

A STUDY OF IMPACT OF LIFE SKILLS INTERVENTION TRAINING ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF COLLEGE ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed with as a need survey in the area of emotional intelligence. The study was carried out to examine the effects of an intervention program on the emotional intelligence of college adolescents. A pre post test design was used for the current study. The current study comprised of 60 college students male and female falling in the age group of 18 to 20 yrs. Generalized Self Efficacy Scale, Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale and Cooper Smith Self Esteem Inventory were used for pre and post test. The students who were low on test norms were selected for the EQ development program for three months. The results were analyzed using paired sample t test to examine pre post test mean difference which revealed a significant increase in the scores of EQ.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence, a vital stage of growth and development, marks the period of transition from childhood to adulthood. Decisions made during this stage have far-reaching consequences for the adolescent. The interpersonal skills that adolescents need to adjust in society are changing, especially the need to communicate across ethnic, gender and religious boundaries (Larson et al., 2002). As adolescents grow to be the leaders of the future it is of utmost importance to ensure their psychological well-being and life satisfaction, so that they may emerge as well balanced adults. Indeed, the future of any culture hinges on how effective this preparation is (Larson, Wilson, Brown, Fursternberg & Verma, 2002).

The youth of today face many more choices and demands than ever before. Whether it is managing ones emotions, developing a personal identity, resisting peer pressure, building relationships or acquiring information on education services, not only gives them greater independence, but also leads to greater conflict and frustration, thus affecting their psychological well-being. There is a need of identity development and emotional intelligence which would help these young adults not only in maintaining effective relationships but also in positive adjustment.

Life Skills Intervention

The present study examines the emotional intelligence and life skills like self esteem, well being and self efficacy. This study was a needs assessment survey of college going students in the area of emotional intelligence. Based upon the results, the study further utilizes a life skills based intervention approach in order to facilitate college students to develop effective skills to improve upon their adjustment.

Three main theoretical orientations have been used for the present research namely those by, Erikson (1959) and Zeman (2007) who spoke about development of identity formation and importance of emotional expressivity. This study is based on Social theory of Bandura (1977) who studied the impact of life skills training on the adolescent's emotional development. He was of the view that life skill training is based on the theoretical orientation providing by the social learning theory which highlights the concept of modeling, behavioral rehearsal, and social reinforcement. Thus, the present research is based upon the premise that during adolescence, there is a need of identity development and emotional intelligence.

Emotional Intelligence and its relevance for college students:

EQ is, the ability and freedom to grow from mistrust to trust, self doubt to self-empowerment, following to leading, incompetence to competence, isolation to synergy, and despair to hope (Singh, 2006). Different researches like the study by Adeyemo (2007) on EQ and academic achievement, by Bartlett (2005) and by Vela (2003) all indicated that emotional intelligence skills are significantly related to student's achievement and mental health. It possesses seven dimensions:

1. Self Esteem and Confidence
2. Empathy and acceptance of others
3. Social Skills
4. Interpersonal Relationships
5. Self Regulation and Responsibility
6. Self motivation
7. Self awareness and appraisal:

Life Skills: Life skills have been defined as “the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life”(WHO). 'Adaptive' means that a person is flexible in approach and is able to adjust in different circumstances. 'Positive behavior' implies that a person is forward looking even in difficult situations, can find a ray of hope and

and opportunities to find solutions. The terms '*Livelihood skills*' or refer to capabilities resources and opportunities to pursue individual and household economic goals and relate to income generation.

The Ten core Life Skills are:

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

Life skills training: Life skills training is a people centered approach and a planned programming, deliberate and arranged in order to alter the anticipated or projected course of development (Jones, 2004); (Cortina et al., 2007). The enhanced competence gained through the intervention leads to the development of positive self-image, independent decision making, healthy problem-solving, assertive communication, and constructive coping (Persha, 2007). A series of studies demonstrating the long-term effectiveness of intervention programs carried out in the United States, such as the Perry Preschool Project, the Seattle Social Development Project, and the Elmira Prenatal/Early Infancy Project have strengthened the argument for the continuation of prevention initiatives (Cortina et al., 2007). Intervention programs thus have prominent effects on pupil outcome, including adopting a health policy, and having a positive school climate. Thus, it provides a strong evidence for the potential for interventions (Cortina et al., 2007).

The Present study

There is limited empirical work available related to the emotional intelligence of adolescents. Most of the intervention research such as (Manning, Homel and Smith, 2006; Peggy, 2006; Sala, 2002), have a western perspective and thus are limited in their ability to be able to generalize the findings across context. Though some work is done in India on EQ (Broota, 2003 & Singh, 2006), there is a definite paucity of research in the areas of life skills based intervention. The present study is thus, both a need assessment survey and also an intervention program that caters to adolescents.

Based upon the preceding section and review of literature following are the objectives and hypothesis for the present study.

Hypothesis:

A life skill based intervention program will have a significant impact on the emotional intelligence of college adolescents.

METHOD

Sample: The sample of 60 adolescents, male and female, both in the age group of 18-20 years from Sri Aurobindo College of Commerce, Ludhiana were selected through random sampling. After the administration of the psychological tests, the respondents who scored average or below average in all the three tests as per the norms of the test were selected for an intervention program. The group was exposed to an intensive intervention program for three consecutive months i.e. Eight days per month for the development of emotional intelligence.

Measures

Self Esteem (SE): Self esteem was assessed by using the Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory (Coopersmith, 1981). The scale comprised of 58 items that measured evaluative attitudes towards the self in the area of social, academic, family and personal.

Emotional Intelligence (EI): The Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale (SFEIS) developed by Khera, Ahuja and Kaur (1999) was administered. The scale consists of 63 items with 7 items dealing with self awareness, 11 items with self regulation, 7 items with empathy and acceptance of others, 7 items with interpersonal relations and 15 items with social skills.

Self Efficacy : Self efficacy was assessed by using the Hindi version of the Generalized Self Efficacy Scale (Sud, Schwarzer, & Jerusalem, 1998). It is a 10 item psychometric scale designed to assess optimistic self-beliefs to cope with a variety of difficult demands in life. It has typically yielded internal consistencies between alpha 0.75 and 0.90. The scale is parsimonious and reliable. It has also proven valid in terms of convergent and discriminant validity.

PROCEDURE

A pre-post testing design was used for the study. Three phases formed an essential part of this research namely development phase, intervention phase, and evaluation phase.

PHASE 1: The Development Phase

Pre-testing/situation analysis: It was the foremost part of the development phase. The three psychological tests were administered upon students in the College so as to assess their emotional intelligence skills. The test which were used were Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence ,Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory , Generalized Self Efficacy Scale.

Derivation of skills: It was the second part of the development phase. Problems identified in the situation analysis/pre testing were then expressed in terms of the possible skills that could help to solve them. These skills formed the learning objectives for children.

PHASE II: The Intervention Phase

Development of life skills training manual : The manual of life skills training programme was developed in order to improve the emotional intelligence of the respondents for effective functioning, to enhance self esteem and confidence; to provide a stimulating environment for better emotional development; to develop self respect and responsibility among respondents; and to develop the ability among respondents in assessing personal strengths and weaknesses. For effective facilitation, aids were also used, skills were taught through active involvement and direct experience and all the activities were integrated with one another.

PHASE III: The Evaluation Phase

Intervention program : The selected group of 40 students , on the basis of the score of the psychological tests, was exposed to an intervention program which comprised of exposing the selected group to an intensive training programme over duration of three months. Weekly interactions were conducted with the adolescents and the facilitator which lasted for one and half hours. These sessions were repeated two times a week. The activities selected for the programme were divided into two sessions i.e. 20 students per session each day.

Evaluation of efficacy of the life skill training manual: A pretest-posttest design was used for this study, which includes a pretest of the dependent variable which can be used as a basis of comparison with the posttest results. The study dealt with the first measurement of the dependent variable and after the period of three month of intervention second measurement of the dependent variable was done. The aim of this phase was to assess the efficacy of life skills training manual on the emotional intelligence skills of the respondents.

Life Skills Intervention

Post testing: After three months of intervention programme post testing with the respondents was done. Post testing of the emotional intelligence tasks was the same as were in pre testing. Post testing of the group on the emotional intelligence skills was done to study the impact of intervention programme. Same arrangements as for pre testing were made for administration of post testing. The post testing was conducted over two consecutive days i.e. 20 students per day.

Plan of analysis: Coding sheets were designed for the analysis of the data and the data was coded accordingly. For analyzing the data related to background characteristics and family structure of the respondents, analysis was done by taking out percentage values. Further, paired sample t-test was used to assess the significant improvement in the mean scores of the respondents in the pre-post tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For the present study, following objectives were framed:

Objective 1 : To examine the demographic characteristics, and family background of adolescents (N=60).

Age: To obtain the information related to demographic characteristics, and family structure of the respondents, the background information form was used. The background information form had close ended questions along with a few open ended questions

Table 1
Age range, mean age, and S.D.

Sr. No.	Variables	Range (Years)	Mean (Years)	S.D.
1.	Age of the respondents	18-20	19	0.91

Objective 2: To study the emotional intelligence of the adolescents.

During the pretesting phase, three psychological tests were administered: Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory (Coopersmith, 1981), Generalized Self Efficacy Scale (Sud, Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1998), Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale (Khera, Ahuja & Kaur, 1992). Then based upon the scores of the respondents on these tests, the following results were obtained.

Table 2

Range of scores, Mean scores, and Standard Deviation values of respondents during pre-test (N=60).

Sr. No.	Test Used	Range of score	Mean Score	S.D.
1.	Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory	117-202	159.9	21.6
2.	Generalized Self Efficacy Scale	23-37	30.6	4.26
3.	Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale	145-245	189.8	25.1

Objective 3 :To formulate a life skill based intervention programme so as to facilitate effective emotional intelligence among the children.

The selected group of respondents (N=40) was exposed to an exhaustive intervention program for a period of three months.

Objective 4:To evaluate the impact of intervention programme on emotional intelligence on college adolescents.

This section is divided into three parts:

A: To evaluate the impact of intervention programme on the emotional intelligence task namely Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory: Self esteem was assessed by using the Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory (Coopersmith, 1981). The study dealt with the first measurement of the variable in the pre-test phase and after the period of three months of intervention, second measurement of the variable during the post-test phase was done. Statistical results of the given test were generated by comparative assessment of the scores obtained during the pre-testing and post testing phases of the current study. Significant differences were observed in the pre-test and post-test mean scores of the respondents which is shown below (See Table 5)

Table 3

Comparison of pre and post assessment of group on Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory (N=40)

Total Score (Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory)	Pre Test			Post Test			Pair T	Sig. P
	Range	Mean	S.D.	Range	Mean	S.D.		
	117-195	151.23	18.72	119-197	153.43	18.83	17.59***	0.001

Note -***p<0.001

The results of the test indicate significant improvement in the emotional intelligence skills of the adolescents as they scored significantly higher scores during the post test as compared to the pre test. Further, the differences were found to be statistically significant. Table 5 shows the quantitative analysis of the data with mean values and standard deviation along with the t-value for resting and post testing phases of the sample. The results were also generated on the basis of gender differences of the selected group. No significant differences were obtained. Although there were no significant between group differences, within group differences were observed (See Table 6).

Table 4

Within group differences on pre and post mean scores of boys and girls on Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory (N=60)

Total Score Self-Esteem Inventory	Pre Test			Post Test			Pair T	Sig. P
	Range	Mean	S.D.	Range	Mean	S.D.		
Boys	117-195	151.23	22.64	119-197	153.42	22.69	17.64***	0.001
Girls	135-163	151.21	8.05	136-165	153.42	8.53	7.88***	0.001

Note -***p<0.001

The above table presents the mean scores obtained by both boys and girls on Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory during pre and post test. .

B: To analyze the effect of intervention programme on an emotional intelligence task namely Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale. :The Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale (SFEIS) developed by Khera, Ahuja and Kaur (1999) was administered. The study dealt with measurement of the variable first in the pre-test phase and after a period of three months of intervention, second measurement of the variable was done during the post-test phase. Significant differences were observed in the pre-test and post-test phase. Significant differences were observed in the pre-test and post-test mean scores of the respondents which are shown below (see Table 7)

Table 5
Comparison of pre and post assessment of group on Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale (N=40)

Total Score (Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale)	Pre Test			Post Test			Pair T	Sig. P
	Range	Mean	S.D.	Range	Mean	S.D.		
	145-214	177.85	14.85	146-217	179.85	14.90	19.01***	0.001

Note -***p<0.001

The comparative assessment of the scores obtained during the pre testing and post testing phases of the present study reflected marked improvement in the emotional intelligence skills of the adolescents as the participants scored relatively higher scores during the post test as compared to the pre test. Statistical significant differences were obtained.

Table 7 shows the quantitative analysis of the data with mean values and standard deviation along with the t-ratio for pre testing and post testing mean scores obtained during pre testing and post testing of the experimental group on Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale.

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The results were also computed on the basis of gender differences of the selected group. It was found that no significant differences were obtained. However, within group differences indicated improvement in the scores of boys and girls during the post test phase as compared to their scores during pre test phase of the study (see Table 8)

Table 6

Within group differences on pre and post assessment of boys and girls on Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale (N=40).

[N=(Boys (n=26); Girls (n=14)]

Total Score (Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale)	Pre Test			Post Test			Pair T	Sig. P
	Range	Mean	S.D.	Range	Mean	S.D.		
Boys	145-214	179.34	17.10	146-217	181.92	17.16	16.25***	0.001
Girls	162-188	173.78	8.81	164-189	176.00	8.67	10.33***	0.001

Note -***p<0.001

The results from the table depict the mean scores obtained by both girls and boys on Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale during the pre test and post test of the study.

C:To study the impact of intervention programme on an emotional intelligence task namely Generalized Self Efficacy Scale. :Self efficacy was assessed by using the Hindi version of the Generalized Self – Efficacy Scale (Sud, Schwarzer, & Jerusalem, 1998). The study dealt with the measurement of the variable in the pre test phase and after a period of three months of intervention second measurement of the variable in the post-test phase was done. Significant differences were observed in the pre-test and post-test mean scores of the scale which is shown below (see Table 9 for details)

Table 7

Comparison of pre and post assessment of group on Generalized Self Efficacy Scale (N=40)

Total Score (Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale)	Pre Test			Post Test			Pair T	Sig. P
	Range	Mean	S.D.	Range	Mean	S.D.		
	21.37	30.40	4.62	24.37	31.50	3.47	4.31***	0.001

Note -***p<0.001

The comparative assessment of the scores obtained during the pre testing and post testing phases indicated improvement in the emotional intelligence skills of the adolescents as the participants scored relatively higher scores during the post test as compared to the pre test. The differences were found to be statistically significant.

Further, the results were also generated on the basis of gender differences of the selected group. No significant differences were obtained, however within group differences were reported such that both boys and girls showed marked improvement in their scores during the post test phase as compared to their scores during pre test phase.(see Table 10 for details).

Table 8

Within group differences on pre and post assessment of boys and girls on Generalized Self Efficacy Scale (N=40)

Total Score (Generalized Self Efficacy Scale)	Pre Test			Post Test			Pair T	Sig. P
	Range	Mean	S.D.	Range	Mean	S.D.		
Boys	21-37	30.30	4.79	24-37	31.60	3.55	3.584***	0.001
Girls	22.37	30.57	4.43	27-37	31.57	3.43	2.314***	0.038

Note -***p<0.05 ***p<0.001

Life Skills Intervention

The major findings of the study are summarized as follows:

- There is a significant increase in the EQ scores of the selected group on all the EQ tasks namely Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory, and Sevenfold Emotional Intelligence Scale, thus showing the positive impact of the life skills based intervention programme on the emotional intelligence abilities of the group.
- The hypothesis namely, that life skills based intervention program will have a significant impact on the emotional intelligence of adolescents, thus, stands accepted.
- Range of scores of the respondents has increased from pre test to post-test. Earlier mean scores of the respondents indicate average emotional intelligence skills but after the duration of three months of intervention programme the mean scores of the respondents in post-test indicate above average emotional intelligence skills.

The results from the present study clearly demonstrate the positive impact of the intervention programme on the emotional intelligence skills of the group exposed to the intervention program. The results obtained can be further substantiated by various studies and intervention programs which have shown a positive impact on several aspects of knowledge, attitudes, and behavior (Stevens, Story, Ring, Murray, and Cornell, 2003). Also, Fernandez (2004) studies had proved the positive impact of intervention program on emotional intelligence of the students.

Implications of the Study

Therefore, the above discussion emphasizes that intervention program play a crucial role towards the positive and healthy development of adolescents. Interventions thus, have positive educational, social, psychological, cognitive and economic impacts. Intervention programs also have prominent effects on pupil outcome, including adopting a health policy, and having a positive school climate. Thus, it provides a strong evidence for the potential for interventions (Cortina et al., 2007).

Interventions on adolescent's have confirmed not only positive outcomes as a result of successful planning and implementation, but the positive effects resulting from the systematic delivery of basic services or resources to young children (Manning, Homel & Smith, 2006)

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