



Strategies for Inculcating Life Skills Education in Central Board of Secondary Education and Uttar Pradesh Board Secondary Schools

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Abstract

It is important to encourage individuals to set educational and career goals early in life and for this it is imperative to identify the career which is best fit for the person. In India we have many examination boards with different curriculum and environment. Life skills education is a very important and integral part of education system worldwide. In Indian schools however, education in life skills is yet to be fully initiated and recognized as an integral part of the curriculum. In the present study the researcher tries to find the level of life skills possessed by Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Uttar Pradesh Board secondary school students. Life Skills Scale made by researcher was used to take the data.

Keywords: Life skills, Central Board of Secondary Education, Uttar Pradesh Board.

Introduction:

The purpose of any education is to make good human beings, honest, loyal citizens and, above all, make a person fit for a livelihood. Every year we churn out lakhs of graduates who do not have the specific skill sets required for their livelihood. We are still following the subjects of study introduced in our curriculum which have lost their significance for us today. This is because we do not give due importance to vocational education. As a result there is a mismatch between the skilled manpower required and skilled manpower available which has resulted in the bankruptcy of achievement by our educated children. To change this situation first we need to change our mindset. In India, we are obsessed with attaining a graduation degree and generally look down upon vocational education. This has resulted in a situation where on the one hand there are scores of unemployed graduates and on the other hand there is a huge shortage of skilled workers such as plumbers, electricians etc. The education system should be build up to spread the right type of education and guarantee a basic livelihood to the students, once they come out after completing their education.

Education is the process of unfolding the hidden potentials of an individual and helps to transform the individual into a wholesome being. One of the aims of education is to prepare students for life, to enable them to face the challenges of life and live in a culturally diverse & rapidly changing society. Education acts as a powerful tool in the development and transformation of a society, community and nation. It is also the key to build the skills and capacity in all dimensions which are necessary for an individual. For the development of any country, it is necessary to make holistic development of its youth. But from the time immemorial youth and adolescences are facing ever changing difficulty in their life, some are eternal and innate which are faced by every adolescence across globe but some problems emerges due to the socio-economic and educational environment of the nation in which adolescence live.

Twenty per cent of the world's adolescent population lives in India. India has 245 million individuals with age between 10-19 years which is twenty per cent of the total population of the nation; that is why India is called 'a young nation'. Such a young population can proved to be either an asset or burden for any nation. If the nation is capable to provide them good education and health facilities than this adolescence population can be boon to nation and can lead the nation to top but if we fail to provide them quality education and proper opportunities than the same adolescents' population become a liability for the country.



Adolescents are in a stage of life span development where they face challenges with distinct needs and demands. It is a critical stage for everyone's life which consist a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. It is a period of sudden physiological changes and psychosocial maturation. These are really the years of imagination, resourcefulness and ingenuity. These are also the years of trial and risk taking, succumbing to academic pressure and of taking ignorant conclusions on critical issues. Though this period carries a mixed bag, which of these aspects presumes controlling proportions in life depends on the support, help and direction received from parents, teachers, peers and the whole society, in general. This period represents, in many cases, a phase when foundation is laid for a booming career and a fruitful life.

To help the adolescence in this dilemmatic phase of challenge and opportunity education system should come forward and provide a helping hand to adolescence. Education system should provide the learner an optimum focus on the acquisition of knowledge, various skills, attitudes and values. But unfortunately today's education focuses on acquisition of knowledge and attainment of degrees. One of the measures to improve this situation is the integration of life skills in school curriculum.

As the adolescence spends most of their time in school and in 21st century schools has a prime role to play in creating responsible, innovative, analytical and also compassionate citizens. The school curriculum must response to changes in a society as it transforms by time. Then only education provided by them will be relevant to our students. So, due to this much importance of schools in students' life there must be need of such a curriculum which impart knowledge as well as essential skills which are needed by students to live happy life.

The aim of education is all-round development of an individual. For this, the children must be educated in such a way that they would develop certain desirable life competencies, attitudes and values among them. It may enrich their intellectual and social skills which are helpful to lead a purposeful and successful life in this rapidly changing sophisticated society. Like learning is an ongoing exercise in human life, the learning of life skills forms an integral part, too, of this whole endeavour to develop and grow as human beings in a natural and spontaneous way. Life skills provides the learnervarious skills needed in day-today life for an effective management of every day hasslesand it also provides a confidence in the individual that he/she is ready to face any kind of situation effectively.

In today's society, students' life has become very fast and stressful. A student has to perform different activities within limited time. Sometimes it becomes very difficult to perform all the activities effectively. The challenges which most of the students face today are failure in examination, attainment of marks lower than expected, cut throat competition etc. if this continues for a long period then it creates frustration in life. Due to stress and lack of time, a student is not in a position to maintain relations with others and enjoy life. So, there is a need to help them to come out of this state of stress. Each student has different problems of his /her own and needs of different skills to cope up with them. In such situation life skills can help students to come out from all this. Life skills teach application of knowledge, attitudes & skills which are an important ingredient for development of an individual. Life skills are a group of psycho social and inter personal Skills which can help students' to make informed decisions, develop stress coping skills, self management skills and communicate effectively that may help them to lead healthy and productive life.

The World Health Organization (1997) has defined Life Skills as, "the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life". Here 'adaptive' means that a person is flexible in approach and is able to adjust in different circumstances and 'positive behaviour' implies that a person is forward looking and even in challenging situations can find a ray of hope.

World Health Organisation (WHO) has identified ten core Life Skills which are-



- **Self awareness:** It is the awareness about oneself. It includes recognition of one's character, one's strengths and weaknesses, desires and dislikes.
- **Empathy:** the ability to understand others' situations and feelings, even in a situation that we may not be familiar with.
- **Critical Thinking:** ability to analyze information and experiences objectively.
- **Creative Thinking:** It is the ability to generate innovative ideas and manifest them from thought into reality.
- **Decision making:** It is the ability to actively make decisions about own actions in relation to a healthy assessment of different options and, what effects these different decisions are likely to have.
- **Problem Solving:** It is the ability to deal constructively and confidently with problem that arises in our life.
- **Interpersonal relationship:** It is the ability to initiate and maintain positive relationship with other individuals and to be socially interactive in the society.
- **Effective Communication:** It is the ability to express him/her self both verbally and non-verbally, in ways that are appropriate to one's cultures and situations.
- **Coping with stress:** It is the ability of recognizing the sources of stress in our lives, recognizing how they affect us, and how we act in a way that helps us control our levels of stress.
- **Managing Emotions:** It is an ability to recognize emotions in one self and others, to realize its effects on behaviour and to respond to emotions appropriately.

Life Skills: The Concept

Skills are competencies for continuous superior performance. It is a learned ability to do something well. It can be described as capabilities that enable individuals to translate information and knowledge into specific behaviour and perform effectively in action-based situations.

Life Skills means the ability to become active and taking the responsibility of behaving in a particular manner, in a particular situation for healthy living. The Webster's New Millennium Dictionary of English, Preview Edition (2003) defines life skills as "the ability to cope with stresses and challenges of daily life especially, skills in communication and literacy, decision-making, occupational requirements, problem solving, time management and planning".

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Life skills refer to the ability to maintain the state of mental and physical wellbeing while interacting with others within the local culture and environment (UNESCO and Indian National Commission for co-operation with UNESCO, 2001). Tung (2002) has defined life skills as a repertoire of life management and problem solving skills involving personally responsible choices, mental wellness, and learning processes so that people can attain their full human potential and become equipped to deal with change throughout the life span.

Smith, et al., (2003) opined that life skills may be thought of as those everyday competencies that allow one to successfully navigate through life and effectively respond to its many challenges.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has adopted a more generic definition of life skills in context of the DeSeCo project. It defines life skills on three general criteria, namely i) key competencies contribute to an overall successful life and a well-functioning society, ii) they are instrumental to meeting important challenges in a wide



spectrum relevant contexts, and iii) they are relevant to all individuals. (Rychaen and Salganik 2001, as cited in Singh, 2003).

Dohemn (1996) defines Life Skills as "the abilities necessary to apply the conceptual thinking and reflection in concrete situation; they involve psychological pre requisites for successful performance, such as problem solving capacities, selfconfidence and skills for critical thinking". (as cited in Tiwari, 2018) So, Life Skills is a bunch of skills which are helpful to an individual to live life happily. With Life Skills, one is able to solve his/her problems by logical decision making. It also helps to establish productive interpersonal relationships with others. Life Skills can help people in making informed decisions, develop stress coping skills, self-management skills and communicate effectively that may help them to live a healthy and productive life.

Review of Literature

Rottinghaus, Patrick J. et al. (2009) investigated the match between vocational interests and satisfaction which have been emphasized in higher-order dimensions and specific occupational scales. The study examined the capacity of content scales of the 2005 "Strong Interest Inventory," including the general occupational themes and basic interest scales in predicting job satisfaction across 22 samples comprising 9647 working adults. Sequential discriminant function analyses demonstrated that sets of hypothesized basic interest scales significantly distinguished between satisfied and dissatisfied workers beyond the six Holland themes in 17 of the 22 occupational samples.

Warwas, Jasmin et al. (2009) examined the relationships of vocational interests and mathematical literacy both cross-sectional and longitudinal. Extending previous research, the results of Holland's RIASEC (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional) scale scores were compared with results from a reductionist approach using individual interest profiles.

Hirschi Andreas (2009) explored interest differentiation and elevation which are supposed to provide important information about a person's state of interest development, among a group of Swiss adolescents. Study 1 applied a cross-sectional design with 210 students in 11th grade. Study 2 applied a 1-year longitudinal design with 289 students in 7th to 8th grade. Gender, personality traits, and career exploration were significant predictors of state and development of differentiation and elevation. Increase in differentiation predicted increase in career decidedness of above traits. Elevation could not predict increase in exploration behavior over traits. The results provide support for differentiation and elevation as important aspects of adolescents vocational interests.

Sanjeev and Kumar (2010) studied socio-economic status as an influential factor for an individual as it determines the vocational preferences interests and choice. It was found that socio economic status could influence the vocational preference of urban students. Urban schools educational and social environment could influence the computational interest of urban students. The reactions of the students reflect that they have a positive attitude towards vocational education.

P. Adinarayana Reddy, D. Uma Devi & E. Mahadeva Reddy (2011) investigated to identify the priorities of vocational educational courses and interests of the Indian undergraduate students. Amani (2013) examined the extent to which occupational knowledge and social influence from significant others predict intentions of undergraduate students to join their careers upon completion of their studies in Tanzania. The study found that undergraduate students intentions to join their careers were highly determined by their level of occupational knowledge and social influence from significant individuals such as parents, friends, and lecturers. It was further revealed that there was low but positive correlation between occupational knowledge and career choice intentions. Overall, the study found that majority of students intends to join their careers upon their graduation.



Monika et al. (2014) studied the vocational interests of boy and girl students of department of Physical Education of Chaudhary Devi Lal University, Sirsa. They found that the students of department of Physical Education differ significantly in inter-vocational interests. The female students have poor vocational interests. Michael L. Morris (2016) studied vocational interests in the United States in relation to sex, age, ethnicity, and year effects. Raj Kumar (2017) studied the vocational interests of secondary school students in relation to the locality of schools and reported that the urban secondary school students were slightly more interested in literary, outdoor, executive and scientific fields. In case of mechanical, business and agricultural fields, rural secondary school students were slightly more interested than that of urban secondary school students.

The analysis of review of related literature reveals that a number of studies have been done on various aspect of vocational education but the studies related to vocational interest of secondary level students of different boards are really a few so the researcher attempts to compare the students of C.B.S.E. and U.P. Board in relation to their vocational interests

Objectives of the Study:

- To compare the level of life skills between CBSE and UP Board secondary school students.

Null Hypotheses: The following statistical hypotheses were stated in null form and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀1. There is no significant difference between level of life skills of CBSE and UP Board secondary school students.

Method:

To meet the objectives of the study descriptive Survey method was adopted.

Population:

The population of the present study comprises Class IX students of the age group of 12-15 years of the CBSE and UP board schools of the Meerut city.

Sample and Sampling Procedure:

There were a total of 137 CBSE schools in Meerut district. Out of which 103 were selected as target population of Meerut city. From the target population of 103 schools, 10 schools were selected randomly from it. One section of class IX were selected incidentally from each school and thus a total of 441 students were selected from CBSE schools for the study.

Similarly, there were a total of 427 UP Board schools in Meerut district. Out of which 157 were selected as target population of Meerut city. From the target population of 157 schools, 10 schools were selected randomly from it. One section of class IX were selected incidentally from each school and thus a total of 417 students were selected from UP Board schools for the study.

Thus, in total 858 samples were taken from 20 different schools of Varanasi. 441 students were taken from CBSE schools and 417 students were taken from UP Board schools. Table showing board wise distribution is as follows-

Table-1
Showing Board wise distribution of Student Sample

S.No.	Board	Male	Female	Total
1.	CBSE	248	193	441
2.	UP	272	145	417
	Total	520	338	858

Tools used in the study:

Life Skills Scale

Life Skills Scale was developed by researcher to know the level of life skills present in the students of class IX of both CBSE and UP Board schools. There were 100 statements given



in the Life Skills Scale. Statements were given in both Hindi and English language. Among 100 items 66 were positive and 34 were negative. Items were measured on three point rating scale with option as: Always, Sometimes, Never. The reliability coefficient of tool on test-retest method was found to be 0.83 and Cronbach's Alpha method reliability was found to be 0.81. The face and content validity of the tool was established by showing it to experts.

Data Collection

For data collection Life Skills Scale was administered on Class IX students' of CBSE and UP Board of the session 2018-19. Life Skills scale was distributed to class IX students in their schools and data was collected from them.

Data Analysis

For the sake of easy analysis, interpretation and conclusion from obtained data, a masterchart was prepared using Excel spreadsheet. Mean, median, mode, standard deviation and t-test was used to arrive at meaningful inferences related to objectives of the study.

Objective wise Findings of the study

Objective 1: To compare the level of life skills between CBSE and UP Board secondary school students.

For the above objective, t-test was applied and the values obtained are as shown in the table below.

Table-2
Showing comparison of level of life skills of CBSE and UP Board students

S. No.	Board	No. of students	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Remark
1	CBSE	441	139.92	17.52	15.19	Significant at 0.05 level
2	UP	417	119.49	21.53		

A significant difference was found between the level of life skills of CBSE and UP board class IX students (t-value- 15.19, df-856, and level of significance-0.05). Further, the mean value is higher (M=139.92) in the case of CBSE school students as compared to UP Board school students (M=119.49). This indicates that Life Skills of CBSE school students are better than UP Board school students.

Conclusion

It was found that there was a significant difference between the level of Life Skills of CBSE and UP Board students. The CBSE board students have better level of life skills than UP Board students. It was also found that most of the students in CBSE schools have above average level of Life Skills while most of the students in UP Board have below average level of Life Skills.

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