



Influence of Personal Variables on Core Affective Life Skills of Adolescents

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Abstract

This study was conducted to find out the influence of personal variables on core affective life skills of adolescents. Sample comprised of 544 adolescents including 292 girls and 252 boys. Life skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) developed by Dr. R. Subasree, and Dr. A. Radhakrishnan Nair was used to assess the levels of life skills. Questionnaire was used to find out the personal variable. The result revealed that order of birth and family income has significant influence on interpersonal relationship dimension of life skills. Gender, number of siblings and family type has no significant influence on core affective life skills.

Keywords: Life skills, Adolescence, Empathy, Interpersonal relationship and Coping with emotions, Coping with stress.

Introduction

Life skills are the skills necessary for successful living. Life skills enable people to adapt and master their life situations at home, school, work, and other context of life. Life skills have been defined in various way as follows: “Personal and social skills required for young people to function confidently and competently with themselves, with other people and with the wider community”¹. Whereas UNICEF² 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. They are classified in to two main broad category Core Cognitive and Core Affective Life Skills. The Core affective life skills consisting of four core life skills such as: Empathy, Interpersonal relationship and Coping with emotions and Coping with stress.

Defining of Core Affective Life Skills: Empathy: Empathy is the ability to put oneself in the other person position, even in a situation, which we are not familiar with. It help us to understand and accept others the way they are. It helps to improve social interactions, in varied situations.

Interpersonal relationships: Interpersonal relationship skills help us to develop and maintain positive and healthy relationship with others.

Coping with emotions: Coping with emotions involves recognizing emotions in ourselves and others, being aware of how emotions influence behavior, and being able to respond to emotions appropriately.

Coping with stress: Coping with stress is recognizing the sources of stress in our lives, recognizing how this affects us, and acting in ways that help to control our levels of stress.

Significance of the Study: Adolescence is a period of heightened emotionality. Stanley hall described this stage as a period of ‘Storm and stress’. He saw adolescence as a period of intense, fluctuating emotions. It is a period marked by severe psychological and emotional stresses³. Adolescence is the time of increased self-awareness, self-identity, self-consciousness, pre-occupation with image, and concern with social acceptance⁴. It is a period of physical and psychological maturity, when an individual is expected to prepare for adulthood by replacing childhood attitudes and behaviours with socially responsible behaviours like those of an adult. One of the most important central developmental tasks in adolescence is to acquire emotional control and to develop necessary skills for maintaining good interpersonal relationship. In adolescence exploration of self and new found independence at times, results in feelings of stress, anxiety and uncertainty. The involvement of adolescents in high risk activities such as alcohol, tobacco and drug abuse, delinquency, poor academic performance, dropping out, raising suicide rates is moreover due to the lack of skills necessary for coping with the developmental tasks of the adolescence /adulthood. So they need life skills especially core affective skills in this crucial stage of transition.

Review of Related Literature: Veena Suresh and Vivek Subramoniam⁵ studied the Life Skills Education in School Setting and found that 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. 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

Arpeeta B.⁶ found that after an intervention on conflict resolution majority of students’ conflict resolution style shifted

from Competing Shark to collaborating Owl after the intervention programme. The paper concludes that Win-Win approach is an ideal vehicle to create a more peaceful world where youth become agents for change and thus it gives them the skills that will assist in achieving peaceful constructive societies of tomorrow.

Christy Mekala V.⁷ found that the correlation between life skills and suicidal ideation was significant. When the life skill is low, there is increase in the risk of suicidal ideation and vice versa.

Khera S. and Khosla S.⁸ conducted a study on 500 adolescents studying in secondary classes of sarvodaya schools situated in South Delhi under gone for YUVA Skill Learning Programme and Core Life Skills (Core Affective and Core Cognitive Life Skills). The Major findings of the study that there is a positive co-relation between Core Affective Life Skill and Self Concept of adolescents which means those who possess these essential skills are better confident in all aspects.

Irshad K.⁹ conducted a study to find out effect of Life Skills Training on Mental Well-Being and Self-Esteem among Vulnerable Adolescents. The results of the study indicate that life skills training have significant effect on the positive mental health of the vulnerable adolescents.

Joseph and Vasanth¹⁰ revealed that life skill training has positive significant influence on emotional intelligence.

Mousami S., Salma A. and Smriti O.¹¹ explored the influence of life skills training on early adolescence. They found a significant relationship between positive wellbeing in early adolescence and life skills training. The finding also proves gender difference exist while using generic life skills. Additionally the study found socio-economic differences exist that “upper middle class and below poverty line class has showed difference in influence of life skills training in early adolescence”.

Rao et al.¹² analysed the importance of Life Skills Education (LSE) in terms of behaviour modification of juvenile delinquents. Results showed that life skills programme helped them to strengthen their personalities. Behavioural changes are happenings among the boys who were trained and criminal propensity came down and morality increased.

Pooja Yadav and Naved Iqbal¹³ studied the impact of life skills training on adolescents. They found significant positive influence of life skill training on self-esteem, emotional adjustment, educational adjustment, total adjustment and empathy. The findings also revealed that empathy and interpersonal sensitivity can be used as effective ‘tools’ for adjusting delinquent or disturbed young people to schooling.

Objectives of the Study: This study has been taken up with following objectives, To study the gender differences in life skills among adolescents. To study the influence of order of

birth on life skills of adolescents. To study the influence of number of siblings on life skills of adolescents. To study the influence of family type on life skills of adolescents. To study the influence of Family income on life skills of Adolescents.

Methodology

Ex-post-facto research design was adopted for conducting this study. Simple random sampling procedure was used to collect sample of 544 students studying in I and II year, including 292 female and 252 male. Life skill Assessment Scale (LSAS) developed and standardized by Dr. R. Subasree, and Dr. A. Radhakrishnan Nair¹⁴ was used for the study.

Results and Discussion

Influence of ‘Gender’ on Life Skills: The influence of Gender on life skills is investigated. The students are divided into 2 groups, i. Male, ii. Female. The following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis-1: There would be no significant influence of Gender on life skills of Adolescents. The hypothesis is tested using ‘t’ technique and the results are presented in the following Table-1.

It is clear from the Table-1 that the calculated ‘t’ values are less than the table value of ‘t’ (1.96) for 542 df at 0.05 level. Hence the hypothesis is accepted at 0.05 levels. It is concluded that Gender has no significant influence on Life skill of Adolescents. The results are similar to the findings Prakash and Nirmala Devi S.¹⁵ that there is no significant difference in their Life skills with respect to Gender. Whereas Richa, Sheela Shanta¹⁶ found that Girls were comparatively better than boys in overall life skills and its aspects and significant differences were found in overall life skills, interpersonal-relationship skills, critical thinking and effective communication

Influence of ‘Order of Birth’ on Life Skills: The influence of ‘Order of Birth’ on Life skills was investigated. The Adolescents were divided in to 3 groups, i. First born, ii. Second born, iii. Later born. The following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis 2: There would be no significant influence of ‘Order of Birth’ on life skills of Adolescents. The hypothesis is tested using ANOVA and the results are presented in the Table-2.

In Table-2 value of ‘f’ for (2,541) df is 3.01, 4.65 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. It is clear from the above table that the calculated ‘f’ values are less for all the dimensions except Interpersonal relationship (7.362). Hence ‘Hypothesis-2’ is rejected at 0.01 levels. It is concluded that Order of birth has significant influence on Interpersonal relationship dimension of Life skill of Adolescents. The mean score for interpersonal relationship dimension of second born is significantly higher than third and later born

Table-1
Influence of ‘Gender’ on core affective life skills

Dimensions of Life Skills	Gender	No. of observations	Mean value	Standard deviation	‘t’ value	Level of significance
Empathy	Male	252	37.80	4.907	0.057	@
	Female	292	37.82	4.992		
Interpersonal Relationship	Male	252	36.97	5.390	0.188	@
	Female	292	36.88	5.089		
Coping with Emotions	Male	252	34.40	4.829	0.531	@
	Female	292	34.17	4.904		
Coping with Stress	Male	252	23.83	5.493	-0.219	@
	Female	292	23.93	5.297		

Table-2
Influence of ‘Order of Birth’ on Life skills

Dimensions of Life Skills	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	‘F’ value	Level of significance
Empathy	Between Groups	42.019	2	21.009	0.858	@
	Within Groups	13253.480	541	24.498		
	Total	13295.498	543			
Interpersonal Relationship	Between Groups	392.900	2	196.450	7.362	**
	Within Groups	14435.857	541	26.684		
	Total	14828.757	543			
Coping with emotion	Between Groups	66.050	2	33.025	1.397	@
	Within Groups	12791.036	541	23.643		
	Total	12857.086	543			
Coping with stress	Between Groups	26.920	2	13.460	0.463	@
	Within Groups	15711.240	541	29.041		
	Total	15738.160	543			

Influence of ‘Number of Siblings’ on Life Skills: The influence of ‘Number of siblings’ on Life skills was investigated. The adolescents were divided into 3 groups, 1) 0 (single child), 2) 1-2 sibling, 3) 3 and more siblings. The following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis 3: There would be no significant influence of ‘Number of siblings’ on life skills of Adolescents. The hypothesis is tested using ANOVA and the results are presented in the Table-3.

Influence of ‘Family Type’ on Life Skills: The influence of ‘Family Type’ on Life skills was investigated. The Adolescents were divided into 3 groups, i. Single parent family, ii. Nuclear family, iii. Joint family. The following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis-4: There would be no significant influence of ‘Family Type’ on life skills of Adolescents. The hypothesis is tested using ANOVA and the results are presented in the Table-4.

Influence of ‘Family Income’ on Life Skills: The influence of ‘Family Income’ on Life skills was investigated. The

Adolescents were divided into 5 groups 1) Up to 5000, 2) 5001-10000, 3) 10001-20000, 4) 20000 -40000 5) 40000 and above. The following hypothesis is formulated.

Hypothesis 5: There would be no significant influence of ‘family income’ on life skills of Adolescents. The hypothesis is tested using ANOVA and the results are presented in the Table-5.

In Table-3 value of ‘f’ for (2,541) df is 3.01, 4.65 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance It is observed from the above table that the calculated ‘f’ values for all the dimensions of life skills. Hence ‘Hypothesis 3’ is accepted. It is concluded that Number of siblings has no significant influence on Life skills of Adolescents.

In Table-4 value of ‘f’ for (2,541) df is 3.01, 4.65 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance It is observed from the above table that the calculated ‘f’ values for all the dimensions is not greater than the table value. Hence ‘Hypothesis 4’ is accepted. It is concluded that Family type has no significant influence on Life skills of Adolescents.

Table-3
Influence of ‘Number of siblings’ on Life skills

Dimensions of Life Skills	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	‘F’ value	Level of significance
Empathy	Between Groups	44.646	2	22.323	0.911	@
	Within Groups	13250.852	541	24.493		
	Total	13295.498	543			
Interpersonal Relationship	Between Groups	90.045	2	45.023	1.653	@
	Within Groups	14738.712	541	27.243		
	Total	14828.757	543			
Coping with emotion	Between Groups	30.902	2	15.451	0.652	@
	Within Groups	12826.184	541	23.708		
	Total	12857.086	543			
Coping with stress	Between Groups	2.817	2	1.408	0.048	@
	Within Groups	15735.343	541	29.086		
	Total	15738.160	543			

Table-4
Influence of ‘Family Type’ on Life skills

Dimensions of Life Skills	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	‘F’ value	Level of significance
Empathy	Between Groups	14.698	2	7.349	0.299	@
	Within Groups	13280.801	541	24.549		
	Total	13295.498	543			
Interpersonal Relationship	Between Groups	22.573	2	11.287	0.412	@
	Within Groups	14806.184	541	27.368		
	Total	14828.757	543			
Coping with emotion	Between Groups	.647	2	.324	0.014	@
	Within Groups	12856.439	541	23.764		
	Total	12857.086	543			
Coping with stress	Between Groups	59.459	2	29.730	1.026	@
	Within Groups	15678.701	541	28.981		
	Total	15738.160	543			

Table-5
Influence of ‘Family Income’ on Life skills

Dimensions of Life Skills	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	‘F’ value	Level of significance
Empathy	Between Groups	106.925	4	26.731	1.092	@
	Within Groups	13188.574	539	24.469		
	Total	13295.498	543			
Interpersonal Relationship	Between Groups	263.441	4	65.860	2.433	*
	Within Groups	14608.328	539	27.103		
	Total	14871.769	543			
Coping with emotion	Between Groups	75.944	4	18.986	0.801	@
	Within Groups	12781.143	539	23.713		
	Total	12857.086	543			
Coping with stress	Between Groups	151.120	4	37.780	1.306	@
	Within Groups	15587.040	539	28.918		
	Total	15738.160	543			

The Table-5 value of 'f' for (4,540) df is 2.39, 3.35 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. It is clear from the above table that the calculated 'f' values are less for all the dimension of Life skill except Interpersonal Relationship dimensions. Hence the 'Hypothesis 5' is rejected at 0.05 levels. It is concluded that family income has significant influence on Interpersonal Relationship dimension of Life skill of Adolescents. The study by Mousami, Salma and Smriti (2012) found that personal-economic differences exist; "upper middle class and below poverty line class has showed difference in influence of life skills training in early adolescence".

Conclusion

This study was an attempt to find out the influence of Personal variables on core affective life skills of adolescents. It can be concluded from the findings that order of birth, family income has significant influence on interpersonal relationship dimension of life skill of adolescents. As adolescence is a period of increased potential and greater vulnerability, learning life skills especially core affective life skills is a necessity to facilitate a complete and integrated development of individuals to function effectively as social beings. Teaching affective life skills in our day to day life would promote the psychosocial wellbeing of children and adolescents.

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