



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Education

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTING LIFE SKILL EDUCATION AMONG CLASS IX STUDENTS IN THENI DISTRICT

KEY WORDS: 1. Status 2. Life Skills - 3. Education -

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ABSTRACT

Life skills are essentially those abilities that help promote well-being and competence in young people as they face the realities of life. Life skills are also regarded as personal and social skills required by all people to function confidently and competently with themselves with other people and with the wider community. Life skills can be utilized in many content areas, issues, subjects, including drug and substance abuse prevention, HIV and AIDS prevention, sexual violence, teenage pregnancy reduction, suicide prevention, environmental education, peace education, livelihood and income generation (UNICEF and WHO, 1997). The cardinal reason for introduction of life skills education in high and higher secondary schools was to bridge the gap between knowledge and behaviour. The aim of this study is to establish awareness and application of life skills on the education of pupils in high and higher secondary schools in Theni district. This study was conducted in Theni District of Tamilnadu in January 2017 using cross-sectional survey. The method used for data collection includes questionnaire. Data was collected from 20 schools (10 High schools and 10 Higher secondary schools) in the study area. 100 teachers and 400 class IX students took part in the study. The study established that assembly talks were the major means teachers used to promote life skills, followed by class meeting.

INTRODUCTION

Life skills are essentially those abilities that help promote well-being and competence in young people as they face the realities of life. Life skills are also regarded as personal and social skills required by all people to function confidently and competently with themselves with other people and with the wider community. Life skills can be utilized in many content areas, issues, subjects, including drug and substance abuse prevention, HIV and AIDS prevention, sexual violence, teenage pregnancy reduction, suicide prevention, environmental education, peace education, livelihood and income generation (UNICEF and WHO, 1997).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know the methods of integrating life skills education in the selected schools.
- To find out the challenges faced by the teachers in promoting life skills development among IX standard students.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The researcher used cross-sectional survey research to collect data.

Sample

The study was conducted in 10 high schools and 10 higher secondary schools in Theni District of Tamilnadu. 100 teachers and a total of 400 pupils of class IX students were selected for the study.

Research questions

- How life skills education is integrated in the teaching/ learning process in High & Higher Secondary schools?
- What are the major obstacles in the application of life skills education?
- To what extent have the obstacles been over come?

Validity of Instruments

The researcher made a draft of questions and discussed with key resource persons of life skill education programme for refining the items. The second draft of questions were made and discussed with the experts and their suggestions are also taken into account for finalizing the items. With the recommendation from the experts, a pilot study was carried out in two high schools in Theni District. The data obtained was scored and the results discussed with the experts. With a few amendments the data collection instruments were deemed suitable for use in the field. In this way the researcher ascertained the validity of the instruments.

Reliability of Instruments

The reliability of the questionnaire was established by pre-testing using a small group of respondents. The respondent responses were subjected to a Cronbach Alpha coefficient reliability test. The reliability was found to be 0.5. The questionnaire was considered reliable for use in the field.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Table 1: Shows whether class talks are given

Response	Students from High Schools		Students from Higher Secondary schools	
	No	%	No	%
Yes	168	84	136	68
No	32	16	64	32
Total	200	100	200	100

From the table 1, 84% of pupils from high schools affirmed that, class talks are given, compared to 68% from Higher Secondary schools. This means class talks were often given to pupils in schools. The researcher therefore sought it necessary to establish who gave the class talks, what the talks centered on and how often talks were given.

Table 2(a): Shows who gives class talks to pupils

Officials	Students from High Schools		Students from Higher Secondary schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Class Teacher	46	23	48	24
Nodal Teachers	118	59	136	68
Head Teacher	36	18	16	08
Total	200	100	200	100

Table 2(b): Shows what talks given to pupils centre on.

Issue	Students from High Schools		Students from Higher Secondary schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Discipline	68	34	56	28
Academic	96	48	116	58
Co-curricular Activities	36	18	28	14
Total	200	100	200	100

Table 2(c): Shows how many times talks are given in a term.

Response	Students from High Schools		Students from Higher Secondary schools	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Once in a week	16	08	24	12
Once in every two weeks	36	18	38	19

Once in a month	84	42	94	47
Twice a term	64	32	44	22
Total	200	100	200	100

As observed in table 2 (a), nodal teachers were the major source of class talks in schools (59% & 68%), followed by class teachers with (23% & 24%) then head teachers with (18% & 08%). Issues of concern varied from schools as seen in table 2 (b). In high schools academic was the main centre of talks with (48%) followed by discipline with (34%). The same sequence was repeated in higher secondary schools with academics having (58%) and discipline with (28%). Co-curricular activities were third issue with 18% and 14% with high schools and higher secondary schools respectively.

Table 2 (c) shows that class talks were held once in a month (47%) in higher secondary schools compared to (42%) in high schools. This means higher secondary schools gave class talks more often than the high schools.

Table 3: Challenges faced by teachers in promoting life skills

Challenge	Teachers from High schools		Teachers from Higher Secondary schools	
	No	Ranking	No	Ranking
Lack of funds	29	1	46	1
Lack of Time	36	2	56	2
Poor Reading Culture	54	3	42	3
Media Influence	30	4	38	4
Lack of interest among pupils	51	5	18	5
Total	200	5	200	5

As observed in the table 4 above, lack of funds and time were the greatest challenge in the promotion of life skills in schools. This was followed by poor reading culture, media influence and lack of interest among pupils. These findings reveals that low interest among learners and some teachers, lack of funds and time, lack of reading materials and the technique of teaching life skills are some of the challenges in the promotion of life skills education.

CONCLUSION

The study established that assembly talks were the major means teachers used to promote life skills, followed by class meeting. The findings agree that lack of time, coupled by lack of materials for teaching life skills are major constraints in implementing the life skill education among IX standard students. The implication is that life skills are given little time, because assemblies and class meetings usually take a short time, and assemblies are held at most, twice a week and quiet often many issues are talked at the assemblies.

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