

TRANSFORMATIVE MODEL OF LIFE'S SKILLS BASIC EDUCATION FOR GENDER IMPACT OF VIOLENCE, SEXUAL COERCION AND VULNERABILITY TO HIV/AIDS THROUGH DISTANCE MODE OF TEACHER TRAINING

By

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Abstract

The challenges facing the developing world in seeking long-term solutions to prevent the transmission of HIV are daunting. Youth and adolescent in Pakistan are prone to a number of novel problems due to changing social norms and values. These include HIV/AIDS, sexual transmitted infections, use of drugs, violence sexist attitude and sexual coercion. It is, thus, imperative to equip the adolescent of Pakistan with necessary life-skills to deal with challenges of life effectively and not letting it drift away towards the failure in life. The education system in Pakistan lacks the ability to inculcate life skills through its traditional teaching-learning process. It is the need of the hour that educational programmes with appropriate learning environment are necessary for the development of life-skills; using the Life Skills Based Education (LSBE) approach. Thus, empowering adolescents in challenging situations. Whole of this scenario demands for the development of this Life Skills Basic Education. This study aimed at identifying the activities for the secondary school teachers which they can plug into the daily classroom teaching for inculcation of life skills in adolescents. Pre and post tests were conducted on sample of 341 teachers who were given training through distance mode of AIOU on 10 modules **manual** developed for this purpose. The manual focused on various approaches to address risk behaviours of adolescents and to sensitize the participants on adolescents' risk behaviour, learn basic concepts related to sexuality, violence among adolescent transmitted infections including HIV and core of life-skills. The post test indicated a significant difference Transformative Index (TI) of 2.05 on all the 25 parameters of LSBE with 204.11 percentage gain maximum 821.96% for decision making skill.

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Preamble

Youth and adolescents make up a large segment (45%) of the population. Youth and adolescents in Pakistan are facing a numbers of problems on account of changing, like societal norms. These problems include HIV/AIDS, sexual transmitted infections, use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, unemployment, delinquent behaviour and discrimination. Violence, gender abuse and sexist attitude also pose a challenge due to changing roles of men and women in our society.

It is imperative to equip the adolescents of Pakistan with necessary skills of life to deal effectively with challenges of life and not letting it drift away towards the failure in life. Life skill education improves the health of adolescent by promotion of physical, mental and social well being particularly, where health problems are related to behaviour. Behaviour is related to inability to deal effectively with stresses and pressures in life. Enhancement of life skills could make an important contribution to the promotion of health and well-being, since behaviour is more and more implicated as the source of health problems. In this way they can lead healthy life styles and contribute positively to the society rather than adolescent becoming a burden on it.

Few health issues have been more challenging to community values and capabilities than HIV/AIDS. More than 33 million adults and children are now suffering with HIV/AIDS (UNICEF, 2000). About nineteen million persons have died due to this epidemic so far. There still seems no cure. Social and economic powerlessness and low status of females than males is the root cause and greater vulnerability of females to HIV infection resulting in their disadvantaged position in coping with it and their greater suffering from its effects.

The rate of infection among women and girls has been increasing most rapidly in recent years (for example, from 41% in 1997 to 47% in 2000 worldwide; from 1% in 1984 to 24% in 1994 in Brazil). In Sub-Saharan Africa, the rate among women (12.2 million) has already surpassed that of men (10.1 million), and AIDS is now a leading cause of death among women aged 20-40 in Europe and North America. Half of all new HIV infections are in young people, aged 10 to 25, with adolescent girls in some places as much as five times more at risk than adolescent boys. Leading global institutions, working in HIV/AIDS prevention, agree that programmes must address these social, economic and political factors if they are to be successful. Gender is the recommended tool of analysis.

Adolescent girls of age (10-25) are at more risk than the peer boys. About 50-60% new HIV infections are adolescent people. According to the

estimate, AIDS is the main cause of death of females between age 20-40 in Europe and North America.

Life-skills may be defined as abilities to attain the adaptive and positive behaviour enabling the individual to cope with the changing demands of daily life. Life skills determine the valued behaviour and include critical thinking, interpersonal relationship, problem solving, self awareness and assertiveness. These help inculcate in young people the qualities, such as managing stress building, self-concept and better self development. Lack of these life skills cause a serious threat for HIV infection in adolescents.

Life-skills based education is helpful in providing experiences to the young people in acquisition of new knowledge and attitude as well as skills to change and share the pattern of behaviour. These skills are specifically helpful in higher secondary schools. UNICEF has created a special website for providing guidance on implementing life skill based education. The same website provides information on programmes by different countries. It contains the catalogue of the status in this regard.

The gender perspective examines female and male roles, responsibilities, opportunities and resources within the context of the distribution of power between women and men. A gender perspective is a critical tool in health matters related to sex because it aims for both women and men to be able to make informed and free sexual and reproductive decisions and gives them the means to do so. But, it is not a neutral instrument nor does it seek to exchange the places of dominance and subordination. Rather, it promotes equality and comprehensive human development. Women's empowerment is a key objective of any gender oriented development process and, moreover, of any development process aimed at achieving equity and sustainability.

Gender equality, empowerment and the advancement of women and girls are both gender and human rights goals. Combining gender and rights in the areas of sexuality and reproduction is critical.

For HIV/AIDS educators, the challenge is to understand gender differences and discrimination in social relations and to address this vulnerability and direct HIV/AIDS related risk in their work.

The teacher is the linch-pin in the total success of any innovation in educational programme like LSBE. As has been envisaged in the General Framework of Adolescence Education, efforts will be made to integrate elements

of adolescence education in syllabi and textbooks of relevant subjects being taught at different stages of school education. Even when this task is accomplished, the knowledge in these elements can be imparted effectively only through teachers.

Most of the elements of adolescence education are very sensitive, delicate and value-laden. Interaction with students on these elements can be effective only when a holistic approach is adopted. The entire school environment is to be made congenial to the imparting of knowledge in these elements to students. Beyond all the abstract arguments put forth in favour of the introduction of adolescence education in the school curriculum interaction between students and teacher is most significant.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this research crystallizes from the need to develop LSPRE generic for package secondary school teachers which could be within the ODL system of AIOU, seeking the collaboration of relevant stakeholders particularly those of the teacher's associations. The objectives followed naturally: To facilitate several forms of the collaboration for developing the open distance learner in life skills training. To provide a deep motivation through grounded in domain expertise of life skills which may produce an immersive pedagogical environment for the teachers. To measure the enhancement in the achievement of integrating life skills with usual classes subject teaching.

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to identify the activities to the secondary school teachers which they can plug into the daily classroom teaching for inculcation of life skills in adolescent. Pre and post tests were conducted. The assessment provided the information at individual and group levels.

Sample

341 secondary school teachers were randomly selected from the Islamabad models schools, 178 were male and 163 female. Four months (one semester) training of AIOU on nine modules was conducted and these teachers plugged Life Skills Based Education in their daily teaching for 4 months. Pre-test and post tests were conducted in the classes where the teachers plugged these LSBE.

Table – I
Showing Sampling Frame for the Study

Teachers	Population	Sample	Characteristics of Sample
Male	1272	178	I. Married

