

Life Skills of College Students in Puducherry Region

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Attitude

In the age of technological development many people are not satisfied with material success. They do not accept things taken for granted by most of society and have several curiosities. They adopted various methods to view things correctly for their satisfaction and adopt spiritual path. The present research article is an attempt to analyze this issue. It also gives suggestions on some important aspects related with this subject alongwith examples.

Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (WHO). Life skills enable us to translate knowledge, attitude and values into actual abilities by helping us decide what to do, when to do and how to do it. Life skill education is an approach that functions as an instrument of empowerment of College students in the 21st century moving towards zenith height and needs to be incorporated for enrichment of quality. A sample of 150 college students in arts and science (Undergraduate and postgraduate students) from Puducherry region were taken for the study. Purposive random sampling technique was used. The investigator prepared the self designed questionnaire focusing on ten coral life skills such as Self awareness, Empathy, Interpersonal relations, Effective communication, Critical thinking, creative thinking, decision making, Problem solving, coping with emotion, coping with stress. College students are good at survival skills i.e. Effective communication and Interpersonal relationship. The finding of the study reveals that coping skills are lagging among college students. Nearly 78% of college students are aware of survival skills such as Interpersonal relationship, effective communication. Life skills should be taught to the college students in order to increase the value system, employability, complete peace and harmony in the society.

Introduction:

Skills are acquired through Practice and patience. There are different types of skills such as literacy skills, language skills, functional skills, sports skills, vocational skills, cultural skills, Recreational skills, life skills etc. Among them the most important skill is life skill. It is the right juncture to know about life skills. Enhancing life skills enables us to adapt to situations and people and help us to lead a healthy and positive life. UNICEF defines Life skills as "a behaviour change or behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: knowledge, attitude and skills".

Ouane (2002) says that "Life skills are developed as a result of

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Ouane (2002) says that "Life skills are developed as a result of constructive processing of information, impressions, encounters and experiences, both individual and social that are part of one's daily life and work, and the rapid changes that occur in the course of one's life".

Life skills help in developing positive and flexible attitude to life. Life skills are learnt from our own experiences, perceptions, insights, stories, books, parents, teachers, religion, media, culture etc. Life skills are present in every individual. To get the best out of them we need to sharpen them regularly. Delors commission (1996) stress the need for four pillar of education-Learning to know, Learning to do, Learning to live together and Learning to be. Learning to live together is a part of life skill which imbibes managing conflict, mutual understanding and peace.

Life Skills - An Overview:

Mother skills:

(a) Self awareness

Self awareness is a probe into ones own self, in relation to the surroundings in which he lives. It is an unbiased assessment about ones character, capacity, capability, competency, desire and dislikes. The process of sensation and perception creates self awareness. Being aware of the positive points about oneself helps the college students build a sense of self-esteem and self confidence. Self awareness is necessary for developing a positive attitude towards life. To assess and improve the self awareness among college students SWOT analysis can be adopted.

(b) Empathy:

Empathy starts with our ability to understand and accept different kinds of people around us who are different from us in many respects. It is the imaginative transposing of ones self to the thinking, feeling and acting of another. A very good example of empathetic person that comes to our mind is Mahatma Gandhiji and Mother Theresa. As college students being empathetic is necessary since it brings about wonders with our loved ones, classmates, parents, friends, cousins and colleagues.

Survival skills:

(a) Interpersonal relationship:

It is the ability to establish positive relationship and help us to relate in positive ways with the people we interact with. It promotes friendly relationship. Proper interactions take place in a good interpersonal situation.

(b) Communication

It is the most important part of life skill education. Communication is the process by which information and understanding transfer from one person to another. Communication is a dynamic and ongoing process which interacts and leads to change in behaviour and attitudes of individuals.

Thinking Skills:

(a) Critical thinking:

It is the ability to analyse information and experiences in an objective manner.

Critical thinking is evaluative thinking. Critical thinking is making objective judgements about choices and risks. It is the ability to analyse facts, issues and experiences rationally based on the positive

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of being both willing to think and able to think.

(b) Creative thinking:

Creativity is the ability to produce work that is both novel and appropriate. Creativity is a unique way of thinking, which bases on the insight we have in a particular area. It is the ability, attitude and also a process. Creativity is the ability to generate new ideas by combining, changing or reapplying existing ideas.

Negotiation skills:

(a) Decision making:

Decision making is to choose from the varied options based on the existing knowledge of the topic under consideration keeping in mind the positive or negative consequences of each of the option.

(b) Problem solving:

Enable us to deal with problems in our lives in a constructive manner. We face many problems in our daily life. This may range from minor issues to major risky problems. A Problem arises when there is a controversy between two needs. A problem should be considered as an opportunity. People, who like to improve, welcome it and meet it as a challenge and opportunity to improve themselves.

Coping skills:

(a) Coping with emotion

Coping with emotions being aware of the predominant emotion that preoccupies the mind at any point of time, knowing how emotions influence behaviour, and being able to respond to emotions appropriately.

(b) Coping with stress:

Coping with stress means recognizing the sources of stress in our lives, recognizing how this affect us physically and emotionally and acting in ways that help us control our levels of stress, by changing our environment or lifestyle and learning how to relax.

Research Questions:

To what extent College students are aware of life skills.

How frequent do College students use life skills?

Methods and Materials:

Table 1 shows the group characteristics of the participants taken for this study. The participants for this study were 150 college students (U.G & P.G) in Puducherry region.

TABLE 1 GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

CHARACTERISTICS	NUMBER	%	
Sex	Male	81	54.00
	Female	69	46.00
Age	16-20 yrs	54	36.00
	21-25 yrs	82	54.66
	26-30 yrs	14	9.3
Subject	Arts	86	57.33
	Science	64	42.66
Locality	Rural	52	34.66
	Urban	98	65.33
College	U.G	102	68.00
	P.G	48	32.00

Materials:

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(a) Life skills awareness survey:

A researcher made survey focusing on five broad life skills. Percentage analysis was adopted for the study.

(b) Frequency of life skill use survey:

A researcher made survey that consisted 10 items of life skills. Procedure:

All those instruments were given to experts for judging their validity. The experts' comments were studied and the instruments were modified accordingly. The instruments were distributed among the randomly selected college students in arts and science colleges in Puducherry region.

Table 2: Life skills awareness of college students

Sl.No	Life Skills	Yes %	No%
1.	Mother Skills	67	33
2.	Survival Skill	78	22
3.	Thinking Skills	73	27
4.	Negotiation Skills	65	35
5.	Coping Skills	59	41

It is analysed for table 2, 78% of college students aware of survival skills. Most of the college students are also aware of other skills such as mother skills, negotiation skills and thinking skills respectively. Only 59% of college students are aware of coping skills.

Table 3 Frequency of Use: Descriptive statistics

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Sl. No	Item	Mean (Max =k 5)	S.D
1.	Self Awareness	1.52	0.49
2.	Empathy	2.13	0.63
3.	Interpersonal Relations	4.38	1.86
4.	Effective Communication	4.12	1.39
5.	Critical Thinking	2.67	0.85
6.	Creative thinking	3.65	1.27
7.	Decision Making	1.24	0.51
8.	Problem solving	1.36	0.68
9.	Coping with emotion	1.11	0.63
10.	Coping with stress	1.16	0.41

Table 3 shows the frequency of use of life skills in their day to day life. The means on the 10 items ranged from 1.11 with a standard deviation of 0.63 to 4.38 with a standard deviation of 1.86. Survival skill is the one which most of the college students are using in day to day life. The mean is 1.11 for coping with emotion. This clearly indicates that the college students are unable to cope up with their emotion. Training should be imparted in coping skill.

Conclusion:

Life skills education is necessary for college students because they are the future builders of society in turn effective nation. Life skill education and training will help us to use our knowledge, attitude and values in a better useful way to develop the positive behavior. Life skills help the college students to identify his own 'capacity' and increase his 'capability' and achieve 'competency' in each endeavour in his life.

Practicing life skills to improve the skills is a life long process. There is no end to the level of the quality of the skill. Dedicated and sincere attempt will pay the way for internalizing life skills among college students. Proper training of Life skills should be given to the college students for their effective, efficient and happy living.

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