



LIFE SKILLS-BASED SELF-AWARENESS STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS

B.Pavithra

*Alagappa University College of Education,
Alagappa University,
Karaikudi, Sivaganga, Tamil Nadu, India.*

Dr. J. Jayachithra

*Assistant Professor,
Department of Education,
Alagappa University College of Education,
Alagappa University,
Karaikudi, Sivaganga, Tamil Nadu, India.*

Abstract

Self-awareness is an essential life skill that contributes significantly to the personal, emotional, and professional development of prospective teachers. The present study, titled "Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies for Developing Effective Prospective Teachers," aimed to assess the level of self-awareness among prospective teachers, develop life skills-based self-awareness strategies, and determine their effectiveness. An experimental method with a pre-test-post-test equivalent control group design was adopted. The sample consisted of 60 B.Ed. prospective teachers from Alagappa University College of Education, Karaikudi, selected through simple random sampling and equally assigned to an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group received structured life skills-based self-awareness strategies, including self-reflection, reflective journaling, goal setting, mindfulness practices, emotional awareness activities, positive self-talk, feedback and self-assessment, interpersonal communication, problem-solving, and

decision-making exercises. A self-awareness scale was used to assess the participants before and after the intervention. The findings revealed that 60% of prospective teachers had a moderate level of self-awareness, 26.67% had a low level, and 13.33% had a high level. The experimental group showed a significant improvement in self-awareness from the pre-test mean of 75.19 to the post-test mean of 80.88 ($t = 5.294$, $p < 0.01$). Although the control group also demonstrated a significant improvement, from 72.19 to 75.05 ($t = 2.109$, $p = 0.044$), the improvement was comparatively smaller. The findings indicate that structured life skills-based self-awareness strategies can effectively enhance self-awareness among prospective teachers. The study recommends integrating such strategies into B.Ed. teacher education programmes to foster reflective thinking, emotional regulation, confidence, effective communication, decision-making, and professional effectiveness among future teachers.



Keywords

Self-awareness, Life Skills, Prospective Teachers, Teacher Education, Self-Reflection, Emotional Regulation, Reflective Practice, Professional Effectiveness.

Introduction

Teacher education plays a vibrant role in preparing skilled and effective teachers who can meet the diverse demands of modern-day classrooms. Twenty-first-century prospective teachers require not only pedagogical knowledge and subject expertise but also essential life skills that foster their personal and professional development. Among these life skills, Self-awareness is a fundamental life skill that allows individuals to recognize their emotions, strengths, weaknesses, values, and beliefs. Teachers who are self-aware are better able to manage their emotions, make informed decisions, foster positive relationships, and engage in reflective practices. All of these elements contribute to effective teaching.

The World Health Organization (WHO, 1997) identifies self-awareness as one of the ten core life skills necessary for promoting psychological well-being and effective interpersonal functioning. Similarly, the National Education Policy (NEP, 2020) emphasizes the need to prepare reflective, competent, and professionally committed teachers capable of addressing the evolving needs of learners. However, teacher education programmes often focus primarily on academic and pedagogical competencies, providing limited opportunities for the

systematic development of self-awareness through structured life skills interventions.

Life skills-based self-awareness strategies, including self-reflection, emotional regulation, goal setting, mindfulness, and reflective journaling, can significantly enhance the confidence, resilience, communication skills, and professional effectiveness of prospective teachers. These strategies promote ongoing self-evaluation and personal growth, allowing future teachers to adapt effectively to the challenges they may face in the classroom.

The present study, titled "Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies for Developing Effective Prospective Teachers," aims to assess the level of self-awareness among prospective teachers. It will also develop and implement life-skills-based strategies to enhance self-awareness and evaluate their effectiveness using a pre-test-post-test control-group design. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for strengthening teacher education programs by integrating life skills-based interventions that promote the development of effective and reflective teaching professionals.

Review of Literature

Ertanti et al., 2024 conducted a study entitled "Systematic Literature Review (SLR): characteristics of self-awareness in shaping the character of prospective teachers" This research examines the role of self-awareness in shaping prospective primary school teachers. It explores their understanding of personal values, strengths, and weaknesses and how

these affect their teaching practices. The findings highlight the importance of self-awareness in developing character and offer guidance for future teacher training programs at the primary level.

Clinton & Smith, 2023 study entitled "The Role of Preservice Teachers' Wellbeing, Dispositions and Self-Awareness in Predicting Future Teacher Behaviour" study aims to understand the role of preservice teachers' well-being and mental health, as well as their relationship with intentional teaching behaviours. The results clearly highlight the involvement of initial teacher educators in this process, emphasizing the importance of fostering self-reflective practices among preservice teachers and enhancing their knowledge and skills in health education. This research has significant implications for initial teacher education, teacher selection, the assessment of classroom readiness, and health education.

Galiakberova et al., 2020 study entitled "Professional Training of Teachers and the Problems of Their Self-Awareness" highlights the necessity of enhancing future teachers' professional self-awareness, as current frameworks often neglect self-evaluation. Research shows that pedagogical students may lose motivation due to a lack of practical experience, despite their theoretical knowledge. It emphasizes understanding future teachers' perceptions of their professional identities and suggests a structured pedagogical system to promote professional self-awareness and identity development.

Background of the Study

In the rapidly changing educational environment, teachers require not only pedagogical knowledge but also essential life skills that enhance their personal and professional effectiveness. Among these life skills, self-awareness is considered the foundation for developing reflective, confident, and competent teachers. For prospective teachers, self-awareness promotes reflective practice, emotional regulation, effective communication, and professional growth, which are essential for successful classroom teaching.

Life skills-based self-awareness strategies provide a systematic approach to strengthening these competencies. Such strategies include self-reflection, reflective journaling, SWOT analysis, goal setting, mindfulness practices, emotional awareness activities, positive self-talk, feedback and self-assessment, and problem-solving exercises. These strategies encourage prospective teachers to identify their strengths and weaknesses, regulate emotions, build confidence, and improve interpersonal relationships.

Despite the importance of self-awareness, many teacher education programmes continue to emphasize academic and pedagogical competencies while providing limited opportunities for structured self-awareness training. Therefore, integrating life skills-based self-awareness strategies into teacher education is essential for developing effective prospective teachers. The present study aims to assess the level of self-

awareness among prospective teachers, develop a structured life skills-based self-awareness strategy programme, and evaluate its effectiveness in enhancing teacher effectiveness, thereby contributing to the preparation of reflective, competent, and professionally committed future educators.

Life skills-based self-awareness strategies may bridge this gap by helping prospective teachers:

- Gain deeper insights into one's own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to enhance self-awareness.
- Cultivate the ability to manage and constructively respond to emotions, leading to improved emotional stability.
- Foster reflective thinking skills to analyze experiences critically and learn from them effectively.
- Improve interpersonal communication abilities to convey ideas clearly and empathetically in various contexts.
- Develop a stronger sense of professional confidence, empowering individuals to take on challenges and assert their expertise.
- Enhance overall teaching effectiveness by implementing innovative strategies and adapting to the needs of diverse learners.

Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies

The current study proposes using structured self-awareness strategies based on life skills education to improve the effectiveness of future teachers. These strategies include:

- **Self-reflection:** Encouraging prospective teachers to recognize their true values, strengths, and weaknesses.
- **Reflective Journaling:** Maintaining reflective journals to analyse daily learning experiences, teaching practices, and personal growth.
- **Goal Setting:** Establishing realistic academic and professional goals while monitoring progress toward achieving them.
- **Mindfulness Practices:** Engaging in breathing exercises, meditation, and mindfulness activities to improve emotional regulation, concentration, and self-control.
- **Emotional Awareness Activities:** Recognizing and managing emotions in personal and professional situations to foster emotional intelligence.
- **Positive Self-Talk:** Replacing negative thoughts with constructive affirmations to build confidence and resilience.
- **Feedback and Self-Assessment:** Seeking feedback from peers and teacher educators while evaluating one's own performance to promote continuous improvement.
- **Interpersonal Communication Activities:** Developing effective communication, active listening, empathy, and collaborative skills through group discussions and role-play.

- **Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Exercises:** Applying critical thinking to analyse situations, evaluate alternatives, and make informed professional decisions.

Statement of the Problem

The quality of education heavily relies on effective teachers, making teacher preparation crucial. While teacher education programs focus on pedagogical knowledge and skills, they often neglect self-awareness – a key life skill for growth. Many future educators lack opportunities to explore their strengths, weaknesses, and professional identity, impacting their confidence and teaching effectiveness. Implementing structured self-awareness strategies could improve reflective thinking, emotional regulation, and communication skills. However, there is limited empirical evidence on their effectiveness in teacher education. Thus, this study, titled "Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies for Developing Effective Prospective Teachers," aims to develop and assess such strategies.

Research Gap

Numerous studies have examined life skills, self-awareness, and teacher effectiveness separately. However, very few studies explore how life skills-based self-awareness strategies can enhance the effectiveness of prospective teachers. Most existing research focuses on measuring self-awareness but does not provide structured activities or interventions for its development.

Additionally, there is a lack of experimental research utilizing pre-test and post-test methods to evaluate the effectiveness of self-awareness strategies among prospective teachers. Therefore, there is a need to create and assess structured life skills-based self-awareness strategies within teacher education programs. This study aims to address that gap by evaluating the self-awareness of prospective teachers, developing targeted self-awareness strategies based on life skills, and testing their effectiveness using experimental methods.

Objectives

- To find the level of self-awareness strategies of prospective teachers.
- To develop life skills-based self-awareness strategies for prospective teachers.
- To determine the effectiveness of life skills-based self-awareness strategies among prospective teachers.

Hypothesis

- The level of self-awareness among prospective teachers is low.
- There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group in their self-awareness.
- There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the Control group in their self-awareness.

Methodology

Research Method

The current study employs the Experimental Method with a Pretest-Posttest Equivalent Control Group Design. Two groups are involved: the experimental group and the control group. Both groups take a pre-test to measure their initial levels of self-awareness. Following this, the experimental group is introduced to Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies, while the control group continues with regular classroom instruction. After the intervention is completed, both groups undergo a post-test using the same assessment tool. We then compare the pre-test and post-test scores of both groups to evaluate the effectiveness of the Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies in fostering the development of prospective teachers.

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the present study consists of all prospective teachers enrolled in the B.Ed. program at Alagappa University College of Education, Karaikudi. The sample consists of 60 prospective teachers studying in the B.Ed. programme at Alagappa University College of Education, Karaikudi. The selected participants are divided equally into two groups:

Level of Self-Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Low	8	26.67
Moderate	18	60.00

Sampling Technique

The study employs the Simple Random Sampling Technique to select the participants. Each prospective teacher has an equal chance of being selected.

- Experimental Group - 30
- Control Group - 30

Variables of the Study

Independent variable	Dependent Variable
Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies	Development of Effective Prospective Teachers

Research Tools

- Self-Awareness Scale: To assess the self-awareness levels of prospective teachers.
- Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies Module: The intervention program was developed by the investigator.

Statistical Techniques

The collected data are analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. Frequency and percentage analyses are conducted to assess the level of self-awareness among prospective teachers. Mean and standard deviation are used to describe the distribution of scores. The paired t-test is used to compare pre- and post-test scores for each of the experimental and control groups. The independent t-test is utilized to compare the post-test scores of the experimental group

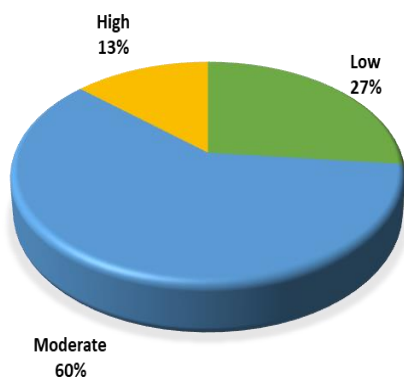
with those of the control group. These statistical methods are instrumental in evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention in fostering the development of competent prospective teachers.

Data Analysis

Table 1: The level of self-awareness among prospective teachers is low

High	4	13.33
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Figure1: The level of self-awareness among prospective teachers is low



Interpretation

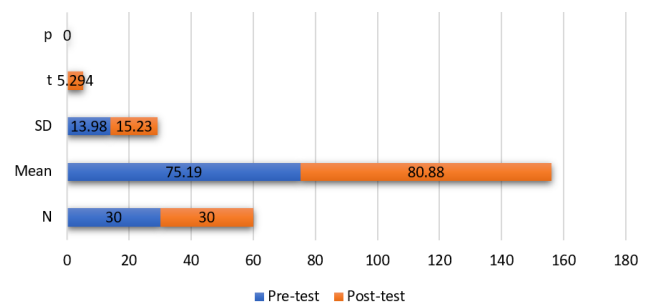
The Table shows that 18 (60.00%) prospective teachers possess a moderate level of self-Awareness, followed by 8 (26.67%) with a low level and 4 (13.33%) with a high level. Thus, the majority of prospective teachers have a moderate level of self-awareness.

Table 2: There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group in their self-awareness

Test	N	Mean	SD	t	p	Result
Pre-test	30	75.19	13.98			
Post-test	30	80.88	15.23	5.294	0.000	Significant

Figure 2: There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group in their self-awareness

Pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group in their self-awareness



Level of Significance: 0.01

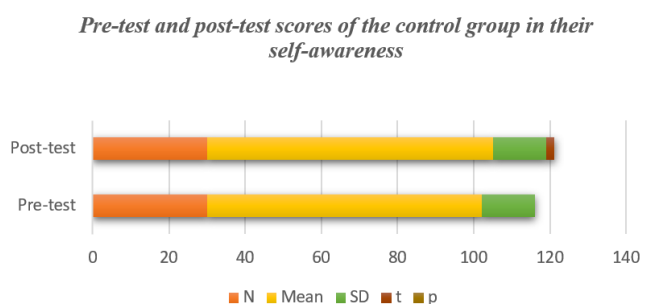
Interpretation

The average self-awareness score of the experimental group increased from 75.19 in the pre-test to 80.88 in the post-test. The obtained t-value of 5.294 is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), indicating that the Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies had a significant positive impact on the self-awareness of the prospective teachers. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3: There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the Control group in their self-awareness.

Test	N	Mean	SD	t	p	Result
Pre-test	30	72.19	13.99			
Post-test	30	75.05	13.94	2.109	0.044	Significant

Figure 3: There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the Control group in their self-awareness



Level of Significance: 0.05

Interpretation

The mean score of the control group improved from 72.19 to 75.05. The calculated t-value is 2.109, which is significant at the 0.05 level. This suggests a slight increase in the self-awareness of the control group, although the improvement is considerably smaller than that observed in the experimental group.

Findings of the Study

- The majority of prospective teachers (60%) demonstrated a moderate level of self-awareness. Approximately 26.67% exhibited a low level, while 13.33% displayed a high level of self-awareness.

- A significant difference was found between the pre-test and post-test self-awareness scores of the experimental group ($t = 5.294$, $p < 0.01$). The post-test mean score (80.88) was higher than the pre-test mean score (75.19). This shows that the Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies effectively improved the self-awareness of future teachers. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.
- A significant difference was also found between the pre-test and post-test self-awareness scores of the control group ($t = 2.109$, $p = 0.044$). The post-test mean score (75.05) was slightly higher than the pre-test mean score (72.19). Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected at the 0.05 level. Nonetheless, the improvement in the control group was less than that observed in the experimental group.

The findings suggest that prospective teachers typically exhibit a moderate level of self-awareness, and the Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies led to a greater improvement in self-awareness in the experimental group compared to the control group.

Recommendations for further study

- The study could be replicated with a larger sample of prospective teachers to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

- Future studies could involve prospective teachers from various teacher education institutions, universities, and geographic regions.
- Future research may explore the effectiveness of life skills-based self-awareness strategies over a longer intervention period.
- A follow-up study will be conducted to assess if the improvement in self-awareness is maintained after the intervention.
- Future research may include additional life skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, empathy, communication, and stress management.
- Research may explore how self-awareness strategies impact various outcomes, including teaching competency, classroom management, reflective practices, and professional effectiveness.
- Future researchers could use mixed-method approaches to gather both quantitative and qualitative evidence on the effectiveness of self-awareness strategies. Similar intervention programs may also be developed and tested for in-service teachers and teacher educators.

Conclusion

The current study, titled "Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies for Developing Effective Prospective Teachers," investigated how structured self-awareness

strategies can improve the personal and professional growth of future teachers. The findings indicated that most prospective teachers have a moderate level of self-awareness, highlighting the necessity for organized interventions to enhance their understanding of emotions, strengths, weaknesses, values, and professional responsibilities.

The experimental findings demonstrated a significant improvement in the self-awareness scores of the experimental group between the pre-test and post-test after implementing Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies. This improvement suggests that structured activities—such as self-reflection, emotional awareness, goal setting, positive self-talk, self-assessment, decision-making, problem-solving, and reflective practices—can effectively enhance self-awareness among prospective teachers. Although the control group also experienced some improvement, the extent of this improvement was comparatively smaller.

Self-awareness is a crucial skill for future teachers because it fosters confidence, emotional regulation, reflective thinking, effective communication, decision-making, and professional growth. Developing these qualities during teacher preparation helps prospective teachers respond effectively to classroom challenges and build positive relationships with their students.

The study concludes that Life Skills-Based Self-Awareness Strategies can be a valuable addition to teacher education programs. By integrating structured self-

awareness activities into Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programs, institutions can help prepare future teachers who are reflective, confident, emotionally competent, and professionally effective. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of teacher education institutions offering continuous opportunities for life skills development as an essential part of preparing prospective teachers.

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