

EFFECTIVENESS OF LIFE SKILLS APPROACH ON ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract:

Environmental Education in school instruction has been concurred high need by the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005. The nation is attempting to settle nearby national issues. Environmental Science as one of the subject has been incorporated into the school subject. The fundamental Life Skills approach is an intelligent, instructive system that spotlights on transmitting learning and goes for forming frames of mind and creating relational aptitudes. The fundamental objective of the fundamental Life Skills approach is to upgrade youthful people's capacity to assume liability for settling on more advantageous decisions, opposing antagonistic weights, and staying away from hazard practices. Teaching methods are youth-centered, gender-sensitive, interactive, and participatory. The most common teaching methods include working in groups, brainstorming, role-playing, storytelling, debating, and participating in discussions and audiovisual activities.

The present study aimed to examine the effectiveness of life skills approach on environmental awareness among secondary school students. Life skills approach was developed to enhance the environmental awareness of the secondary school students. The effectiveness of the approach was evaluated. The investigator finds it very useful and effective in developing the environmental awareness of student and suggests that it should be given prominent place in the curriculum of school education.

Key Words: Life Skill, Life Skills Approach, Environmental Education, Environmental Awareness, Life Skill Strategies and Techniques.

Introduction:-

The most disastrous event of this century is rapid degradation of environment awareness in the secondary school students. The population explosion has worsened the situation. The people started exhausting the natural resources on one side and on the other creating pollution on the earth affecting the ecological balance in the ecosystem.

Lack of environmental awareness regarding the preservation of the species & culture etc. and conservation of the forests are responsible for degradation of the environmental procurement at

gross root level. If it continues, the human civilization will face disastrous situation. Environmental education for environmental awareness will prepare human society to protect the ecological balance. Environmental education aims at developing in them the knowledge, attitude, skills and communication to protect our nature. Environmental education is nothing but to educate human society to perceive environment in totality.

Environmental Education Goals:

The requirement for environmental education is perceived by everything except there is minimal genuine encounter or information about the best approach to give it.

The goal of such instruction is that people and social gatherings ought to wind up mindful, gain information, create frames of mind, aptitudes and capacities and have the option to address genuine natural issues. Incorporated between disciplinary and all encompassing training is to be given to all areas of the populace. It would above all else require another way to deal with training itself—a methodology which cuts crosswise over various subjects in schools and colleges.

Life Skills

"Life skills" are defined as psychosocial abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. They are loosely grouped into three broad categories of skills: cognitive skills for analyzing and using information, personal skills for developing personal agency and managing oneself, and interpersonal skills for communicating and interacting effectively with others.

Life skills Approach

The fundamental Life Skills approach is an intuitive, instructive philosophy that spotlights on transmitting learning and goes for molding frames of mind and creating relational aptitudes. The primary objective of the Life Skills Approach is to improve youngsters' capacity to assume liability for settling on more advantageous decisions, opposing negative weights, and dodging hazard practices. Teaching strategies are youth-focused, sex delicate, intelligent, and participatory. The most common teaching methods include working in groups, brainstorming, role-playing, storytelling, debating, and participating in discussions and audiovisual activities. Research exhibits that having Life Skills might be basic to youngsters' capacity to emphatically adjust to and manage the requests and difficulties of life. A few projects adequately instruct and advance fundamental abilities.

Core Life Skill Strategies And Techniques: UNICEF, UNESCO and WHO list the ten core life skill strategies and techniques.

The Ten core Life Skills as laid down by WHO are:

1. Self-awareness
2. Empathy
3. Critical thinking
4. Creative thinking
5. Decision making
6. Problem Solving
7. Effective communication
8. Interpersonal relationship
9. Coping with stress
10. Coping with emotion

1. Self-awareness: includes recognition of “self”, our character, our strengths and weaknesses, desires and dislikes. Developing self-awareness can help us to recognize when we are stressed or feel under pressure. It is often a prerequisite to effective communication and interpersonal relations, as well as for developing empathy with others.

2. Empathy: - Empathy is the ability to imagine what life is like for another person. Empathy can help us to accept others, who may be very different from ourselves. This can improve social interactions, especially, in situations of ethnic or cultural diversity. Empathy can also help to encourage nurturing behaviour towards people in need of care and assistance, or tolerance, as is the case with AIDS sufferers, or people with mental disorders, who may be stigmatized and ostracized by the very people they depend upon for support.

3. Critical thinking is an ability to analyze information and experiences in an objective manner. Critical thinking can contribute to health by helping us to recognize and assess the factors that influence attitudes and behaviour, such as values, peer pressure and the media.

4. Creative thinking: is a novel way of seeing or doing things that is characteristic of four components – fluency (generating new ideas), flexibility (shifting perspective easily), originality (conceiving of something new), and elaboration (building on other ideas).

5. Decision making: helps us to deal constructively with decisions about our lives. This can have consequences for health. It can teach people how to actively make decisions about their actions in relation to healthy assessment of different options and, what effects these different decisions are likely to have.

6. Problem solving: helps us to deal constructively with problems in our lives. Significant problems that are left unresolved can cause mental stress and give rise to accompanying physical strain.

7. Interpersonal relationship skills: help us to relate in positive ways with the people we interact with. This may mean being able to make and keep friendly relationships, which can be of great importance to our mental and social well-being. It may mean keeping, good relations with family members, which are an important source of social support. It may also mean being able to end relationships constructively.

8. Effective communication: means that we are able to express ourselves, both verbally and non-verbally, in ways that are appropriate to our cultures and situations.

This means being able to express opinions and desires, and also needs and fears. And it may mean being able to ask for advice and help in a time of need.

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

10. Coping with emotions: means involving recognizing emotions within us and others, being aware of how emotions influence behaviour and being able to respond to emotions appropriately. Intense emotions like anger or sadness can have negative effects on our health if we do not respond appropriately.

Significance of the Study:

The need to spread environmental awareness is enormous in the context of successfully addressing environmental problems. It is linked to environmental education.

On the one hand, provision of environmental education creates greater awareness in individuals and communities with respect to putting environmental resources to use even while conserving them. On the other hand, greater environmental awareness increases the scope of environmental education—as a discipline as well as inclusion of aspects of it within the scope of other disciplines.

Various media and means are used to spread environmental awareness among the people. The electronic media and the print media are the major mediums of spreading information about environment among the populace—educating them about environmental concerns and ways to address these. News, features, talk shows and discussions on television and radio are increasingly focusing on environmental themes of today.

Today man is living in a world of crisis. The social, economical, political and value crisis are some of the threats which the humanity faces and these threats are quite alarming. Added to this, the recent decades, the environmental crisis has become another important factor which made everyone to think of its gravity. Education is the powerful weapon for creating awareness. Life skills approach is the one way to boost environmental awareness. Therefore the investigator selected the present study.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To find out the effectiveness of life skills approach on environmental awareness.
2. To compare the mean pre- test scores of environmental awareness of experimental group and control group.
3. To compare the mean post- test scores of environmental awareness of experimental group and control group.
4. To compare the mean gain scores of environmental awareness of experimental group and control group.

Hypotheses of the Study:

1. There will be a significant difference between the mean pre-test scores of environmental awareness test of experimental group and control group.
2. There will be a significant difference between the mean post-test scores of environmental awareness test of experimental group and control group.
3. There will be a significant difference between the mean gain scores of environmental awareness test of experimental group and control group.

Methodology of the Study:

Design of the study:

The pre-test, post –test equivalent group design was selected.

G₁ O₁ X O₂

G₂ O₃ C O₄

Where G₁ = Experimental group, G₂ = Control group, X = Application of experimental treatment, C = Application of control treatment, O₁, O₃ = Pretests, O₂, O₄ = Post tests

Sample selected for the Study:

The sample for the present study was secondary school students. Two intact groups of 80 IXth standard students (40 in experimental group and 40 in control group) were selected as Experimental and Control Groups.

Tools for the Study:

The following were the tools used for the study.

1. Lesson Transcript for Life Skills Approach (Dr.Femila Pangat)
2. Lesson Transcript for Conventional Method (Dr.Femila Pangat)
3. Environmental Awareness Test (Dr.Femila Pangat)
4. Raven Standard Progressive Matrices Test (Raven)
5. Classroom Environment Inventory (Aruna, etal.)
6. Socio Economic Status (Rajbir Singh, Radhey Shyam and Satish Kumar.)

Statistical techniques used for data analysis :

The following statistical techniques were used for analyzing the data and were computed by using standard formula.

1. Mean differences (t-test) test

Analysis of Data and Interpretation:

Mean differences (t-test) test was used to find the effectiveness of life skills approach on environmental awareness among secondary school students.

Table:1

Data and result of test of significance of the difference between the mean scores of non verbal intelligence of pupils in the experimental and control group

Variable		Mean	SD	CR	Level of significance
Non-verbal Intelligence	Control Group	48.15	5.299	0.277	Not Significant
	Experimental Group	48.475	5.193		

Table:2

Data and result of test of significance of the difference between the mean scores of socio economic status of pupils in the experimental and control group

Variable		Mean	SD	CR	Level of significance
Socio Economic Status	Control Group	68.875	7.802	0.715	Not Significant
	Experimental Group	68.75	7.824		

Table:3

Data and result of test of significance of the difference between the mean scores of Classroom Inventory of pupils in the experimental and control group

Variable		Mean	SD	CR	Level of significance
Classroom Inventory	Control Group	24.65	2.527	0.7415	Not Significant
	Experimental Group	24.35	1.915		

Comparison of mean performances of Experimental and Control group on Environmental Awareness

Table:4

Data and result of test of significance of the difference between the mean scores of Environmental Awareness Test (Pre-test)

Variable		Mean	SD	CR	Level of significance
Pre-test	Control Group	17.77	5.699	0.0588	Not Significant
	Experimental Group	17.7	5.464		
Post -test	Control Group	30.85	5.58	3.752	Significant at 0.01 level
	Experimental Group	52.075	3.597		
Mean Gain Score	Control Group	13.075	7.408	12.697	Significant at both level
	Experimental Group	33.75	7.153		

Major findings of the Study:

- There is no significant difference between the mean difference in the pre-test scores of environmental awareness of the experimental and control group, which means that the two groups were almost equal in their initial status.
- There is a significant difference between the mean difference in the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups taught through the Conventional Method and Life Skills Approach.
- There is a significant difference between the mean difference in the mean gain scores of the experimental and control groups taught through the Conventional Method and Life Skills Approach.

Educational implications:

The Life Skills approach has advantages over the methods of teaching because it is a combination of individualized instruction and collaborative learning. Life skills are essentially survival skills that would allow a person to make through the world. They are essential to handle interpersonal relations to make appropriate decisions, to communicate effectively, to manage our emotions.

TECHNIQUES OF LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION:

Life skill techniques involves all or some of the following techniques:

- Dynamic teaching & Dynamic learning
- Working in small groups & pair
- Brainstorming
- Role-plays
- Experiential learning
- Games & debates
- Home assignments, to further discuss and practice skills with family & friends.
- Demonstration and guided practice
- Simulations
- Case studies
- Story telling
- Debates

Conclusion:

Environmental Education is frequently praised by instructors as a perfect method to coordinate scholastic controls, animate the scholarly and social development of youngsters, and advance protection of the common habitat.

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