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### EFFECTIVENESS OF LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

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#### Abstract

*Human beings pass through various stages of life span development. Among them, the youthhood as an incessant process carries unforgettable moments and advances remarkable changes in one's life. While, they are growing, they adopt and improve their life to be very confident and effective in facing the fluctuations. These changes postulate challenges and demands. Therefore, they are very constructive, positive and skilled in understanding their life. At the same time, they too are affected negatively which shatter their dreams and future endeavours. By understanding these changes and to address the issues among youth, good numbers of scientific solutions have been proposed by various experts. WHO (1999) points out that Life skill are one among, more effective and help them to grow in optimistic behaviour which supports the individuals to solve the challenges of life at all-time.*

*The main objective of this study is to find out the effectiveness of life skills development among 11<sup>th</sup> standard school students. The researcher plans to adopt Experimental research design by conducting pre and post interventional studies. The details of the paper will be discussed later.*

Key words: Life skills, Life skills Development, Youth, Effectiveness.

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## INTRODUCTION

Human beings pass through various phases of life span development. Among them the youth hood carries unforgettable moments and simultaneously processes remarkable changes in one's life. Under these circumstances, the world wide youth population draws more attention from all over the world. According to recent UN report 2016, India stands first in the world's largest youth population and plays significant role. More than 356 million youth with the age group between 10 to 24 years old is widely prevailing in India.

The United Nations has clearly defined that those who are in the age group 15 to 24 are considered to be youth but the National Youth Policy (NYP) includes all youth between the age group 13 to 35 years. For clear - cut specifications the age group was further classified into two groups, that is, 13-19 years and 20-35 years (National Youth Policy 2003). The current National Youth Policy has demarcated youth as those in the age group 15 to 29 years (National youth policy 2014).

Through the demarcation on youth has categorized for better understanding yet the fixation of age group is vary and the contextual, need based realities of each country and the continents remain in dissimilarities. Nevertheless, it is universally accepted that youth hood is a period of transition. It includes various phases such as: Physical, Psychological, Social, Spiritual and Economic dimensions which advocates constant changes in their lives.

## YOUTH IN TODAY'S CONTEXT

In the present scenario, Youth are having a lot of positive traits and having grown in practicing optimal behaviour in all spheres of life. The impact of Science and technology and the influences of post- modern trends have contributed more for the well-being of youth. The instant Growth in terms of education and various splendid performances of youth testifies their involvement and dedication in enriching oneself and the society at large. All these natural processes are serially leading the youth to adopt good position and paves way for self- promotive and self-supportive towards dependency. (IIPS 2010: Dinesh & Blinda 2014). Likewise there are countless optimistic achievements that tell upon their merits and successes. At the same time, we cannot deny the prevalence of certain significant risk factors which are threatening their future dreams and stands motionless as stumbling blocks in their endeavour on the other side. This is something detrimental and completely affects their personal and professional lives too. Their amusing attitudes and trialing behaviours such as: Smoking, Substance abuse, pre-marital contacts, addictions, unemployment, inefficiency, lack of interest, lack of involvement, lack of self-confidence, Psycho- social problems, Emotional burn-out and Suicidal indentation makes them to lose their potency and ultimately end up their life in dissatisfaction and frustration (Berk, 2007; Vranda and Rao, 2011). These highly risky behaviours are not only affecting the individual

but also create large extent of damages to the society.

### LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION

Taking into considerations of above all factors, a number of scientific solutions have been proposed by various experts. Among them, a long-standing life skills education program was given much emphasis and found to be culturally and developmentally more appropriate. It adequately evokes expected changes among youth in general and students in particular (WHO 1999; Rooth 2000; Joseph 2008; Bharath Srikala & Kishore Kumar K. V. 2014 & 2016).

### COMPONENTS OF LIFE SKILLS

The major and the most vital components of the Life Skills proposed by WHO (1999) are worth recording and adequate attention should be focused for their development during the adolescence period especially at the secondary school level. These components are:

1. **Decision Making** is the skill of taking effective decisions in life situations.
2. **Problem Solving** is the skill enabling to solve unresolved and tough problems.
3. **Creative thinking** is the skill of exploring the alternatives and various consequences of our actions or non-action.
4. **Critical Thinking** is the ability of the individual to analyze the information and experiences in an objective manner.
5. **Effective Communication** is the skill of expressing verbally and non-verbally in ways that are appropriate to the cultures and situations.
6. **Interpersonal Relationship Skills** is the skills of relating with others people in positively.
7. **Self-awareness** is the skill of understanding the characters, strengths, weaknesses, desires and dislikes.
8. **Empathy** is the skill of understanding other person as he or she is.
9. **Coping with Emotions** is the skill of identifying one's and others emotions and responding accordingly.
10. **Coping with stress** is the ability to analyze the sources and management of stress.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Dinesh & Belinda (2014)**, Importance of Life skills education for youth. The study suggested that the implementation of Life skills programs among youth in the school and college settings will reduce the problems of the youth.

**Belay Tefera Kibret (2016)**, Life skills program for youth: Justifications, foundations and contents. The paper argued the concerns and the necessity of LST programs and the importance of life skills for integrated growth among Ethiopian youth.

### THE NEED OF THE STUDY

By understanding the significance of Life skills education, the Educationalists, Social activists, Teachers, Professors and other active

professionals who are strenuously working for youth time and again speak about the importance, contribution, formation and wholistic development of life skills programs. The genuine emphasis on Life skills education along with an instant promotion among youth may help them to get sufficient strength and find meaning even in the unfavorable situations (Clarke, P. (2001; Veena Suresh 2014). Hence, there is a need to find out their present conditions and strengthen them by implementing life skills interventional programs.

### AIM

The aim is to find out the effectiveness of life skills development among XIth Standard School students through the development of academic, emotional and social skills.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the socio- demographic profile of the respondents.
2. To promote the benefits of Life skills by pre and post interventions.
3. To improve their potency by offering sessions on Life skills.
4. To offer suitable suggestions and recommendation and Social Work interventions.

### HYPOTHESES

1. There will be significant difference between High and Low Academic Skills among Students on their academic performance.
2. There will be significant difference between High and Low Emotional Skills

among Students on their emotional maturity.

3. There will be significant difference between High and Low Social Skills among Students on their Social interactions.
4. There will be a significant difference between the Pre and Post life skills intervention programme of the experimental group of students on Academic, Emotional and Social skills.
5. There will be a significant difference between the Experimental Group and the Control Group of students on their effectiveness of life skills development.

### OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

**Academic Skills:** Academic skills are a collection of study habits, learning strategies, and time management along with academic remediation and motivation. (Youth work's Vitamin E, 2002; Arbreton et al, 2005).

**Emotional skills:** Refers to the ability to deal with, manage, express and control one's emotional states, including anger, sadness, excitement, anxiety and joy. And the motional self-regulation is an important aspect of resilience.

**Social skills** Focuses on establishing and maintaining positive relationships with others, make responsible decisions in social events, and handling interpersonal situations constructively and effectively.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

Quasi-Experimental design was selected for this study. This study described the effectiveness of Life skills development among both experimental and control groups with pre and post interventions. Further the experimental group was given follow up sessions.

## UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY & SAMPLING

There were 100 students who are doing Eleventh standard at St. Mary's higher secondary School, Coimbatore was chosen for the study. Among them 50 students were selected as an experimental group by using simple random sampling, lottery method without replacement technique. The remaining 50 students were labelled as control group.

## TOOLS

Questionnaire method was used to collect data from the students. To understand and measure the effectiveness of life skills development the 50 items scale with 5 sub dimensions namely a) Search for Meaning, b) Mindfulness, c) Altruism, d) Ability to be inspired by a vision, e) Ability to face and use challenges, developed and standardized by Sunder Wilson (2016) was adopted.

## FINDINGS

- (82%) of the respondents were at the age of 16 and the remaining (18%) were above 16.
- (100%) of the respondents were doing their 11<sup>th</sup> Standard in English medium.
- A complete majority, (100%) of the respondents were from the urban settings.
- During the pre-interventional study More than half (56%) of the respondents had said that life skills education contributed to them where as in the post interventional study a complete majority (100%) of the respondents agreed that life skills education contributed wholesomely to their development.
- Concerning the development of Academic skills, the pre - interventional study showed that (62%) were able to achieve in their academic performance. after the intervention (99%) of the respondents showed their academic performance. Hence, the difference between before and after the interventions was (37%).
- With regard to Emotional skills, the pre-interventional study proved that only (42%) of the respondents were able to balance emotionally. After the intervention (91%) of the respondents responded that they were able to balance emotionally. Hence, there could identify (49%) difference between pre and post interventions.
- When it was studied about their Social skills, the pre - interventional study showed that more than half of the respondents (58%) were having social interaction. After the intervention, the post study proved that (89%) were improved in social interaction. Hence, the difference between pre and post was (31%).

8. In over all, it was identified that there could find significant development between experimental and control groups.

### SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION

1. To promote the importance of life skills education in the school environment, the social workers, the school mental health professionals, life skills educators, should join together and emphasis certain executional patterns with the intention of practicality.
2. There should be a strengthening of networks and private public partnership in teaching LSE.
3. There should be periodical trainings offered to the managers, teachers and the students with the help of Social workers.
4. The social workers must come forward to contribute more research oriented materials for better operation of life skills in the school environment.

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main aim of the study was to find out the effectiveness of life skills development among school students. From the study the conclusion was drawn that the intervention on Life skills education would bring changes in the life of the youth. At the same time, proper planning, allocating proper hour's periodical trainings on life skills education with the guidance of the professionals and the positive responses associated with initiatives from the part of management would surely serve the real purpose

of the inclusion of Life skills education in the school environment.

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