

Effectiveness of Life skills program on Emotional Intelligence in economically vulnerable Low resilient women students

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Abstract

Life skills Education meets the twin aims of any education system, namely to facilitate optimum development of human potential and to prepare students for life. The changing perspective of education in the light of the new education policy lays emphasis on enhancing the students' emotional capabilities besides the cognitive, social and ethical ones and developing life skills among students is one of the fundamental principles on which the NEP 2020 is based. The present study was conducted to find out the effect of the Life skills training program on emotional Intelligence. The participants were 34 women students aged between 18-25 years studying at the undergraduate level in the metropolis of Mumbai. They all belonged to the vulnerable low economic strata of society and were of low resilience. The results showed that there was a significant improvement in emotional intelligence ($t=p<.01$) after the life skills intervention. It shows that life skills training would be an effective way to increase emotional intelligence in women students from economically vulnerable groups. The limitation of the study is that the study did not have a comparable group of students who did not undergo training in life skills during the period.

Keywords: *New Education Policy, Life skills training, Emotional intelligence, Resilience, Vulnerability, Women Student*

Introduction: Life skills education meets the twin aims of any education system namely to facilitate optimum development of human potential and to prepare students for life. The changing perspective of education in the light of new education policy lays emphasis on

enhancing the students' emotional capabilities besides the cognitive, social and ethical ones and developing life skills among students is one of the fundamental principles on which the NEP 2020 is based.

WHO department of mental health defines life skills education as skill training designed to facilitate the practice and reinforcement of psychological skills in a customarily and developmentally appropriate way.

The ten core life skills delineated by the world health organizations are self-awareness, empathy, effective communication, interpersonal communications, problem solving, decision making, creative thinking, critical thinking coping with emotion and coping with stress. Life skills training is a kind of behaviour based psychological learning. The term was first coined during the training resources for youth project during the anti-poverty training programme in the Dedfort Stuyvesant area of Brooklyn New York in the seventies by Adkins Winthrop. Emotional intelligence is the capacity to accumulate and apply information of an effective character to feel and to respond emotionally. Emotional intelligence affects major areas of life namely Well-being learning behaviour and interpersonal relationships. The components of emotional intelligence are self-awareness self-regulation motivation empathy and social skills.

A number of these come under the realm of life skills and it might therefore be of interest to see how training in life skills would impact emotional intelligence. Resilience is defined as the maintenance of positive attitude and

adaptation despite a personal experience with adversity or traumatic experience. Resilience plays a key role in developing and maintain personal resources having a positive outlook in life and adapting healthy coping mechanisms. Enabling and empowering low resilient girl students through life skills education would be a strategic step towards women empowerment. Vulnerable populations are the groups or individuals who have been denied access to opportunities to grow to optimize their potential to fast rereck success. Of those the most vulnerable would be the economically disadvantaged women. NEP 2020prposes quality education for all and especially for the marginalized disadvantaged and underrepresented. The current study explores whether life skills training can increase emotional intelligence in low resilient economically vulnerable women students.

What are Life skills?

In an effort to identify the skills needed to maintain the quality of civic live, a successful and meaningful personal life, and positive social relationships, authors have proposed various definitions and conceptualizations of life skills. This chapter focuses on the development of life skills in young people. The World Health Organization (1997) defines youth as people between the ages of 15 and 24 years and adolescents as people between the ages of 10 and 19 years. The term “young

people” can be used as shorthand for these groups combined (ages 10 to 24).

In general, life skills are considered to be those abilities that help promote well-being, positive health outcomes, and productive development. They comprise a set of core skills that empower young people to take positive steps to promote health, positive social relationships, and positive contributions to society. The question is what young people must have to function well in society as they find it. Life skills are important in helping them shape their world, not just cope with it. Thus, the concept of life skills transcends previous concepts such as coping and adaptation to circumstances; it presupposes an active, autonomous, and responsible stance towards the self in the social world.

According to the World Health Organization (1997), life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. By emphasizing adaptation and a positive orientation, this commonly used definition is consistent with the skills-based, positive approach to youth development. The Pan-American Health Organization defines life skills as social and interpersonal skills (including communication, refusal skills, assertiveness and empathy), cognitive skills (including decision-making, critical thinking, and self-evaluation), and

emotional coping skills (including stress management and increasing an internal locus of control.

UNICEF (2002) 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. Life skills can be applied to actions directed at either the self, other people, or the local environment; their goal is to promote health and wellbeing at all these levels.

Thus, life skills include not only behaviour, but also attitudes and knowledge. The OECD specifies three key competencies.

- The first is the ability to use a wide range of tools to interact constructively with the social context. The tools can be either physical (e.g., application of information technology) or sociocultural (e.g., language). To adapt such tools to meet their goals, people must understand them and be able to use them interactively.
- The second competency is the ability to engage with others in an increasingly interdependent world. Because individuals encounter other people from a diverse range of backgrounds, the ability to interact in heterogeneous groups is of particular importance.

- The third competency is the ability to take responsibility for managing one's life, place it in the broader social context, and behave autonomously and responsibly

Because the above definitions are meant to apply to the general population, they are not developmentally oriented. If we are interested in young people, adaptation and positive outcomes must be defined developmentally. This means that the level of a given life skill needs to be considered in respect to a young person's age and in relation to his or her general biological, cognitive, emotional, and social development (i.e., age appropriateness of life skills). For example, they have defined life skills as those competencies that enable young people to deal with the challenges of their lives in a manner that is adequate to their age and thus allows for healthy and positive development.

CORE DIMENSIONS OF LIFE SKILLS

Young people need a wide range of intra- and interpersonal skills to face the complex challenges of today's world, but it would be of little practical value to produce a long list of all the skills they may need in various contexts and at various times in their lives. A better choice is to consider only the skills that are most helpful to young people in managing situations in an age-appropriate way. The preceding definition of life skills makes it clear

that the core skills must not be chosen arbitrarily. Rather, their selection should be the result of carefully considering the individual and psychosocial prerequisites for a healthy and productive individual life and a well-functioning society. Collectively, these core skills can be considered a loosely coupled system of different aspects of specific abilities. Their underlying unity is represented by a structural continuity of developmental changes. This framework implies that in any given individual, some skills are well developed and others poorly developed. In addition, contextual variables (e.g., level of social support) can influence how well a skill develops. Complexity is inherent in frameworks that are as broad and comprehensive as life skills, and this complexity has implications for measuring, monitoring, and evaluating life skills.

To answer the question of what skills young people, need to cope with the changes in modern society, we must begin with a coherent concept of what constitutes the core skills. The framework must consist of a set of specific abilities bound together in an integrated whole. It is necessary for adaptation and healthy outcomes to balance different cognitive, emotional, and behavioural skills, as well as creative capacities and psychological resources such as attitudes, motives, and values. This ability to integrate different life

skills crucially depends on how young people construct their social experiences, including their thoughts, emotions, and relationships with others, and how they integrate them into their self-concept.

Logically, it is possible and important to separate the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. However, in everyday life, what happens inside a person and his or her relationships is continuously connected and exchanged. For example, in a dialogue between two friends who discuss their relationship, many of the points made will trigger self-reflection, which in turn will shape a response. As the list reflects a positive, asset-based view of young people's development, it is consistent with conceptualizations of youth development such as the risk and resiliency framework and the positive youth development perspective, which treats all adolescents as having strengths and potential.

Scientists studying adolescent development have proposed the "Six Cs" of this development. They are a way to conceptualize positive youth development and integrate its various separate indicators, including self-esteem, empathy, and emotion regulation.

A life skills framework places several requirements on young people in different contexts and different situations. It specifies that the key life skills must (a) be of particular value, (b) have multiple areas of usefulness,

and (c) be needed by everyone. The first of these, that the skill should be valued as a fundamental resource of human capital, means that application of the skill should have measurable social benefits. Recent research reinforces the view that human capital brings key individual and social benefits such as better health, an improved sense of well-being, and increased civic engagement. The second condition, that skills should yield benefits and support in various contexts, means that they should apply in multiple areas of life.

The primary theories of adolescent development have most often evolved in the tradition of cognitive and psychosocial theories. These theories usually describe development in terms of sequences of increasing levels of complexity, maturity, and differentiation. For example, Erikson's psychosocial theory describes the development of identity across the lifespan in socio-historic terms. Identity refers to feelings of self-trust that develop through our daily interactions with supportive others. At each stage, people experience a conflict typical of that stage, which serves as a turning point in their development. The successful mastery of this conflict, such as identity refinement in adolescence, helps to enhance strengths. In contrast, unresolved crises are assumed to cause disaffection and maladaptive outcomes.

Purpose:

To study the effect of Life skills training program on emotional intelligence in low resilient, economically vulnerable women students.

Hypothesis:

The group of participants who have underground life skills training program will have a significantly higher post-test emotional intelligence as compared to their pre-test emotional intelligence.

Method:

Sample Low resilient young women from undergraduate colleges in Mumbai belonging to economically vulnerable group.

Stage wise Sampling:

Stage 1: Survey of women students from economically vulnerable groups. Resilience scale administered to identify students scoring low.

Stage 2: The sample characteristics of selected groups were as follows:

Age range: 18 to 25 groups Gender: Female

Education level: UG Students

Economic status: Low Income groups. Those students whose families were entitled orange ration cards from the state government.

Geographical area: Urban metropolitan – city of Mumbai

Tools: Connor Davidson Resilience scale (CD-RISC Connor Davidson 2003)

It is a 25 item the ability to cope with stress and adversity. Alpha reliability $\alpha=0.89$

Emotional Intelligence Scale:

Emotional Intelligence Scale by Anukool hude, Sanjyot Pethe and Dhar 2001 Vedant Publications, Lucknow. It is a 34-item scale. It measures 10 aspects of emotional intelligence. Each item is to responded to on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree. The reliability of the scale is 0.88 and the validity is 0.93

Design:

One group Design:

Pre-Test	Intervention	Post Test
Emotional Intelligence	Life skills Training	Emotional Intelligence

Variables:

Independent Variables: One IV – Training in Life skills

Dependent Variables: One IV – Emotional Intelligence

Operation Definitions:

Training in life skills:

A training programme in life skills which are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.

Dependent Variable: Emotional intelligence – One's ability to understand and manage one's own's and other emotions as measured by emotional intelligence scale. Higher the score, higher the emotional intelligence.

Procedure:

The researcher made all the preliminary arrangements and began the first stage of sampling a survey.

A survey – Resilience levels in young women from the age group of 18-25 years of age studying in undergraduate colleges in Mumbai were tested using the Connor Davidson scale. Results for resilience were analysed using mean as a measure of central tendency and standard deviation as a measure of variability. After those young women who fall in the lowest 27 % were taken for the next stage of the study. These participants were then given training in life skills.

Pre-Testing: The study begins after taking the consent of the participants and their demographic details. Emotional intelligence was measured for the group of participants.

Intervention Programme:

The participants were given a life skills intervention training programme. The modules included ten core life skills accepted by WHO namely - self-awareness, empathy, effective communication, interpersonal communications, problem solving, decision making, creative thinking, critical thinking coping with emotion and coping with stress.

The Facilitator manual on enhancing life skills prepared by Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth development was used for the six days training programmes on all ten core life skills recommended by world health organization's training programme was designed based on training received by the researcher from the Indian association of life skills education and Bombay Psychological association during a trainer of trainer's program. Faciliatory skill training was received by Researcher from UGC during trainer of Trainers program for capacity building of women mangers.

Post Testing:

Emotional Intelligence was measured post this intervention Programme. After debriefing the participants feedback were taken and the study was concluded.

Results:

Data analysis:

- Mean as a measure of central tendency.

- Standard deviation as a measure of variability.
- t-test was used to find out significance between means.

Table 1: Mean Analysis of group Performance on Emotional intelligence		
	Pre-Test	Post Test
Total	4216	4854.42
Mean	124	142.78
SD	17.91	9.48
t Test		7.21

Conclusion:

The Hypothesis “The group of participants who have undergone the life skills training program will have higher emotional intelligence after the training as compared to before the training is completely supported.

Limitations:

The study did not have a comparable group of students who did not undergo training in life skills.

Implications:

Life skills training can be used for increasing Emotional Intelligence in low resilient economically vulnerable women students. It supports one of the Fundamental Principles of NEP 2020.

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