Impact of Professional and Non-Professional Degree Programs on the Life Skills and Home Environment: A Study of Higher Education Institution Students

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper was to examine the difference between professional and non-professional course students enrolled in higher education institutions on the variables- home environments and life skills.

A sample of 100 students was taken from the Punjab state. These students were enrolled in Science and Commerce disciplines and pursuing B.Tech and BBA programs. Home Environment Inventory (HEI) by Karuna Shankar Mishra (2012) and a self-made scale to assess life skills was used.

Life skills were measured by self-developed tool. This test measures 10 life skills, including critical thinking, self-awareness, creativity, decision-making, problem-solving, effective communication, interpersonal relationships, empathy, stress management, and dealing with emotions. Each dimension has five statements, and a 5-point scale is used to rate each.

It was found that there is no significant impact of any subject discipline on life skills and home environment.

Keywords: Life Skills, Home Environment, Professional and non-professional courses Students.

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INTRODUCTION

Life skills are most important skills to be developed among all in-service and pre-service teacher trainees. In order to enable the child to overcome the challenges of the 21st century life, the National Education Policy 2020 enlists a few fundamental principles to guide the education system of the country. Some of these principles highlight the importance of soft skills which can be broadly classified as "life skills" that form an integral part of modern education. NEP 2020 highlighted the education of life skills at each level of education and is one of the most important part of syllabi to be developed in teachers which can further transfer these skills their taught.

Life skills education includes skills defined by WHO to develop adaptive and positive behavior among the teachers. Skills such as critical thinking, communication, cooperation, teamwork, empathy etc. as indicated by NEP 2020 are vital to be developed and instilled in current teachers to enhance their competency and adaptablity to the new situations. Life skills are not only helpful to educate the learners but also make them competent, self-reliant and develop skills which would further enhance their career related requirement of skills. Keeping all these things in mind the training material has been developed to meet the requirement of the teachers on life skills so that they could train the in-service teachers on these skills.

Life skills is usually used for life skills refer to the skills necessary for living better social life and managing the life situations. These skills help one to live life with full potential and accomplishing their ambitions. These are the human skills which are gained through teaching and direct experiences faced by them to handle the day-to-day real life problems. Life skills associate the individuals to face and become capable of handling challenges of everyday life. Life skills increase the capacity of the individual to become healthy, responsible and cultured citizen of the country. Development

of life skills is affected by many factors like family, school etc. The World Health Organization (WHO) describes life skills as the abilities and positive behaviours that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. In a constantly changing environment, i.e., a fast-paced world, life skills have become essential in overcoming the roadblocks of daily life. From managing things better to processing emotions and interacting with others, the need for life skills becomes necessary with time. Therefore, there was a felt need to conduct a study on the variable home environment and life skills among the students of professional and non-professional degree programs.

METHODOLOGY

A sample of 100 students was taken from the Punjab state. These students were enrolled in Science and Commerce disciplines and pursuing B.Tech and BBA programs. Home Environment Inventory (HEI) by Karuna Shankar Mishra (2012) and a self-made scale to assess life skills was used.

Life skills were measured by self-developed tool. This test measures 10 dimension of life skills, including critical thinking, self-awareness, creativity, decision-making, problem-solving,

Table 1: Mean, Standard deviation, and t-value on life skills in respect to science and Commerce discipline

Total Life Skills	Discipline	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
	Science	50	178.67	7.77	0.465625	Not significant
	Commerce	50	176.90	7.14		

Table 2: Mean, standard deviation and t-value on component - critical thinking of life skill scale in respect to science and commerce discipline

Critical Thin king	Discipline	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
	Science	50	18.67	2.77	0.465625	Not significant
	Commerce	50	15.23	3.14		

Table 3: Association of life skills with home environment and socio-economic status (N=100)

Variables	Life skills	Home environment	Socio economic status
Life skills	1.00		
Home environment	.67	1.00	
Socio economic status	.51	.53	1.00

effective communication, interpersonal relationships, empathy, stress management, and dealing with emotions. Each dimension has five statements, and a 5-point scale is used to rate each.

OBJECTIVE

- To study the home environment, and Life Skills of Science and Commerce disciplines Students.
- To study the association of life skills with home environment and socio-economic status.

Table 1 shows that there is no significant difference in mean scores of sciences and commerce discipline students on life skills. The 178.67 mean score of science discipline students on life skills and the mean score of commerce students is 176.90. As shown, in table the computed t-ratio of the sample is 0.465625, which is not significant at any level. Thus, the hypothesis that there is a significant difference in science and commerce students in respect to life skills is rejected.

It may be seen from Table 2 that there is no significant difference in mean scores of sciences and commerce discipline students on Critical Thinking. The 18.67 mean score of science discipline students on critical Thinking and the mean score on critical thinking of commerce students is 15.23 As shown, in table the computed t-ratio of the sample is 0.465625, which is not significant at any level. Thus, the hypothesis that there is a significant difference in Science and Commerce students in respect to critical thinking is rejected.

Table 3 reveals that life skill is positively corelated with home environment (.67), Life skills and Socio Economic Status (SES) are highly corelated with each other (.51). Similarly, home environment has positive association with SES (.53). Therefore, it may be concluded that home environment and SES are positively and significantly corelated with life skills.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

In the present study it has been established that there is no significant difference in the life skills and home environment of professional and non- professional program students.

Kuppuswami (2020) reported that the family environment is the positive sources of support of any individual and one of the inspiring factors for human being to grow and achieve goals of life. The various components such as protectiveness, conformity, reward and nurturance of home environment plays a crucial role in the development of positive life skills of adolescents (Dhir, A., Kaur, P., Chen, S., & Pallesen, S. 2019). Findings from (Kumar2015) also confirmed that parental control showed negative relationship with academic success and competence. Family togetherness and supportive relation between members of the family is associated with adolescent psychological adaption and lower depression (Herman, Ostrander, and Tucker, 2007). Research regarding level of family conflict suggest that associated with adolescents increase and psychological distress as well as aggressive behaviour and conduct disorder (Wissink, Dekovic and Meijer, 2006). Thus, the role of home environment seems to be important for life skills (Bhat and Aminabhavi, 2011).

CONCLUSION

A comprehensive study was conducted to examine the impact of professional and non-professional degree programs on students regarding life skills and home environment. The research encompassed diverse demographic backgrounds and educational pursuits to ensure a representative sample. Findings revealed nuanced differences in the development of life skills and the influence on home environments between the two types of programs.

Professionally oriented degree programs were observed to foster a strong emphasis on specialized skill acquisition relevant to career pathways. Subsequently, students in these programs demonstrated heightened proficiency in technical and job-specific competencies. However, there was a tendency towards a narrower skill set, potentially limiting adaptability in non-professional contexts.

Conversely, non-professional degree programs exhibited a broader spectrum of skill development, encompassing critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving abilities. Participants displayed greater versatility in navigating various life situations beyond their academic or career domains. Moreover, these students were more inclined towards active engagement within their home environments, contributing positively to familial dynamics and responsibilities.

In conclusion, while professional degree programs offer targeted expertise crucial for career success, non-professional programs facilitate holistic skill development essential for piloting multifaceted life encounters and enhancing home environments. A balanced educational approach integrating both types of programs could optimize students' overall development, equipping them with the diverse skills necessary for success in professional pursuits and personal accomplishment in domestic settings

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