

Significance of Life Skills among B.Ed. Students : Gender Perspective Discourse

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The aim of this study was to compare the life skills of B.Ed. students of Sitapur city on gender basis. The sample was comprised of 203 students. Data has been collected with the help of Life skills assessment scale (2010) and personal data schedule (to gather personal information from the respondents). T-test has been used to analyse data statistically. Results indicated : 1. Male B.Ed. students of science background have shown better life skills than that of Female B.Ed. students. 2 Male and female B.Ed. students of Arts background have shown almost same level of life skills. 3 Female B.Ed. students of commerce background have shown better life skills than that of Male B.Ed. students. 4 Male B.Ed. students have shown better life skills than female B.Ed. students.

[Keywords : Life skills, Gender, Socio emotional skills]

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1. Introduction

21st century is full of opportunities as well as challenges. To avail the opportunities and to tackle the challenges we need some life skills which help us to attain success in every sphere of life and deal effectively with day to day situations. Every individual faces various problems and issues in his/her day to day life. Some people tackle those challenges very well and some face difficulty in doing so. To tackle these issues we need certain skills which are known as life skills. Life skills are the abilities which help an individual to maintain his/her mental well being as well as help him/her to maintain congenial relationships with his/her known ones. WHO has defined life skills as “the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life”. WHO has considered life skills comprising of personal, interpersonal, physical and cognitive skills. These skills make an individual capable of living efficiently. UNESCO has defined life skills as “a behaviour change or behaviour development approach designed to address a balance of three areas: knowledge, attitude and skills”. Life skills are very important for any individual as they help in positive development and orientation of one's life goals as well as make them cognitively, emotionally and socially sound. There are ten generic life skills have been defined by World Health Organization (WHO) which must be possessed by a human being. These are- Self awareness, Empathy, Effective Communication, Interpersonal Relationships, Creative thinking, Critical thinking, Decision making, Problem solving, Coping with emotions and Coping with stress.

Packer investigated that gender did not significantly influence life skills development, racial/ethnic identity, self esteem or self efficacy. Race/ ethnicity were found to have an impact on life skills development, racial/ethnic identity and self esteem. Ndirangu et al. (2013) in their study emphasized on gender factors related with life skills education in secondary school, they found that female teachers teaching life skills are not feeling comfortable to teach sensitive issues to opposite gender and unable to complete their syllabus. Female students are not comfortable to share their problems with boys rather they feel comfort to share with girls of their class. Administration's role was also not found very supportive as they do not provide opportunities to their teachers to attend life skills

development programme and improve their skills. Sharma & Nidhi Bala (2015) discussed the role of life skills education in gender equality. They considered men and women as complimentary to each other and thus each and every right and opportunity must be for everyone without any discrimination. They discussed various classroom practices which knowingly or unknowingly play an important role in gender inequality. They also discussed various measures to be taken in classroom to ensure development of life skills in boys as well as girls.

To inculcate these skills in proper manner life skill education is very necessary. In India various organizations are working in field of life skills education. National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) works on life skills education and focuses on community health care through this. NCERT with HRD ministry is focusing on training of adolescent about life skills to prevent diseases like AIDS. National Curriculum Framework (NCF-2005) emphasized on the need and importance of life skills education. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has introduced life skills as a part of their curriculum in 2005. In a report titled 'Mapping Life Skills in India: Research, Policy and Practice', NCERT discussed benefits of life skills education. According to them life skills education may be helpful in peace education, health and physical education, adolescence education programme etc.

YUVA School Life Skill Program was centered in Delhi and focused on training of teachers and students about life skills. Public Private Teacher Training venture was launched in 2012 which was planned for teacher's training of life skills. NCERT has formed a teacher suggestion packet in 2016. CBSE also formulated teacher manual on life skills. Indian Association of Life Skill Education (IALSE) is a registered society in Tamilnadu, working very well in field of life skill education throughout India. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan also focused on importance of life skills. Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development in Tamilnadu is also working on training of teachers since 2008. This institute focuses on all arenas of society to develop life skills.

Life skills education is demand of contemporary society. Any individual having various technical skills cannot even survive in absence of these life skills. As teachers we must focus on inculcation of these life skills in our students at every educational level whether it is primary, secondary or higher or professional education. B.Ed.

students are and future teachers of society. They must be skilled with life skills so that they can uplift themselves from gender biases and can utilize their full potential in the favour of their students as well as their nation's growth.

2. Need and Justification

This is important from above discussion that life skills are one of the most important needs to survive in this mortal world with full potential. Various researches have been conducted to study life skills in number of dimensions. But no study has been conducted with reference to gender perspective of pupil teachers of this region. Teachers are torch bearers and they must be free from any biases. They must be efficient in that manner so they can guide and help their students to realize the importance and use of these life skills. So there is great need of this study.

3. Statement of the Problem and Objectives

The focus of this study is on the significance of life skills among B.Ed. students (gender perspective discourse). Its specific objectives are as under :

1. To compare the life skills of male and female B. Ed. Students of science background.
2. To compare the life skills of male and female B. Ed. Students of Arts background.
3. To compare the life skills of male and female B. Ed. Students of commerce background.
4. To compare the life skills of Male and Female B.Ed. Students.

4. Hypothesis

An attempt has been made to test the following hypotheses :

1. There will be no significant difference in life skills of male and female B. Ed. Students of science background.
2. There will be no significant difference in life skills of male and female B. Ed. Students of Arts background.
3. There will be no significant difference in life skills of male and female B. Ed. Students of commerce background.

4. There will be no significant difference in life skills of male and female B.Ed. students.

5. Research Methodology

This study is descriptive in nature. Survey method has been used to collect data.

5.1 Population and Sample

All B.Ed. students of Sitapur city have constituted the population of the study. Sampling has been done in two stages. At stage one two teacher's training institutions have been selected randomly from Sitapur city. At stage two: sample has been selected through incidental sampling. Thus sample was comprised of 203 students studying in teacher's training institutions.

5.2 Tools

1. **Life Skills Assessment Scale** : Life Skills Assessment Scale has been prepared and standardized by A. Radhakrishnan Nair, R. Subasree and Sunitha Ranjan. This scale is based on ten core life skills suggested by WHO. This multi dimensional life skills assessment scale consists of 100 items in the form of statements in-built with a 5 point scale (Always true of me, very true of me, sometimes true of me, occasionally true of me and not at all true of me). This scale has both positive and negative items.
2. **Personal data Schedule** : A self developed personal data schedule was conducted to collect detailed information about the respondents such as name, age, sex, educational qualification, and educational background

5.3 Procedure

After sampling, students were requested to fill life skill assessment scale (LSAS) and personal data schedule (PDS).

5.4 Statistical Analysis

Mean, SD and t-test were used to analyse the data.

6. Results

Results are presented in tabular form on next pages :

Table-1 : Showing difference in Life Skills of Male and Female B.Ed. Students having Science Background

Groups	N	M	SD	t-value	significance
Male	36	353.88	57.28	0.28	Not Significant at 0.05 level
Female	38	341.26	40.84		

The above table indicated the mean scores and SD values for male and female B.Ed. students having Science background in life skill assessment scale. Mean score and SD value for the male students having science background were 353.88 and 57.28 respectively. Same values for the female students having science background were 341.26 and 40.84 respectively. T-value in the table-1 is 0.28 which is not significant at 0.05 level. . Thus the hypothesis 1 i.e. there will be no significant difference in life skills of male and female B. Ed. Students of science background has been accepted.

Above findings can be represented graphically as below :

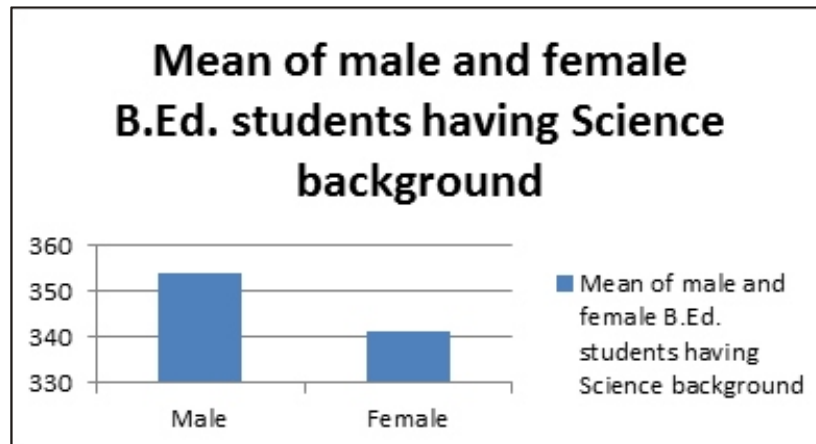


Figure-1 : Showing difference in life skills of male and female B.Ed. students having Science background

Table-2 : Showing difference in Life Skills of Male and Female B.Ed. students having Arts Background

Groups	N	M	SD	t-value	significance
Male	32	371.68	29.66	0.90	Not Significant at 0.05 level
Female	30	370.61	37.91		

The above table indicated the mean scores and SD values for male and female B.Ed. students having Arts background in life skill

assessment scale. Mean score and SD value for the male students having science background were 371.68 and 29.66 respectively. Same values for the female students having Arts background were 370.61 and 37.91 respectively. T-value in the table-2 is 0.90 which is not significant at 0.05 level. Thus the hypothesis 2 i.e. there will be no significant difference in life skills of male and female B. Ed. Students of Arts background has been accepted.

Above findings can be represented graphically as below :

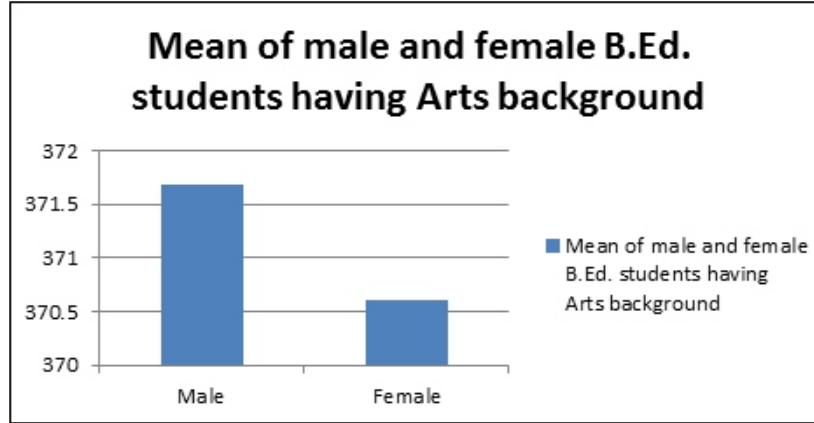


Figure-2 : Showing difference in life skills of male and female B.Ed. students having Arts background

Table-3 : Showing difference in Life Skills of Male and Female B.Ed. students having Commerce Background

Groups	N	M	SD	t-value	significance
Male	33	355.24	37.44	0.24	Not Significant at 0.05 level
Female	34	366.06	36.88		

The above table indicated the mean scores and SD values for male and female B.Ed. students having commerce background in life skill assessment scale. Mean score and SD value for the male students having commerce background were 355.24 and 37.44 respectively. Same values for the female students having commerce background were 366.06 and 36.88 respectively. T-value in the table-3 is 0.24 which is not significant at 0.05 level. Thus the hypothesis 3 i.e. there will be no significant difference in life skills of male and female B. Ed. Students of commerce background has been accepted.

Above findings can be represented graphically as shown on next page :

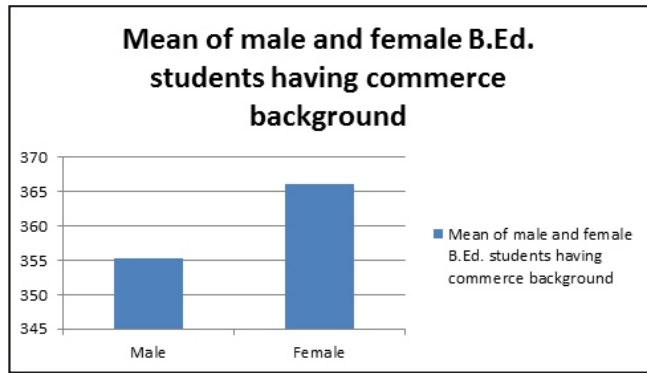


Figure-3 : Showing difference in life skills of male and female B.Ed. students having commerce background

Table-4 : Showing difference in Life Skills of Male and Female B.Ed. Students

Groups	N	M	SD	t-value	significance
Male	101	359.96	43.99	0.38	Not Significant at 0.05 level
Female	102	358.16	40.52		

The above table indicated the mean scores and SD values for male and female B.Ed. students in life skill assessment scale. Mean score and SD value for the male students having were 359.96 and 43.99 respectively. Same values for the female students were 358.16 and 40.52 respectively. T-value in the table -10 is 0.38 which is not significant at 0.05 level. . Thus the hypothesis 10 i.e. there will be no significant difference in life skills of male B.Ed. students having Arts and Commerce background has been accepted.

Above findings can be represented graphically as below :

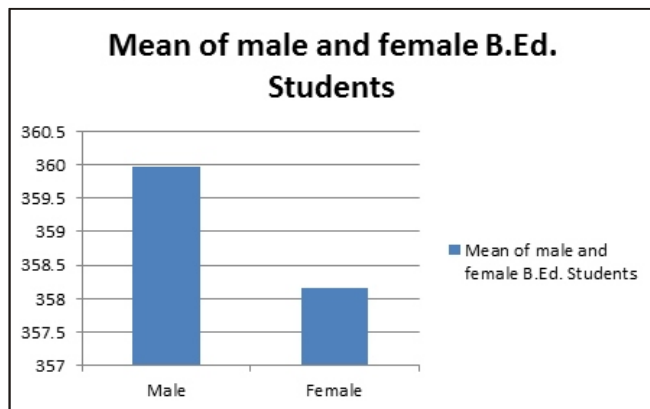


Figure-4 : Showing difference in life skills of male and female B.Ed. students

7. Discussion

Life skills play vital role in overall development of an individual. Life skills are 'the abilities individuals can learn that will help them to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life (Hendricks, 1996). These skills are essential for everyone and can be inculcated in child through education. Teachers are the source of knowledge, values and skills for their students. So required life skills in students must be carried by the teachers as well. Teachers are the leaders in classroom who motivate and lead the students towards better society and nation. Miller (1976) accepted 'development of life skills is necessary to perform leadership functions in real life'. Overall male B.Ed. students have shown better life skills than female B.Ed. students. We belong to a patriarchal society where males are considered more important in family. Males are the decision makers and females are generally in role of followers. Each and every decision of their life has been affected with male counterpart in the family. Alam (2011) found in his study that men play role of decision makers in the family. This could be the reason behind low scores of female students in life skill assessment. Life skill approach is an interactive educational methodology that focuses on boys and girls acquiring gender specific skills as among them communication and assertiveness, decision making, critical thinking and negotiations, coping emotionally, stress management and self awareness (Ndirangu et al., 2013).

8. Conclusions

Participants have shown 'Average' level of life skills. No significant difference has been found in their life skills. But on the basis of differences in mean scores it can be concluded that :

1. Male B.Ed. students of science background have shown better life skills than that of Female B.Ed. students.
2. Male B.Ed. students of arts background have shown slightly better life skills than that of Female B.Ed. students.
3. Female B.Ed. students of commerce background have shown better life skills than that of Male B.Ed. students.
4. Male B.Ed. students have shown better life skills than female B.Ed. students.

9. Implications

Life skills are one of the most important requirements for successful living. So there must be provision to train each student in these life skills for this purpose life skill education must be incorporated with in curriculum itself. As this study has discussed the life skills status of pupil teachers, it is clear that proper life skills training must be given to these trainees as well so that they would be able to incorporate these skills in their students in future. Kwauk et al. (2017) focused on the necessity of teaching 21ST century life skills to teachers, to eliminate their unconscious gender biases and stereotypes. This stereotypical behaviour is a hindrance to achieve gender equality which is one of the goal for sustainable development. They emphasized on the importance of socio emotional skills along with cognitive skills.

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