

EFFECTIVENESS OF LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION
PROGRAMME AMONG CBSE AND STATE BOARD
STUDENTS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Abstract

"Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (WHO). It transforms knowledge into positive behavior. Adolescence is a vital stage of growth and development. It is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood and also called a period of stress and strain. It is characterized by rapid physiological changes and psychological maturation. These are also years of risk taking, solving their own problems, taking decisions on crucial issues, peer pressures and coping with stress. Thus it is a turning point in one's life and a period of increased potential. There is a need to focus on physiological, emotional and socio-cultural dimensions of the adolescents. Moreover, the greater need is to equip adolescents with life skills, so that they can cope with the challenges and pressures. Life skill of a person develops over the years continuously in a dynamic manner. There are many skills which are needed to successfully negotiate each and every situation in one's life ever day. Adolescents are considered to be the productive members of a society due to their physical and intellectual capacity. Unfortunately most of the adolescents are unable to utilize their potential to maximum due to inappropriate environment. They are always engaging in antisocial activities and spoiling their life. To make life of adolescents valuable and to convert them to individuals with high potential, educational system should be reformed giving due importance to life skill education. In the present paper the investigator explores the relevance and comparative study of life skills education amongst state and CBSE school students.

Key words : *life skills, adolescents, youth dynamism, transition, self development.*

Introduction

“We are guilty of many errors and many faults, but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the foundation of life. Many of the things we need can wait. The children cannot. Right now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood is being made and his senses are being developed to him we cannot answer “tomorrow”. His name is “today”.

Gabriela mistral, 1948

Life skills have been defined by the world health organization (WHO) as “abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to cope effectively with the posing challenges of life”. They represent the psycho-social skills that determine valued behaviour and include reflective skills such as problem-solving and inter personal skills. Practicing life skills leads to qualities such as self-esteem, sociability and tolerance, to action competencies to take action and generate change and to capabilities to have the freedom to decide what to do and what not to. In life skills education, children are actively involved in a dynamic teaching and learning process where they themselves fill the gaps and comes out of the discrepancies.

The methods used to facilitate this active involvement include forming peer groups and working in pairs, Brainstorming, Role play, Dramatization and debates. A life skills lesson may start with a teacher exploring with the students what their ideas or knowledge is about a particular situation in which a life skill can be used. The children may be asked to raise and discuss the issues in peer groups, in small groups or with the partners. They may then engage themselves in a role play, or take part in activities that allow them to practice the skills in different situations as actual practice of skills is a vital component of life skills education. After the activity the teacher then assigns the assignment to motivate and encourage the children to discuss and practice the skills with their close friends and families.

Adolescence

Adolescence is a period when the intellectual, physical and all the capabilities are very high but their antisocial activities and behavior are deteriorating all their capabilities and they are becoming a burden to the society that’s why an Adolescence is a period of stress and strain, a period of transition and a period of immature demeanor. Adolescence is a vital stage of growth and development. Since it is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood and hence being called a period of stress and strain. It is characterized by rapid physiological changes and psychological maturation. These are also the years of risk taking, solving their own problems,

taking decisions on crucial issues, peer pressures and coping with stress. Thus it is a turning point in one's life and a period of increased potential. There is a need to focus on physiological, emotional and socio-cultural dimensions of the adolescents. Imparting life skill training through inculcating life skill education will help our adolescents to overcome such difficulties in life. Moreover, the greater need is to equip adolescents with life skills, so that they can cope with the challenges and pressures. Life skill of a person develops over the years continuously in a dynamic manner. There are many skills which are needed to successfully negotiate each and every situation in one's life ever day.

Concept and Scope

Life skill education aims at providing students with strategies to make healthy choices that contribute to a meaningful life. Life skills are the abilities that help to promote mental well being and competence in young people as they face the realities of life.

It helps the young people to take positive actions to protect themselves and to promote health and meaningful social relationship. Life skill facilitates a complete and integrated development of individuals to function effectively as social beings.

Life skill education is a value addition programme for the youth to understand self and able to assess their skill, abilities and areas of developments, which also enable them to analyse their capacity to enhance the function in a most productive way.

The main objective of life skill education is to enable the learner to develop a concept of oneself as a person of worth and dignity. It should help one to understand oneself and lead to growth in personal responsibility.

Life skill education is a basic learning need for all young people. It will help the young people to empower in challenging situations. Various skills like leadership, responsibility, communication, intellectual capacity, self esteem, Interpersonal skill etc., extend its maximum level, if it is practicing effectively among the youth. We need to create life skill education as the cornerstone of various youth programmes. An effective implementation strategy will help the youth to practice it in their life. Specific activities like leadership training, communication, interaction, understanding self, making decisions, working with groups, socialization etc added the quality of youth.

Developing life skill helps the adolescents to translate knowledge, attitude and their health behaviour such as acquiring the ability to reduce specific risk behaviour and adopt healthy

behaviour Skill based approach in life skill education follows well established mentoring techniques to develop students innate quality and also motivating them to adopt socially acceptable pattern of lifestyle's particularly, strategy consisting of a group of people combined together to help themselves by identifying their talents and directing them to choose an appropriate steps to enhance their skill and abilities as a part of development.

Need for Life Skills Education.

The psychological push factors such as the inability to tackle emotional pain, conflicts, frustrations and anxieties about the future are often the driving force for high risk behaviour. Life skills training, having the power to produce a desired result, especially an improvement is tool for empowering the youth to act responsibly, take initiative and take control. It is based on the assumption that when young people are able to rise above emotional impasses arising from daily conflicts, entangled relationships and peer pressure, they are less likely to resort to anti social or high risk behaviours

Review of Related Literature:

According to WHO life skills are 'living skills' or abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (Anon., 2010).

Life skills are used every moment of our lives in various situations-choosing friends/career, developing or breaking habits, making and breaking relationships, following discipline, understanding one's needs, solving problems, interacting with teachers and parents. (Michael J Wallace (1999).

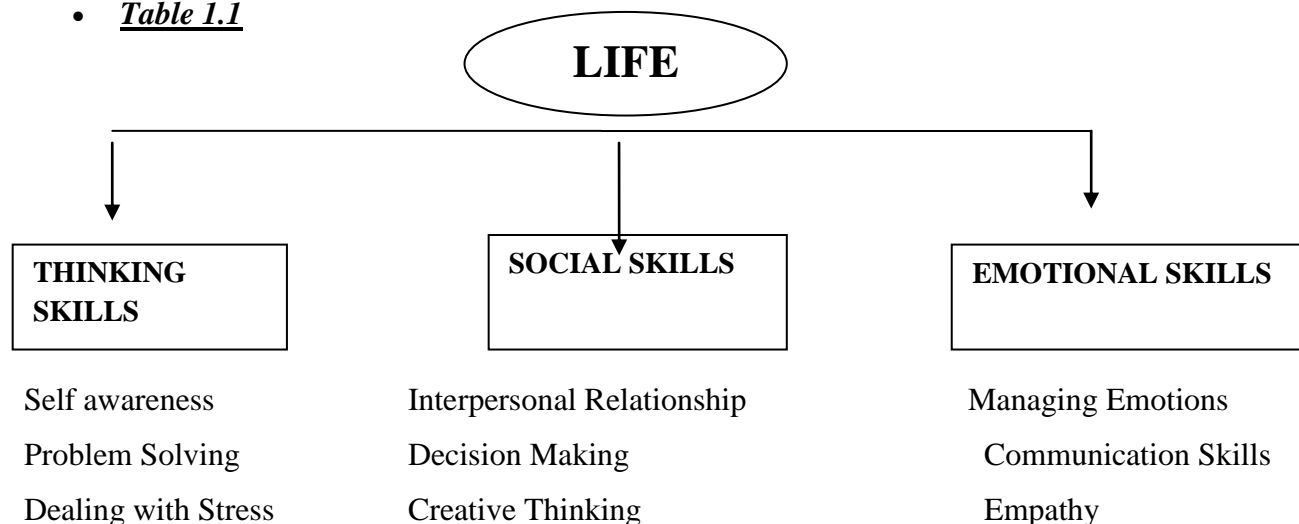
Life skill education promotes mental well-being in young people and equips them to face the realities of life. By supporting mental well-being and behavioral preparedness, life skills education equips individual to behave in a pro-social ways and it is additionally healthy living (Nair, 2005). Consequently, life skills education can be seen as empowering adolescent to take more responsibility for their actions.

Life skill education aims to provide students with strategies to make healthy choices that contribute to a meaningful life. Life skills are the abilities that help to promote mental well being and competence in young people as they face the realities of life. It helps the young people to take positive actions to protect themselves and to promote health and meaningful social relationship. Life skill facilitates a complete and integrated development of individuals to

function effectively as social beings. Life skill education is a value addition programme for the youth to understand self and able to assess their skill, abilities and areas of developments, which also enable them to analyse their capacity to enhance the function in a most productive way. The main objective of life skill education is to enable the learner to develop a concept of oneself as a person of worth and dignity. It should help one to understand oneself and lead to growth in personal responsibility. Life skill education is a basic learning need for all young people. It will help the young people to empower in challenging situations. Various skills like leadership, responsibility, communication, intellectual capacity, self esteem, interpersonal skill etc., extend its maximum level, if it is practicing effectively among the youth. We need to create life skill education as the cornerstone of various youth programmes. An effective implementation strategy will help the youth to practice it in their life. Specific activities like leadership training, communication, interaction, understanding self, making decisions, working with groups, socialization etc added the quality of youth. Developing life skill helps the adolescents to translate knowledge, attitude and their health behaviour such as acquiring the ability to reduce specific risk behaviour and adopt healthy behaviour that improve their lives in general. Skill based approach in life skill education follows well established mentoring techniques to develop students innate quality and also motivating them to adopt socially acceptable pattern of lifestyle's particularly, strategy consisting of a group of people combined together to help themselves by identifying their talents and directing them to choose appropriate steps to enhance their skill and abilities as a part of development.

Major Components of Life skills

- Table 1.1



The core set of life skills which help in promoting health and well being of children and adolescents are

Self-awareness:- Self awareness includes recognition of self, our character, our strengths and weaknesses, desires and dislikes. Developing self-awareness can help us to recognize when we are stressed or feel under pressure. It is also often a prerequisite for effective communication and interpersonal relations, as well as for developing empathy for others

Problem solving: - After making the decisions about available options, choosing the one which suits the best, following it through even in the face impediments and going through the process again till a positive outcome of the problem is achieved.

Coping with stress: - Coping with stress is identifying the sources of stress in our lives, recognizing how this affects us, and acting in ways that help to control our levels of stress. This may mean that we take action to reduce the sources of stress, for example, by making changes to our physical environment or lifestyle. Inevitably, cultural and social factors will determine the exact nature of life skills. For example, eye contact may be encouraged in boys for effective communication, but not for girls in some societies, so gender issues will arise in identifying the nature of life skills for psychosocial competence.

Interpersonal relationships: - Interpersonal relationship skills facilitate us to relate in positive way with the people we usually interact with. This means being able to make and keep friendly relationships, which can be of great importance to our mental and social well-being. It

also includes keeping good relations with family members, which are an important source of social support.

Decision making - The process of assessing an issue by considering all possible/available options and the effects those different decisions might have on them.

Creative thinking: - It is the ability to look beyond our direct experience and address issues. It contributes to both decision making and problem solving by enabling us to explore the available alternatives and various consequences of our actions or non-action. It helps us to look beyond our direct experience, and even if no problem is identified, or no decision is to be made, creative thinking can help us to respond adaptively and with flexibility to the situations of our daily lives.

Critical thinking: - It is an ability to analyze information and experiences in an objective manner. Critical thinking can contribute to health by helping us to recognize and assess the factors that influence attitudes and behavior, such as values, peer pressure, and the media.

Coping with emotions: - Coping with emotions involves recognizing emotions in ourselves and others, being aware of how emotions influence behavior, and being able to respond to emotions appropriately. Intense emotions, like anger or sorrow can have negative effects on our health if we do not react appropriately.

Effective communication: - Effective communication means that we are able to express our own views , both verbally and non-verbally, in ways that are appropriate to our cultures and situations. This means being able to express opinions, desires, needs and fears. And it also means being able to ask for advice and help in a time of need.

Empathy: - Empathy is the ability to imagine what life is like for another person, even in a situation that we may not be familiar with. Empathy can help us to understand and accept others who may be very different from ourselves, which can improve social interactions, for example, in situations of ethnic or cultural diversity. Empathy can also help to encourage nurturing behavior towards people in need of care and assistance, or tolerance, as is the case with AIDS sufferers, or people with mental disorders, who may be stigmatized and ostracized by the very people they depend upon for support.

Objectives:

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To understand the context of Effectiveness of Life Skills Education Programmes in schools.
2. To study the understanding and effectiveness of imparting life skills education among the 10th standard students of State syllabus.
3. To study the understanding and effectiveness of imparting life skills education among the 10th standard students of CBSE syllabus.

Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference of understanding about life skills education programme between state and CBSE students.
2. There is no significant difference of life skills scores between boys and girls of state syllabus.
3. There is no significant difference of life skills scores between boys and girls of CBSE syllabus.

Need of the study and research gap

Review of the previous studies enabled the researcher to be thoroughly familiar and conscious with both previous familiar theory and researches carried out in the field of life skills education.

Each study rests on effort of earlier ones and provides a basis for future ones. The more links that can be established between a given study and other studies or a body of theory the greater the probable contribution the review helped the researcher to gain a thorough understanding and insight into the work done in the field of life skills education.

The review of related studies and its research gap provided the base on which the building of present study is constructed.

Design of the study:

Participants in the study are from the state and CBSE schools of Bangalore East, the standardized questionnaire was selected to administer the students of state board and CBSE syllabus. 160 participants participated from State and CBSE schools located in Bangalore East in

this study of which 60 girls and 100 boys with ages between 14-16 years. (M = 20.68, SD = 3.207).

The prior consent was obtained and permissions were taken from respective school principals, data was collected personally on an individual basis. The information collected was tabulated and scored. The scores have been analysed and graphical representation was prepared.

Sampling procedure:

In the present endeavor, random sampling technique and standardized questionnaire was used to collect the data. The sample of present research comprises 160 students, the age range of the students was 14-16years, selected from student's population of 10th STD.

Statistical Analysis:

A comparative statement was prepared for analysis and interpreted by the investigator in terms of simple percentile analysis (t-test) along with mean and standard deviation.

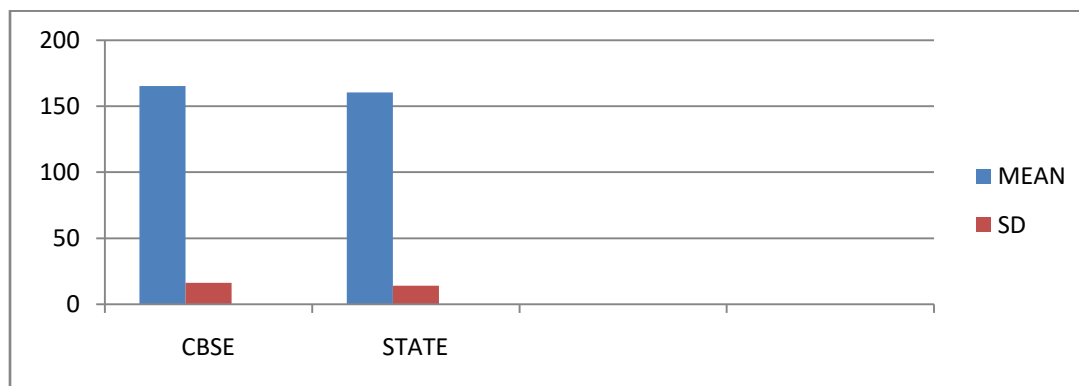
Result Analysis:

Hypothesis 1: *There is no significant difference of life skill scores between state and CBSE students.*

Differences between life skill scores of state syllabus and CBSE syllabus

Table 1.2

Type of syllabus	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of significance
CBSE	80	165.3125	16.21344	1.982	Significant at 0.05 level
State	80	160.5500	14.10799		



From the above, the obtained t-value 1.982 which is greater than the table value 1.960 and 1.982 The P-Value is .024601. The result is significant at $p < .05$ hence Null hypothesis is

rejected and Alternative hypothesis which stated that there is a significant difference between life skill scores of state and CBSE 10th standard students.

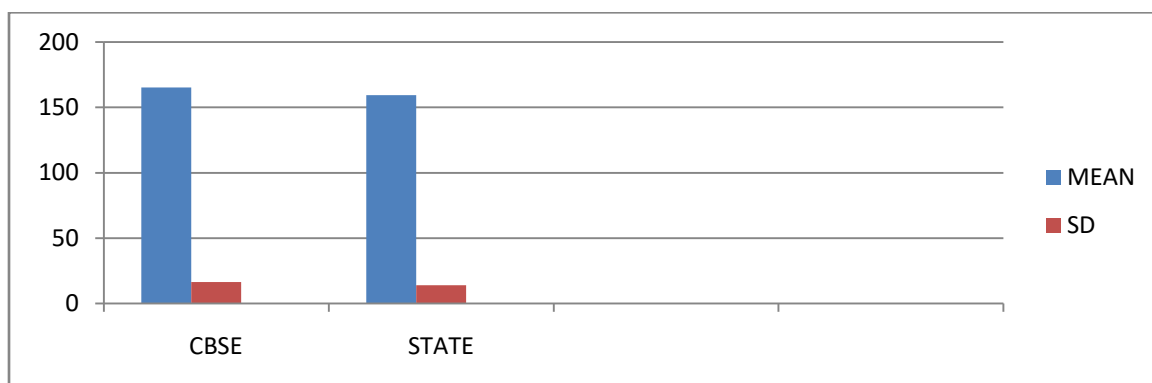
It can be said that life skills Mean scores of CBSE students which is 165.3125 is significantly higher than the life skills Mean scores of state syllabus students which is 160.5500 hence it can be said that CBSE students differ significantly compared to that of State syllabi.

Hypothesis 2: *There is no significant difference of life skill scores between boys and girls of State syllabus*

Difference between life skill scores of boys and girls of State syllabus

Table 1.3

Type of syllabus	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of significance
State Boys	48	165.3184	16.51706	3.257	Significant at 0.05 level
State Girls	32	159.3209	14.00687		



From the above, the obtained t-value 3.257 which is greater than the table value 1.982 hence null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis which states that there is a significant difference between life skill scores of boys and girls studying in 10th standard state syllabus.

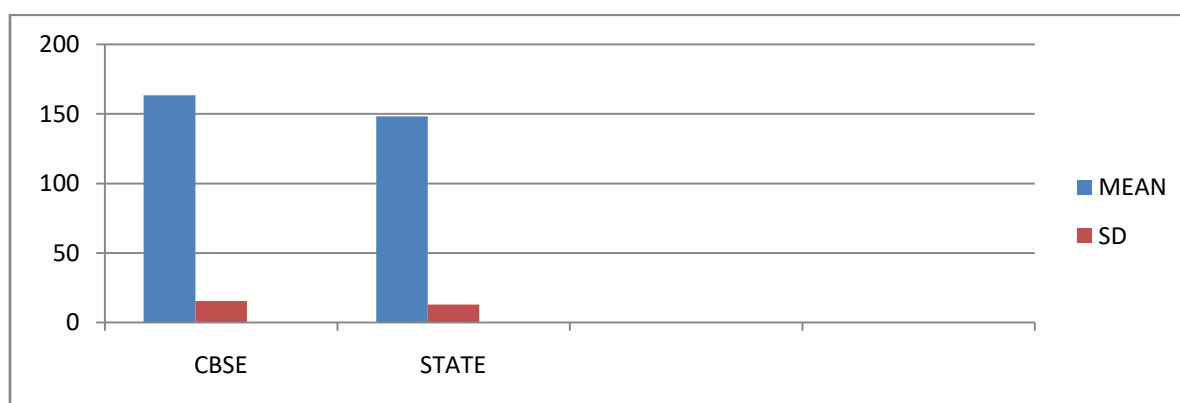
It can be said that the life skill mean scores of boys is 165.3184 is significantly higher than that of girls which is 159.3209. Hence it can be said that Boys differ significantly in life skills compared to Girls of state syllabus.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference of life skill scores between boys and girls of CBSE syllabus.

Table 1.4

Difference of life skill scores between boys and girls of CBSE syllabus.

Type of syllabus	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of significance
CBSE Boys	52	163.3195	15.51706	2.379	Significant at 0.05 level
CBSE Girls	28	148.3208	13.00687		



From the above table 1.4 - the obtained t-value 2.379 which is greater than the table value 1.960 hence null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis which states that there is a significant difference between life skill scores of boys and girls of CBSE syllabus .

It can be said that the life skill mean scores of Boys studying in 10th standard is 163.3195, is significantly higher than that of girls which is 148.3208. Hence it can be said that 10th standard Boys differ significantly in life skill compared to Girls.

Conclusion

The paper concludes that the intervention on life skill education is helpful for the adolescents to take positive actions and improving their coping skills of stress and problem solving ability. Life skills are the building blocks of one behavior and need to be learnt well to lead a healthy, meaningful and productive life. Attempts should be made to understand the adolescents problems and guide them in aquisition of life skills. The intervention on life skill development is a good support system for adolescents at the community level Adolescence is a

period when the intellectual, physical and all the capabilities are very high but their antisocial activities and behavior are deteriorating all their capabilities and they are becoming a burden to the society.

Life skills education should be an inextricable part of school syllabus. Although researcher analyzed children at both the syllabi. From the analysis of data, researcher is of the opinion that the CBSE students had shown a considerable depth of understanding and knowledge of Life Skills Education. They are benefited from a well formulated life skills enhancement programmes at school levels and thus researcher recommends that life skills programmer should be well integrated into the whole school curriculum with due stress, depth & seriousness on the state syllabus also.

Society in the future, as in the past, will need citizens with more that academic abilities. Intuition, creativity, adaptability, and powers of perception, interpretation and communication will all be essential qualities in the third millennium. These qualities are recognized or nurtured in formal academic settings. Juvenile live their lives in the present moment but their future potential will depend on the capacities, social, spiritual an emotional that is fostered in their formative years.

Given opportunities to make sense of and contribute to their world, they will become makers of culture. Quality experience in the arts will help our dynamic adolescents to become capable of interrogating and evaluating the values, beliefs and traditions of the society and to find their own place in the world.

Limitations of The Study

- The present endeavor is to Study the effectiveness of imparting life skills Education and its understanding amongst the pupils of class 10th only.
- This is only a precise product study in the area of life skills education.
- Due to laborious calculations, only certain variables are studied in this investigation.
- It is a study of survey research where in the technique of questionnaire is employed.
- Collected data may be too small to accept the findings universally.

Educational Implications:

- In addition to life skills educational programme (LSE), Researcher recommends that a long term intervention should be developed, continuing throughout the school years beginning from primary level until school leaving age.

- A training course for the teachers should be developed for an effective implementation of a life skills programme.
- Life skills education facilitates the learning of the life skills that are learnt through a social learning process of observation, practice and reinforcement. Moreover life skills are enhanced effectively in a participatory learning class atmosphere where students can express their feelings and opinions freely. However in most schools in India, teachers are used to the traditional method of teaching and students are expected to accept whatever the teachers say without questioning. This is a perennial problem. Therefore teachers need to be capable of facilitating human –center lessons, thus making learning an enjoyable,
 - They need to believe that on the bases of personal experience, these skills they see as of prime importance and that society considers them essential.
 - The values and related experience acts as the major influence in developing life skills, particularly communication and interpersonal skills.
 - Teachers should be able to describe wide applications of problem solving and critical thinking skills ranging across making informed decisions about what to do in this leisure time, formulating possible outcomes of interpersonal actions or understanding power structures in students and wards respectively.
 - Incorporate age-appropriate activities that promote health and diversity.
 - Continue to promote active parent participation in letter and spirit.
 - Educate parents about the goals and life skills concerning the children.
 - Develop evaluation strategies that target the children to provide additional validation program beyond parent input.
 - Comparative study of life skills is recommended among the secondary school students of ICSE, CBSE and Govt. Schools of Bangalore.
 - Study on effect of life skills on the future success, adaptability and over all development of the students is also recommended.

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