

Life Skills of High School Teachers: A Comparison of Salesian and Model Schools

Rosily T. E.^{1*}, Geetha K²

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to compare the differential effect of gender, residential locale, educational qualification, age, and service length on the life skills of high school teachers of Salesian schools and Model schools from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states (India). The Life Skill Assessment Scale for School Teachers, developed by the investigator for the purpose of the study, was administered along with a personal data sheet on a sample of 300 high school teachers (150 each from Salesian schools and Model schools), selected on a stratified random basis. The data, thus collected, were subjected to statistical analysis (t-test) by keeping the hypotheses in mind. The analysis revealed the presence of a significant difference between Salesian schools and Model schools with regard to their life skills; wherein the Salesian school teachers excelled Model school teachers. The Salesian schools and Model schools differed neither in the life skills of male teachers nor in the life skills of female teachers significantly. The school type was found to be significant in discriminating the rural teachers on the basis of their life skills, but not teachers from urban and semi-urban areas. The Salesian schools and Model schools differed significantly regarding the life skills of postgraduate teachers, but not regarding the life skills of trained graduate teachers. Whereas significant difference was observed between the Salesian schools and Model schools with respect to the life skills of teachers in the 20-29 years and the 30-39 years age groups, no significant difference was observed between teachers in the 40-45 and the >46 years age groups. Length of service was found to be decisive in discriminating teachers from Salesian schools and Model schools for groups having a service length of 6-10 years and 11-15 years.

Keywords: *Life skills, Salesian schools, Model schools*

Education is the medium by which individuals achieve success in their life, society and the world. The objective of education is overall and holistic development of the child which prepares healthy and intellectual human resources to the society. One of the common criticisms of the existing education system is that it tends to be bookish and detached from real life. Most of the education seems to be focused on mere cognitive skills revolving around rote learning of the content of subjects. Life skills such as critical thinking, ability to

¹ Research Scholar, Directorate of Research, Assam Don Bosco University, Kamarkuchi, Sonapur, India

² Professor, Directorate of Research, Assam Don Bosco University, Kamarkuchi, Sonapur, India

*Responding Author

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interpret, reflecting on thoughts and actions, communication, interpersonal skills and, above all, “learning and relearning” to adapt to ever-changing new situations in life are hardly dealt with consciously through the education process. If education has to prepare children to be able to cope with their future as well as that of the society they live in, education must have a reasonably clear idea of the skills and abilities that children need to be helped to develop. Every education system, thus, has a duty to support the development of life skills among its clients in order to enable them function effectively in society.

Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (WHO, 1994). Life skills are essentially those abilities that help promote mental well-being and competence in young people as they face the realities of life (Sulfikar, 2016). It includes psychological abilities and interpersonal skills that help people to take decisions, solve problems, think critically, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others and cope with stress and strain of life in a healthy and productive manner. Practice of life skills can bring qualities like self-esteem, sociability and tolerance, action competencies to the contemporary secondary school students and can generate enough capabilities among them to have the freedom to decide what to do in a special situation (Singh & Sharma, 2016). Earlier researches have revealed significant association of life skills with psychological wellbeing (Sujatha & Jayakumar, 2017), mental health (Kahnooji & Rashidinejad, 2017), self-esteem (Gharamalekia & Rajabi, 2010), adjustment (Yadav & Iqbal, 2009), emotional maturity and stress resilience (Shwetha, 2015). The need for instilling the psychosocial skills that are required to deal with the demands and challenges of everyday life has been acknowledged by the modern education system in the form of Life Skills Education. Life skills education is an interactive process of teaching and learning, which enables learners to acquire knowledge and to develop attitudes, and skills which are needed to make decisions, take decisions and take positive action to support the adoption of healthy behavior. The role of the teachers in life skills education is pivotal. Ultimately, the responsibility of equipping youngsters with knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life is vested with teachers. In spite of many educational efforts taken nationally, instilling adequate level of skills and abilities needed for productive participation in society still remains an unachievable goals among Indian youth. One of the important unrecognized reasons for this crisis is that teachers are not able to support learners in the classroom to acquire essential skills and abilities as most of the teachers themselves lack such life skills (Joxy, 2014). Understanding the life skills of the learners in the context of teachers own a life skill has, thus, become an important area of research study in both psychology and education. This investigation is an attempt to understand how far the type of school management will be decisive in the life skills of teachers by taking two school systems, viz., Salesian schools and Model schools, as examples.

Objectives

The objective of the study is to compare life skills of high school teachers of Salesian schools and Model schools with respect to their gender, residential locale, educational qualification, age, and service length.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested for the study:

1. There is no significant difference between Salesian school teachers and Model school teachers in their life skills.

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2. The Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of male teachers.
3. The Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of female teachers.
4. There is no significant difference between Salesian Schools and Model Schools situated in different locales with regard to the life skills of high school teachers.
5. The Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of trained graduate teachers.
6. The Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of postgraduate teachers.
7. The Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of teachers in different age groups.
8. The Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of teachers having different length of service.

METHODOLOGY

Normative survey method was adopted for the present study. The study made use of a sample of 300 high school teachers, 150 each from Salesian schools and Model schools, selected on the basis of 'stratified random sampling technique' from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states of India.

Tools Used

Life Skill Assessment Scale for School Teachers (*LAST*): The life skills of the teachers were measured by using the Life Skill Assessment Scale for School Teachers developed by the investigators. It is a 50 item five-point Likert-type scale that measures 10 core life skills identified by the World Health Organization (1994), viz., Self-awareness, Critical thinking, Problem solving, Decision making, Creative thinking, Effective Communication, Empathy, Interpersonal relationships, Dealing with emotions, and Coping with stress. The *LAST* has concurrent validity of 0.74 with another established test and split-half reliability of 0.79.

Procedure

The tool was administered on the sample in small group situation under standardized conditions, their responses were collected in the response sheets, and the total scores on the *LAST* was found out. A personal data sheet was also attached with the *LAST*, so as to collect the required demographic information. The data thus obtained were subjected to appropriate statistical treatment with SPSS and interpreted accordingly.

Analysis And Interpretation

Hypothesis-1: There is no significant difference between Salesian school teachers and Model school teachers in their life skills.

Table 1: Comparison of the Life Skills Scores of Salesian and Model School Teachers

Groups	Statistical Indices				t-value	Level of Significance
	N	M	SD	SE _M		
Salesian	150	145.25	28.161	2.299	3.395*	.01 Level
Model	150	134.72	25.472	2.080		

The two tailed test carried out to compare the life skills of Salesian and Model School teachers produced a t-value significant at 0.01 level, revealing that teachers of Salesian

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schools and Model schools differ significantly in their life skills ($t = 3.395$; $p < 0.01$). Inspection of the mean values indicates that teachers from Salesian schools ($M = 145.25$) excel their counterparts from Model schools ($M = 134.72$) in their life skills.

Hypothesis-2: The Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of male teachers.

Table 2: Comparison of Salesian and Model schools with regard to the Life Skills of Male Teachers

Groups	Statistical Indices				t-value	Level of Significance
	N	M	SD	SE _M		
Salesian Males	38	137.18	21.310	3.457	1.724	Not Significant
Model Males	80	129.96	21.235	2.374		

The t-value obtained on comparing the Salesian schools and Model schools with regard to the life skills of Male teachers is not significant ($t = 1.724$; $p > .05$). It exposes that the male teachers of Salesian schools and Model schools are alike in their life skills. To put it differently the type of school does not have a significant effect on the life skills of male teachers.

Hypothesis-3: The Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of female teachers.

Table 3: Comparison of Salesian and Model schools with regard to the Life Skills of Female Teachers

Groups	Statistical Indices				t-value	Level of Significance
	N	M	SD	SE _M		
Salesian Females	112	147.98	29.722	2.808	1.749	Not Significant
Model Females	70	140.16	28.786	3.441		

The t-value obtained on comparing the life skills scores of female teachers in Salesian schools and Model schools is not significant ($t = 1.749$; $p > .05$). It shows that the Salesian schools and Model schools are almost alike with respect to the life skills of female teachers. He school type does not seems to be a factor significantly influencing the life skills of female teachers.

Hypothesis-4: There is no significant difference between Salesian Schools and Model Schools situated in different locales with regard to the life skills of high school teachers.

Table 4: Comparison of Salesian and Model schools with regard to the Life Skills Scores of Teachers from different Residential Locales

Residential Locale	Salesian School			Model School			t-value	Level of Significance
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD		
Rural	90	140.10	26.04	129	132.06	25.02	2.301	.05 Level
Semi-urban	14	143.64	25.67	15	147.33	22.14	0.415	Not Significant
Urban	46	155.80	30.45	6	160.33	22.24	0.351	Not Significant

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Comparison of Salesian schools and Model schools with respect to the life skills scores of teachers from different residential locales exposed the presence of significant difference between the groups only in the case of teachers residing in rural areas ($t = 2.301$; $p < .05$). No significant difference was noticed between the Salesian schools and Model schools with regard to the life skills of teachers from urban ($t = 0.351$; $P > .05$) and semi-urban areas ($t = 0.415$; $p > .05$). Scrutiny of the mean life skills scores of Salesian and Model school teachers from rural area shows that the rural teachers working in Salesian schools excel their counterparts in Model schools in their life skills.

Hypothesis-5: The Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of trained graduate teachers.

Table 5: Comparison of Salesian and Model schools with regard to the Life Skills Scores of Trained Graduate Teachers

Groups	Statistical Indices				t-value	Level of Significance
	N	M	SD	SE _M		
Salesian TGT	80	140.82	23.418	2.618	1.341	Not Significant
Model TGT	12	131.33	18.337	5.293		

Comparison of the life skills of graduate teachers from Salesian and Model schools produced a t-value which is not large enough to be significant at least at .05 level ($t = 1.341$; $p > .05$). It exposes the absence of a true difference between the Salesian schools and Model schools with regard to the life skills of trained graduate teachers. In another words, the trained graduate teachers in Salesian schools and Model schools are almost alike in their life skills.

Hypothesis-6: The Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of postgraduate teachers.

Table 6: Comparison of Salesian and Model schools with regard to the Life Skills Scores of Postgraduate Teachers

Groups	Statistical Indices				t-value	Level of Significance
	N	M	SD	SE _M		
Salesian PGT	70	150.30	32.188	3.847	3.688	.01 Level
Model PGT	138	135.01	26.031	2.216		

The t-value obtained on comparing the life skills scores of trained postgraduate teachers of Salesian schools and Model schools is large enough to be significant beyond 0.01 level ($t = 3.688$; $p < .01$). It means that a true statistical difference exists between Salesian and Model schools with regard to the life skills of postgraduate teachers. Scrutiny of the mean values estimated for the life skills scores of the group reveals that postgraduate teachers from Salesian schools ($M = 150.30$) excels their counterparts from Model schools ($M = 135.01$) in their life skills.

Hypothesis-7: The Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of teachers in different age groups.

Table 7: Comparison of Salesian and Model schools with regard to the Life Skills Scores of Teachers in different Age Groups

Age Group	Salesian School			Model School			t-value	Level of Significance
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD		
20-29	34	133.18	22.272	28	116.11	22.755	2.974	.01 Level
30-39	57	159.14	29.104	92	142.01	24.238	3.879	.01 Level
40-45	38	142.29	24.373	23	135.00	20.432	1.201	Not Significant
> 46	21	132.43	25.143	7	112.43	18.183	1.932	Not Significant

The data and results of the analysis given in Table 7 shows that the Salesian schools and Model schools differ significantly with regard to the life skills of teachers in two age groups: (i) 20-29 year age group ($t = 2.974$; $p < .01$) and, (ii) 30-39 age group ($t = 3.879$; $p < .01$). No significant difference between Salesian and Model schools, however, was observed in the life skills of teachers in the remaining two upper age groups: (i) 40-45 age group ($t = 1.201$; $p > .05$), and (ii) the >46 age group ($t = 1.932$; $p > .05$). Inspection of the mean life skills scores of Salesian school teachers and Model school teachers in 20-29 and 30-39 age groups showed that the Salesian school teachers excel the Model school teachers in both the groups in their life skills.

Hypothesis-8: The Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of teachers having different length of service.

Table 8: Comparison of Salesian and Model schools with regard to the Life Skills of Teachers having different Length of Service

Service Length	Salesian School			Model School			t-value	Level of Significance
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD		
< 5	36	126.39	19.339	30	119.53	22.931	1.318	Not Significant
6-10	56	158.32	28.024	90	140.06	24.671	4.127	.01 Level
11-15	41	155.85	21.603	24	140.33	23.386	2.712	.01 Level
>16	17	116.53	11.737	6	108.17	6.463	1.643	Not Significant

The result of the analysis given in Table 8 shows that significant difference exists between Salesian schools and Model schools with regard to the life skills scores of teachers in two groups based on the length of their service. A true difference was observed between Salesian school teachers and Model school teachers having 6-10 years' service length ($t = 4.127$; $p < .01$) and those having 11-15 year service experience ($t = 2.712$; $p < .05$). No significant differences were found to exist between the Salesian and Model school teachers in <5 years service length group ($t = 1.318$; $p > .05$) and >16 years service length group ($t = 1.643$; $p > .05$). A closer observation of the mean life skills scores obtained for teachers from Salesian schools

and Model schools in groups having significant difference exposes that the Salesian school teachers surpass the Model school teachers in both 6-10 and 11-15 years service length groups.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study revealed the presence of a significant difference between Salesian schools and Model schools with regard to their life skills; wherein the Salesian school teachers excelled Model school teachers. The Hypothesis-1 (there is no significant difference between Salesian school teachers and Model school teachers in their life skills) is, therefore, rejected. The Salesian schools and Model schools differ significantly neither in the life skills of male teachers nor in the life skills of female teachers. The hypotheses formulated in this context, viz., Hypothesis-2 (the Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of male teachers) and Hypothesis-3 (the Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of female teachers), are, therefore, accepted. Comparison of Salesian schools and Model schools with respect to the life skills scores of teachers from different residential areas revealed the presence of significant difference in rural groups, while the groups from semi-urban and urban areas were found alike in their life skills. The hypothesis formulated in this context, viz., Hypothesis-4 (there is no significant difference between Salesian Schools and Model Schools situated in different locales with regard to the life skills of high school teachers) is, therefore, partially substantiated. Although no significant difference was found to exist between Salesian schools and Model schools regarding the life skills of trained graduate teachers, the groups differed significantly with regard to the life skills of postgraduate teachers. These findings have led to acceptance of Hypothesis-5 (the Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of trained graduate teachers), and rejection of Hypothesis-6 (the Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of postgraduate teachers). Whereas significant difference was observed between the Salesian schools and Model schools with respect to the life skills of teachers in the 20-29 years and the 30-39 years age groups, no significant difference was observed between teachers in the 40-45 and the >46 years age groups. The hypothesis formulated in this context, viz., Hypothesis-7 (the Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of teachers in different age groups) is, therefore, partially substantiated. Comparison of the life skills of teachers from Salesian schools and Model schools exposed the presence of significant difference in two groups based on their service length (6-10 years and 11-15 years group), while no significant difference was noticed in the remaining two groups (<5 years group and >15 years group). The Hypothesis-8 (the Salesian Schools and Model Schools do not differ significantly with regard to the life skills of teachers having different length of service) is, therefore, partially accepted.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors carefully declare this paper to bear not conflict of interests

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