



**EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING LIFE SKILLS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN AHWAZ CITY**

**HAKIM SAHAGHI^{1*}, MOHAMMADREZA JOHARINIA², ALI MOHAMMADI³,
ZAHRA REZAEI NIA⁴**

1: MA in Educational Psychology, Shahid Chamran University, Department of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Ahvaz, Iran. (Corresponding Author)

2: MA in Clinical Psychology, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University Khouzestan, Iran

3: MA in Family Counseling, Lecturer Department of Psychology and Counseling, Payam Noor University, International Center of Assaluyeh, Iran

4: MA in Family Counseling, Faculty of Education and psychology, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Iran

Received 3rd June 2016; Revised 20th July 2016; Accepted 17th August 2016; Available online 1st Sept. 2016

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness training of life skills on academic performance of High School Students. This study is a experimental with pre-test/post-test and a control group. The sample of consisted of 30 students that selected among high school students in ahwaz city- iran, and assigned to two experimental (n=15) and control groups (n=15). The experimental group attended in 8 weekly session (one hour) of academic and life skills training. The results of t-test showed that the life skills training were effective in improvement of academic performance of students.

Keywords: training of life skills, academic performance, Students

INTRODUCTION

Academic performance in school is one of the factors closely related to individuals'

succeed. Many researchers, social sciences and psychology professionals have been

interested in academic performance during different parts of the last decades and it has been increasingly becoming important in last years. In this context, a lot of money spends by households and government every year (Yusefi, Mirjafari, & Rezai, 2008). It is important to attend to the issue because the growth and maturation of a modern society owe to its educational system and attention to students' academic performance and upgrading it may lead to their academic achievement. Today, for learners GPA is a sort of representation of their scientific ability to enter to labor market and higher education levels. More they try and improve their performance in school, more flourish their talents will be and more success they achieve in school. They become aware people who fulfill their academic goals through achieving gains and their satisfying performance in educational setting. Then, more we try to recognize the factors related to learner's performance in school, less the problems individuals will face to and more successful people will enter into the society; thus, it would help to develop a successful and healthy community. Then, the society, in particular the educational institutions, have to pay more attention to academic destiny and successfully growth and maturation of people in society.

One of the most important factors that help people live well and successfully is to know and feel good about themselves. Life skills help individuals understand more about themselves, their characteristics, needs, desires, goals, weaknesses, strengths, passions, values and identity (Fati et al, 2006). World Health Organization(1997) defines Life Skills, as abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday lif. Life skills, from this perspective, are essentially those abilities which help to promote mental well-being and competence in young people as they face the realities of life. Secondly, to enable children to learn and practice skills, life skills education is based on a child-centred and activity oriented methodology. And finally, life skill education is based on the philosophy that young people should be empowered to take more responsibility for their actions (World Health Organization, 1993,1996). Life skills include individual and social skills, which adolescents should learn about and ultimately be able to treat themselves and other people of the whole society in an appropriate manner effectively and safely (McTavish, 2000). Based on the previous research done, self- esteem, interpersonal skills, good communication, goal setting,

decision making, problem solving and recognizing personal values are among the contributing factors that help students promote their mental health and prevent behavioral abnormalities or mental disorders. Lack of such skills, however, would make students get away with stressful troubles through ineffective and maladaptive behaviors (Taromiyan, Mahjuyee, & Fathali, 1999). Bob and Roisin (2010), investigating students' communication skills, conclude that these skills dramatically increase students' self-confidence and communication skills and flexibility. Bo et al (2010), examining the quality of life among rural migrants in cities, conclude that teaching life skills to immigrants before the migration, with a focus on efficient coping skills, improves their quality of life and mental health. In a study authors concluded that social skills training programs lead to reduced anti-social behavior and problematic behaviors. In another research conclude that social skills training leads to increase the understanding of social self and decrease in negative behaviors toward peers and provides ability and quality of the behavior. In 2011, Rahmanpour et al. Martin and Jones (2009) claim that personal skills, discipline, performance results management and self-confidence are among the most important life

skills. In another study conducted by Turner et al (2008), studying life skills training, such as problem solving and effective communication on adolescents, indicates that these skills increase their abilities to solve problems and effectively use social support. Johnson and Johnson (2000) considered the following results as the beneficial effects of social skills training: 1) Individual and identity development; 2) Job opportunities; 3) Improving the quality of life; 4) Physical health; 5) Mental health; 6) The ability to cope with anger-provoking situations. Harter (1998) argues that there is a relationship between decreased permanent self-esteem and decreased academic progress, depression, eating disorders and delinquency, and that social skills training causes reduction of anxiety of female students. conducted a research study on the effect of life skills training on self-esteem and mental health and found that life skills training led to mental health and self-esteem. The purpose of present research was to examine the effectiveness of life skills training on academic performance of students

METHODS

This research was experimental with pretest/posttest and a control group. Statistical population consisted high school students, all were of Ahwaz-Iran origin in

2016. The sample of consisted of 30 students that selected among high school students in Ahwaz city, and assigned to two experimental (n=15) and waiting list groups (n=15). The 8 sessions (one hour) of life skills training were implemented for experimental group. Having finished the training, both groups were analyzed in the posttest stage by t test.

RESULTS

Table 1: t-test results training on life skills, academic performance

| Group | n | Mean | s.d | Df | T | P |
|------------|----|------|-----|----|------|------|
| Experiment | 15 | 4/49 | 3/8 | 28 | 1/34 | 0.01 |
| Control | 15 | 6/07 | 2/6 | | | |

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of present research was to examine the effectiveness of life skills training on academic performance of students. The results indicated that training of life skills has been positively affected on academic performance . Other research studies also confirm the above results. Bo et al (2010), Savoji, Ganji and Ahmad Zade' (2010), and Larson & Gerber, Tatl (2006). Generally the results of this study regarding the relationship between life skills and academic performance indicate that life skills are influencing factors on different aspects of students' life. It seems whatever the education system can improve the life skills of students, it can see its effect on different aspects of students' life specially academic achievement. So it is better to do other

Top table shows of t-test analysis of the impact of training on life skills, academic performance. This table is based on the covariance data and experimental conditions the significant level less than 0.05 and therefore is significant. The based of Table 1, since the average is significantly higher in the experimental group than the control group, we can say that academic performance will improve life skills.

studies in different places in relation to other life skills and academic achievement to more understand the extent of this relationship. Therefore it is recommended that counselors and school administrators to improve academic skills to provide motivation and academic performance to reach better quality of life for our students in school.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Of all the people who helped us in conducting this study, we thank.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bo, W., Li, X.M., Bonita, S. and Xiaoyi, F. (2010) The Influence of Social Stigma and Discriminatory Experience on Psychological Distress and Quality of Life among Rural-to-Urban Migrants. China Social Science & Medicine, in Press,

- Corrected Proof, Available Online 27 March.
- [2] Bob, L. and Roisin, D. (2010) Using Podcasts to Support Communication Skills Development: A Case Study for Content Format Preferences among Postgraduate Research Students. *Computers & Education*, 54, 962-971.
- [3] Fati, L., Motabi, F., Mohammadkhani, Sh., Bolahri, J. and Kazemzadeh Otof, M. (2006) *Life Skills Training for Students: Tutor Handbook*. Danjeh Publication, Tehran.
- [4] Harter, S. (1998) The Development of Self-Representation. In: Damon, W. and Eisenberg, N., Eds., *Handbook of Child, Social, Emotional, and Personality Development*, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, 518-553.
- [5] Johnson, O. and Johnson, R. (2000) *Learning Together and Alone: Cooperative, Competitive, and Individualistic Learning*. Allyn and Bacon, Boston.
- [6] Larson, K. A., Gerber, M.M. (1987). Effects of social met cognitive training for enhancing overt behaviour in learning disabled and low achieving delinquents. *Exceptional Children*, 54, 201- 211.
- [7] Martin, I. and Jones, D. (2009) Exploring the Life Skills Needs of British Athletes. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 10, 159-167.
- [8] McTavish, S. (2000). *Life skills: Activities for success and well-being*. New York: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins.
- [9] Rahmanpour, M., Teimori, S. and Momeni Mehmoee, H. (2011) Examining the Effects of Life Skills Training on Mental Health and Self-Esteem of Fifth-Grade Female Elementary Students. *Journal of New Thoughts on Education*, 6, 102-112.
- [10] Savoji, Azar & Ganji, Kamran & Ahmadzade, Mahmood.(2010). Effect of Life Skills Training on Motivating Progress and Students' Academic achievement. *Scientific Journal of Social Welfare*12 (47).
- [11] Taromiyan, F., Mahjuyee, M., & Fathali, T. 1999. *Life skills*, Tarbiyat Publications, Tehran.
- [12] Turner, N.E., Macdonald, J. and Somerset, M. (2008) *Life Skills, Mathematic All Reasoning and Critical Thinking: Curricula for Prevention of Problem Gambling*.

Journal of Gambling Studies, 24, 27-29.

- [13] World Health Organization (WHO) (1997). Life skills education for children and adolescents in schools. Geneva: Programme on Mental Health.
- [14] World Health Organization (WHO). 1993. Life skills education in schools. Geneva: Division of Metal Health and Prevention of Substance Abuse.
- [15] World Health Organization (WHO). 1996 Life skills education planning for research. Geneva: Division of Metal Health and Prevention of Substance Abuse
- [16] Yusefi H, Mirjafari SA, Rezai A. (2008). The relationship of locus of control and academic performance of high school third grade students in Khormoj, Bushehr state. *Psycho Con & Apps in So- ci*, 739(3), 60-67.