

A STUDY OF LIFE SKILLS OF ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract:

Life skills are the skills which help adolescents to prepare them to face the various challenges of life. Adolescence is the period of rapid physical, emotional, and social changes. This is a period of taking decisions about which subject to choose. As this is a stepping stone for adolescents which helps in to prepare them in independent future adults. Multiple streams are offered to the students at class eleventh to the adolescents to give the opportunity to chase their dreams according to their interest. This study is an attempt to find out whether there is any difference in the life skills of adolescents on the basis of the stream they choose. The study consist a sample of 432 adolescents. Stratified random sampling was used to collect the sample. Data was collected from the Private senior secondary schools of North West zone of Delhi. Self made rating scale of life skills having reliability .79 and .82 and validity .75 was administered in the adolescents. Mean value, SD and T Value was calculated to analyze the result. Result shows that tear was found1. Significant difference between the mean life skills score of students of arts stream and commerce stream.2. There is no significant difference between the mean life skills score of students of art stream and science stream. 3. There is no significant difference between the mean life skills score of students of Commerce and Science stream.4. There is no significant difference between the mean life skills scores of male and female adolescents. 5. There is a significant difference between the mean life skills scores of urban and rural adolescents.

Key words: Adolescents, life skills

Introduction

Each and every human being goes through a lot of developmental changes. From childhood to old age a person succeeds or fails in life also depends on the fact that how skillfully he handles the day to day challenges of life. Different stages of life consist of different challenges. Thus every stage requires different skills to learn so that one can grow up as skillful individual capable enough to deal with every problem of life. These skills are termed as life skills. Life skills play an important role in the life of adolescents where he has to face various uncertainties. Life skills for adolescents are very important not just because they have to face various challenges but also because they are the future adults of a country.

*Just at the age 'twist boy and youth
When thought is speech and speech is truth'*

-Sir, Walter Scott, "Mannion"

*Oh the innocent girl
In her maiden teens
Knows perfectly well
What everything means.*

-D.H. Lawrence, "The Jeune fille"

The above lines by two distinguished literatures have been said for adolescents. One is calling it an age of twist while other calls it a period where knowledge is at its best. Literatures, Educationists, Psychologists, Physicians, sociologists, and that every community which is directly or indirectly related to the studies of human, human being or humanity have surely said about or thought about one period of life and that period is 'adolescent' Adolescent development has become an enormous, complex field. This period of life is loaded with many changes. These

Changes affect the personality of an individual. Adolescents have to deal first and foremost with 'I, me and myself'. The rhythm of life and the meaning of the song of the life all become very different as well get disturbed for an individual when this transition from childhood to adolescent takes place in life.

Starting first the biological changes which comes with a bang are the growth spurt, hormonal changes, and sexual maturation that come with puberty. Hormonal changes disturb the biological clock of adolescence. It becomes habitual for them even to sleep at late and rising late in morning, paying more attention to their physique etc.

Cognitive changes make adolescence more egocentric as they become more idealistic with more abstract and logical reasoning and thinking. They try to prove and even think themselves unique and invulnerable. They start taking decisions and hence develop quality of decision making.

Socio emotional changes bring a quest in them to be independent. It raises their conflict with peers and parents. They become more self-disclosure among their friends circle than the family members. Their mood swings make them more restless. Their consciousness to prove themselves and stand out best in the crowd becomes a serious affair for them. Attraction towards opposite sex is the main feature of their social change. This change also comes in them due to hormonal changes.

Aristotle, the famous philosopher called the years from 14 to 21 'young manhood', He emphasized the adolescents ability to make choices. G.S. Hall the founder of Development psychology viewed adolescent as a period of storm and stress, a time of conflict and upheaval.

Various factors play important role in influencing the characteristics of adolescent development. A number of social, cultural, economical factors play vital role in influencing the development of adolescence. Among these factors also degree of impact has been varied from time to time. For example earlier, urbanization and industrialization of the world had a great influence on adolescence. Now in the second decade of 21st century technology has influenced the adolescence at large. It has affected their way of thinking, behaving and acting. It has given a new definition to their intelligence and emotions. Life skills Programs helps to develop capacity of decision making and other such skills which help into make them more skillful individuals in order to adapt their surroundings. A primary goal is to promote their psychological as well as physical well being.

Significance of the study

In the twenty first century Educational system of India has undergone through extreme changes. Now, education system has become more student-centred. Various reforms in education has rebuilt the classrooms. Expectations from teachers have increased. Teaching is not simply about content and curriculum but it is about developing ability in the students so that they can become the competent citizens of a developing country. In the process of making educations system more upgraded various terminologies like value education, moral education, education for all were added in the curriculum. Lessons in the textbooks have been also divided into various parts like related to the understanding, knowledge, analysis, etc. of the students. Among all these new patterns 'Life Skills' have been also included in the curriculum after 2005.

NCERT and CBSE upgraded the curriculum gave special attention to life skills development which can be seen in the textbooks of NCERT at elementary, middle, secondary and higher secondary levels. Lessons of the text books have been linked with the life skills development in the learners. While evaluating the students' scholars and non-scholastics performance their life skills are also evaluated as a part of evaluation system.

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan has also said that, "Education is not merely a means of learning a living, nor it is only a citizenship. It is initiation into the life of spirit, a training of virtue". Education develops all the capabilities in the individuals all the perfection of which process. Education helps in to develop individual's intellect socialization, emotions, etc. which makes the individuals humane and competent.

Life skills are the skills that prepare an individual to face the difficulties of life and adjust accordingly. Adolescent is an age where development becomes rapid due to hormonal changes and due to curiosity to learn. This is also a stage of risk taking because adolescents are always curious to learn new and do experimentation with their experiences.

This study is an attempt to find out the life skills among adolescents studying in class eleventh. The study will give an answer to the question whether there lies any difference among adolescents' life skills on the basis of the stream they choose. Findings of the study will help to find difference between Life skills of adolescents on the gender basis and area basis.

A wide range of adolescents will be covered in the study. The results of the study will help to know the difference between the life skills of adolescence of different streams. The result of which may help the educators to upgrade the environment of teaching and curriculum. Which may help the educators to frame a base further to find the reasons if differences exist?

Such type of study will help into provide a proper understanding of the life skills among adolescents, to the teachers. This will help the teachers to understand the changes in the adolescents and deal with any problematic situation.

Statement of the problem

A study of the Life Skills of the Adolescents

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the difference between the mean life skills scores of students having art stream and Commerce stream.
2. To find out the difference between the mean life skills scores of students having arts stream and Science stream.
3. To find out the difference between the mean life skills scores of students having Commerce stream and Science stream.
4. To find out the difference between the mean life skills scores of male and female adolescents.
5. To find out the difference between the mean life skills scores of urban and rural adolescents.

Hypothesis of the study

1. There is no significant difference between the mean life skills scores of students having art stream and Commerce stream.

2. There is no significant difference between the mean life skills scores of students having arts stream and Science stream.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean life skills scores of students having arts stream and Science stream.
4. There is no significant difference between the mean life skills scores of male and female adolescents.
5. There is no significant difference between the mean life skills scores of urban and rural adolescents.

Operational Definition of the related terms

a) Adolescent

Stanley hall (1904) coined the phrase 'stress and storm' in reference to adolescents his definition concentrates on the quest an adolescent face during this stage. Conger and Peterson (1984) defined this stage as the stage of growth and spurt. This definition is more about the physical change an adolescent have to face because of puberty. Rousseau relied on a stormy metaphor in describing adolescence: "As the roaring of the waves precedes the tempest, so the murmur of rising passions announces the tumultuous change.... Keep your hand upon the helm," he advised parents, "or all is lost". Stage of adolescents is neither limited to physical changes nor to the mental quest this stage is characterized by major psychophysical, emotional, cognitive and social changes among an adolescents this stage starts with the end of childhood and ends with the starting of adulthood. In the present study investigator will use the following definition of adolescence:

“Adolescence is a period between 10 and 19 years of age, which broadly corresponds to the onset of puberty and the legal age for adult hood”.

-World Health Organisation

Adolescent is a period full of surprises for an individual. This period starts with the end of childhood and onset of puberty, after a long significant period of changes due to hormonal changes it ends with the starting of adulthood. This period results in physical, mental, social, cognitive and emotional changes. These changes often results in mood swings in the adolescents. During this period of development adolescence refines their choices and prefers to be independent to find the answers of their questions. Hence Adolescence is the stage of surprises. A lot of skills are developed during this stage as adolescence face a lot of changes in them and when they cannot ask questions to others they directly or indirectly develop various skills in themselves to adjust in the environment. Hence it is very important to channelize their mental and emotional faculties in a better way so that they can concentrate well and also can discriminate between right and wrong, healthy and unhealthy.

b) Life Skills

UNICEF has defined life skills as “changing of behavior to address a balance of behavior in the three areas i.e. knowledge, attitude and skills.” Life skills are about adjusting in the life’s every situation skillfully. In the present study life skills have been studied in context of the following operational definition .

“Life skills are the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life”.

-World Health Organisation

Life skills direct an adolescent to make healthy choices. For an adolescent life skills are very much important for shaping his/her future persona as this is more a matter of choice than fixed criteria for learning. Presences of life skills in an adolescent help him to be physically fit, mentally strong, and emotionally stable. Which in turn enlightens his/her life with a positive outlook and a self made secure environment. Thus life skills are nothing but the skillful art of handling challenges of life with an aim of leading a healthy (physically, mentally, emotionally, socially healthy) life. various life skills are (i) problem solving i.e. skill to solve the problems of day to day life (ii) critical thinking i.e. skill of reasoning and analyzing the facts in an objective manner (iii) communication skills (iv) self awareness (v) coping with stress i.e. skill of balancing the self in diverse situation or in any trauma situation (vi) decision making i.e. skill of making best choice among the present options (including goal setting) (vii) creative thinking(including value clarification) i.e. skill of looking and thinking beyond the available alternatives and thus results in something novel (viii) interpersonal relationship skills(including assertiveness)i.e. skill of maintaining social personal relations in a harmonious manner as well ending them constructively (ix) empathy i.e. skill of being sensitive about any ones problem and sympathizing with the person (x) coping with emotions i.e. skill of balancing and understanding the emotions of others and of the self.

Research Methodology (Sample, tool used, statistical technique used)

For the following study survey method was used to collect the data from a sample of 432 adolescents. Stratified random sampling was used to collect the data. The data was collected from the 8 Private Co.Ed senior secondary schools of North West Zone of Delhi. Self made rating scale was used to collect the data. Five point Life skills rating scale for adolescents' consisted of 60 situational statements. Reliability of the rating scale from test retest reliability was found .79 and from split half reliability it was found .82. Content validity as per Average Content Coefficient was found 0.75. Adolescents were to rate the statements according to their experiences on a five point rating scale.

The data was collected from adolescents studying in class eleventh. The sample consist of 216 male 216 female adolescents of which 144 adolescents were from art stream, 144 adolescents were from commerce stream and 144 adolescents were from science stream. The permission was taken from the plrincipals' of the respective schools to collect the data. Rapport was build up with the adolescents' before collecting the data. After that life skills rating scale was given to them and directions to answer the rating scale was given to the adolescents. Though there was no time limit but they were instructed to answer the rating scale as soon as possible.

Statistical techniques used for results analysis were: Mean, standard deviation and t-test.

Delimitation

1. The Present study is delimited to the North West Zone of Delhi.
2. The Present study is delimited to the Private Schools of Delhi.
3. The present study is delimited to the students of class 11th.

Result Analysis sand Interpretation

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean life skills scores of students having art stream and Commerce stream.

TABLE: 1

Table showing difference between mean life skills scores of students having art stream and commerce stream

Streams of Adolescents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated 't' Value	Tablet 't' Value	Degree of Freedom
Life Skills of students having art stream	144	82	17.70	2.57	2.58 at 0.01 level	286
Life Skills of students having Commerce stream	144	76.77	16.95		1.96 at 0.05 level	

Interpretation

The obtained 't' value with degree of freedom 286 is 2.57 which is higher than the 't' value at 0.05 level and 0.01 level i.e. 1.96 and 2.58 respectively. It shows that the null hypothesis is rejected and there is a significant difference between the mean life skills score of students of arts stream and commerce stream. The results reveals that life skills of students having art stream is higher than the life skills of adolescents having commerce stream.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the mean life skills scores of students having arts stream and Science stream.

TABLE: 2

Table showing difference between mean life skills scores of students having arts stream and Science stream

Streams of Adolescents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated 't' Value	Tablet 't' Value	Degree of Freedom
Life Skills of adolescents having arts stream	144	82	17.70	1.04	2.58 at 0.01 level	286
Life Skills of adolescents having Science stream	144	80.26	17.79		1.96 at 0.05 level	

Interpretation

The obtained 't' value with degree of freedom 286, is .1.04, is lower than the table or 't' value at 0.05 level and 0.01 level i.e. 1.96 and 2.58 respectively. It shows that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between the mean life skills score of students of

art stream and science stream. The result shows that the life skills of students having art stream and life skills of students having science stream does not differ significantly.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the mean life skills scores of students having arts stream and Science stream

TABLE: 3

Table showing difference between the mean life skills scores of students having Commerce stream and Science stream.

Streams of Adolescents	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated 't' Value	Tablet 't' Value	Degree of Freedom
Life Skills of students having Commerce stream	144	76.77	16.95	1.71	2.58 at 0.01 level	286
Life Skills of students having Science stream	144	80.26	17.79		1.96 at 0.05 level	

Interpretation

The obtained 't' value with degree of freedom 286, is 1.71 is lower than the table or 't' value at 0.05 level and 0.01 level i.e. 1.96 and 2.58 respectively. It shows that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between the mean life skills score of students of Commerce and Science stream.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference between the mean life skills scores of male and female adolescents.

TABLE: 4

Table showing Difference between mean life skills scores of male and female adolescents

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated 't' Value	Tablet 't' Value	Degree of Freedom
Life Skills of male adolescents	216	78.93	16.9	0.89	2.58 at 0.01 level	430
Life Skills of female adolescents	216	80.43	18.21		1.96 at 0.05 level	

Interpretation

The obtained 't' value with degree of freedom 286, is 0.89 is lower than the table or 't' value at 0.05 level and 0.01 level i.e. 1.96 and 2.58 respectively. It shows that the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between the mean life skills scores of male and female adolescents.

Hypothesis 5: There is significant difference between the mean life skills scores of urban and rural adolescents.

TABLE: 5

Table showing difference between mean life skills scores of urban and rural adolescents

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated 't' Value	Tablet 't' Value	Degree of Freedom
Life Skills of urban adolescents	216	81.26	14.69	2.33	2.58 at 0.01 level	430
Life Skills of rural adolescents	216	78.09	13.69		1.96 at 0.05 level	

Interpretation

The obtained 't' value with degree of freedom 430, is 2.33 is lower than the table or 't' value at 0.01 level which is 2.58 and higher than the value at 0.05 level which is 1.96. It shows that the null hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level and there is a significant difference between the mean life skills scores of urban and rural adolescents. The results reveals that the life skills among adolescents studying in the schools of urban areas are higher than the life skills among adolescents studying in school of rural areas.

Educational Implications

On the basis of the analysis of the above results it can be concluded that

- School located in the rural areas should focus more in inculcating lifes skills among adolescents. More life skills program should be organized.
- Adolescents should be indulged in such activities where they can learn to face challenging situations.
- Holistic approach of teaching and learning should be used.
- Adolescents should be given education about the significance of life skills.
- Parents and teachers should create such programs for adolescents where they can express themselves and their energy of doing the task can be channelized properly.
- Curriculum frame workers should prepare activity based curriculum.
- Teachers should be given in service training about life skills and adolescence.
- Teachers should update their knowledge. It will help the teachers to deal with the problem those adolescents face.

- Teachers should use multiple teaching learning methods , approaches and techniques to teach the adolescents.
- Schools can organize exchange programs.
- Seminars and workshops should also be organized for teachers as well for students. And all should be given equal opportunity to attend these.
- There should be equal treatment (rules ,regulations, guidelines etc.) for all the adolescents in the school . There should not be any biased behavior of the teachers or administrators towards adolescents having different streams. All should be treated equally.

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