CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter will discuss the findings of the research, its significance, implications, strengths and limitation. This study was carried out with the purpose of examining the effect of life skills training intervention on psychological distress, balanced emotional empathy, and autonomy of adolescent students. The sample consisted of 200 adolescent students (100 for experimental group and 100 for control group), belonging to the age group 13-17 years from two schools of Mysore, Karnataka. These adolescents had scored high on Kessler Psychological Distress Scale and low on Multi-Dimensional Emotional Empathy Scale and Adolescent Autonomy Questionnaire. After the selection of the sample, the adolescents were randomly assigned into experimental and control groups, each group consisting of 100 subjects (50 boys and 50 girls). The experimental group underwent eight sessions of life skills training intervention, each session of 120 minutes duration. This intervention was spread over a period of two months with a frequency of one session per week. After the intervention, post-test were conducted for both experimental and control groups by administering the same scales and questionnaire. The pre and post-test scores were compared to assess the effectiveness of life skills tainting intervention.

The primary objective of this intervention study was to examine the effect of Life Skills Training on Psychological Distress, Balanced Emotional Empathy, and Autonomy among Adolescent Students. Additionally, we wanted to explore the effect of Life Skills Training on Gender Differences in Psychological Distress, Balanced Emotional Empathy, and Autonomy among Adolescent Students. In order to assess the effectiveness of life skills training intervention, test results of both experimental and
controls groups, before and after the intervention were compared. The data obtained at these various stages of assessment was subjected to statistical analyses. The analysis of result has indicated that life skills training was found to be highly effective in reducing the psychological distress and increasing emotional empathy and autonomy of adolescent students. The result also showed that gender did not have significant influence over decreasing psychological distress and increasing autonomy and emotional empathy.

To conclude, the current study provides further empirical support that learning and practicing life skills can strengthen or change the attitudes, values, and behavior of the individual, achieving this goal is not practically possible unless the essential skills are taught to adolescents. Imparting life skills training through inculcating them in the curriculum will help our adolescents to overcome difficulties in life. If a small part of the school curriculum is allocated to teaching life skills and holding workshops, it will help students to improve their psychological health.

5.1. Significance of the Study

The following points have made this research significant:

1- From the review of literature, it can be understood that research regarding the effectiveness of life skills training program, especially with adolescent is limited. What become salient from the review of literature is the scarcity of research especially regarding the psychological distress, emotional empathy, and autonomy in adolescent students. Keeping this scarcity in consideration an attempt has been made by the researcher to design an intervention program for the development of life skills among adolescent having difficulties in this area and the result of this intervention study is very important for literature.
2- Review of literature indicates that there has been no comprehensive, complete and holistic approach implemented and studied as far as the present research variables are considered. The majority of research findings reviewed have revealed that the components of their intervention were limited to a few skills, whereas in this study the researcher has examined the effectiveness of life skills training which include 10 core skills in the intervention program.

3- In the present study researcher has explored the set of skills that act as ingredients for adolescent psychological distress, emotional empathy and autonomy, and empirically validate these set of skills to meet and fulfill the needs of adolescent population according to the variables of this study.

4- Another significant feature of the present study is that, it has broadly included various variables. There is a combination of three variables in intervention program to explore different facets of adolescent students under the controlled procedure of life skills training intervention that makes this study distinguish from the rest.

5- The review of research literature revealed that life skills have been widely studied in different countries and cultures but the research done in India specially for adolescent population is only handful, lack of comprehensive health service exclusively for adolescents, lack of supportive and guidance service at school, stigma for seeking help from professionals in time of distress were major reasons to conduct the present study to empirically investigate the effect of life skills intervention to provide adequate scientific basis for the efficacy of this intervention.
5.2. Strengths of the Study

1- This study is an intervention study which is very important for literature.

2- The sample size is large hence the generalization is more valid within the population from which the sample has been chosen.

3- Randomization of sample into Experimental and Control groups helps in better characterization of intervention effect and increased internal validity.

4- Well standardized measures have been used for the assessment of variables taken for this study.

5- Methodology chosen for the study takes a multi-dimensional perspective by assessing psychological distress, emotional empathy and autonomy. It also assesses the correlation between severities of the problem and effect of life skills training intervention.

5.3. Implications

The present study has some of the important implications which are noted below:

1- The findings of the present study are beneficial for professionals and counselors in the sense that they can apply them for developing good mental health and prevention of mental illness, so that it may improve adolescents’ quality of life, reduce their depression, anxiety and stress, help them to make informed and rational decisions and empathize with others which lead to improving their physical and mental health.
2- Though the components of life skills like problem-solving skills, decision-making skills, empathy, communication skills etc. were studied and taught in the past, a complete and holistic approach was not implemented and studied until recently. The present study used life skills as a holistic approach which includes 10 core skills, and finding has provided the empirical support for proving the efficacy of life skills training as a holistic approach which can be implemented on adolescents issues in future research.

3- In the present study, researcher has explored the set of skills that act as ingredients for adolescent psychological distress, emotional empathy, and autonomy. The theoretical and empirical outcome of the present study has provided adequate information that these sets of skills meet and fulfill the needs of the adolescent population according to variables of this study. Henceforth, it is hoped that this study may help the therapists and researchers in exploring the conceptual realms of life skills and its constructs.

4- The theoretical and empirical reviews made in chapter two, adequately justify the need for the present study. These reviews briefly highlight that the life skills have been widely researched in the different countries and cultures but there is a scarcity of research in India especially for adolescent population. The findings of the present study have provided adequate scientific basis for the efficacy of life skills training intervention in Indian cultural scenario.

5- Thus from the outcome of the present study, it can be strongly recommended that Life Skills Training program should be started earlier in the school year and continued for a longer period of time in order to produce more valid results.
6- Finally, the unique feature of this present study is that it has broadly included various variables to explore different facets of the adolescent students under the controlled procedures of life skills training intervention.

7- As a result, the findings of the present research will activate the attention of the educational counselors, researchers, teachers, and parents in the future. In conclusion, it can be suggested that the theoretical and empirical outcomes of the present study, broadly covering the components of life skills and will provide beneficial directions for the Educators, Counselors, and Researchers in the future.

5.4. Suggestion for Future Studies

There are several potential avenues for future research on this topic. The present study offers certain suggestions, which can be considered by prospective researchers while conducting any related studies in future. They are:

1- Life skills training intervention has been proved highly effective in adolescent issues. Adolescents spent a quality of time in schools and they live in groups most of the time. Educators can think about including separate modules in their existing curriculum to address adolescent behavior issues. Finding information about family background and adolescent relationships along with parental involvement would also be advisable.

2- Life skills training research on students for its effectiveness on same variables as well as other related variables of significance such as locus of control, self-confidence, adjustment, peer relations and familial relations, social skills and different types of personality variables, with a follow-up, may bring forth
findings of research value and those finding can be useful in find out the impact of life skills training and in generalizing the findings of the present study as well.

3- Since there are few studies conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of life skills training intervention with adolescents issues especially some factor like psychological distress and empathy, replication of this study could be suggested with different populations in different context.

4- A longitudinal study may be conducted across various developmental stages to find out whether the life skills constructs remain the same or change, as a person grows older.

5- Further studies on the effectiveness of life skills training on the variety of psychological condition, with different cultural, regional and socio-economic groups could help to generalize the findings of the present research.

6- Finally, a cross-cultural study may be conducted to examine the cultural variations in the experience of life skills. The findings may provide evidence to the researcher for further explorations to find out to what extent cultural differences, influence life skills.
5.5. Limitation

The researcher has taken great effort to make this study as much precise and objective as possible. Still, certain unavoidable mistakes must have occurred. The limitations of the study are given below:

1- The main limitation in the present study was the length of the three questionnaires used before and after the intervention program as some of the subjects expressed that answering the questionnaires which took around one hour was a difficult job for them.

2- Pre-test and post-test measures were assessed using the same questionnaires. The knowledge of the items in the test (gained during the pre-test) might have affected the responses during the post-test. However, this is probably not significant in our study since the duration between the pre-test and post-test was quite large.

3- The influence of various demographic factors such as age, sex, socioeconomic status, place of living, etc. on the outcome of the intervention was not assessed.

The present study with all its limitations is expected to open up new avenues for further research in this area.