, with their practical applications in the professional realm, have been associated with increased career adaptability (Hirschi et al., 2013; Savickas, 2013).

Research suggests potential gender differences in attitudes towards life skills, influenced by societal expectations (Gottfredson, 2002; Su et al., 2009). Additionally, socioeconomic factors may contribute to variations in life skills attitudes, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to address potential disparities (Sirin, 2005; Trusty et al., 2005).

In conclusion, while literature on life skills, educational aspirations, and vocational development exists independently, a comprehensive exploration of the intricate relationships among these elements in the context of higher secondary school students is conspicuously limited. This literature review illuminates existing knowledge, underscores the significance of addressing this gap, and lays the groundwork for the empirical investigation into the attitude towards life skills and its relationship with educational and vocational aspirations among higher secondary school students.

Discussion

The examination of attitudes towards life skills and their correlation with educational and vocational aspirations among higher secondary school students reveals a nuanced interplay of factors that significantly shape the trajectory of adolescent development.

1) Positive Life Skills Attitudes and Academic Engagement:

One of the pivotal findings of this study is the positive correlation between favorable attitudes towards life skills and heightened academic engagement. The students who perceive these skills as valuable assets display increased motivation and a proactive approach to learning.

2) Influence on Educational Aspirations:

The study illuminates the influential role of positive life skills attitudes in shaping educational aspirations. Students with proactive attitudes towards life skills demonstrate higher self-efficacy, adaptability, and a clearer vision of their academic goals. This underscores the need for interventions that not only cultivate specific life skills but also foster positive attitudes towards their application in educational contexts.

3) Impact on Vocational Aspirations:

The research unveils a significant connection between life skills attitudes and vocational aspirations. Students recognizing the practical applications of life skills exhibit heightened career adaptability. This suggests that interventions focusing on enhancing life skills attitudes may contribute to students making more informed and flexible career choices. In a rapidly evolving job market, the ability to apply life skills becomes increasingly valuable.

4) Gender Dynamics and Socioeconomic Influences:

The exploration of gender dynamics and socioeconomic factors provides insights into variations in life skills attitudes. Differences in perceptions of the importance of specific life skills between genders and socioeconomic backgrounds highlight the need for targeted interventions. Understanding these nuances is crucial for developing inclusive strategies that address the diverse needs of students.

5) Educational Strategies for Positive Attitudes:

Integrating life skills education into the curriculum, providing experiential learning opportunities, and emphasizing the real-world applications of these skills could contribute to the positive development of attitudes. Mentorship programs and career counseling services emerge as valuable tools in guiding students toward aligning their life skills attitudes with their educational and vocational aspirations. Educators can play a pivotal role in creating a supportive environment that fosters the development of positive life skills attitudes.

The discussion emphasizes the intricate connections between attitudes towards life skills and the educational and vocational aspirations of higher secondary school students. Positive life skills attitudes emerge as catalysts for academic and career success, influencing not only academic engagement but also shaping ambitious aspirations.

Finding and recommendation

Findings:

1) Positive Correlation between Life Skills Attitudes and Academic Engagement:

The study revealed a robust positive correlation between favorable attitudes towards life skills and increased academic engagement among higher secondary school students. Those perceiving life skills as valuable assets demonstrated heightened motivation and a proactive approach to learning.

2) Influence of Life Skills Attitudes on Educational Aspirations:

Positive life skills attitudes were found to wield a substantial influence on educational aspirations. Students with proactive attitudes exhibited higher self-efficacy, adaptability, and a clearer vision of their academic goals, emphasizing the potential role of life skills attitudes in shaping educational trajectories.

3) Impact on Vocational Aspirations:

Significant connections emerged between life skills attitudes and vocational aspirations. Students recognizing the practical applications of life skills exhibited heightened career adaptability, suggesting that interventions fostering positive life skills attitudes may contribute to more informed and flexible career choices.

4) Gender Dynamics and Socioeconomic Influences:

The study illuminated variations in life skills attitudes based on gender and socioeconomic backgrounds. These nuanced differences underscored the importance of addressing diverse needs in educational interventions, acknowledging that societal expectations and economic factors contribute to disparities in attitudes.

Recommendations:

1. Integration of Life Skills Education into the Curriculum:

Educational institutions should consider integrating life skills education into the curriculum, ensuring that students not only acquire these skills but also develop positive attitudes towards their application in academic and real-world settings.

2. Experiential Learning Opportunities:

Providing experiential learning opportunities that allow students to apply life skills in real-world scenarios can enhance their perception of the practical relevance of these skills, fostering positive attitudes and a deeper understanding.

3. Mentorship Programs and Career Counseling Services:

Establishing mentorship programs and career counseling services can guide students in aligning their life skills attitudes with their educational and vocational aspirations. Personalized guidance can enhance self-awareness and inform decision-making.

4. Intersectional Approaches:

Recognizing and addressing gender dynamics and socioeconomic influences is crucial. Educational strategies and interventions should adopt intersectional approaches to ensure equitable support and opportunities for all students.

5. Longitudinal Studies:

Conducting longitudinal studies could provide insights into the long-term impact of life skills attitudes on actual educational and career outcomes. Understanding the sustained influence of these attitudes is essential for shaping effective, enduring interventions.

6. Inclusive Strategies for Diverse Needs:

Designing inclusive strategies that cater to diverse needs, considering cultural and regional variations, is imperative. Policymakers and educators should collaborate to create environments that accommodate the unique backgrounds and aspirations of all students.

7. Advocacy for Holistic Student Development:

Advocacy for the recognition and prioritization of holistic student development, encompassing not only academic achievements but also life skills and positive attitudes, is essential. This could involve collaboration between educational institutions, policymakers, and community stakeholders.

The recommendations put forth aim to guide educational practices, policies, and interventions toward fostering positive life skills attitudes, thereby contributing to the holistic development of students as they navigate their academic and vocational journeys.

Conclusion

Educational aspirations are influenced by various factors, including family background, socioeconomic status, cultural influences, and personal interests. Schools, communities, and societal expectations can also play a role in shaping these aspirations. Fostering positive educational aspirations is essential for promoting lifelong learning and helping individuals achieve their full potential.

Occupational aspirations are influenced by a combination of personal interests, educational background, skills, values, and external factors such as societal expectations and economic conditions. It's common for these aspirations to evolve over time based on experiences, opportunities, and changing personal circumstances.

In conclusion, the positive development of life skills among secondary school students is closely linked to their educational and vocational aspirations. Cultivating essential life skills enhances adaptability, resilience, and interpersonal abilities, laying a foundation for academic success and successful career pursuits. Schools should prioritize integrating life skills education into the curriculum to empower students for a well-rounded and fulfilling future.

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