



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Education

PREDICTOR VARIABLES OF LIFE SKILLS AND TEACHING COMPETENCIES OF PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS IN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

KEY WORDS: life skills, teaching competencies, prospective students in college of education

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ABSTRACT

Life skills the essential skills developed through a higher order thinking, that enable a person to perform effectively in the teaching profession, and thus become a socially acceptable and competent teaching skills with varied variables. The main objectives of the study to assess life skills and teaching competencies of prospective students in college of education and to find out the significant influences if any on life skills and teaching competencies of prospective students in college of education in relation with certain demographic variables. Descriptive Survey Method was used for data collection in this study. The investigator has chosen 100 B. Ed trainees from College of Education in Madurai District of Tamil Nadu under Purposive Sampling involved in the assessing predictor variables of life skills and teaching competencies of prospective students in college of education. The major findings in life skills, 70.40%, 71.73% and 81.42% of trainees are agreed to have good self awareness, innovative and problems solving skills; 68.30%, 73.17%, 63.82% and 63.75% of trainees are undecided about their creative thinking, decision making and leadership; 68.13%, 59.53% and 53.45% are disagreed about their critical thinking, empathy and communication. In teaching competencies, 72.45%, 70.26%, 75.32%, 70.35% and 73.53% of trainees agreed to have good contextual, content related, transactional, educational activities and management. The predictor variables such as gender, age, marital status, subject, community, living locality and family head annual income have been taken for the study. R2 values are also computed for the predictor variables of life skills and teaching competencies.

INTRODUCTION

Today's life and work environments require far more than thinking skills and content knowledge. The ability to navigate the complex life and work environments in the globally competitive information age requires people to pay rigorous attention to developing adequate life and career skills. Life skills is a term used to describe a set of basic skills acquired through learning and/or direct life experience that enable individuals and groups to effectively handle issues and problems commonly encountered in daily life.

Life skills are "living skills" or abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with demands and challenges of everyday life (WHO, 1999). Life Skills a group of psycho-social and interpersonal skills which can help people make informed decisions, communicate effectively, think critically and creatively, cope with stress and emotions, problem solving, have empathy and self awareness. Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (WHO 1993). Life skills the essential skills developed through a higher order thinking, that enable a person to perform effectively in his or her life, and thus become a socially acceptable and successful person and life skills as self awareness skill, empathy, interpersonal relationship, effective communication, critical thinking, creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, coping with emotions and coping with stress skills (WHO 2017). These are decision making, problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, and effective communication; inter personal relationship skills, self-awareness, empathy, copying with emotions and stress (Sridevi, 2015).

WHO (1999) classified core life skills of life skills are self awareness, empathy, communication skills, interpersonal skills, decision-making, problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, coping with emotions and coping with stress. UNICEF (2012) classified into problem solving skills, critical thinking skills, effective communication skills, decision making, creative thinking, interpersonal relationship skills, self-awareness building skills, empathy, coping with stress and emotions and coping with stress and emotions. The following are the important components of the life skills such as self- awareness, creative thinking ability, critical thinking ability, innovative skills, empathy, decision making, communication skills, problem solving ability, managing people and leadership skills (WHO, 1999 & 2017; UNICEF, 2017 and Sridevi, 2015).

Life Skills for Teaching Profession

Life skills are different from academic education. There exists a

clear relationship between life skills acquisition and life quality.

Teachers play a vital role in the education and also student's life. A person with proper vision, experience, and an education degree can enter the teaching profession. The teacher today is quite diverse than past and has an extensive role in almost every occupation. In many cases of a successful student, there seems to be a good teacher. The relation in between seems to be very harmonious with complete dedication and affection from the teacher towards the student. Life skills education to teachers and teacher educators is need with an aim of improving quality of life through capacity building of children and enriching their life skills. Life skills education was very important especially for teachers who prepared the young minds. The Life skills education will enable teachers to translate knowledge, attitude and values for handling real life situations to the children helping them decide what to do, when to do and how to do it with ease (The Hindu, 2012). Life Skills are behaviours used appropriately and responsibly in the management of personal affairs. Teachers were needed to different types of life skills like empathy, problem- solving, critical-thinking, creative thinking, inter-personal relationships, intra-personal relationships, managing stress and emotions, decision-making and self- awareness. Each of these skills has been categorised into 3 categories, namely, Thinking skills, Social skills and Emotional skills (The Indian School, 2013).

When a person's repertoire of various life skills increases, his or her independent functioning, social competence and quality of life is also thought to increase.

Teaching Competencies

Competencies are the skills and knowledge that enable a teacher to be successful. To maximize student learning, teachers must have expertise in a wide-ranging array of competencies in an especially complex environment where hundreds of critical decisions are required each day (Jackson, 1990).

Chan (2000) described teachers competencies are teaching as complex and many sides, demanding a variety of human traits and abilities. These may be grouped in to two major categories first those involving the teacher's mental abilities, skills, understandings of psychological and educational principles, knowledge of general and specific subject matter to be taught and second, those qualities stemming from the teacher's personality, interests, attitudes and beliefs, behaviour in working relationship with pupils and other individuals. Venkataiah (2000) defined

teaching competency as any single knowledge, skill or professional expertise which a teacher may be said to possess and the possession of which is believed to be relevant to the successful practice of teaching. **Passi and Lalitha (1994)** defined teaching competency means an effective performance of all observable teacher behavior that brings about desired pupil outcomes. **Shashi Shukla (2014)** defines teaching competency as suitable or sufficient skill, knowledge and experience for teaching purpose, properly satisfied. According to **Rana Pratap Sing (2013)** teaching competency includes teaching behaviour and teaching skills. Teaching behaviours can be linked with knowledge of the subject matter and its presentation. According to **Ushalaya Raj and Vasantha (2014)** teaching competency is the professional development of the teacher in terms of academics, skillful and able teaching, classroom control and utilization of teaching aids and tool in a constructive way.

Teacher competencies can be categorized into the three groups: general competencies, professional competencies and special competencies. **Pragya Aggarwal (2014)** stated the **NCTE, New Delhi** identified teaching competencies such as contextual competencies, conceptual competencies content competencies, transactional competencies, competencies related to other educational activity, competencies to develop teaching learning material, evaluation competencies management competencies, competencies related to working with parents and competencies related to working with community. The types of teaching competencies are: cognitive based teaching competencies, performance based teaching competencies, consequences based teaching competencies, explorative competencies, managerial teaching competencies and life and soft skills competencies.

Need and Importance of the Study

The teacher in modern school plays in their daily activities not only the role of traditional teacher by giving new knowledge for students. Today teacher is a consultant, an advisor, elder friend, a researcher and so on. It is difficult to list all roles of today teacher.

Teachers should be given life skills training as they are the ones who contribute most in the development of the children. If teachers would not be competent enough, then that would affect the development of students at a large scale as development of children is directly related to teachers' competency **Ji Hyun Yu et al (2012)**. Teachers are responsible to develop essential skills and abilities among adolescents and youth. The need is realized to introduce life skills programme for the prospective teachers at pre service teacher education programme

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 (**Sarika Chauhan, 2016**). 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. It is not always possible for the parents to be a role model for their wards in molding behavior. It is the responsibility of teachers to give importance for life skills in their teaching. Hence the life skill sloping prospectus must be included at all levels, especially in B. Ed and M. Ed curriculum (**Prema, 2013**).

But teachers' knowledge, skills, personal qualities and values affects not only students learning motivation and achievement, but also formation of their national identity. Therefore, the investigator has realized the need of life skills and teaching competencies of prospective students in college of education and willing to assess the predictor variables of life skills and teaching competencies which will result to enhance the life skills and teaching competencies in a single nutshell to future policy makers and curriculum setters. Hence from the above all discussions and research facts, the investigator has made an honest attempt on finding out the predictor variables of life skills and teaching competencies of B. Ed Trainees who are the prospective students in college of education

Title of the Study

Predictor Variables of Life Skills and Teaching Competencies of Prospective Students in College of Education

Objectives of the Study

To assess life skills and teaching competencies of prospective students in college of education and To find out the significant influences if any on life skills and teaching competencies of prospective students in college of education in relation with certain demographic variables such as gender, age, marital status, subject, community, living locality and family head annual income

Hypothesis of the Study

There is no significant difference on the life skills of prospective students in college of education in relation with gender, age, marital status, subject, community, living locality and family head annual income and There is no significant influences on the teaching competencies of prospective students in college of education in relation with gender, age, marital status, subject, community, living locality and family head annual income.

Methodology and Samples of the Study

Descriptive Survey Method was used for data collection in this study. The investigator has chosen 100 B. Ed trainees from Meenamaal College of Education in Madurai District of Tamil Nadu under Purposive Sampling involved in the assessing predictor variables of life skills and teaching competencies of prospective students in college of education.

Tool Used in the Study

Life Skills Assessment Scale and Teaching Competencies Assessment Scale developed by **Gopinath (2018)** have been used for the assessment of life skills and teaching competencies of prospective students in college of education. In the tool, personal data dealt with gender, age, marital status, subject, community, living locality and family head annual income followed by the Life Skills Assessment Scale and Teaching Competencies Assessment Scale has given with 69 life skills item statements and 35 teaching competencies item statements Against each item statements column the responses such as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with a score of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The given negative statements of life skills and teaching competencies statements are scored reversely.

Reliability and Validity of the Tool Used in the Study

The reliabilities of the Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) and Teaching Competency Assessment Scale (TCAS) used in the study are by using test re-test method is 0.612 and 0.589, split-half method is 0.656 and 0.602 and Kuder- Richardson method is 0.536 and 0.502. For establishing the validity, the investigator used content validity and face validity of the Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) and Teaching Competency Assessment Scale (TCAS) used in the study.

Findings of the Study

In life skills, 70.40%, 71.73% and 81.42% of trainees are agreed to have good self awareness, innovative and problems solving skills. 68.30%, 73.17%, 63.82% and 63.75% of trainees are undecided about their creative thinking, decision making and leadership. 68.13%, 59.53% and 53.45% are disagreed about their critical thinking, empathy and communication.

In teaching competencies, 72.45%, 70.26%, 75.32%, 70.35% and 73.53% of trainees agreed to have good contextual, content related, transactional, educational activities and management. 64.33%, 60.95% and 67.56% are undecided about their conceptual, learning materials and evaluation.

This analysis on life skill of trainees were taken as the criterion variables and the seven demographic variables as predictor variables such as x_1 = gender, x_2 = age, x_3 = marital status, x_4 = subject, x_5 =community, x_6 = living locality, x_7 = family head annual income. With a view to find out the contributions of life skill of trainees and selected demographic variables to the predicted value

of the criterion to stepwise regression analysis was done with life skill of trainees and selected seven demographic variables. $Y_1 = 225.68 + 2.589 x_6$, x_6 = living locality- $R = 0.357$ - $R^2 = 0.1274$.

It is found that the predictor variable of life skill of trainees is the living locality through step by step linear regression method. R^2 value indicates that the living locality explains positively 12.74 % of the variance in percentage with respect to life skill of trainees. It is concluded that the living locality is positively contributes on life skills of trainees. The living locality is the predictor variable of life skills of trainees. Therefore, the formulated hypothesis there is no significant influence on the life skills of trainees in relation with gender, age, marital status, subject, community and family head annual income is accepted in relation with living locality is rejected. With a view to find out the contributions of teaching competencies of trainees and selected demographic variables to the predicted value of the criterion to stepwise regression analysis was done with teaching competencies of trainees and selected seven demographic variables of trainees $y_2 = 110.25 - 2.859 x_5 + 3.569 x_3$; x_5 =community $r = 0.306$ - $r^2 = 0.0936$, x_3 = marital status $r = 0.295$ - $r^2 = 0.0870$

It is found that the predictor variable of teaching competencies of trainees is the community and marital status through step by step linear regression method. R^2 value indicates that the community of trainees explains negatively 9.36 % of the variance in percentage with respect to teaching competencies of trainees. R^2 value indicates that the marital status of trainees explains positively 8.70 % of the variance in percentage with respect to teaching competencies of trainees. It is concluded that the community of trainees is negatively contributes on teaching competencies of trainees and marital status is positively contributes on teaching competencies of trainees. The community and marital status is the predictor variable of teaching competencies of trainees. Therefore, the formulated hypothesis there is no significant influence on the teaching competencies of trainees in relation with gender, age, subject, living locality and family head annual income is accepted and in relation with marital status and community is rejected.

Recommendations of the Study

This study strongly recommended that the immediate attention should be given to enhance creative thinking, decision making and leadership which are undecided by trainees and most attention should be given to critical thinking, empathy and communication of life skills which are average among trainees in college of education with additional academic and special trainings. Similarly immediate focus should be given to conceptual, learning materials and evaluation teaching competencies with rigorous periodical evaluations. The positive contribution of living locality on life skills and marital status on teaching competencies should be kept for future planning and intake to the teacher education for better tomorrow in Indian conditions. The community is negatively contributing on teaching competencies of the trainees which are neutralized with social justice and necessary developmental policies.

This study concludes with a special attention to the policy makers and administrators in teacher education that some of the teaching competencies of the prospective students are still undecided which in turn affects the future generations. Further, the predictor variables of living locality for life skills and community and marital status on teaching competencies of the prospective teachers in the college of education is unique nature of this study is concerned.

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