



IJSRM

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SCIENCE AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An Official Publication of Human Journals



Human Journals

Research Article

January 2021 Vol.:17, Issue:3

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Effectiveness of Activity-Based Intervention on Life Skills among Adolescent Girls at Selected Government Girls Higher Secondary Schools in Puducherry



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Submitted: 05 December 2020

Revised: 25 December 2020

Accepted: 16 January 2021



HUMAN JOURNALS

www.ijsrm.humanjournals.com

Keywords: Activity-based Intervention, Life Skills, Adolescent girls

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Adolescents are a demographic force. It is also a crucial period for developing and maintaining social and emotional habits which are important for mental well-being. An estimated 10–20% of adolescents globally experience mental health problems, yet these remain under diagnosed and undertreated. Psychosocial competency is a person's ability to deal effectively with the demands and challenges faced in day-to-day life. Life Skills help adolescents to make proper decisions, solve problems, critically think, effectively communicate, build healthy relationship, empathize with others and cope with stress to manage their lives in a healthy and productive way. **Objectives:** To assess the level of Life Skills among Adolescent girls and to evaluate the effectiveness of Activity-based Intervention on Life Skills among adolescent girls. **Materials and Methods:** A quantitative research approach and a quasi-experimental two group Pre-test Post-test research design was adapted to conduct a study among 254 adolescent girls. Non - probability purposive sampling technique was used to select the samples. A standardized Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) by Subasree R & Nair A.R was used to assess the level of Life Skills and then a series of Activity-based Intervention was given. Post-test was conducted using the same LSAS. **Results and conclusion:** The results revealed that in the experimental group post-tests, majority 89(69.52%), 87(67.97%), 100(78.13%), 91(71.09%), 92(71.88%), 70(54.69%) of the subjects had an average level of knowledge on self-awareness, effective communication, creative thinking, decision making, problem-solving and coping with stress respectively and also in the control group, majority 86(67.19%), 84(65.63%), 85(66.41%), 87(67.97%), 45(35.16%), 87(67.97%) of the subjects had an average level of knowledge on self-awareness, effective communication, creative thinking, decision making, problem-solving and coping with stress respectively. There was a statistically significant difference in the pre & post-test level of knowledge in the experimental group at the level of $p < 0.001$ showing the effectiveness of Activity-based Intervention on Life Skills. The study concluded that there was an average level of knowledge on life skills among adolescent in the Experimental and Control group.

INTRODUCTION:

Adolescents are a demographic force. More than 22% of India's population is in the adolescent age group of 10–19 years; 12% are in the 10–14-year age group and 10% in the 15–19-year age group. [1] It is also a crucial period for developing and maintaining social and emotional habits important for mental well-being. These include adopting healthy sleep patterns; taking regular exercise; developing coping, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills; and learning to manage emotions. An estimated 10–20% of adolescents globally experience mental health problems, yet these remain under diagnosed and undertreated. [2]

Psychosocial competency is a person's ability to deal effectively with the demands and challenges faced in day-to-day life. It plays a vital role in the promotion of health in its broadest sense; in terms of physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being. The enhancement of psychosocial competency can make a huge contribution to health and problems related to behaviour which is due to the inability to deal effectively with stressors and pressure in life. [3]

Life skills are behaviours that enable an individual to adapt and deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life. A review by **UNICEF** found that approaches relying on life skills have been effective in educating adolescent about health-related issues—such as alcohol, tobacco and other drugs uses, nutrition, preventing HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and teenage pregnancy. Life Skills intervention is effective in preventing school dropout and violence among young adolescents. [4]

Life Skills help adolescents to make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others, and cope with stress to manage their lives in a healthy and productive way. Such knowledge and skills can lead to behaviour that prevents disease and injury, foster healthy relationships, and enable young people to play leadership roles.

A Pre- and Post-test in both experimental and control groups research study was conducted in Greater Mumbai among 81 adolescent students from two schools affiliated to the SSC board and to see its effect on their mental health using Life Skill program. Results showed that the life skills program has a minimum effect on the mental health of experimental group students and

significant difference found in pre and post-test of mental health of experimental group students. This indicates that the treatment given to the experimental group was effective.[5]

The main aim of the study is to assess the level of Life Skills among Adolescent girls and to evaluate the effectiveness of Activity-based Intervention on Life Skills among Adolescent girls by the researcher.

The researcher conducted a survey on 60 school teachers at Puducherry, using self-administered questionnaire on Life Skills. The result revealed that the Life Skills like self-awareness, effective communication, problem solving, decision making, creative thinking and coping with stress were essential for the adolescent girls which are lacking on them. Hence Life skill education is a basic learning need for all adolescent. It will help the adolescent to face challenges in everyday life.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The official permission was obtained from the Department of Education Puducherry. Formal permission was obtained from the Principal, Head Master, and Class Teachers of Government Girls Higher Secondary School in Puducherry. Informed Consent was obtained from all Adolescent girls who were participated in this study. The research approach used in the study was Quantitative. A quasi-experimental two groups Pre-test Post-test research design was used. Non - probability purposive sampling technique was adopted for this study. A total of 254 adolescent girls were selected. Adolescent girls who were studying 9th Standard were included in this study.

The tool used in the study was standardized Life Skills Assessment Scale by Subasree R & Nair A.R.[6] and got expert's opinion in the field of psychiatry, psychology, psychiatric social worker, Mental Health Nursing Departments. It included 2 sections. Section A consisted of demographic variables and Section B consisted of a modified Life Skill Assessment Scale. A series of Activity-based Intervention program on Life Skills were given as group discussion, brainstorming, storytelling, case-studies, games, question and answer sessions over a period of 7 days.[7] The Post-test was also conducted by the same standardized Life Skills Assessment Scale on the 8th day. The collected data was then analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Considering the distribution of Adolescent Girls based on their demographic variables, concerning the age in the Experimental group and the Control group, majority 109(85.2%) and 117(92.9%) of the Adolescent girls were in the age group of 13 – 14 years respectively. With regards to the place of residence in the Experimental group and the Control group, the majority 113(88.3%) and 106(84.1%) were residing in urban area respectively.

Regarding the type of family in the Experimental group & the Control group, the majority 92(71.9%) & 89(70.6%) were from nuclear family respectively. Regarding the socio-economic status in the Experimental group & the Control group, the majority 87(68%) were in the middle socioeconomic status.

With regards to the subjects’ father’s education in the Experimental group, majority 47(36.7%) of the fathers were educated up to primary and secondary levels of education whereas, in the Control group, majority 36(28.6%) of fathers were educated up to the secondary level of education. Regarding subjects’ mother’s education in the Experimental group & the Control group, majority 59(46.1%) & 43(34.1%) of the mothers were educated up to the secondary level of education respectively.

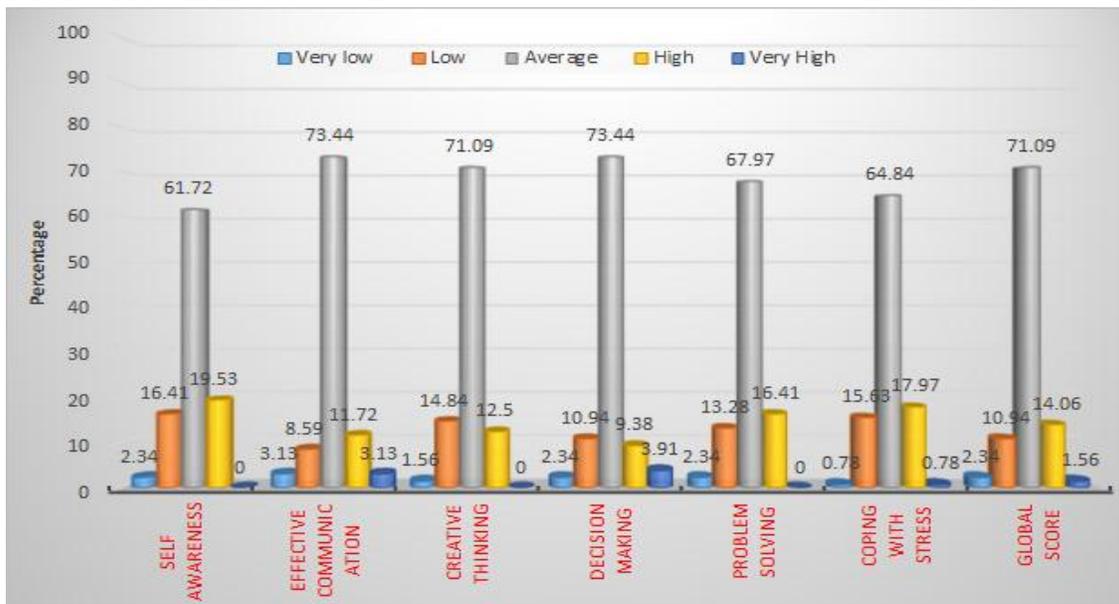


Figure No.1: Distribution of Pre-test level of Life Skills in the Experimental group among Adolescent girls

Figure 1 results revealed that in the Experimental group, majority 79(61.72%), 94(73.44%), 91(71.09%), 94(73.44%), 87(67.97%), 83(64.84%) of the adolescent girls were having an average level of Life Skills on self-awareness, effective communication, creative thinking, decision making, problem-solving and coping with stress respectively.

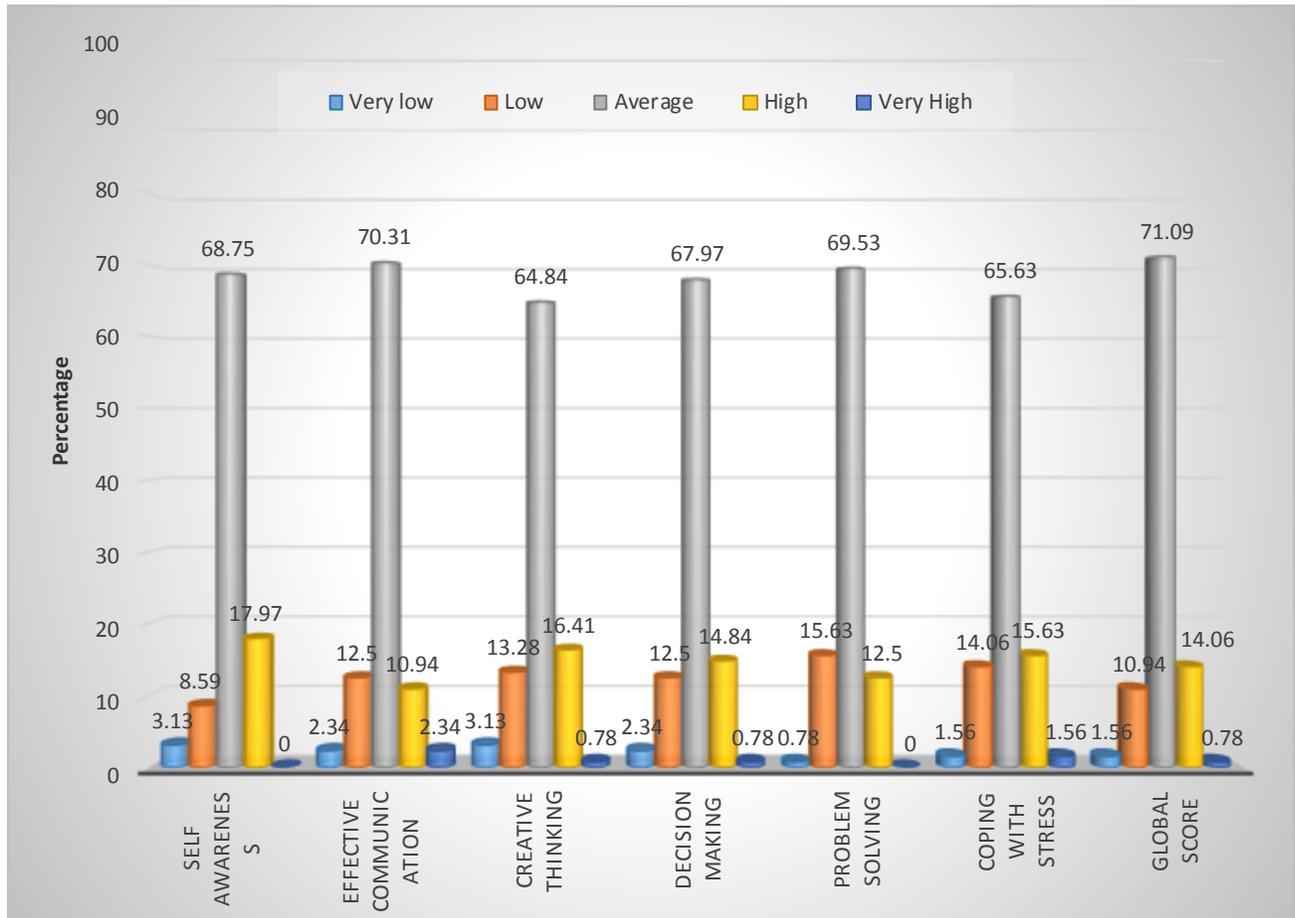


Figure No.2: Distribution of Pre-test level of Life Skills in the Control group among Adolescent girls

Figure 2 results revealed that in the Control group, majority 88(68.75%), 90(70.31%), 83(64.84%), 87(67.97%), 89(69.53%), 84(65.63%) of Adolescent girls were having an average level of Lifeskills on self-awareness, effective communication, creative thinking, decision making, problem-solving and coping with stress respectively.

According to the study findings, this result is supported by the study conducted by Kurian A in (2015) to explore the extent of life skills and the possibilities of enhancing the life skills among

the 73 adolescents from 8th standard by purposive sampling method using Life skill assessment Scale (LSAS), (A. Radhakrishnan Nair, R. Subasree, SunitaRanjan, 2010). The researcher observed that majority 43.84%, 71.23%, 75.3%, 69.86%, 65.8%, 65.7%, 68.5%, 65.8%, 56. %, 65.8% of the subjects had an average level of knowledge on self-awareness, effective communication, creative thinking, decision making, problem-solving, coping with stress, critical thinking, interpersonal relationship, empathy and coping with emotions. The majority (74 %) of the adolescents had an average level of knowledge in life skills. [8]

Table no 1: Effectiveness of Activity-based Intervention on Life Skills among adolescent girls in the Experimental group.

Life Skills	Pretest		Post Test		Paired 't' Test value
	Mean	S. D	Mean	S. D	
Self-awareness	40.14	5.62	45.87	2.62	t = 12.646 p = 0.0001, S****
Effective communication	29.48	4.08	36.29	2.68	t = 17.400 p = 0.0001, S****
Creative thinking	28.0	4.19	33.67	1.83	t = 15.610 p = 0.0001, S****
Decision making	36.19	4.39	43.24	4.32	t = 15.717 p = 0.0001, S****
Problem solving	33.80	5.11	38.69	2.56	t = 12.978 p = 0.0001, S****
Coping with stress	23.19	5.49	34.44	1.38	t = 24.550 p = 0.0001, S****
Global score	190.82	15.50	232.22	8.81	t = 32.591 p = 0.0001, S****

Table 1 shows that the calculated paired 't' test value of Life Skills in Experimental group regarding self-awareness was (t = 12.646, p = 0.0001), effective communication (t = 17.400, p = 0.0001), creative thinking (t = 15.610, p = 0.0001), decision making (t = 15.717, p = 0.0001), problem solving (t = 12.978, p = 0.0001), coping with stress (t = 24.550, p = 0.0001) and global

score ($t = 32.591$, $p = 0.0001$) which shows that there was statistically significant difference between the pre & post-test level of Life Skills in the experimental group at the level of $p < 0.001$. This infers that the series of Activity-based Intervention provided to adolescent girls in the Experimental group has significant improvement in their level of Life skills showing the effectiveness of the intervention.

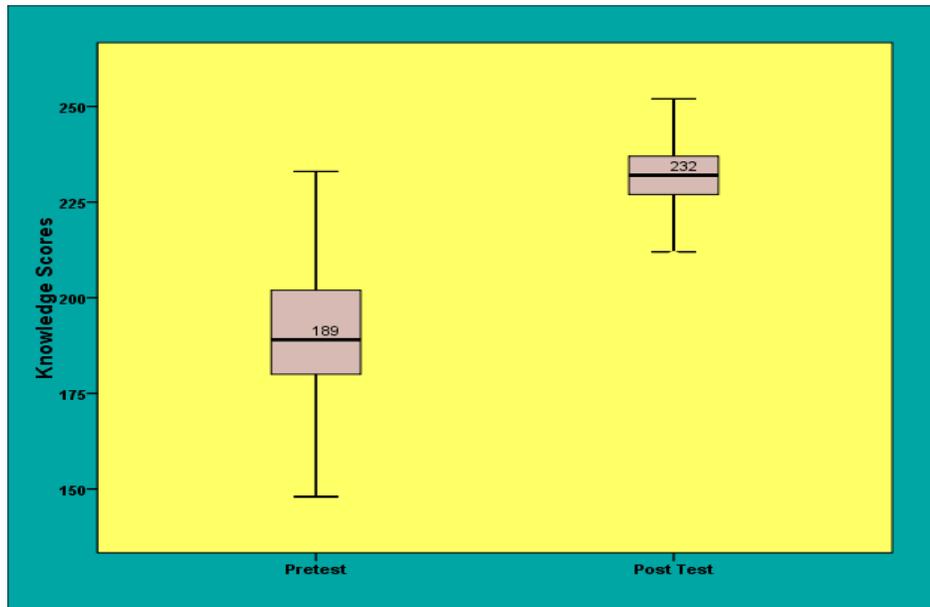


Figure no 3: Boxplot showing the comparison of global Pretest and Post-test level of Life Skills among Adolescent Girls in the Experimental group

This result was supported by the study by **Daisy P J and Nair R (2018)** conducted a quasi-experimental one group pre-test post-test design to compare the effectiveness of life skills training on study skills among 188 adolescents (boys– girls) in Ghaziabad district of UP studying in CBSE stream. Results showed that the paired t-test score was 0.000 (df 188) it indicates there is an extremely high significance and it has been proved that the life skills intervention has an impact on enhancing study skills among young adolescents.[9]

On analysis of effectiveness of activity based intervention on life skills in the Control group, the paired 't' test value of self-awareness was ($t = 1.451$, $p = 0.149$), effective communication ($t = 0.018$, $p = 0.985$), creative thinking ($t = 0.051$, $p = 0.960$), decision making ($t = 1.328$, $p = 0.187$), problem solving ($t = 0.701$, $p = 0.485$), coping with stress ($t = -0.419$, $p = 0.676$) and

global score ($t = 1.096$, $p = 0.275$) showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the Pre-test and Post-test level of Life Skills.

CONCLUSION:

The finding of the study reveals that there is an average level of Life Skills among Adolescent Girls in both Post-test of the Experimental and Control group. In the Experimental group, there was a significant difference between the Pre and Post-test levels of Life Skills which shows that Activity-based Intervention on Life Skills may improve their level of Life Skills from average to a high level and helps the adolescent to cope with life challenges very effectively. A periodic education on life skills and assessment may help the teacher to identify the adolescent who is at risk, thereby a positively challenging environment may flourish and develop self-confidence in their adolescent life.

Recommendations: Life skills education for adolescents to be incorporated in the school and college curriculum. Specific emphasis to be provided in the curriculum on adolescent mental health and adolescent coping strategies using Life Skills to face day-to-day affairs.

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