



LIFE SKILLS AWARENESS OF STUDENT TEACHERS OF SECONDARY LEVEL IN RELATION TO GENDER, STREAM OF STUDY AND EXPOSURE TO COURSE

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Abstract: The purpose of the study is to aware the young student teachers about Life Skill Education so to gain new ways of learning and developing problem solving attitude and having control over their behaviour in various situations of life. The study was followed by Descriptive Survey Research method. The population of the study was B.Ed. 1st year and 2nd Year student teachers of two distinct teacher education institutions of Odisha. A sample of total 80 students (40 male & 40 female) were taken for the research and the data were collected by using a self-prepared Awareness scale contained five points by the investigators. For the analysis and interpretation to result, the researchers have used t-test, mean, standard deviation. The result showed that life skill awareness has a significant impact among the students' teachers for improving their lives.

Index Terms - Life-skill, student-teacher, awareness, gender, stream of study, course.

Introduction

The unlimited wants of human beings have given birth to new challenges which require immediate and an effective response from a socially responsible system of education. Education, now-a-days is very important, to support and live peaceful life. Hence, the main role of Education emphasizes on developing such skills among students so as to create dynamic citizens, who can cope up with the future challenges, and survive successfully. In this context, life skills enable individuals to translate knowledge, attitude and values into actual abilities. World Health Organization (WHO) while initiating Life Skills Education conceptualized Life Skills as "psychological competence". Psychological competence is the individual's ability to maintain a state of mental well-being and demonstrate this in adaptive and positive behavior while interacting with others, and with her/his culture and environment. The 10 core (generic) Life Skills as listed by WHO (1997) are Self Awareness, Empathy, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Decision Making, Problem Solving, Effective Communication, Interpersonal Relationships, Coping with Stress and Managing Emotions. According to early adolescence (10-14 years) is singled out as a critical moment of opportunity for building skills and positive habits, since at this age, there is a recognition of self, ability to think and solve problems. An early adolescent is expected to move from the security of a middle school to the challenges of a secondary school education. The wider social context of early and middle adolescence provides varied situations in which there is motivation to practice new skills with peers and other individuals outside the family. The life skills approach aims at assisting adolescents to gain new ways of learning as well as control over their behavior and to take informed decision that can lead to positive values (Githaiga et al., 2014). The transition to high school is also a challenge for students, both academically and socially. Effective strategies for coping with problems, planning and time management skills, problem solving and decision-making skills are among the factors identified as instrumental in students making a successful transition. 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 empathy (Veena and Vivek, 2010). Awareness of life skills is one of the successful components for reinforcing flexibility among adolescents, teachers and family members. No doubt transacting Life Skills Education is a challenging job but it is rewarding. Schools play an important role in transacting Life Skills Education because the traditional mechanisms for passing on Life Skills are no longer adequate. Therefore, the schools are an appropriate place for the transaction of Life Skills Education. Life Skills Programme can be infused in other school subjects and it can also be introduced as a new subject. Life skills motivate healthy behaviour and increase self-confidence. Therefore, we can say that they will lead to the increase of psychological health and that they have an important role in the prevention of psychological diseases and behavioural problems (Nori, 1998). Greene (2003a) suggests a teacher should imagine, reflect and act with more and more concrete responsibility. The teachers should not merely prepare Life Skills lessons but they should be prepared and planned as a part of unified and sequential programme which promotes psychosocial competence and mental health of the young adolescents. The schools should promote Life Skills Education by: Creating a friendly, supportive, stimulating and structured learning environment catering to the needs of all the students Promoting mutual respect and individual empowerment Encouraging collaboration among teachers, disciplines and students strengthening community action by involving parents and outside agencies in schools.

1.1 Importance of Life Skill Education Training for Student Teacher

Life skills education training is very necessary for Student Teachers to improving quality of life through capacity building of children and enriching their life skills. A module on life skills education also developed for eighth, ninth and tenth class students to enhance their skills and help them handle things efficiently. Life skills education was very important especially for teachers who prepared the young minds. The LSE will enable teachers to translate knowledge, attitude and values for handling real life situations to the children helping them decide what to do, when to do and how to do it with ease. Modules on self-awareness, empathy, critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving, decision making, effective communication, inter-personal relationship, coping with emotions, coping with stress as recommended by UNICEF have also been dealt with knowledge and power.

2. RATIONAL OF THE STUDY

Studies by Sketchman (2001), Zafer (2006), Raymond (2011), Simone and Mary (2012), and Khosavani et al (2014) reveals that life skill education improves the skills like inter personal skill, coping with stress, critical thinking, decision making and problem solving. There is also instance of life school education organised through different out of school activities. Gender difference was also observed in the reported by Hilita and Kumar (2007), Sr and Lancy (2012), Rani et al (2018), Prasad (2018). Life skill education also is a part of 21st century skills as envisaged in NEP 2020. It may be stated that B.Ed. 1st year students have limited exposure to life skill education as compared with 2nd year students. Keeping in view the facts stated above it was considered worthwhile to conduct a study on life skill education.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was undertaken with the following objectives:

- i. To find out the awareness level of life skills among the Student Teachers of secondary level.
- ii. To compare the degree of awareness in terms of exposure to pre service training.
- iii. To compare the levels of life skill awareness of B.Ed. student teachers with respect to gender.
- iv. To compare the levels of life skills awareness of student teachers with respect to stream of study.

4. HYPOTHESES

H₀₁: There exist no significant difference in the awareness level of 1st year and 2nd year B.Ed. Student Teacher.

H₀₂: There exist no significant difference in life skills awareness between Male and Female Student Teachers of secondary level.

H₀₃: There exist no significant difference in life skills awareness between Arts and Science Student Teachers of secondary level.

5. METHODOLOGY

This study was followed on the Descriptive Survey method. The objective is to find out the awareness level of life skills among the student teachers of secondary level. To compare the degree of awareness in terms of exposure to pre service training, compare the levels of life skill awareness of B.Ed. student teachers with respect to gender and stream of study. The researchers were considered all students from the two institutions University Department of Teacher Education, Utkal University and Department of Integrated Teacher Education, M.P.C. Autonomous College Baripada, Odisha. The population unit was around 200. The total sample unit was 80(40 student teachers from each institution). Out of 80 samples, the Arts and Science stream may consist of 40 units each, the 1st year and 2nd year students may constitute 40 units each. Accordingly, all sample units were considered for data collection. The sample was collected by the way of stratified random sampling technique. The researchers collected the data of B.Ed. students with due permission from the authority of the respective institutions. The data were collected from these two institutions by self-developed Awareness Scale.

Table 1: Sample distribution in terms of academic year and gender

Total Sample = 80			
B.Ed. 1 st Year		B.Ed. 2 nd Year	
40		40	
Male	Female	Male	Female
20	20	20	20

Table 2: Sample distribution in terms of stream of study

Total Sample = 80			
B.Ed. 1 st Year		B.Ed. 2 nd Year	
40		40	
Arts	Science	Arts	Science
20	20	20	20

5.1 Tool for the Study

The researchers were developed a self-developed Awareness Scale for the purpose of measuring awareness level of life skills. The scale consists of different items based on life skills dimensions. Each statement of this scale will follow by 5-point rating. The scale stated against each statement comprises with options such as: SA-strongly Agree; A-Agree; I-Indifferent; D-Disagree; and SD-Strongly Disagree. The dimensions are:

- ❖ Self-Awareness
- ❖ Empathy
- ❖ Critical Thinking
- ❖ Creative Thinking
- ❖ Decision Making
- ❖ Problem Solving
- ❖ Effective Communication
- ❖ Interpersonal Relationships
- ❖ Coping with Stress
- ❖ Managing Emotions

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In order to fulfil the objectives of the study the investigators analysed the data quantitatively. The investigators analysed the Awareness Scale which contained five points. Among the items some of were positive statements and some were negative statements. The positive items were scored like – 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 for SA-strongly Agree; A-Agree; I-Indifferent; D-Disagree; and SD-Strongly Disagree whereas negative items were scored liked – 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 for SA-strongly Agree; A-Agree; I-Indifferent; D-Disagree; and SD-Strongly Disagree. After getting the response from respondent the investigators scored each response from the respondent. As per the need of study, the investigators used statistical techniques such as:

- Mean
- Standard Deviation
- T test

Table 3: Comparison of Exposures (B.Ed. 1st year and 2nd year)

The mean, SD and t-value of B.Ed. 1st year and B.Ed. 2nd year students' level of life skill awareness.

Exposure	N=80	Mean	S.D.	df	t- value	Significance Value (0.05)
B.Ed. 1 st year	40	125.5	10.85	78	0.903488	Table Value (1.990)
B.Ed. 2 nd year	40	125.675	6.94			

It is found from the table, calculated t-value is less than the table value for the df 78 at the 0.05 significant level. Hence the null hypothesis(H01) "There exists no significant difference in the awareness level of First Year and Second Year B.Ed. Student Teacher" was accepted.

Table 4: Comparison of Gender (Male and Female)

The mean, SD and t-value of male and female student teachers' level of life skill awareness.

Gender	N=80	Mean	S.D.	df	t- value	Significance Value (0.05)
B.Ed. 1 st year	40	127.67	10.56	78	0.031558	Table Value (1.990)
B.Ed. 2 nd year	40	123.3	6.92			

It is found from the table, calculated t-value is less than the table value for the df 78 at the 0.05 significant level. Hence the null hypothesis(H02) "There exists no significant difference in life skill awareness between Male and Female Student Teacher of Secondary level" was accepted.

Table 5: Comparison of Arts and Science Student Teachers

The mean, SD and t-value of Arts and Science Student Teachers level of life skill awareness.

Stream	N=80	Mean	S.D.	df	t- value	Significance Value (0.05)
Arts	40	127.4	10.22516	78	0.0	Table Value (1.990)
Science	40	123.975	7.505511			

It is found from the table, calculated t-value is less than the table value for the df 78 at the 0.05 significant level. Hence the null hypothesis(H03), there exists no significant difference in life skill awareness between Arts and Science Student Teacher of Secondary level" is accepted.

7. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- I. The mean score of B.Ed. 1st year student teachers about life skill awareness (125.5) does not differ significantly than B.Ed. 2nd year student teacher (125.67). It is found that both have same level of life skill awareness.
- II. The mean score of male student teachers about life skill awareness (127.67) does not differ significantly than female student teachers (123.3). So that it is found that both the male and female student teachers having same idea about life skill awareness.
- III. The mean score of Arts student teachers about life skill awareness (127.4) does not differ significantly than Science student teachers (123.97). It is revealed that both Arts and Science student teachers have same knowledge about life skill awareness.

8. DISCUSSION

The present research work is a significant attempt to find out the life skill awareness of Student Teachers refers to gender, stream and exposures. Many other investigators have also been carried out previously by other researchers in the related area of study. Results of some study are similar with the present study. When the findings reported by Sr & Lancy (2012) both male and female adolescents do not differ in the level of life skill, the present study also revealed that same case. Vijayarani et al (2019) & Jagannathan (2020) life skill help the 21st century youngsters to achieve their goal, and to be sustain and successful their work field and life. The most of the teachers still have awareness on life skill. The exposures, male and female, Arts and Science student teachers are adult and skillful, so there is no significant difference between them.

9. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

By giving life skill education to the young student teachers, it:

- ❖ Strength's teacher pupil relationship
- ❖ Improves discipline in the school
- ❖ Reduces learners' day to day problems
- ❖ Helps learners to improve their performance
- ❖ Develops self-concept among learners
- ❖ Develops self-confidence among student teachers

9. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was delimited with following aspects:

- ❖ Study was delimited to B.Ed. students of University Department of Teacher Education, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar and M.P.C. Autonomous College, Baripada, Odisha.
- ❖ Total of 80 number of samples were considered for collected data.
- ❖ The data was collected by using life skill Awareness Scale.
- ❖ The students pursuing B.Ed. Arts and Science stream only.
- ❖ The study is confined two institutions under self-finance mode.

10. CONCLUSION

Life skills development enables the adolescents to translate knowledge, attitude and their wellbeing conduct, such as acquiring the ability to reduce particular risk behaviour and embrace healthy behaviour that enhance their lives general, such as planned ahead, career planning, decision making, and forming positive relationships (WHO, 1997). Life skills are skills to manage genuine and saw the dangers that stand up to a man's life. Life skills enable adolescents to strengthen their overall development and add to the inspiration and skills to create and keep healthy behaviour. By empowering the school, students and adolescents in the household exercises they are empowered to reinforce their life skills. Life skills are very important competency everyone should have. It can be imported to the students through teachers only. So, it is need of the hour for the teachers to get familiar with life skills. This study reveals that both 1st year and 2nd year student teachers have same level of life skill awareness. Gender, Stream and Exposures are not the determining variables to influence the level of life skill awareness. So, it is important for teacher education courses to have life skills in the curriculum. So that it can be imported to the students effectively.

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