

Role of Life Skills Training Program on Emotional Competence of Adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Present study was conducted with the purpose of investigating the role of life skills training of adolescent's emotional competence. The present study is single group experimental type with pre-test and post-test design. The sample of the study was 50 boys and 50 girls' students in Chavara Public school, Dhule. Both the group was trained in life skills for about 30 sessions, one session per day for 2 hours. The tools used in the present research were emotional competence scale by R. L. Bharadwaj & Dr. H.C. Sharma. Finding shows that life skill training has positive effects on emotional competence. Life skill training programs definitely improve student's emotional competence skills. Girls have better emotional competence than boys in pre-test and post-test condition. The results are applicable for educational experts.

Keywords: Life Skill Training, Self-Esteem, Adolescents

Life skill education plays a major role in enabling individuals to translate knowledge, attitudes and values into actual abilities in reference to what to do and how to do it. Life skills are those competencies that help people to function well in their living environments. Life skills are defined as non-academic abilities, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors that must be learned for success in society.

According to **WHO (1997)**, "Life skills are the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enables individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life". Life skills can be best understood as the abilities for positive and adaptive behavior, which enable individuals to deal effectively with day to day needs and challenges. "Adaptive" means that a person is in approach and is able to adjust to difficult circumstances. "Positive" behaviour implies that a person is capable of handling adverse situations and can find a ray of hope and opportunities to find solutions [WHO, 1993].

Life skills mean the everyday skills that people need to live a liberated life and to relate to other people. In paying attention to skills learning, it is important that we remember the vital role that life skills play and that we develop them in everyone. Life skills are those skills that

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are not related to a certain intellectual or vocational discipline but they describe the basic competencies for maintaining a fulfilling and independent existence. Actually no life skill is used alone; there is always a combination of more than one. Major life skills include problem solving, decision making, creative and critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal skills, empathy, and self-awareness, coping with stress and emotions. These Life skills have further been clustered by WHO [1995] as; Thinking skill, Social skills, and Emotional skills. Effective acquisition and application of life skills can impact the way we sense things about ourselves and others, and equally influence the way we are perceived by others. They contribute to our perceptions of self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem and can be acquired by instruction and also by personal experience.

Emotional Competency

Emotional competence refers to the essential social skills to recognize, interpret, and respond constructively to emotions in yourself and others. The term implies an ease around others and determines one's ability to effectively and successfully lead and express.

Importance of emotional competence

Caregivers who assist children in understanding and communicating their **emotions** can nurture an **important** protective factor - Social and **emotional competence**. It is a child's ability to interact in a positive way with others, communicate feelings positively and regulate behavior.

The Development of Emotional Competence

Carolyn Saarni stated a number of goals in his book including: writing about emotional development in mid-childhood and adolescence, examining emotion as a part of culture, and establishing a pattern of studying emotion within the lives of children. The book was organized into three parts: research and theories of emotional competence, skill levels of emotional competence and the clinical application of emotional competence.

In the first part, Dr. Saarni defined emotional competence as the functional capacity wherein a human can reach their goals after an emotion-eliciting encounter. She defined emotion as a building block of self-efficacy. She described the use of emotions as a set of skills achieved which then lead to the development of emotional competence. Attainment of the skills of emotional competence is crucial to self-efficacy. Dr. Saarni outlined her theoretical position in relation to theories of emotion and social learning and cognitive development. Her approach to theory in each of these fields was integrative and focused on self-development with a strong social-constructivist perspective. I enjoyed the culture and folk theories of emotional regulation in chapter three. Also, chapter three contained an interesting section on parent and peer influences on emotional regulation, very useful for child psychiatrists who work to discern abnormal emotional regulation and mood patterns in context.

The bulk of the book was devoted to the eight emotional competence skills:

1. Awareness of one's own emotions,
2. Ability to discern and understand other's emotions,
3. Ability to use the vocabulary of emotion and expression,
4. Capacity for empathic involvement,
5. Ability to differentiate subjective emotional experience from external emotion expression,
6. Adaptive coping with aversive emotions and distressing circumstances,
7. Awareness of emotional communication within relationships, and
8. Capacity for emotional self-efficacy.

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First six skills are based on developmental research on emotions but the final two skills are based on her experience as a clinical developmental psychologist. Each chapter contained organizing subtitles and ended with culture, developmental stage and gender information. In keeping with her leanings to Lewis and Michaelson, her most basic skill, ‘awareness of one’s own emotions,’ is one that requires cognitive ability. She stipulated that, to accomplish the first skill, (Lewis’ argument) the child must know how the body feels to have an emotion. A child needs to be age four or five to demonstrate this skill reliably. Of all the skills, skill four, the capacity for empathic involvement appears to be an outlier. While the material she presented was interesting to read, the role of empathy as a skill of emotional competence wasn’t argued convincingly. On the other hand, skill 7 had a great deal of face validity. It suggested that there is a skill of emotional meta-communication.

Statement of Problem

To study the role of life skills training programs on the emotional competence of adolescents.

Objective

- To examine the impact of life skill training on student’s emotional competence.
- To find out gender-wise differences due to life skill training.

Hypotheses

1. There would be a significant difference between student’s emotional competences in pre-test post-test conditions of the experimental group due to life skills training.
2. There is no significant difference between boys' and girls’, emotional competences in the pre-test condition of the experimental group.
3. There is no significant difference between boys and girls, emotional competences in the post-test condition of experimental group due to life skills training.

METHODOLOGY

A) Sample: Purposive sampling technique was used and 100 participants (50 boys and 50 girls, N= 100) were selected from 9th class in Chavara Public School (CBSE- English medium School) of Dhule city. That age group ranged from 14 to 16 years.

B) Variables under Study:

Independent Variables:

Experimental group

Gender- A) Boys B) Girls

Life skill training (60 hrs. training program)

Dependent Variables: Self-esteem

C) Design: - Single group Pre-test and post-test design was used for present research.

Experimental Group
Phase- I -- Pre testing Administration of emotional competence scale for school students
Phase- II -- Intervention
Treatment Regular teaching with 3 Months life skill training program (2hrs. 30 secession will be conducted= total 60 hrs. training)
Phase- III -- Post testing Administration of emotional competence scale for school students
N=100(50 Boys+ 50 Girls)

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Treatment

The life skills training program was 60 hours distributed in 30 days. The major techniques were used in the life skill training program include as follows-

1. Classroom Discussions: Discussions offer opportunities for learning and practicing for solving problems and enable learners to make their understanding deep of the topic and Develops skills, in listening, assertiveness, and empathy.
2. Group tasks: Group tasks are important exercise and maximize student engagement and allow interactions, allow knowing others better which in turn enhances team forming and teamwork.
3. Educational Games: Educational Games are helpful in promoting fun-based active learning, enriching discussion and motivate participants to work hard. Students learn combined use of knowledge, attitudes, and skills and test their assumptions and abilities.
4. Role Plays: Role Play is a fun based activity involving all members of the class, to be active and take part. Role Play provides an excellent method for practicing and experiencing skills and increase empathy for others.
5. Brainstorming: Brainstorming students generate ideas quickly which helps them to use their imagination and think differently. It is essential to evaluate the bright and dark sides of ideas.
6. Story-Telling: Story telling is helpful for students to develop critical thinking skills, creative thinking skills for writing or telling stories. It helps to draw conclusions and make comparisons. Storytelling also enhances concentration, listening skills and develops patience and endurance in students.

Homework assignments were also given to the subjects. These strategies in an appropriate way with the planned curriculum, Life skills education program can be very effective for students at schools.

Criteria for The Selection of Sample

1. All the participants are regular students of Chavara Public School.
2. The socio-economic class was not considered in the selection of the sample.
3. Only those participants who respond neatly in the pre-test will be select.
4. Those participants who attend near about ninety percent life skill training program sessions will be considered for analysis.

Measurement Tools:

Aspect Measured	Name of the Test	Author	Reliability	Validity
Emotional competence skills	Emotional Competence Scale	R. L. Bharadwaj Dr. H.C. Sharma	.71 to .82	.64 to .69

Statistical Analysis

Hypothesis No. 1 - There would be a significant difference between student's emotional competences in pre-test post-test conditions of the experimental group due to life skills training.

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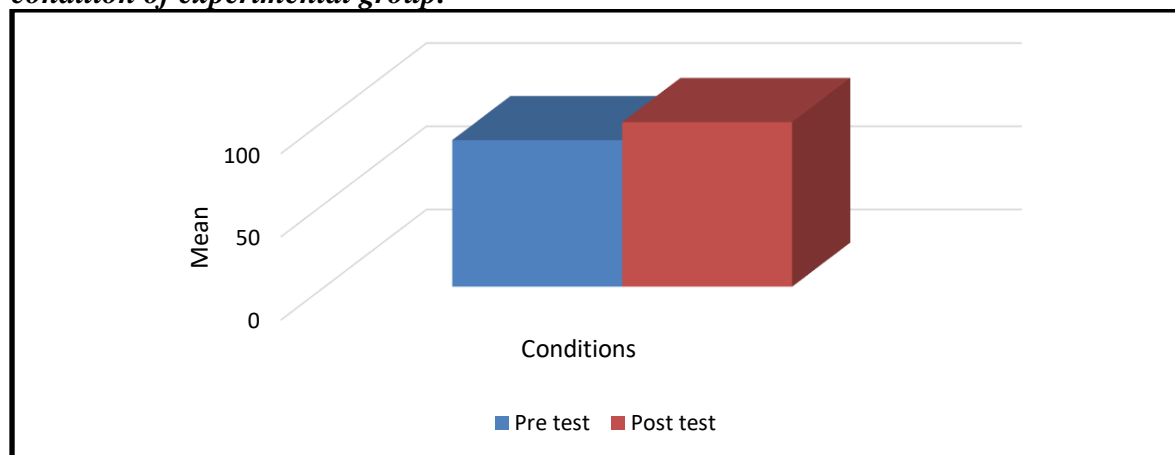
Table No. 1 – Table showing the mean, S.D and 't' value of both condition of experimental group and its level of significance about their emotional competences skills.

Group	Condition	N	Mean	SD	t Value	Level
Experimental	Pre-test	100	88.07	16.92	5.04	0.01
	Post-test	100	98.89	16.34		

$df = 99; 0.05=1.98; 0.01=2.63$

The above table shows the significant difference between the means paired sample 't' test. It is observed that the mean of the pre-test condition of an experimental group is 88.07 and S.D. is 16.92 while the mean of the post-test condition is 98.89 and S.D. is 16.34. The obtained value of 't' is 5.04 ($t(df 99) = 5.04, p < 0.01$) In order to be significant at 0.01 level the minimum required value of 't' is 2.63; since the computed value of 't' is larger than what is need to be significant at 0.01 level. It is concluded on post-test condition is definitely improve their emotional competence skills due to life skill training programme than pre-test condition. So, stated hypothesis, **there would be significant difference between students' emotional competence skills in pre-test post-test condition of experimental group due to life skills training programme is accepted.** The same is explained through the following graph.

Graph No. 1: Graph showing the comparative mean of the pre-test and the post- test condition of experimental group.



Hypothesis No. 2- There is no significant difference between boys' and girls', emotional competences in the pre-test condition of the experimental group.

Table No. 2 – Table showing the mean, S.D and 't' value of both gender of experimental group and its level of significance about their emotional competences skills.

Group	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t Value	Level
Experimental	Boys	50	82.53	18.5	3.78	0.01
	(Pre-test)	Girls	50	92.56		

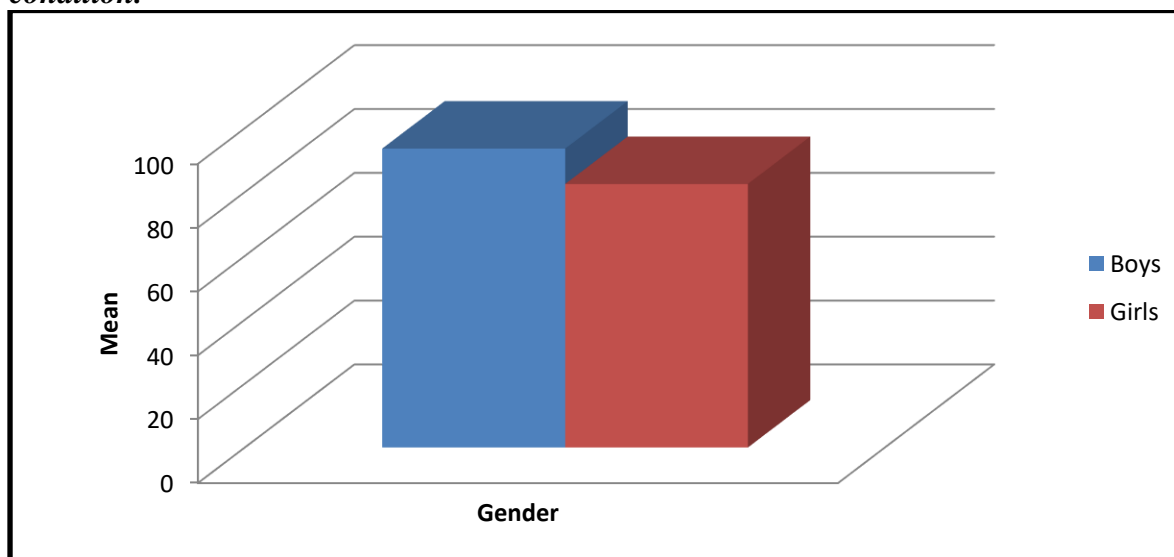
$df = 98; 0.05=1.98; 0.01=2.62$

The table shows difference between the groups of boys and girls in experimental group of pre test condition on the emotional competence skills. It is observed that the mean of boys group is 82.53 and S.D. is 18.5 while the mean of the girls group is 92.56 and S.D. is 13.16 The obtained value of 't' is 3.78. ($t(df 98) = 3.78, p > 0.01$) In order to be significant at 0.01 level the minimum required value of 't' is 1.98; since the computed value of 't' is higher than

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what is need to be significant at 0.01 level. It could be inferred that the difference between the means is significant. So, the null hypothesis, **‘There is no significant difference between boys and girls, emotional competence skills in pre-test condition of experimental group due to life skills training programme is rejected.** It means that girl students are at higher level at the experimental group pre-test condition. The same is explained through the following graph.

Graph No. 2- Graph showing the comparative mean of the boys and girls group pre-test condition.



Hypothesis No. 3- There is no significant difference between boys and girls, emotional competences in the post-test condition of experimental group due to life skills training.

Table No. 3 – Table showing the mean, S.D and 't' value of both gender of experimental group and its level of significance about their emotional competences skills.

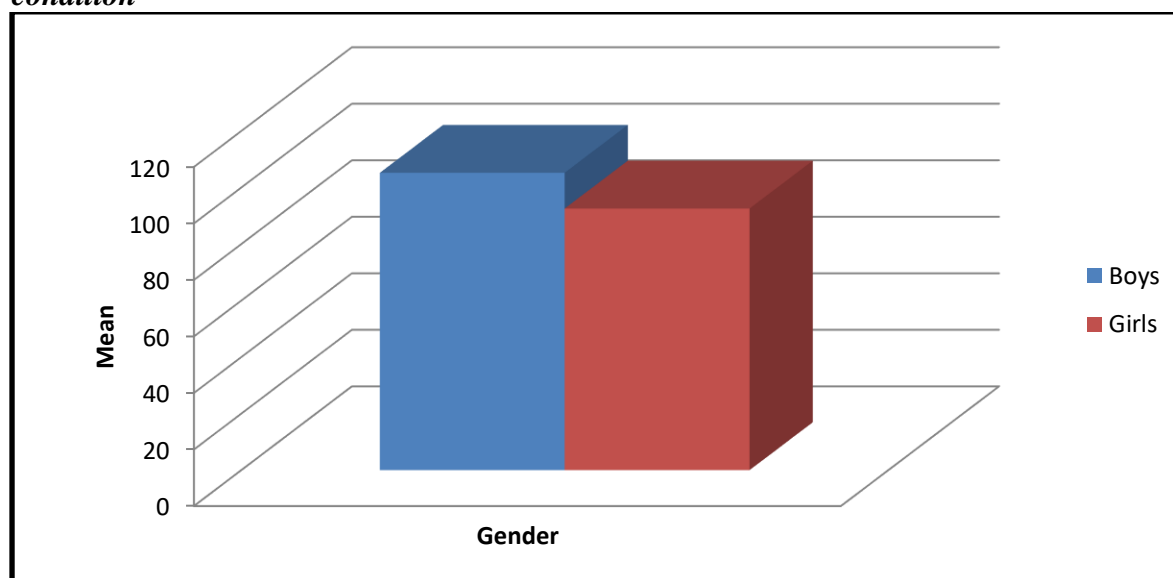
Group	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t Value	Level
Experimental (Post-test)	Boys	50	92.56	17.61	4.58	0.01
	Girls	50	105.21	12.11		

df = 98; 0.05=1.98; 0.01=2.62

The table shows difference between the groups of boys and girls in experimental group of post test condition on the emotional competence skills. It is observed that the mean of boys group is 92.56 and S.D. is 17.61 while the mean of the girls group is 105.21 and S.D. is 12.11. The obtained value of 't' is 4.58 ($t(df\ 98) = 4.58, p > 0.01$) In order to be significant at 0.01 level the minimum required value of 't' is 1.98; since the computed value of 't' is greater than what is need to be significant at 0.01 level. It could be inferred that the difference between the means is significant. So, the null hypothesis, **‘There is no significant difference between boys and girls, emotional competence skills in post-test condition of experimental group due to life skills training programme is rejected.** It means that both the groups are at different level at the experimental group post test condition. The same is explained through the following graph.

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Graph No.3: Graph showing the comparative mean of the boys and girls group post-test condition



CONCLUSIONS:

- Life skill training programs definitely improve student's emotional competences skills.
- Girls have better emotional competences than boys in pre-test and post-test conditions.

Limitations

The present problem researcher acquired some limitations. The researcher is mainly focused on 9th std. and CBSE English medium school children of one school from Dhule city. The sample size is very small.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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