



A correlational study of Mental health and Life skills among college students

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The present study aimed to study the relationship of life skill and its dimensions on mental health of college students.

Method: This descriptive study was conducted on 600 college students of Chandigarh, who were randomly selected. Out of 600 students selected, 300 were from degree college and 300 from professional college. Out of 100 college students per stream, 50 males and 50 females were selected. Tools used for mental health and life skills data collection was Mental Health Inventory by Jagdish and Srivastava and Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) depicted in terms of ten core life skills developed by Nair, Subashree and Ranjan (2010). Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential t- test statistic tests.

Results: The results of the study concluded that life skills is positively and significantly correlated to mental health. The coefficient of correlation of mental health with dimensions of life skills came out to be significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Conclusion: Life skills had positive impact on mental health of the college students. Given the importance of mental health in modern societies, it is necessary for colleges to incorporate life skills in their curriculum to support the mental health of college students.

Key Words: Life Skills, Mental Health, College Students

1. INTRODUCTION

College life brings lot of challenges and responsibility in an individual's life. College seems to be very exciting phase in a student's life as they get to explore lot of experiences with their peers and friends. This phase of life demand lot of hard work as well as persistence to pursue their chosen stream in college. But, this phase can also bring about lot of stress and anxiety in student's life due to demand and competition of doing well in life. Even peer pressure can lead to mental disturbance and stress.

Thus, mental health stability becomes very crucial.

1.1 MENTAL HEALTH

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health is defined as "a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make contribution to his or her community (Galderisi et al, 2015).



WHO in the "Health 2020" program states that mental health improvement involves making people flexible against various stressors in life. (Carta et al , 2004).

According to Durlak et al. (2011), mental health promotion is more effective when a person is taught life skills of coping, adjustment, adaptability, and flexibility early in life.

Mentally healthy individuals are able to cope up with any stressors of life with righteousness and deal effectively with any given situation at any time. College students are dealing with various choices in their day to day struggle and thus, sound mental health is of prime importance at that stage of their life.

1.2 LIFE SKILLS

Life skills education is important to equip young people to negotiate and accept challenges in their lives. This enables them to participate productively in the society. All of us face problems in daily life. Thus, Life skills coping mechanism can contribute to tackle problems in the best possible way.

WHO (World Health Organization, 1997) has defined life skills as "the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life".

WHO has provided a set of guidelines for life skills that are concerned with the mental, social and interpersonal skills of individuals (Moshki et al. ,2014).

According to Mohammadkhani et al. (2011), Life skills empower individuals to have more appropriate and flexible behavior in the community and increase their self-esteem

Some studies have found positive effects of life skills training on responding to psychosocial and social factors such as depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, anger, addiction and interpersonal conflict (Luna-Adame et al. , 2013).

Thus, Life skills are an important set of skills that enable the individual to cope up with difficult situations in life which include interpersonal relationships, decision making abilities, problem solving skills that help an individual to sustain the hardships of life.

2.OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To study the relationship between mental health and life skills among college students.

3. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

There exists no significant relationship between mental health and life skills among college students.

4. SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

A sample of 600 students (300 degree and 300 professional) studying in college in Arts, Science and Commerce and Law, Medical , Engineering streams were randomly selected as shown in table-1.



Table -1 Distribution of Sample

COURSE	GENDER	TOTAL
ARTS	Male -50	100
	Female-50	
SCIENCE	Male-50	100
	Female-50	
COMMERCE	Male-50	100
	Female-50	
LAW	Male-50	100
	Female-50	
MEDICAL	Male-50	100
	Female-50	
ENGINEERING	Male-50	100
	Female-50	

Descriptive survey method was used for the present study. Data was collected using two standardized tools, Mental Health Inventory by Jagdish and Srivastava and Life Skills Assessment Scale (LSAS) depicted in terms of ten core life skills developed by Nair, Subashree and Ranjan (2010). The collected data was analysed as per instructions given in the respective manuals, and was subjected to statistical analysis. Pearson Product Moment method of Correlation was calculated to test the hypothesis.

5. RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Testing the hypothesis

Table 2 shows the calculated coefficient of correlation of mental health and life skills.

Table- 2: Coefficient of Correlation of mental health with life skills

Variables	Coefficient of Correlation
Mental health and Life Skill (Self -Awareness dimension)	.348**
Mental health and Life Skill (Empathy dimension)	.424**
Mental health and Life Skill (Effective Communication dimension)	.399**
Mental health and Life Skill (Interpersonal Relationship dimension)	.362**
Mental health and Life Skill (Creative thinking dimension)	.414**
Mental health and Life Skill (Critical Thinking	.431**



dimension)	
Mental health and Life Skill (Decision Making dimension)	.386**
Mental health and Life Skill (Problem Solving dimension)	.445**
Mental health and Life Skill (Coping With Emotions dimension)	.267**
Mental Health and Life Skill (Coping With Stress dimension)	.211**

The perusal of table 2, reveals that life skills among college students is positively and significantly correlated to the life skills. All the ten life skills dimensions are significantly and positively correlated to mental health at 0.05 level of significance. Life skills are significantly correlated with mental health. This signifies that life skills are helpful in maintaining the mental health of college students. This means that increasing skills like problem solving, decision making and other skills help in the sound mental health of the students.

Training of problem solving skills has been effective in increasing social competence of students in behavioral, emotional and motivational subscales, and teaching students such skills at schools can be effective in improving their social competence as researched by Patel (2014).

According to Spaeth et al. (2010), providing life skills training program to students can provide new opportunities for them to improve their critical thinking and problem solving skills, cope with emotions and stresses and improve their ability to say no.

Concluding one can say that, life skills are helpful in keeping and maintaining the sound mental health.

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