

An assessment of the life skills training program based on the CIPP evaluation model in high schools of Ahvaz

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Introduction

The Ministry of Education, as an institution whose main mission is to transmit cultural tenets of the Iranian society to the next generation by developing relevant curriculum in schools, tries to teach people the necessary life skills they need to meet the life challenges and succeed. This study was, thus, intended to evaluate the life skills training program in high schools in Khuzestan province using the CIPP evaluation model.

Methods

To that end, the general framework of the factors and markers necessary in the assessment of life skills training program based on CIPP model (i.e., context, input, process and output) were firstly determined using factors, markers and specified judgment criteria. Then, by the use of the codified factors and markers, five research questions were formulated

Instruments

A comprehensive questionnaire was developed to investigate experts' attitude toward the life skills training program in high schools in Khuzestan province, in which the factors assessed, the indicators and the proposed standards for the components of the field, the input, process as well as the output were specified. Then, the respondents were asked to agree or disagree with any of the suggestions given. The analysis of the results led to the development of the main questionnaire used in this study. In addition, the 114-item questionnaire of life skills were used including 19 subscales. In order to investigate the validity of the questionnaires after formulating the questions, the experts were asked to comment on the external validity (face and appearance) and internal validity (construct and content).

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Intervention

The population of this study included all first grade high school students; all counselors who were involved in life skills training; and all managers of high schools where life skills training was used. The sample consisted of 30 principals, 30 counselors and 298 first grade high school students (154 boys and 144 girls). The principals and counselors were chosen using a census method, while the students were selected via a multi-stage random sampling, from among the schools providing life skills lessons.

Results

The results of the first questionnaire showed that from 23 components evaluated, 21 components were "optimal" and 2 components were evaluated as "relatively optimal", indicating the desired level of implementation of the program. The results of the second question also showed that principals and students were not very satisfied with the facilities and preparations provided for the implementation of the training program, and expected better facilities. As for the third question, participants expected additional facilities and inputs for the implantation of the program. The fourth question also showed that the qualitative assessment of the participant groups had higher quality than other research areas. Finally, the fifth question reflected the highest quality for students and instructors, but the least desirable for managers. This, in turn, indicates a higher expectation level of managers from the life skills training program.

Conclusion

Learning life skills can teach the cognitive, emotional and behavioral abilities necessary to feel successful and overcome the tensions and challenges ahead in life. The main advantage of the evaluation of a training course is that its strengths and weaknesses are found via a systematic approach. It also influences decision making and planning, and leads planners and policy makers to understand the needs of the learners and the community when they design any educational program. Based on these findings, conducting need analysis studies for target groups is necessary to implement skills training programs and develop a theoretical and practical plan for life skills training, based on the Islamic-Iranian model for its implementation by managers counselors and students' parents.

Keywords: CIPP evaluation model, life skills