ABSTRACT

Deficits in life skills play a significant role in the development and maintenance of many emotional and behaviour disorders of childhood and adolescence (Spence, 2003). In view of this, the present study was aimed to determine the effect of life skills training on self-esteem, emotional intelligence, coping style, perceived social support, and behaviour problems of boys in need of care and protection. The present study was conducted in two phases. In phase I, a survey was carried out to understand the behaviour problems of boys who were in need of care and protection in four children’s homes. A sample of 219 boys was surveyed from three Non-Government Organizations and one government Children’s Home. The data collected during the survey was scored using the Youth Self-Report (YSR) manual (Achenbach, 2001). The boys who scored above borderline in total behaviour problems were chosen to impart life skills training. In Phase II, life skills training module was developed based on the needs of these boys. Eight life skills such as self-awareness, empathy, decision-making, problem solving, interpersonal relationship, effective communication, coping with emotions and coping with stress were chosen. The training was conducted in 42 sessions each of one and a half hours duration. Training was conducted weekly thrice. 35 boys who met the inclusion criteria were assessed on self-esteem, emotional intelligence, coping style, perceived social support and behaviour problems at pre, post and 3 months follow up. The data collected during the pre-, post- and follow-up assessments of the present study was analyzed. The study found that self-esteem positively correlated with emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence positively correlated with adaptive coping, maladaptive coping and social support. Social support negatively correlated with behaviour problems. The study also revealed that, 62.5% of the boys who were living in children’s homes were found to have behaviour problems. The present study also found out that the life skills training reduced the boys’ behaviour problems and increased the self-esteem, perceived social support, emotional intelligence, and adaptive coping. Further, the study also found that the boys’ maladaptive coping decreased after the life skills training.