CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

Survey of researches is an obligatory part of any study to justify the novelty of the problem; hence it is mandatory for the researcher to present abroad review of related studies. It helps and guides the investigator to know the current status of the problem, which he is going to study. It is expected to offer the guiding principle for formulating the hypotheses to be tested in the study. A literature review is an explanation of what has been presented on a subject by qualified scholars and researchers. In writing the literature review, the aim of the researcher is to convey to the reader what knowledge and ideas have been established on a topic, and what their strengths and weaknesses are.

So, a review of related literature is of paramount importance for the researcher as it provides background and technical knowledge useful in conducting the research. A vigilant review of research journals, books, dissertations, thesis and additional sources of information on the problem to be considered as one of the chief steps in the development of any research study. Without a critical study of the related literature, the researcher will be probing in the dark and perhaps uselessly do again the work already done. Therefore, to save time, energy and resources, it is required to undertake a detailed and penetrating study of all available literature. Developing knowledge and understanding of the preceding work with regard to the topic being researched is the main purpose of the literature review. It also addresses the need to inform the investigator about the main findings, trend areas of debate or controversy, areas of
neglect and suggestions for additional research. Moreover, review of related literature helps the researcher to decide the topic, proceed with it and analyze it. It also enables one to define limits of one’s study.

This chapter includes a detailed explanation of literature review related to dependent and independent variables under the present study. The collected literature has been classified under following sections.

I. Studies on Life Skills Training and Psychological Distress

II. Studies on Life Skills Training and Empathy

III. Studies on Life Skills Training and Autonomy
2.2. Studies on Life Skills Training and Psychological Distress

Psychological distress is a major problem of the present era, especially for students’ population. According to Mirowsky and Ross (1989) “Psychological distress is a state of emotional suffering distinguished by symptoms of depression and anxiety, which has both emotional and psychological manifestations”. In this study, the complex interrelationship among depression and anxiety was assessed by using the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10; 2002). This combines anxiety and depression symptoms in order to measure psychological distress. Hence, anxiety and depression are the focus of this literature review for psychological distress.

Jamali et al. (2015) have done an investigation to examine the relation of life skills training given to adolescents in school on the state of mental health and level of anxiety and depression. The subjects were selected by random sampling and allocated into experimental and control groups. The experimental group underwent intervention of life skills training while any intervention for the control group was avoided. The result indicated that experimental group was significantly improved in mental health and significant reduction in level of anxiety and depression was seen after intervention program, while no significant difference was observed in the control group. It was concluded that with performing programs such as life skills training, the levels of mental health of the students could be increased, which itself could lead to reduce anxiety and depression, reduce violence, and increased stress tolerance in the students.

Zarei and Darban (2015) have conducted a study on “effect of life skills training in reducing the symptoms of depression, stress, and anxiety among adolescent students”. The results showed that the life skills training had a significant effect on reducing the symptoms of depression, stress, and anxiety, given that learning and
practicing life skills can strengthen or change the attitudes, values, and behavior of the individual, it is necessary to implement training courses in this regard.

Hajiamini et al. (2014) did a study with the aim of examining the effect of life skills training on emotional reactions in boy adolescent students. Determined students with a middle range of emotional reaction were divided into experimental and control groups randomly. Subjects in experimental group trained with life skills training intervention. The result revealed a significant difference in stress and anxiety and total emotional reaction but insignificant difference in depression before and after intervention.

Srikala and Kumar (2010) investigated the effectiveness of life skills training for promoting mental health in adolescents in a school-based setting. Students were split into a control and experimental groups. After the program ended, the students in the program had statistically significant improvement in self-esteem, perceived adequate coping, better general adjustment, and better adjustment in schools, pro-social behavior and significantly improved in symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Gharamaki and Rajabi (2010) examined “Efficacy of life skills training on increase of mental health and self-esteem among students” which was aimed to determine the impact of life skills training on providing mental health and self-esteem. Students were randomly selected and distributed into two groups. Life skills training was given to experimental group and control group was avoided to expose to any intervention. The outcome of this study demonstrated that life skills training had significant effect on reducing mental disorders symptoms particularly anxiety, depression, and stress of students assumed with mental disorder.
Chatrath and Yadav (2009) have conducted a study on school students with the aim to explore the relationship between life skills training and mental health in reducing the symptoms of depression, stress, and anxiety among students. The study revealed that higher levels of stress were observed among the adolescent students aged 14 years than 18 years, who have entered the first year of school and is being manifested in the form of psychological distress and somatic symptoms. In addition, study showed that life skills acquired during the process of normal development can go a long way in avoiding both mental and physical illnesses. It was revealed that life skills were helpful to enhance mental health and reducing the level of psychological distress in adolescents.

Smith et al. (2007) in their study found that better social skills were predictive of decrease in depression, loneliness, and social anxiety whereas poor social skills were believed to make people vulnerable to psychosocial problems.

Lida and Ishnikuma (2006) also examined the effects of life skills training on school stressors, stress coping and stress responses on junior high school students. The result of life skills training was found to reduce some school stressors. It also found that life skills training improved active coping, support seeking, cognitive coping and peer communication skills.

Vinnick and Erickson (2005) have investigated the relationships among stressful life events, social skills and behavior problems in children. Depressive symptoms showed significant correlation with concurrent measures of recent stressful life events. The effect was stronger for girls than for boys. The study shows that previous level of depressive symptom could predict stressful life events. They found that social skills can serve as a stress protective factor.
Moradi (2002) has conducted a study with the aim to investigate the effect of life skills training (interpersonal relationships, problem-solving, anger management, assertiveness) on female high school students in improving mental health status, the results obtained after the training life skills, showed a significant reduction in symptoms of depression, anxiety and somatic complaints in adolescent girls students.

Collingwood, Sunderlin, and Reynolds (2000) studied physical training as a mode of teaching life skills. The physical training program consisted of exercise and educational modules delivered over a twelve week time period that focused on learning values and life skills through exercise. Significant increases were demonstrated in physical activity and self-reported data indicated significant decreases in risk factors such as low self-concept, poor school attendance, anxiety and depression and in a number of friends who used cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, and alcohol. It demonstrated a strong relationship between increased fitness and decreased risk factors and drug usage pattern.

Moote, Smyth, and Wodarski (1999) have done a study on the effect of social skills training with adolescents in school settings. Result of this study showed the positive effects of social skills training in different areas, such as enhancing problem-solving skills, self-awareness, control anger, anxiety and depression, developing an internal locus of control, improving assertiveness, and improving verbal and nonverbal skills.

Meery and Reed (1996) in their study found that life skills such as problem-solving ability, information-seeking and coping strategies were related to reduction in exam stress and non-exam stress among Korean students. Adolescents who were not able to cope with stress and anxiety sometimes resorted to alcohol as a coping strategy.
Avision and Mealpine (1992) have done a study with the aim to examine the source of gender differences in depressive symptoms in male and female adolescents. The findings of this study showed that female adolescents substantially experienced upper levels of depressive symptoms than males. The role of psychological resource revealed as very significant factors related with experience lower level of depressive symptoms. Adolescents’ relationship with parents and peers found as momentous correlates of depressive symptom and to some extent accounted for the gender difference in levels of depression.

Fernandez and Larimer (1990) studied female patients (aged 16-40 years) diagnosed with bulimia nervosa. They were divided into three groups where they underwent short-term group treatment programs. The first group underwent exposure with response prevention treatment, the second group underwent life skills training and the third group had psychodynamic group interactions as its treatment modality. Results indicated that life skills training was as effective as other treatment methods studied. Pre-test vs. post-test scores demonstrated improved control over eating behavior and lowered anxiety and depression.

Research regarding the effectiveness of life skills training programs, specifically with adolescents is limited; however, there was promising studies that were published that support efficacy of these programs. Psychological distress among adolescents is caused by a range of factors, and more generally, it is not a single factor but combinations of different factors operate to produce and maintain psychological distress. It was revealed that adolescents who trained with life skills training program along with elicit social support engage in problem-solving and cognitive restructuring were more able to successfully face with anxiety and depressive symptoms during
adolescence, furthermore tendency of internalizing behavior was more among girls than boys (Herman-Stahl, Stemmier & Petersen, 1995).

Coping mechanisms of children and adolescents has also been growing rapidly and have been investigated (Fanshawe & Burnett, 1991; Tyszkowa, 1990; Seiffge-Krenke, 1995; Dumont & Provost, 1999). However, adolescents use coping strategies when confronted with problems (Lee, Chan & Yik, 1992). The coping skills taught through the program could potentially reduce the symptoms of anxiety and depression and suicidal rate of adolescents with a mental health condition. Between the two coping mechanism, approach coppers reported the fewest symptoms of depression whereas avoidant coppers reported the most. Subjects who changed over time from approach to avoidant coppers evidenced a significant increase in depressive symptoms whereas subjects who switched from avoidant to approach coping displayed a significant decrease in depression (Stable, Stemmer & Petersen, 1994).

Kumar and Kumar (2015) in their study examined the relationship of coping strategies with anxiety and depression in adolescent students. In this study, they hypothesized that coping strategies have a significant relationship with anxiety and depression. The result of this study revealed that avoidant coping is associated with experiencing greater level of anxiety and depression. Alternatively, problem-focused coping was associated with reduced psychological distress.

Deasy, Thomas and Shanafelt (2014) in their study on adolescent students have found that the coping and problem-solving strategies reduce psychological distress. Adolescents who used coping strategies and problem-solving skills were able to reduce their avoidance behaviors including substance use and unhealthy diet and also they showed low level of anxiety and depression.
Seiffge-Krenke and Klessinger (2000) have conducted a study on adolescents with an approach-oriented coping style. According to the results the study reported that adolescents with an approach-oriented coping style reported the fewest depressive symptoms whereas avoidant coppers reported the most. A follow up was done after two years where in a higher level of depressive symptoms were found in all adolescents who used avoidant coping.

Taking above studies into consideration, it can be concluded that there was a significant link between coping mechanisms, health problems, and psychological distress. Adolescents predominantly use alcohol as a way of coping with daily life events. Coping strategies was found to be more favorable in facing stresses than passive or avoidance coping strategies. Life skills such as stress management and problem-solving are effective in strengthening coping strategies among adolescents. Though female tend to use emotion-focused coping style but in many studies, there was not much gender differences in using coping strategies.

Therefore adolescents who are poor in life skills reported a higher level of psychological distress and they were more likely to experience the levels of anxiety and depression and tendency to alcohol use as a means of facing psychological distress. Life skill such as problem-solving and coping mechanism were effective in reducing symptoms of psychological distress.
2.3. Studies on Life Skills Training and Empathy

Empathy is a complex, multi-dimensional phenomenon that has been conceptualized either as a natural and intrinsic trait or as a learned phenomenon (Ouzoni & Nakakis, 2012). It has been defined as “the ability to see the world, including one’s own behavior, from another person’s point of view” (Hollin, 1994). Empathy includes the capacity to participate vicariously in the experiences and emotions of others (i.e. emotional empathy) and to understand intellectually and creatively the mental states and behaviors of others (i.e. cognitive empathy).

Empathy is an important life skill which helps children to show concern with other individual’s problems. School is the right place where students are involved in programs designed such as life skills training to increase empathy and create ‘caring communities’ and this instruction additionally enhance communication skills and interpersonal relationship skills. This realization along with improving self-awareness skills enables adolescents to take actions and make choices regarding to others situation and they all serve for developing empathy for others. There are very few studies with regard to the empathy towards people and especially empathy among adolescents (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990).

Parvathy and Renjith (2015) have done a study with the aim to investigate the impact of life skills training on empathy in adolescents in a rural school. A number of students were taken and they were divided into experimental and control group. The result showed experimental group revealed higher level of empathy than control group in post study whereas that control group in pre and post study remains almost the same. Results of this study have shown that life skills training had a strong link with empathy.
Manee, Michaeli, Khoiee, and Eghbal (2014) have carried out a study to examine the effect of life skills training with the aim to improve pro-social behavior and stress management in adolescent students. A number of male and female students were chosen and randomly placed into experimental and control groups, experimental group trained in one of these areas, empathy, self-awareness skills, stress management skills and effective communication while the control group received no intervention. The results showed that holding life skills training had an overall positive effect on the pro-social behavior and adjustment of the students in the experimental groups. It also was found that life skills training improved self-awareness, stress management skills, empathy and effective communication.

A study on “Impact of life skills training on self-esteem, adjustment, and empathy among adolescents” was conducted by Yadav and Iqbal (2009), with an objective to identify the impact of life skills training on self-esteem, adjustment and empathy among adolescents. The result showed that subjects improved significantly in post condition on self-esteem, emotional adjustment, educational adjustment, total adjustment, and empathy. However, no significant difference was found on social adjustment in pre and post condition.

Haager and Vaughn (1995) have conducted a study on elementary school students who demonstrated a lack of social skills necessary to work cooperatively in a classroom. The records revealed that students demonstrated lack of respect, responsibility, cooperation, empathy, and self-control before the intervention. Then, researchers used social skills as intervention activities. Each activity was designed to promote a specific social skill. The results have reported that students exhibit a higher level of confidence, respect, cooperation, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.
Studies have proved that empathy is regarded as one of the most desirable of personality traits due to its positive association with pro-social behaviors and its crucial role in the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2012). Besides understanding and appreciating the other person’s feeling, communicating meaningfully with the person is an important aspect of empathy. Therefore life skills such as effective communication skills and interpersonal relationship skills are two important skills shown that have consistent and strong links with empathy. In addition, problem-solving as a domain of life skill enables individuals to deal constructively with moral behaviors of others life and it has been shown as an important skill to amplify empathy and pro-social behavior (Nair & Pejaver, 2001).

According to Harry S. Dent, empathy is considered as a sign of maturity and great virtue. In order to develop empathy in the classroom and beyond, students need to have an experience in helping relationships, understanding and appreciating the other person’s feeling and communicating meaningfully with others. Life skills training motivate students to offer meaningful service to other people. There is some evidence that lack of problem-solving and social skills (communication and interpersonal relationship skills) are the contributing variables in the misbehavior of school students (Jordan & Lemetais, 1997).

Sohravardi, Bafrooei, and Fallah (2015) have conducted a study with the purpose of evaluating the effect of empathy teaching on pro-social behavior, communication skills and compatibility in female students. A number of students were selected and randomly designed in experimental and control group. The results showed that training programs with the aim of developing empathy can have a positive effect on communication skills and compatibility. This program can consequently improve pro-social behavior in school students.
A study was conducted by Movallali, Ashori, Abkenar and Salehy (2014) with the aim to investigate the effect of life skills training on the social skills of hearing impaired students. Study showed that life skills training had a significant effect on the social skills and subscales (empathy, cooperation, communication and interpersonal relationship skills) in the experimental group, while in the control group no change was observed. It can be concluded that training of life skills has a crucial role in improving the social skills of hearing impaired students and deserves to be given more attention.

McArthur and Janice (2002) emphasized the need for teaching social skills in classroom situation. They have done a study with the aim to investigate the effect of social skill training on interpersonal communication of students. Subjects that took part in the study were students with difficulties in interpersonal communication. Subjects participated in 4-stage social skills training program for 2 weeks. The post-assessment after 2 weeks showed a significant enhancement in interpersonal communication skills.

Nair and Pejaver (2001) have conceptualized the domains of life skills in the rural context as self-awareness/self-esteem, empathy, effective communication, interpersonal relationship skills and problem-solving. The project used life skills approach and was successful on several fronts such as improving empathy and pro-social behavior, self-determination, and interpersonal common skills.

Jordan and Lemetais (1997) focused on a case study in which a program of life skill development and cooperative learning activities was introduced over a period of six weeks. Cooperative learning was used to develop students’ life skills such as empathy and interpersonal communication skills, thereby improving their behavior. There was some evidence that students became more socially aware and more skilled.
The authors are committed to life skill development and cooperative learning as a means to develop empathy and communication skills in students.

From all these studies, it can be concluded that effective communication skills and interpersonal relationship skills are two important life skills that have consistent and strong links with empathy. Some believe that friendships are vital to the healthy development of students. They say that students who do not develop the necessary characteristics for maintaining social attachments are more likely to have health problems, emotional disturbances, and personality disorders in adulthood. Students need help in learning how to show concern and empathy (Lawhon, 1997).

As it has already said empathy is considered as a sign of maturity and great virtue. Good character requires self-control and self-awareness. Self-awareness, as a skill to be aware of one’s own emotional experience, is believed to be a beneficial antecedent of empathy and therefore an important effective communication skill. However, research on the relationship between self-awareness and empathy is extremely scarce.

A study by Cronauer (2013) with the aim to investigate the relationship between self-awareness and empathic behavior in students showed that self-awareness was significantly related to empathy and it was found that as an important factor in improving empathy and communication skills in students. Results are integrated in existing research of significant relationship between self-awareness, communication style, and empathic behavior.
In summary, the ability to empathize is important for promoting positive behaviors towards others and facilitating social interactions and relationships. What becomes salient in this review is an intimate interrelation among empathy enhancement, self-awareness, problem-solving skill, communication and interpersonal relationship skills, which is consistent with previous research on empathy and pro-social behavior. A holistic assessment of the adolescents’ empathetic understanding supports that teaching life skills is effective in helping adolescents in developing social competence and developing caring relationships which lead enhancement of empathy and pro-social behavior. It is the hope of the researcher that students will benefit from their experience in this program and become agents of positive change in their schools and communities.
2.4. Studies on Life Skills Training and Autonomy

Autonomy is an ability to regulate one’s own behavior and select and guide one’s own decisions and actions without undue control from or dependence on one’s parents (Steinberg, 1987). It is not the same as rejection, alienation or physical separation from parents. Rather it is an independent psychological status in which parents and children accept and respect each other’s individuality. Adolescents who achieve a certain level of autonomy can recognize and accept both the similarities and differences between themselves and their parents, while still feeling a sense of love, understanding, and connection with them. In individual terms, autonomy of adolescents is considered a developmental milestone in the transition to adulthood and corresponds to a set of skills that provide “the ability to give direction to one’s own life, by defining goals, feeling competent and being able to regulate one’s actions” (Noom, 1999).

Research concerning the effectiveness of life skills training program especially with adolescents is limited; nevertheless, there are promising studies that were published that support value of these programs. According to available evidence, autonomy is positively tied with decision-making; evidence has revealed that decision-making skills can be effectively enhanced in people who show deficits in this area. Most of the decision-making skills enhancement interventions were carried out along with other skills development programs such as creative thinking, critical thinking and problem-solving. Researches support that life skills programs integrated into schools can be an effective way to empower adolescent’s autonomy and decision-making skills.
Rezaei (2015) with the aim to investigate the efficiency of life skills training in terms of autonomy has conducted a study in school students. The results of this research indicated that training life skills had a significant effect on autonomy of students. From the outcome of this study, it can be understood that training in life skill is a necessary and principal part of curriculum which can increase autonomy among students.

The impact of life skills training on adolescents’ autonomy was examined in another study by Ghadiri, Manee and Issazadegan (2015) entitled “The effect of life skills training on psychological well-being and satisfaction among female adolescent students”. The experimental groups received life-related skills during five sessions. Outcomes showed that life skills training were in direct relation with enhancement of self-concept, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life and personal growth, an overall result of this study showed an improvement in psychological well-being and school satisfaction. In conclusions, life skills training were known as a useful strategy for improvement of these factors.

Kumar and Balaiah (2012) conducted a study with the purpose to explore the effect of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) for the development of life skill-autonomy among male and female adolescents. The outcome of this study showed that, the girls in the experimental group in comparison to the control group enhanced significantly in post-test condition on life skill autonomy. The boys in the experimental group sustained their level of autonomy in the post-test condition. Group counseling was found to be effective and the results showed a positive change in their attitudes, feelings, and behaviors of the respondents.
Jones, Corbin, and Sheehey (1995) studied the effects of two different programs, one containing life skills component and other containing only information. The first group was trained in drug refusal skills and other imparted drug related information. The former group was taught drug knowledge, assertiveness skills, decision-making skills, elaborative rehearsals and specific drug refusal skills. The latter were taught all the same information except elaborative rehearsal skills. Results showed that sample from both the groups show significant improvement in drug knowledge whereas the group with rehearsal skills reported significant improvement in the assertiveness skills, decision-making skills, and drug refusal skills. Hence, intervention/prevention programs that enable skill development rather than only knowledge enhancement are much more effective.

A comparative review of the components of life skills development interventions has revealed that decision-making skill is the most extensively researched and developed area. Findings have revealed that life skills training can be effectively enhanced autonomy and decision making skills in people who show deficits in this area. In general assessment of researches have revealed that there is an interlinked relationship between enhancement of autonomy in adolescents and other life skills variable such as problem-solving, critical thinking and creative thinking. Problem-solving skill was related to decision-making and requires many of the same skills. Adolescents can improve their skills in problem-solving through practice. Problem-solving skills have been incorporated in most of the self-enhancement programs and its emphasis can be observed in the recent literature of life skills development interventions which lead to enhancement the ability to make responsible decision and improvement the life skill and livelihood opportunities.
Michale (2001) did a research on life skill training to enhance autonomy in male and female adolescent students. Life skills training intervention were conducted with emphasize on decision-making and problem-solving skills. The results of study revealed that progress in autonomy was obtained after life skills training program; it is also appeared from the result that gender did not have a differential influence on autonomy due to life skills training.

A program conducted by Caplan, Weissberg, Grober and Jacoby (1992) included teaching of core life skills such as stress management, problem-solving, decision-making, and communication skills, revealed that students in the experimental group demonstrate improvements in their ability to plan ahead and choose effective solutions to problem situations that they faced. This research provides evidence of the effectiveness of life skills programs in achieving multiple promotions and prevention goals.

Creative thinking and critical thinking are other life skills criteria which are related to autonomy development and decision-making. Creative thinking approach in the sense of being innovative leads to new insights, novel approaches, fresh perspectives and whole new ways of understanding and conceiving of things (Facione & Facione, 2001). Developing autonomy is also facilitated by critical thinking skills including information-gathering and problem-solving skills. Creative thinking and critical thinking skills are viewed as generating a range of possible solutions, challenging pre-suppositions and seeing the world in imaginative and different ways. The following studies illustrate how life skills (critical thinking and creative thinking skills) have been used to deliver intervention on autonomy development and enhancement the ability to decision-making among adolescents student.
With the aim to evaluate and enhancement of creative thinking skill and also the major components of creative thinking; namely, fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration, George (2007) held a study in which life skills training intervention was conducted among middle school students. The result showed that subjects improved significantly in post condition on creative thinking and its components. In conclusions, life skill training is recognized as a useful strategy for improvement of these factors.

The effectiveness of life skills training program was examined in another study by Ahmed, Flisher, and Mathews (2006) aimed at providing students with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively face with demand and situation of everyday life. Life skills curriculum consisting of decision making, critical thinking and creative thinking was conducted for adolescent students. Findings indicated that students reported increased confidence and comfort in autonomy, self-control and decision making. This study highlights the need for life skills training to be part of students training and teaching practices.

McAlevey and Ellen (1997) with the objective to develop autonomy and assertiveness among male and female adolescent students have carried out a study in which life skills training intervention was held for adolescents aged 13-18 years. The life skills explored by the participants comprise self-awareness, problem-solving, decision-making, creative thinking, critical thinking, interpersonal relationships, self-control, and assertiveness. The results showed that autonomy can be enhanced effectively through life skill development programs and due to this program adolescents become more creative when they face new situation and they were able to make good decisions on their own.
An overall review of findings revealed that achieving autonomy should be considered as a multidimensional task. There is an interlinked relationship between autonomy, decision-making, critical thinking, creative thinking and problem-solving skills. Autonomy can be enhanced effectively through life skill development programs. This program integrated into schools can be an effective way to empower adolescent’s autonomy.

2.5. An Overview of Review of Literature

Life skills training and its influence on the lives of the adolescents are among the most concerned areas of education today. Many studies were conducted in the area of life skills training have shown that life skills approach has been found so useful for all age groups of children in and out of school setting. Life skills approaches facilitate skills learning and promote social and environmental supports that aim to influence health and social behavior in a positive way. Where life skills programs are being implemented, research findings indicate they are the effective approaches to health promotion and illness prevention. From the discussions of various researchers it is evident that life skills and its various components have a significant relationship with psychological resources. An enhancement in one area leads to an enhancement in the other. Hence the life skills intervention programs hold a place of paramount importance in the overall development of an individual. Life skills training has been employed in programs with a wide variety of objectives ranging from improving physical activity levels to preventing health compromising behaviors to promoting psychosocial competence. The training program would be of great help if targeted on the adolescent population, as this is the age where learning and practicing of these life skills would have far-reaching results in adult life. Therefore, around the world, life skills are
considered as a means to empower young people in challenging situations. Literature related to life skills, cited above lead to the following assumptions:

1. A close analysis of nature, type and quality of the concerned literature revealed that there is a scarcity of researches in the area of this research. Keeping this scarcity in consideration, an attempt has been made by the researcher to design an intervention program for the development of life skills for adolescent students who have difficulties in the area of psychological distress, emotional empathy and autonomy and also to find out the effectiveness of the same.

2. From the review, it can be concluded that life skills are a generic type of skills that provide some of the basic skills for the foundation of psychosocial competence. These psychosocial competencies play a very important role in the promotion of health in terms of physical, mental and social compatibility. Such programs help the individuals to address the issues such as an inability to deal effectively with depression and anxiety, pressures in life, inability to make decision and lack of empathy toward others.

3. The review and the above assumptions point out that life skills training is a much-needed part of education. A review on life skills showed that life skills training have been found to be very effective in reducing stress, anxiety, and depression, enhancing autonomy, self-confidence and self-esteem and ability to make decision on his/her own and improving empathy among adolescents.

4. From the discussions of various researchers, it is evident that life skills and its various components have a significant relationship with health promotion and illness prevention. An enhancement in one area leads to an enhancement in the other. Hence the life skills intervention programs hold a place of paramount
importance in the overall development of an individual. The training program would be of great help if targeted on the adolescent population, as this is the age where learning and practicing of these life skills would have far-reaching results in adult life.

The review and the above assumptions point to life skills training as a much needed part of education. Where life skills programs are being implemented, research findings indicate they are the effective approaches to health promotion and prevention education. The overview of studies reviewed earlier indicates that research concerning the effectiveness of life skills training program especially with adolescents is limited. Hence, it is clear that there is a need for further research in this area and specially implementing life skills as a holistic approach for proving the efficacy of this program on adolescents issues in future research.

From the discussions of various researchers it is evident that life skills and its various components have a significant relationship with mental health and psychological wellbeing. An enhancement in one area leads to an enhancement in the other. Hence the life skills intervention programs hold a place of paramount importance in the overall development of an individual. The training program would be of great help if targeted on the adolescent population, as this is the age where learning and practicing of these life skills would have far-reaching results on adult life.

Review suggests that the problems associated with students can be corrected. Thus the enhancement of life skills in adolescent students will help them to handle the everyday life situations with least difficulty. It may be henceforth concluded, that a, comprehensive approach is needed which may contribute a great deal for further clarification on adolescent population. Hence, the present study aims to examine the
effectiveness of life skills training as a holistic approach in reducing psychological distress, strengthening autonomy and enhancing emotional empathy among adolescent students.