

An Intervention Study “On Life Skill Training To Improve Self Awareness Among Women With Disability In Higher Education”

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ABSTRACT: *Women with disability not only have to settle themselves with social and cultural concerns but also have to deal with social structural inequalities at the practical level. The census 2011 data shows that the literacy rates of females are low in all types of disabilities as compared to the males. Women with disability in higher education are facing many barriers such as accessibility, availability, sexual exploitations denial of rights. Education is a boon for every one to succeed in life. But in the case of women with disability it is yet an another challenge for them to break the barriers in education by increasing their self awareness and developing a higher aspirations to achieve greater heights in this competitive world. Self-awareness is an important skill to acquire because it is an attitude that will help us to face problems.*

Hence a study was attempted at Avinashiligam Deemed University, special education department, 30 women with disability in higher education was taken as sample for the study. The aim of the study is to improve the level of self awareness of women with disability in higher education through life skill intervention. The intervention was planned for one week. Self awareness scale by Kathrin Trechieshe (2013) was applied to find out the pre test and post score on self awareness and findings of the study revealed that there is a significant difference between pre test and post test score Hence it is concluded that an effective intervention such as life skill training is essential for women with disability in higher education in understanding their strengths and weakness so that they can easily break the personal and social bearers and lead a very self reliant and self dependent life.

KeyWords: *Women with Disability, Higher Education, Self Awareness, Life Skill Intervention.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Women with disabilities are more in global population, and a majority of the population of persons with disabilities are in developing countries. They are facing many problems.. Particularly for women with disability education is must for them to have a holistic development. But existing system of education is not designed effectively to solve many of their problems, Recent literature shows young women with disability face physical/

emotional barriers. Majority of them are not aware of their own positives and negatives. If they gain self knowledge and self awareness on their own emotions they'll be able to find their own style of battling all the evils that they come across in their daily life.

Strengthening the personality of women who have disabilities is essential. Innovative programme must designed for them to widen their knowledge and skills. Increasing their self awareness will help them to have a clear perception about their personality, including strengths, weaknesses, thoughts, beliefs, motivation, and emotions. Self-awareness is a cognitive process requiring integration of information from both external reality and inner experience. High level of self awareness will make changes in thoughts and emotions so self awareness is one of the attributes of Emotional Intelligence and an important factor in achieving success.

Life skill education include a wide range of knowledge and skill interactions believed to be an essential for individual independent living. Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (WHO) A study on “ Importance of life skill education for youth” by R. Dinesh in the year 2014 revealed that Life skill education has reduced the problems of young minds and also equipped them to act in a par with the demands of the society. So the researcher was very curious in preparing a life skill module for the differently abled persons and to find the effectiveness in improving self awareness,

AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to find out the impact of life skill training to improve self awareness among women with disability in higher education

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the socio- economic profile of women with disability in higher education
- To find-out their level of self- Awareness, of the respondents before the life skill training
- To find out the significant difference between pre test score and post test score of self awareness

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

- There is no significant difference on the level of Self- awareness of women with disability in higher education after the life skill intervention

RESEARCH DESIGN

- Since it is an intervention study on life skill training to improve the self awareness of differently abled women . The researcher has adopted experimental research design

UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY

Differently abled women in higher education are the universe of the study

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Since it is an intervention study the researcher wanted to have differently abled women under one roof hence, special education department of Avinashilingam deemed University for Home Science and Higher Education For women in Coimbatore has been selected for the data collection. The total number of differently abled women who are studying in the university was 30, which include 22 visually impaired, 4 hearing impaired and 4 loco motor disabled students. All the 30 students are in different discipline such as B.A Eng.Lit, B.A..Tam.Lit, B.A.Economics a B.A.History B.com. and M.A.Tam All the students has included for the pre data collection, Intervention and also for the post evaluation Hence census sample has adopted for the study

TOOLS USED FOR DATA COLLECTION

Majority of the respondents were visually impaired so, Interview schedule was used to collect data. The first part of the tool includes personal profile of the respondents, their disability details and information related to their higher education and their scholarship. To measure the level of self awareness a standardized scale on . Self- Awareness scale by Kathrin Trechieshe (2013) was used.

LIFE SKILL TRAINING MODULE FOR DIFFERENTLY ABLED

Introduction

Life skills are a group psycho – social competencies and interpersonal skills that help people make informed decisions, communicate and effectively and develop coping and self – management skills to lead a healthy and productive life. Life skills enable us to translate knowledge attitude and values into actual abilities by helping us decide what to do, when to do and how to do it.

- Life Skills Education is an approach that functions as an instrument of empowerment.
- Life skills enable adolescent boys and girls to utilise the other skills such as functional, vocational/ livelihood and literacy skills better

Totally there are ten cores of life skills. They are Self – awareness, Empathy, Critical thinking, Creative thinking, Problem Solving, Decision making, Interpersonal Relationship Effective communication Coping with Emotions and Coping with stress. Among the ten cores of life skills the researcher focused only on Self-awareness, From Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development model, A Facilitators Manual on Enhancing Life Skills has been referred to prepare a module on life skill for differently abled women. Many of the activity discussed in the manual was not suitable for the differently abled person so many activities has been changed according to the target group. A special module was prepared by the researcher. Based on the module the intervention was conducted for one week Totally five activities on self awareness was given to the participants The total duration was 5 hours. The main objective of this training programme is to enable the participants to develop their self –awareness

MODULE ON LIFE SKILLS (Self Awareness) FOR DIFFERENTLY ABLED PERSONS

Objectives of the intervention: By the end of the session, participants will be able to

- Differentiate between life skills and other skills
- Define the concept of life skills
- Describe the practical use of core life skills in daily life
- Understand their self by doing many practical exercises

Activity No	Topic	Methodology	Duration
Activity 1	Understanding skills and life skills	Brainstorming, Explanation	1hr
Activity 2	Understanding Self Awareness	Story telling, Discussion and Explanation	1 hr
Activity 3	Warming up	Game	45 min
Activity 4	Relate your fingers	Analysis	1hr
Activity 5	Knowing My self	Sharing and	1hr

		discussion	
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Activity 1 - Understanding skills and life skills

- Step 1:** Ask each participant to say any one skill which they know
- Step 2:** Categorise the responses as vocational, livelihood, functional, literacy numeric skills
- Step 3:** Initiate a discussion on
 - The difference between skilled and unskilled persons?
 - Why it is necessary to have skills?
 - How does one acquire skills?
 - Why should the skills be enhanced?
- Step 4:** Describe life skills and give explanation on significance of core life-Skills

Activity 2 – Understanding Self Awareness

- Step 1:** Introduce self awareness,
- Step 2:** Narrating the story of crocodile and the monkey and divide the participants into five groups and ask each group to identify the life skills used in the story
- Step 3:** Invite the groups to make their presentations.
 When the groups complete their presentations, highlight the following People use various combinations of life skills to address the same issue, based on their perspectives, past experiences, values, needs and understanding of the issues. Therefore final discussion will help the participants to understand, how selected three life skills are used practically to overcome a challenging situations in life.

Activity 3 - Warming up

- Step 1:** In order to make the participants, to feel comfort and free ask the participants to sit in a circle
- Step 2:** Ask each one to collect some information from their friends who is sitting were close to them and collect information about their neighbour’s personal details, their ambition, interest likes, dislikes
- Step 3:** Finally the individuals have to present the information and now it is possible for everyone to know each other.

Activity 4 - Relate your fingers

- Step 1:** Ask each participants to expand their palm and touch every fingers to know their shape and height.
- Step 2:** While touching each fingers of their own they will be able to relate their personal character with each finger. Like, thumb finger for confident character, middle finger for good character, short finger for negative character, ring finger for weak character, and fore finger for positive character
- Step 3:** After finding out their both positive character and negative character they have express in the group
- Step 4:** After listening to every participants, the facilitators explain how it is important to analyse and understand our own self.

Activity 5– Knowing My self

- Step 1:** Help the participants to divide into small groups and discuss on positive and negative character in general which every individual possess.
- Step 2:** Ask the participants to check how many character are they possess
- Step 3:** Encourage the participants to share, analyse and discuss their individual character among the members of their groups . Once these have been discussed, ask each group to give feedback to each person- on the additional character that were not checked by the person.
- Step 4:** Ask the participants to share their qualities with the larger group
- Step 5:** Use the following to stimulate discussions and to link the activity to the lives of young people
- How would you feel when a friend points out the faults in you? How would you react immediately?
 - How did you feel while sharing your personal qualities during the activity? Did you identify new qualities you took for granted and did not realise that they were your special traits?
 - It is hard to say positive things about yourself in a group? Now that you have been reiterating your positive qualities in the previous exercise –do you believe in your strengths? Is it easier to say these now?
 - Were you surprised at how many qualities you have? Did You learn anything new about yourself or your group members while doing this activity?
 - Have there been times in your life when you felt there was nothing positive about yourself? What are the ways in which you can think positively about yourself?
 - How important is it to like ourselves?

End the session with following key messages:

- It is important for us to know who we are – our strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes, goals dreams and priorities
- Never compare yourself negatively to others
- We must love ourselves and feel worthy of ourselves. When we have a good relationship with ourselves our relationship with others will improve
- Instead of hating ourselves for what we are not or have not done, we should give ourselves credit for what we are and what we have done
- A healthy personality is based on being honest about who we are
- Nourish yourselves with good friends, food, books, and experiences. Take care of your mind body and, feelings and take charge of your life

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Majority of the (93 Percent) of the respondents are single.
- Nearly (57 percent) of respondents are belong to the age group of 18- 20years.
- Majority of the (87 percent) of respondents are studying Under Graduation.
- Nearly (70 percent) of the respondents are visually impaired.
- Only (43 percent) of the respondents are having 61-80 percentage of disability
- Majority of the (83 percent) respondents are having disability from their birth
- Nearly (43 percent) of the respondents are disabled because of the biological reason
- Majority of the respondents (80 percent) are having low level of self awareness before the life skill training
- PAIRED SAMPLE T-test

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-Self Awareness	19.4000	30	6.83096	1.24716
Post-Self Awareness	35.0333	30	3.31645	.60550

Paired Differences					T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
			Lower	Upper			
-1.56333E1	6.40303	1.16903	-18.02427	-13.24240	-13.373	29	.000

- The t- test was applied to find out whether there is any significant difference between the level of self awareness before and after the intervention of life skill training. The significant value is .000, is less than the 0.5 which indicated that there is statistically significant difference in the self awareness level of the respondents before and after the life skill intervention,

SUGGESTION

- **General recommendations**
 Special education curriculum must introduce the life skill training as separate syllabus for the special category individuals Though special education serves the purpose of shaping the destiny of differently abled person.
- **Creating a Module on life skill training**
 Life skill module for normal persons is readily available. For the category of differently abled person the module is not available, we do have some life skill soft wares but does not suit and serve every individual.. Life skill module has to be prepared according to the disability and the difficulties that each person with disability face in their life.
- **Relevance of skill training**
 Life skill training for special educators is must so that they can impart the knowledge se to differently abled students though it is a extra burden for them to learn and to train, it will give them a fruitful results in their carrier. Since social work profession has its scope with persons with disability and rehabilitation, it is essential for the social workers to

undergo training on life skills before training for trainers. Later it is more helpful to handle the physically challenged persons

➤ **Research activities on life skill**

Promoting many research activities in the area of life skill is needed. New modules can be framed according to the age, gender, and type of disability, and their problems.

2. CONCLUSION

In order to equip women with disability and to react in more rational way life skill training has to be given to them. Life skill education program is an incentive and a preventive program. This program has been prepared to promote mental health level and prevent social-mental trauma. Life skill include a set of abilities that increase compatibility power and positive effective behaviour of differently abled women to shine like a star in the whole galaxy of self –fish world.

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