

The Effect of a Parent Training Program, In Conjunction with a Life Skills Training Program for School-age Children, on Children's Life Skills, and Parents' Child-rearing Skills and Perceptions of Support for Child Life Skills Development

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Abstract: This quasi-experimental study sought to examine the effect of a parent training program, in conjunction with a life skills training program for school-aged children, on children's life skills, and parents' child-rearing skills and perceptions of support for child life skills development. One school was purposively selected, from which two 5th grade classes were randomly assigned to either the experimental group or the comparison group. The parent and student study participants, who met the inclusion criteria and consented/assented to take part in the study, included 26 student/parent dyads in the experimental group and 27 student/parent dyads in the comparison group. All students were recruited into the life skills training program, while only parents of the students assigned to the experimental group were recruited into the parent training program. The principle investigator based these programs on the Theory of Planned Behavior and interactive group techniques. Instruments for data collection included: a Life Skills Questionnaire for School-aged Children; and, the researcher-developed Child Life Skills Development Questionnaire for Parents. Data were collected on all participants prior to implementation of both programs, immediately following each program's completion, and one month and three months after each program's completion. Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and repeated measures ANOVA were used to test the effect of the parent training program.

The results demonstrated no significant effect of the parent training program on the children's life skills, the parents' attitudes, and their subjective norms regarding child life skills development. Positive effects, however, were seen on the parents' child-rearing skills that supported child life skills development, self-efficacy toward child life skills development, and intention to engage in child-rearing skills that supported child life development. These findings suggest this intervention may require a longer duration of implementation, so as to improve child life skills. Recommendations for further research include a larger sample size and a longer period for outcome measurements.

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Key words: Children's life skills; Training program; School-age children; Parents' perceptions; Parental child-rearing skills

Introduction

The proportion of child behavioral problems and risk behaviors has increased throughout the 21st century.^{1, 2} Data indicate a number of interrelated social problems have their roots in childhood behavioral problems, including aggressive behavior, delinquency, smoking, and drug and alcohol abuse.^{1, 2, 3} The lack of competencies in adapting to and dealing

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