



Short Communication

Empowering high school children in life skill education in Imphal City, Manipur India

Hemita Keithellakpam and K. Purnima

Department of Extension Education and Communication and Research Centre, Smt. V.H.D Central Institute of Home Science (Autonomous),
Seshadri Road, Bangalore-560001, India
hemita88@gmail.com

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Abstract

UNICEF defined life skills as “a behaviour or behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: knowledge, attitude and skills”. Life skills include psychological competencies and interpersonal skill that help adolescence to make decisions, solve problems, think critically, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others, and cope with managing their lives in a healthy and productive manner. Life Skill Education helps the student to enter into a healthy relationship with the society and also helps in various skills like choosing friends, carrier developing, leadership, responsibility, making relationships, following discipline, effective communication, interpersonal skill, understanding one’s needs, solving problems etc. Adolescence, the transition between childhood and adult life, is one of the most dynamic stages of human development which go with physical, mental and emotional changes. Hence, the investigator finds it an immense and immediate necessity to empower high school children studying at Government and private schools in Imphal City, Manipur, India with Life Skill Education as a part of her Ph. D research work.

Keywords: Life skills, knowledge, attitude, psychological.

Introduction

Adolescence is a phase separate from early childhood and adulthood¹. It is a time that needs special attention and protection¹. These include physical, mental and emotional changes such as mood swing, aggression, anxiety, depression, loneliness, feeling uncomfortable, sadness, fear, irritated, loss of temper etc. During this period of adolescence, they start looking for new experience, searching for identity, seeking more independence and responsibility, and get more influence by friends. Many unhealthy behaviours develop during adolescence such as alcoholism, smoking, drug abuse, anti-social activities etc. to a large extent.

According to WHO, Life Skills has been defined as “the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life”². The ten core of life skills, self-awareness, empathy, critical thinking, creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, effective communication, interpersonal relationship, coping with stress and coping with emotion laid down by WHO².

Life skills are essentially those abilities that help to promote physical, mental and emotional well-being and competence in young people as they face the realities of life³. Life skill education empower the students to analyse the situation in a positive way and manage their life from stressful situation,

emotion and fear. Young people need to be helped with life skills essential for wisely navigating these life’s waves to maturity. Imparting life skill education in adolescents would help them to know the facts about themselves, their dreams, dignity, own relationships, emotions etc. Developing life Skill Education helps the student to enter into a healthy relationship with the society and also help in various skills like choosing friends, carrier developing, leadership, responsibility, making relationships, following discipline, effective communication, interpersonal skill, understanding one’s needs, solving problems etc.

Studies related to Life skill

Aarti Bardhan and Radhakrishnan Nair conducted a study on “Life Skills Education: A Strategy for Handling Adolescents’ Risk Behaviour”. The study proved that with continuous life skills training along with structured counselling helped in developing positive changes among the children with problem behaviour. It also helped the children to develop friendly relationship with teachers, peers and parents⁴.

Sreehari R and A Radhakrishnan Nair stated that a study was conducted on “Measuring life skill of school going adolescents”. The major finding of the study suggests that there is no gender or age difference in life skills among school going adolescents⁵.

Sandya Khera and Shivani Khosla conducted a study on “A study of core life skills of adolescents in relation to their self-concept developed through Yuva school life skill programme”. The major findings of the study were that there is a positive correlation between core affective life skill and self-concept of adolescents which means those who possess these essential skills have better confidence in all aspects⁶.

Need for the study

Adolescence is a period of transition with significant changes happening in different facets of a person's life⁷. It is also a time for them to educate, well manner, well informed about their knowledge and skills. But it is sad to recognize that most of the adolescents are incapable to use their inner skills in a proper way due to lack guidance, motivation and inappropriate environment. In this connection, life skill education helps to develop the values, attitude and skills among adolescents that will enable them to know their self, helping them in making decision and solving their problems to lead a better life. Hence, the research scholar felt it an apt and crucial need to take up this study and with a good intervention program, educate not only the children but also their parents who play a pivotal role in the lives of the young children.

Aim of the study: The study aims at empowering high school children studying at government and private schools in Imphal city towards life skill education.

Objectives of the study: The objective of the study was to know the existing knowledge of the children about the concept of life skills; to understand and explore the attitude and practiced by the children toward life skill; to develop an educational module for intervention using appropriate techniques and teaching materials to empower the children in life skill education; to differentiate the knowledge, attitude and practice of life skills between the children who underwent intervention and those who did not, between the students of Government and Private schools and between boys and girls.

Hypothesis: The high school children do not have adequate knowledge about the concept of life skills; the children do not have positive attitude towards life skills and do not practice in their day-to-day life; there is no difference in the knowledge attitude and practice of life skills between government and private schools, between the intervened and non-intervened children and between boys and girls.

Methodology

The study will be carried out in nine phases.

Survey of the schools: A survey of Government and private schools in Imphal city has been done of which ten Government and ten private schools will be selected at i.e., a total of twenty schools. Out of these schools 2 government and 2 private schools will be selected from Imphal East and Imphal West.

Sample identification: Boys and Girls studying at the high school level (9th standard) in the 20 schools chosen will be selected for the study.

Tool development: An appropriate tool to study the children's knowledge, attitude and practice of life skills has been developed.

Pilot study: It will be conducted on 10% of the sample equal to the main study to study the feasibility of the tool.

Pre-test: Ninth Standard children of all the Government and Private schools taken for the study will be conducted using the developed tool to collect information about their existing knowledge, attitude and practice followed regarding life skills.

Module development: After evaluating the existing knowledge, attitude and practices followed by the children, they will be intervened to educate them in gaining more knowledge, to develop positive attitude and better practices with regard to life skills.

Intervention program: The educational module of the intervention program will be conducted in 2 government and 2 private school of the total sample of schools identified through the above tool using appropriate teaching techniques and teaching materials.

After the intervention, an intensive two day workshop will be conducted and an exhibition put up by the children, for their parents and teachers.

Post test: The developed tool will be re-administered to the children to evaluate their knowledge, attitudes and practices followed in life skills. Data analysis of pre and post-test will be done to study the impact of the intervention program in strengthening the knowledge, positive attitude and better practices of life skill among the adolescents. The intervention program will be re-evaluate using the same tool, keeping a gap of one month between the intervention and re-evaluation.

Statistical analysis: Appropriate statistical analysis like chi square and co-efficient of co-relation will be made to analyse the data based on the objectives and hypotheses formulated.

Conclusion

The findings of the present study will provide a scope to understand other government and private schools to empower many more children with life skills, giving them hands on experience about good and bad experiences in life which will make them stronger and give them the capability to face and solve different types of problems and live life a better, healthy and wholesome way.

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