

A STUDY OF EFFECTIVENESS OF LIFE SKILL MODULES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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Abstract

Life skills are defined as the human capabilities necessary for positive behavior. These skills equip the adolescents to behave properly and also enable them to remain outside the daily conflicts, entangled relationships and peer pressures. Development of life skills is strongly affected by factors like family environment, school environment and socio-economic status. The basic and most important environmental factor which affects the life skills is the family environment because family is the place where a young one spends most of his/her time. Consciously and unconsciously family environment affects the attitude, aptitude, personality and self-confidence of child. School is the second most important influence after home. The school environment is not only responsible for providing academic qualifications but also enriches the learning experiences regarding behavior in social setting and prepares them for solving day to day life problems. Healthy school environment is very important for all round development of the adolescents. Socio-economic status (SES) also affects the development of life skills among adolescents. Socio-economic status is determined by income, level of education and occupation. Children from lower income families have much less chances to succeed in life as compared to middle income families. The present investigation is aimed at studying the impact of family environment, school environment and socio-economic status on development of life skills among senior secondary school students in relation to locale, gender and government and private schools.

Keywords: *Effectiveness, Life Skill Modules, Secondary School Teachers, family environment, school environment, socio-economic status.*

1. INTRODUCTION

For the development of any country, it is necessary to make holistic development of various sectors of the country. If various sectors are not developed holistically then it affects the development of the country. The country finds it difficult to face healthy market competition in globe. For proving its self in global market, the country needs competent personnel with the other resources. These human beings are the main assets of the country and competent human beings are prepared by the education system of the country. Education is essential tool for developing human beings. So, the role of Education System is to provide such kind of education which fulfills the demands of the country and facilitates the holistic development of the person. The aims of education are to liberate human beings from the shackles of ignorance, privation and misery. It must also lead to a non-violent and non-exploitative social system. As it correctly said, "Education is a human right with immense power to transform. On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable human development."

Education is basic requirement of citizen's of the world which helps them to develop their concern for the world. With the change in time demands of society from the education have changed. Today, the world requires all round human beings who can carry out multiple tasks at a time with efficiency. has said that this world demands the qualities of youth: not a time of life but a state of mind, a temper of the will, a quality of imagination, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the love of ease. The person needs to be competent enough to maintain own

Temper while carrying out multiple tasks creatively in time. It indicates that life has become more stressful than earlier. To develop competent citizens of the world, family and education has to nourish the child in such a way that she or he becomes competent person to face the challenges of the life. Today, child is spending more time of her or his life in Education system. It is responsibility of education to develop skills and knowledge in the child which make her or him competent enough to face the challenges of her or his life effectively. So, providing education is essential responsibility of the society.

2. HISTORY OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

Indian Education has changed with the change in time to cater needs of the society. Education system was different in different time period in India and also the role of teacher has changed with the change in time period. History of Teacher Education is as old as the history of Education itself. Education of teachers must have been boom in 2500 B. C., in Ancient period. The history of Teacher Education in India may be divided into five parts:

1. Ancient and Medieval Period: 2500 B.C. to 500 B.C.
2. Buddhist Period: 500 B.C. to 1200 A.D.
3. Muslim Period: 1200 A.D. to 1700 A.D.
4. British Period: 1700 A.D. to 1947 A.D.
5. Post-Independence Period: 1947 A.D. up to this date

The status of Teacher Education in different period is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Status of Teacher Education in India

Sr. No.	Period	Year	Status
01	<i>Ancient and Medieval Period</i>	<i>2500 A.D. to 500 B.C.</i>	No formal system of Teacher Education
02	<i>Buddhist Period</i>	<i>500 B.C. to 1200 A.D.</i>	Formal system of Teacher Education emerged
			Training under supervision of Senior Teacher
			Certificated by the Teacher
03	<i>Muslim Period</i>	<i>1200 A.D. to 1700 A.D.</i>	No formal system of Teacher Education
04	<i>British Period</i>	<i>1700 A.D. to 1947 A.D.</i>	
Year	Name of Commission and Committee		Status
1854	Wood's Despatch		2 Formal Teachers' Training Colleges
1882	Indian Education Commission		Formal Teachers' Training Colleges
			Less number of trained teachers

1993	Yashpal Committee Report	Unsatisfactory quality of teachers
2005	National Curriculum Framework	Concern for improving the quality of Teacher Education
2009	National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education	Towards preparing professional and humane teachers
2009	Teacher Education (NCTE, 2009)	Reflection towards Policy Formulation

These commissions, committees and Framework have tried to bring positive change in Indian Education System for the development of India. But due to some factors recommendations of commissions and committees were not implemented, whereas, recommendations of some of the commissions and committees have made strong impact on development of Indian Education System. Due to these recommendations different autonomous bodies, UGC, NCERT, DIET, CASE, IASE, CTE, NCTE, were established for providing quality education to the society.

3. TEACHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

In India, Teacher Education is based on Western Education System as implemented in the British Period. As per the recommendations of commissions and committees, in India, two types of training provided to teachers. One was before joining teaching profession, known as Pre - Service Teacher Education and another was during teaching service, known as In - Service Teacher Education. Today also both training are necessary to improve quality of education by updating school teachers.

- **Pre - Service Teacher Education Programmed**

Pre - Service Teacher Education Programmed is the course offered for students before they join teaching profession and leads to a degree and certificate, to make person eligible to join teaching profession. In Pre - Service Teacher Education Programmed, students get training about skills and knowledge which are required in teaching profession. In other words, it is a programmed for making students competent to face the challenges when they provide their services to the society by joining teaching profession. The Pre - Service Teacher Education Programmed have certain objectives on the basis of which the training is provided to students. These objectives are listed as under.

- **Relevance of Life Skills in Pre-service Teacher Education**

Teacher Education programmers are the programmers for professional preparation of teachers. There are various types of teacher education programmers like-

1. Formal Teacher Education Programmers (Pre-teacher education, In-service teacher education, Distance teacher education)
2. Adult and Non-formal teacher education
3. Preparing teacher educators for distance education
4. Professional Development Programmers like Orientation, Refresher courses and faculty development programmers for the professional growth of teachers and teacher educators. Unlike general academic programmers, teacher education programmers are different programmers which are aimed at professional preparation and development of teachers. It is a process of preparing a person with specialized skills and methods/techniques required for a teaching profession. The colleges of education, known as B.Ed. and D.Ed. prepare teachers through their varied programmers for schools which provide professional knowledge, attitudes, values and skills required for teaching profession. There is a difference in the development of teacher education in India between the two periods-before and after independence. After independence, during the five decades, teacher education has embarked a new height from its early dreary structure to its new identity as a complex institutions and varied programmers with distinctive relevance.

But there is a need to bring together all teacher education programmers at various stages, for more focused attention for composite conceptualization leading to stage-specific and programmed-specific differentiated forms of knowledge base. And attempts were made at the national level to develop curriculum frameworks for teacher education in 1978 and 1988. The NCTE has attempted to study specific teacher education programmers, such as the integrated courses in teacher education. Teacher education has been gravely influenced over the years by developments in the field of education as well as those in the society at large. Teacher education is a professional training programmed for the development of teacher as a person and as an agent of social change. So teacher education for all stages of school education is the most crucial point for the improvement of quality of school education. Teacher is the person who serves as a social worker of the society. The teacher has many responsibilities towards pupils, parents and the institution.

The teacher has to decide which kinds of learning experiences need to be given to the students, inform parents about pupil's performance and also play different roles like administrator, coordinator, researcher, decision maker, guide, leader and facilitator within the institution. Many a times it is difficult to give proper attention to manage all these roles properly. In such conditions they experience stress and that affects their performance in the school as stress and mental health are closely related. Due to this students' development is affected.

Teacher trainees need to study issues related to self and identity, human relationships, adult-child gaps, assumptions, beliefs and attitudes. They could explore the meaning of ethics and values, observe and understand feelings of fear and trust and their influences in personal and social attitude, attitudes towards competition and co-operation, analyze and observe the impact of competition in personal and social life, observe the role of listening, attention and empathy and the role of a teacher in establishing relationship with children and as a communicator. A greater insight into one's aims of life, one's strengths and weaknesses and the dynamics of identity formation provides the base for developing a professionally competent teacher who is sensitive to issues of equity, democracy and social justice.

It has stressed on preparing teachers to be equipped with not only the subject content and epistemology but also with the knowledge of concepts of child psychology, understanding the adolescents, learning theories, and socialization processes at all the stages of school level whether it is pre-primary, primary, secondary stages of teacher education. However during the admission of Teacher education certain points are often overlooked like

- (a) Communication skills
- (b) General awareness of the self and the World
- (c) A positive outlook on life
- (d) Capacity to build and maintain good human relations etc. and these abilities are very important for pre service teachers to grow in personality and to face certain problems in life and ultimately lead towards quality life.

- ✚ In this line, the National Curriculum Framework on Teacher Education, while articulating the vision of teacher education, positions the new approach, as under:
 - ✚ Central aim should be reflective practices;
 - ✚ an individual should be provided environment to be self-learner, reflector, critique, and creative;
 - ✚ an individual should be provided to develop capacities to think, and to work cooperative manner;
 - ✚ Student teachers should be providing opportunities to observe and engage with children, communicate with and relate to children. Hence, it is desired that the future teachers would develop essential constructs of life skills which not only help them to face challenges in life confidently but also to train their students, in future, to utilize the skills in their personal and professional life.

• **Status of Life Skills Education in India**

Between 1978 and 1988, steps were initiated to develop curriculum frameworks for teacher education at national level. As its initiative the NCTE has made an attempt to study integrated courses in teacher education. Similarly, the document popularly known as NCF (National Curriculum Framework) was published by the National Council for Educational Research and Training outlining four aspects of education in India. The very first aspect "context and concerns" mentioned and rather advocated to link education with life skills and the real world work as well as value education. The prime objective here was to get teacher trainees acquainted with life skills elements to cope with

issues related with youth in future. Moreover, also emphasizes on development and learning perspectives for child, youth and adolescent.

The idea is not only to hone the teachers' teaching skills but also to enable them to understand the students and their community in order to understand the students' problems. Life skills education has now turn out to be a very essential and imperative part of educational system all over the world. But in Indian schools it has yet to be fully initiated and acknowledged as an integral part of the curriculum. Here are few examples which show the status of life skills education in certain states of India. Teacher Plus in which she has mentioned that value education is often misunderstood with life skills education in the majority schools of India. She further states that most schools have included value education in their curriculum but life skills education was given less importance in the curriculum in spite of its requirements as mentioned in the NCF.

Realizing the importance of life skills education as per recommendations of NCF, UNICEF in collaboration with GCERT developed Life Skills Education Modules for elementary teachers to integrate life skills with schools, the CBSE began life skills training programmed as a Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation aimed at the adolescents of 10-18 years of age.) has started giving training in life skills for the upper primary girls apart from providing elementary education. But it was observed from classrooms of Government schools in few districts of that life skills education has a lot been misunderstood with vocational education. When government schools were asked about the life skills education being offered, the reply received from the teachers was surprising.

The teachers shared that the girls are taught to make dolls, stitch frocks, and make candles and napkins under life skills training. These data indirectly point out the need of disseminating appropriate training programs of life skills in schools in order to deliver its true intent. And teacher education colleges are the direct stakeholders to integrate life skill approach as future teachers are going to train the adolescents and youth. A special course, first of its kind in India, M.A. in Life Skills Education is offered Development which aims at preparing cadre of youth with self-worth, power and competence in all walks of life. This program, as it states, is designed for imparting skill-based education to address the issues of day-to-day life. This PG program presumes to enable students to help others to make informed decisions, solve problems, develop critical and creative thinking, and build healthy relationships through effective communication and deal with risk situations.

Similarly, an institute known as in provides free education along with residential facilities to tribal students. The prime idea is to educate these students through life skills to deal with the challenges of their real life effectively. Moreover, the institute is also supported by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to undertake initiatives for promoting Life Skills Education (LSE). The institute in collaboration with ST and SC Development has embarked towards the journey of providing life skills education in 121 tribal residential high schools and. This endeavor is considered to reach out to more and more school children in near future. Along with initiatives supported by the government, there have been few nongovernment organizations who have taken up projects to improve quality of education in the nation. Parham is an organization of that kind which aims for quality improvement with low-cost interventions in education.

With several projects in different states, primarily in Baroda and . It provides learning support by offering modules to brush for secondary education, in Language, Math, Life Skills and English. Very few teacher education colleges in Gujarat offer Life Skills Education as one of the subjects in the curriculum. UNICEF in collaboration with GCERT developed Life Skills Education Modules for elementary teachers to integrate life skills with schools subjects. The Department of Education, Faculty of Education and Psychology, has initiated to provide life skills integrated in one of the core subjects "education Psychology". Has also introduced Life Skills as a subject in. These all efforts were voluntarily taken by the organizations. But government's systematic efforts are not made to enhance life skills among pre-service teachers.

Although there have been educational initiatives to either introduce or incorporate Life Skills Education with the main stream curriculum, it still has not got its place into the main frame of academics on a regular level. The recommendations made by NCF about life skills have not become a regular part of school curriculum in real sense, particularly in GSEB schools. GSEB schools give no emphasis at all on life skills education. Somehow, the gap between knowledge aimed through the pure academics and preparing competent individuals who would be ready to take challenge in future world needs to be filled up through appropriate training of life skills. On a more practical ground, substantially real life oriented and learner-centered life skills training programmed needs to design. Unless,

the students and parents do not realize its relevance to real life it is not make any difference in the perception towards taking life skills as important as any other core subject.

- **4 Type of Life Skills / Basic Areas of Generic Life Skills**

The life skills were mainly classified into Thinking, Social, Negotiation, Non- judgmental and Empathy

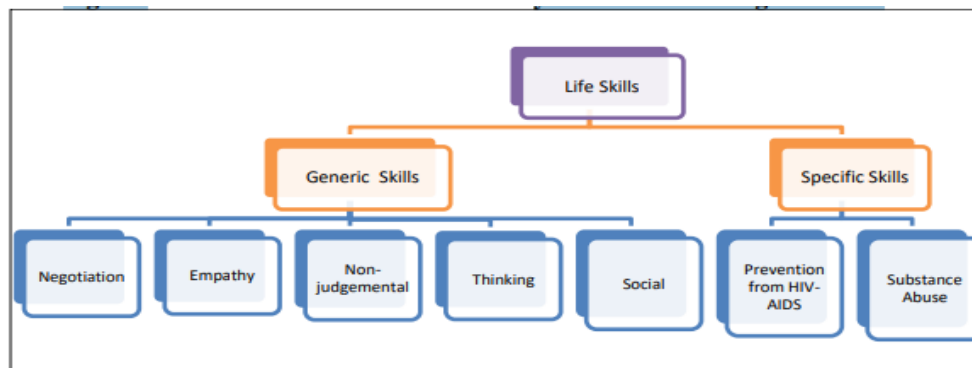


Figure 2: Classification of Life Skills by World Health Organization 1999

Department of Mental Health identified five basic areas of life skills that are Relevant across the cultures now:

- Decision-making and problem solving
- Creative thinking and critical thinking
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Self-awareness and empathy
- Coping with emotions and coping with stress

Thinking skills are grouped into Self-awareness, Critical thinking, Creative thinking, Problem solving and Decision making. Kinds of social skills are Inter personal relationships, appreciating others, coping with stress and taking responsibility. The kinds of negotiation skills are skill to be assertive, say no to risky situations and Communication skills. The kinds of non-judgmental skills are, avoiding personal values and respect for others' values. The kinds of empathetic skills are compassion and care. The researcher has focused on four thinking skills only, as main objectives of teaching of science are to develop scientific attitude and develop science process skills.

Science process skills are named as observing qualities, measuring quantities, sorting and classifying, inferring, predicting, experimenting and communicating which require critical thinking, problem solving, creative thinking and decision making skills. has given specific objectives for secondary stage class (IX, X) as to understand the basic concepts, principles, and laws of science, to apply those principles in finding solutions to the problems related to agriculture, energy, health, nutrition etc. It also states the objectives as to develop problem solving and decision making skills, to acquire process skills, which form part of the attitude for developing a scientific temper.

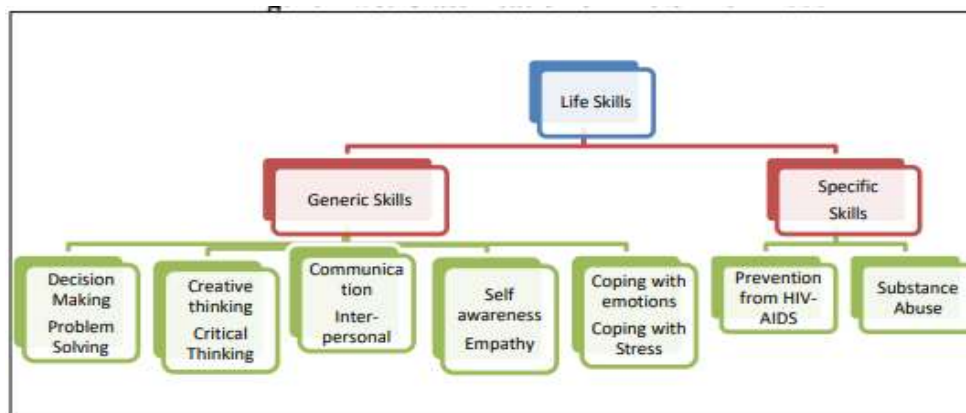


Figure 3: Classification of Life Skills

- **Thinking Skills and their Components**

The kinds of thinking Skills focused by the investigator in the present study are critical thinking, creative thinking, problem solving and decision making.

Skill of Critical Thinking

Critical mindedness or critical thinking insists upon evidence to support another person's statement, questions to the source of information and its reliability; often asks questions like how do you know, why do you believe this and what evidence do you have? Questioning, arguing, re-thinking, and reflecting were seen as necessary skills for an individual to contribute to society and provide a platform for change. The cognitive skills most often associated with critical thinking include:

- i) Interpretation,
- ii) Analysis,
- iii) Evaluation,
- iv) Inference,
- v) Explanation and
- vi) Self-regulation;

Faction,

Critical mindedness or critical thinking is the ability to evaluate any accepted rules or procedures. For developing critical thinking, it is important for adolescents to begin with listening and asking questions. Information is needed to think critically so that appropriate decisions and choices can be made. This skill will also lead young adolescents to introspect oneself and never follow blindly any path howsoever may be the pressure from peers. mentioned in the guide for educators that critical thinking in the student can be identified when the student can identify the components of given data, classify them, can see the assumptions behind those assumptions, can check the trueness of the data and can arrange the data to derive the idea from it. Mentions indicators of critical thinking skill in her study as,

The activities assigned to adolescents of class IX like skit/role play to show characteristics of the animals of particular phylum or critical analysis of advertisements on food products shown on television give scope to develop critical thinking.

4. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

After receiving informal education at home, a child comes to school for formal education. School is the second most impressionable influence after home that provides an enormous area of interaction in which personality is vividly expressed and shaped. Here the teacher substitutes the parents. The teacher's behavior plays significant role in the child's development. The school moulds the personality of the child through interaction with classmates and guidance from teachers.. The school's environment is a chain connecting great number of activities on a campus. School environment consists of physical and psychosocial environment. It also includes positive interpersonal relationship and support for learning. Other factors affecting the environment of school include economy, culture and religious influences of the society. School environment is very important variable for developing all round development of the students.

The components that may constitute the school environment are good location, number of teachers, water facilities, library and laboratories, number of rooms, furniture and play grounds. School environment is the atmosphere of a school that potentially influences what students learn. If the school environment is according to the needs of the children, then they will adjust better in school. Healthy school environment is required for an effective education. It motivates teachers to put in their best efforts and inspires the students to take interest in their learning. The components of healthy school environment comprise of good location, appropriate facilities, library, laboratories, attitudes of teachers, teacher and pupil relationship, availability of playground etc. School environment is very important variable for developing instinct of self-esteem among students. The school environment should be made attractive and pleasant.

The rooms should be full of light, colorfully painted with good pictures hung on the walls. Drape walls, dirty and untidy classrooms and corridors tend to make children depressed and dull. Teachers are vital part of environment. Their general appearance, their dress, their speech, their manners, their attitude and ideas will be reflected in their pupil's performance. The place, its surroundings, the structure, furniture and the like constitute school environment .The school environment is really very important in the makeup of an educational institution. By its silent potent suggestions, it exerts a tremendous influence on the impressionable minds of students. The environment of a place of education therefore ought to be made congenial for the desired growth of pupils. Pupil-teacher relationship, class room environment, methods of teaching and available facilities all together constitute school environment. School environment may influence the habits, aptitude, personality, sentiments etc. The impact of school environment on growing individual is undoubtedly accepted by almost all persons.

A good environment motivates the students to learn to work and to make concentrated efforts to achieve their academic goals. School environment means the environment of special institution where the work of imparting education is carried out. The school is considered as one of the most effective formal agency of education. School environment is more than the physical space; it is the entire setting for learning. The school environment is combination of eight variables i.e. clear school mission, safe and well-ordered learning environment, expectation for success, high morals, effective instrumental leadership, quality class room instructions, monitoring of student progress and positive home-school relations.

5. CONCLUSION

Positive significant relationship exists between the life skills and school environment of the students studying in senior secondary schools. Positive significant relationship exists between the life skills and socio-economic status of the students studying in senior secondary schools. The study reveals that to begin with a large majority of the Student - Teachers were relatively poor at Self Awareness Skill, Coping with Emotions Skill, Coping with Stress Skill, Decision Making Skill and Problem Solving Skill. The Life Skills scenario of the Student- Teachers was relatively better on Interpersonal Relationship Skill, Empathy Skill, Creative Thinking Skill and Critical Thinking Skill. A few of the Student - Teachers possessed all the Life Skills very well, whereas, a few of them were very poor in all the Life Skills. Post intervention scenario on the Life Skills of the Student - Teachers reveals that there was a remarkable gain in their Self Awareness Skill, Effective Communication Skill, and Interpersonal Relationship Skill, Coping with Emotions Skill, Decision Making Skill and Problem Solving Skill. We need to learn to take right decisions and solve problems efficiently. Teachers need to possess healthy Life Skills for development of a healthy Society. So, the Life Skills should be well integrated into Teacher Education. To conclude, the research study was significant in establishing that the life skills programmed provided innovative and creative ways of cultivating and enhancing pre service teachers' life skills i.e. cognitive and psycho-social skills. It helps to get insight into the use of

Life Skills Programmed for both the teachers and the students and for the society as a whole. Thirty five hour programmed is a very short period to develop life skills; however the programmed which is experiential and situation specific to the pre-service teachers was found significant at some level.

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