

SCHOOL TYPE: AN INFLUENCING FACTOR FOR LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AMONG TRIBAL STUDENTS

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Abstract

The main aim of the present investigation was to study the influence of type of school on life skills development among tribal students. Descriptive survey method was employed for the present investigation. For conducting this study, a total sample of 325 tribal students of the age group of 16 to 18 years from different government and private schools of tribal areas of Himachal Pradesh were selected by employing incidental sampling technique. Data were collected with the help of adapted version of Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) developed by Nair, Subasree and Ranjan (2010). Mean, S.D. and t-test were used for analysis of data. The findings of the study revealed that it was concluded that the students of both govt. and private schools in tribal areas possessed low level of thinking skills. On the other hand, the students studying in govt. as well as private schools in tribal areas possessed average level of social skills, emotional skills as well as overall life skills. Further, the students of both govt. and private schools situated in tribal areas possessed almost similar level of thinking skills, social skills, emotional skills as well as overall life skills and there exist no significant difference in these skills among govt. and private school students. The educational implications have been discussed at the end of the research paper.

Keywords: Life Skills, School Type



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INTRODUCTION

Life skills include psychological competencies and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others and managing their lives in healthy and productive manner. Life skills fall into three basic categories which compliment, supplement and reinforce each other. Essentially, there are three kinds of life

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skills i.e. thinking skills, social skills and emotional skills. Thinking skills which is related to reflection at a personal level and social skills include interpersonal skills and do not necessarily depend on logical thinking. Emotional skills can be perceived as a skill not only in making rational decisions but also in being able to make other agree to one's point of view. WHO defines Life Skills as, "the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable the 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 even in challenging situations, and can find a ray of hope. Ahmadi Gatab et al. (2011) showed that there was a significant relationship between life quality and life skills and most of its scales. In other words, the increase of awareness of the students of life skills led to the improvement of life quality. Roodbari, Sahdipoor and Ghale (2013) showed that life skills training had a positive effect and improved social development, emotional and social adjustment. Further, it was reported that this kind of skill training could increase public health level and children and adolescence compatibility. Prajina and Godwin (2015) revealed that there was no significant difference in academic score of tribal students with respect to standard of studying, caste, mother's education and occupation. Dhingra and Chauhan (2017) concluded that the life skills of adolescents were affected by various factors, socio-economic status and education of parents being some of them. Majority of the respondents who participated in this study had average levels of life skills as compared with the standard life skill assessment scale scores. Abbasi et al. (2018) showed that the life skills training significantly reduced the risk of drug abuse, violence and improved health behaviours among the students. These findings showed the effect of life skills training on reducing high-risk behaviours. Rani, Choudhary and Kusum (2018) concluded that male students possessed more life skills than female undergraduate students. Private institution students were having more life skills than govt. institution students. On the other hand, there was no difference between life skills on the basis of academic stream. Life skills and its consequences could be either positive or negative. Rani and Menka (2019) concluded that life skills help adolescents in facing all life-related problems.

On the basis of review of related literature, it may be summed up that good life skills of adolescents are highly essential in present times of cut-throat competition. It also came to forefront that the institution type, the environment of educational institution and various

educational experiences provided institutions have a significant influence on life skills of students. Hence, present study was undertaken with following objectives:

OBJECTIVES

- (i) To study level of life skills among tribal students of govt. and private schools.
- (ii) To study difference in following life skills of tribal students studying govt. and private schools:
 - (a) Thinking Skills (Comprising of Self Awareness, Problem Solving, Decision Making, Critical Thinking and Creative Thinking)
 - (b) Social Skills (Comprising of Interpersonal Relationships, Empathy and Effective Communication)
 - (c) Emotional Skills (Comprising of Managing Emotions and Dealing with Stress)

HYPOTHESIS

There exists significant difference in various life skills among government and private school students of tribal areas.

METHODOLOGY

For conducting the present investigation, survey technique under descriptive method of research was employed.

Sampling

The sample of the study consisted of school going students of age group of 16 to 18 years. A total sample of 325 tribal students (16 to 18 years) were selected by employing incidental sampling technique from Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti districts of Himachal Pradesh which are entirely tribal in nature.

Research Tool used

Adapted version of Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) developed by Nair, Subasree and Ranjan (2010) was used to collect the requisite data.

Analysis of Data:

The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics and for studying significant differences in life skills among tribal school students with respect to type of schools, t-test was used.

MAIN FINDINGS

The result obtained after applying t-test to ascertain influence of type of school (govt. / private) on life skills (component-wise i.e. thinking skills, social skills, emotional skills and overall life skills) of tribal students are presented and discussed as follows:

Level of Life Skills and School-wise Difference in Life Skills of Tribal Students:

The mean thinking skills scores of tribal students studying in govt. and private schools are given in Table 1 along with number, S.D. and t-value.

Table 1: Level of Different in Life Skills and Differences in Various Life Skills of Students of Govt. and Private Schools of Tribal Areas

| Sr. No | Variable | | Thinking Skills | Social Skills | Emotional Skills | Overall Life Skills | |
|--------|------------------|-------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Govt. | Mean | 154.88 | 154.88 | 115.12 | 338.14 | |
| | | S. D. | 23.735 | 23.735 | 10.578 | 7.304 | 39.40 |
| 2 | Private | Mean | 153.57 | 153.57 | 114.78 | 67.83 | 336.18 |
| | | S. D. | 22.229 | 22.229 | 10.254 | 7.132 | 37.185 |
| 3 | Total | Mean | 154.19 | 154.19 | 114.94 | 67.97 | 337.11 |
| | | S. D. | 22.929 | 22.929 | 10.394 | 7.205 | 38.204 |
| | | N | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 | 325 |
| 4 | SE _{dm} | | 2.550 | 2.550 | 1.156 | 0.801 | 4.249 |
| 5 | d _f | | 323 | 323 | 325 | 323 | 323 |
| 6 | t-value | | 0.514 (NS) | 0.514 (NS) | 0.299 (NS) | 0.374 (NS) | 0.460 (NS) |

NS- Not Significant

Table 1 shows that the total mean thinking skills score of all tribal students (irrespective of school type) was computed to be 154.19 with SD of 22.929. The mean scores of thinking skills of students studying in govt. and private schools in tribal areas were found to be 154.88 (with SD of 23.735) and 153.57 (with SD of 22.229) respectively. On the basis of mean scores, it may be interpreted that the school students studying in both government as well as private schools situated in tribal areas possessed low level of thinking skills. Further, the calculated value of ‘t’ for testing the significance of the mean difference (1.31) was found to be 0.514 which is not significant even at 0.05 level of significance, for d_f 323. So, it may be interpreted that the students studying in govt. and private schools situated in tribal areas do not differ significantly from each other in terms of their thinking skills. Hence, Hypothesis No. 1 (a) that, “there exists significant difference in thinking skills of students studying in govt. and private schools of tribal areas”, is not retained. The students of both govt. and private schools situated in tribal areas possessed almost similar level of thinking skills.

Further, the total mean social skills score of all tribal students (irrespective of school type) was found to be 114.94 with S.D. of 10.394 respectively. The mean scores of social skills of students studying in government schools in tribal areas were 115.12 with SD of

10.578 which is somewhat higher than the mean social skills score of tribal students studying in private schools (114.78 with SD of 10.254). On the basis of mean scores, it may be interpreted that the tribal school students studying in government as well as private schools situated in tribal areas possessed average level of social skills. Further, the calculated t-value for mean difference in social skills was found to be 0.299 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance, for d_f 323. This implies that there does not exist significant difference in social skills of students studying in govt. and private schools situated in tribal areas. Hence, Hypothesis No. 1 (b) that, “there exists significant difference in social skills of students studying in govt. and private schools of tribal areas”, is not retained. The students of both govt. and private schools situated in tribal areas possessed almost similar level of social skills.

The total mean score on the variable of emotional skills of all students (irrespective of school type) was found to be 67.97 with SD of 7.205. The mean score of emotional skills in respect of tribal students studying in government schools of tribal areas was 68.13 with SD of 7.304 which is somewhat higher than the mean emotional skills score of tribal students studying in private schools (67.83 with SD of 7.132). On the basis of mean scores, it may be interpreted that the school students studying in government as well as private schools situated in tribal areas possessed average level of emotional skills. Further, the calculated t-value for mean difference in emotional skills of students studying in govt. and private schools of tribal areas were found to be 0.374 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance, for d_f 323. This implies that there does not exist significant difference in emotional skills of the students studying in govt. and private schools situated in tribal areas. Hence, Hypothesis No. 1 (c) that, “there exists significant difference in emotional skills of students studying in govt. and private schools of tribal areas”, is not retained. The students of both govt. and private schools situated in tribal areas possessed almost similar level of emotional skills.

Furthermore, the total mean score on overall life skills of all students (irrespective of school type) was found to be 337.11 with SD of 38.204. The mean score of overall life skills of students studying in government schools in tribal areas was 338.14 with SD of 39.40 which is somewhat higher than the mean overall life skills score of students studying in private schools in tribal areas (336.18 with SD of 37.185). On the basis of mean scores, it may be interpreted that the school students studying in government as well as private schools situated in tribal areas possessed average level of overall life skills. The calculated t-value for

mean difference in overall life skills of students studying in govt. and private schools situated in tribal areas was found to be 0.460 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance, for d_f 323. This implies that there exists no significant difference in overall life skills of students studying in govt. and private schools situated in tribal areas. Hence, the Hypothesis No. 1 (d) that, “there exists significant difference in overall life skills of students studying in govt. and private schools of tribal areas”, is not retained. So, it may be interpreted that the students of both govt. and private schools situated in tribal areas possessed almost similar level of overall life skills.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The present investigation was conducted to study the influence of type of school on life skills development among students of tribal areas. The findings of the study revealed that it was concluded that the students of both govt. and private schools in tribal areas possessed low level of thinking skills. On the other hand, the students studying in govt. as well as private schools in tribal areas possessed average level of social skills, emotional skills as well as overall life skills. Further, the students of both govt. and private schools situated in tribal areas possessed almost similar level of thinking skills, social skills, emotional skills as well as overall life skills and there exist no significant difference in these skills among govt. and private school students. But, the literature clearly signifies that the educational institutions and the environment prevailing over there is a vital contributor for development of knowledge, understanding, skills and values among the students. The educational institutions are the platforms where the students are provided with such experiences which make them able to tackle different situations of life and survive in this competitive world. The schools should provide enriched academic opportunities to the students by involving important stakeholders like parents and community so that life skills can be developed and enhanced among students. The educational institutions should introduce life skills education and assign it an important place in school curriculum. The teachers, parents and even society should be aware about importance of life skills and have in-depth knowledge. Proper training in context of life skills should be given to the teachers and students. Teacher should perform different activities and strategies for developing life skills among children e.g. role-play, brainstorming, group discussion, team teaching, collaborative teaching, field trips and debates etc. The educational institutions should organize different orientation programme and workshops from time to time where experts from different walks of life can be introduced to

the teachers and adolescents. Counseling is now-a-days getting much significance in the schools. A counseling corner must be set-up in each and every school where students can discuss their problems freely and have important directions and information from the counselor. The schools should see life skills as a major part of curriculum. It should be integral to each and every activity of school where life skills training be made essential for students. Life skills training should not be seen by the institutions and teachers as an extra work or activity but it should be integrated in the curriculum, daily teaching-learning process and co-curricular activities. The environment of educational institutions be created and developed in such a manner that promotes life skills among the students. The teachers should be given proper training in developing life skills among students. In-service training programmes should have major focus on such aspects of life skills also. The teacher education programmes at pre-service level should be re-oriented and revised by introducing life skills as a major component of teacher education curriculum. Such strategies can play an effective and vital role in improving life skills among students which is the need of the hour and educational institutions should make the students ready for this noble cause and objective with 'no stone left unturned' strategy.

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