

Significance of Life Skills for Education

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Abstract

Life Skills treats us to live life from a positive dimension of view .Only living a life is not important but how to lead a life positively that is necessary. Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable humans to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of life. This concept is also termed as psychosocial competency It allows the person to release fears, anger, and stress & achieve a qualitative life. Any skill that is useful in your life can be considered a life skill.

. Education is important, but education to support and live life better is more important. It has been felt that life skills education bridges the gap between basic functioning and capabilities. It strengthens the ability of an individual to meet the needs and demands of the present society and helps in dealing with the above issues in a manner to get a desired positive life. The present paper focuses on the importance of life skills education and the benefits of imparting life skill education .

Keywords: Life Skills Education; Challenges in Covid-19 pandemic.

I. INTRODUCTION

Certain skills may be more or less relevant to us depending on our life circumstances, our culture, beliefs, age, geographic location, etc. However, in 1999, the World Health Organization identified six key areas of life skills:

- **Communication and interpersonal skills.** This broadly describes the skills needed to get on and work with other people, and particularly to transfer and receive messages either in writing or verbally.
- **Decision-making and problem-solving.** This describes the skills required to understand problems, find solutions to them, alone or with others, and then take action to address them.
- **Creative thinking and critical thinking.** This describes the ability to think in different and unusual ways about problems, and find new solutions, or generate new ideas, coupled with the ability to assess information carefully and understand its relevance.
- **Self-awareness and empathy,** which are two key parts of **emotional intelligence.** They describe understanding yourself and being able to feel for other people as if their experiences were happening to you.
- **Assertiveness and equanimity, or self-control.** These describe the skills needed to stand up for yourself and other people, and remain calm even in the face of considerable provocation.
- **Resilience and ability to cope with problems,** which describes the ability to recover from setbacks, and treat them as opportunities to learn, or simply experiences.

In the wake of social distancing owing to the COVID-19 virus there are multiple short-term and long-term effects that can affect children, young adults and their families. With schools, colleges and universities shut down there are millions of children and teenagers at home. Malls, gardens, playgrounds, entertainment zones, restaurants, clubs and sports facilities are denied to our children. Entertainments and outings have virtually stopped and there is a sense of insecurity, anxiety and an eerie silence that has crept into most of our households and societies.

However, these last few days have also been quite wonderful for our young children and their families. For most fathers who don't get to see their children in the mornings or come back late from work at night and only get to see or spend quality time with them on weekends, this has been a blessing in disguise.

Amid the COVID-19 scare, some may be going through anxiety and fears with regards to this pandemic and not knowing how and who it would affect. Some children are concern and fear about

something happening to their parents or grandparents. They are scared if their loved ones taken away to be quarantined. Some are experiencing complete boredom, frustration, irritability, mood swings, acting out behavior or screen time addiction. A few children who've been exposed to a lot of news and online social media coverage of this pandemic, or have had a family member or loved one infected by this virus, may go through Acute Stress Disorder (ASD).

Covid-19 *is a time of great confusion and despair.* Although the immediate future is still full of uncertainty, we can reflect on what we have learned to guide us moving forward. COVID-19 has brought life's vulnerabilities to the forefront and reminded us that we must protect ourselves and our loved ones not only from illness but also from the emotions, stress, pressures, and expectations we put on ourselves. To do so requires introspection to prioritize our life and work. We also cannot go through this alone. Our efforts must be in conjunction with transparent communication networks with our families, colleagues, and leadership to help shape our decisions. Similar to our acquired immune response, we can use our learned adaptations moving forward to more effectively prioritize our research strategies and improve critical operations required to protect people and our academic missions when we face future unprecedented challenges.

As the COVID-19 pandemic sweeps the world, people are of course dealing with greater concerns, such as the health of family, friends, or themselves. As a first step, don't neglect your physical and mental health. Meditate in your living room. Practice yoga. We must take healthy food and drink kada, the ultimate medicinal drink to boost our immunity. Whatever it is that works for you, do what it takes to care for your body and mind. Let's face it. If you're stuck at home, you're probably not going to become an expert on how to run a mass spectrometer. But you can enhance your computer skills. You could also read a book about a new topic or circle back to that online course that you never finished. Be nice to your fellow humans.

In this pandemic situation, we all are learning how to keep our mind and body healthy. Previously people did not know about the use of handwash, sanitizer and mask but in this pandemic situation these are a part and parcel of our lives now people feel the importance of social distancing and the depth of lock down and shut down.

This new challenge requires immediate and an effective response from a socially responsible system of education. Education, now a days is hence, very important, but the kind of education, to support and live life better is more important. Thus, the cardinal focus of Education, therefore, needs an extraordinary emphasis on developing such skills in students, as they are the important building blocks for a dynamic citizen, who can cope up with future challenges, and survive. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) India has recognized this fact that it is necessary to develop scholastic as well as co-scholastic areas, and hence, has made life skill education as a compulsory element in its curriculum. It has been felt, that life skills education bridges the gap between basic functioning and capabilities.

LIFE SKILL EDUCATION

According to UNICEF, Life Skills are a behavior change or behavior development approach designed to address balance of three areas:

- Knowledge
- Attitude
- Skills.

The world bodies such as UNICEF, UNESCO, and WHO list the ten core Life Skills as:

1. Self-awareness
2. Critical thinking
3. Creative thinking
4. Decision making
5. Problem Solving
6. Effective communication
7. Interpersonal relationship
8. Empathy
9. Coping with stress
10. Coping with emotion

Life skills training/ education takes into account psychosocial competencies and interpersonal skills that help students to take right decisions, solve problems, to face any type of disaster like Covid-19, , communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others, and cope with managing their lives in a healthy and productive manner. (WHO) defines Life skills as the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life .

Life skill has been classified into three broad categories:

- Thinking skills: Thinking skills are the skill that enhances the logical faculty of the brain using an analytical ability, thinking creatively and critically, and developing problem-solving skills and improving decision-making abilities.
- Social skills: Social skills include interpersonal skills, communication skills, leadership skills, management skills, advocacy skills, co-operation and team building skills, etc.
- Emotional skills: Emotional skills, involves, knowing and being comfortable with oneself. Thus, self-management, including managing/coping with feelings, emotions, stress and resisting peer and family pressure.

Imparting 'Life Skills Education' in Classroom

Imparting Life Skills Education in classroom is now demand of the time and it has been researched thoroughly. Different activities that can be used to enhance Life Skills in Students are as follows:

Classroom Discussions: An activity, providing opportunities for students to learn and practice turning to one another in solving problems. Enables students to deepen their understanding of the topic and personalize their connection to it. Develops skills, in listening, assertiveness, and empathy. Now when in this pandemic situation students are learning how to attend virtual classes and mentors are also guiding them to face this critical situation effectively.

Brainstorming: It allows students to generate ideas quickly and spontaneously. Helps students use their imagination and think out of the box. Good discussion starter because the class can creatively generate ideas. It is essential to evaluate the pros and cons of each idea or rank ideas according to certain criteria.

Role Plays: Along with being a fun activity and involves whole class, to be active and participative, it also provides an excellent strategy for practicing skills; experiencing how one might handle a potential situation in real life; increasing empathy for others and their point of view; and increasing insight into own feelings. It promotes fun, active learning, and rich discussion as participants work hard to prove their points or earn points. They require the combined use of knowledge, attitudes, and skills and allow students to test out assumptions and abilities in a relatively safe environment.

Analysis of Situation and Case Studies: It gives a chance, to analyze, explore, challenges, dilemmas and safely test solutions for; providing opportunities for working together in groups, sharing idea, new learnings and gives insight and promotes sometimes to see things differently. Case studies are like powerful catalysts for thought and discussion. Engaging in this thinking process; students improve their own, critical thinking, decision-making skills. It also gives chance to confront with risks or any challenges and find ways to cope with it. Case studies in this Covid-19 critical situation is a bright example of this.

'Story-Telling' lends itself to draw analogies or make comparisons, help discover healthy solutions. It also enhances attention, concentration, listening skills and develops patience and endurance.

Debates: Provides opportunity to address a particular issue in depth and creativity.: students can debate, for instance, whether sanitization and using masks use in public places is mandatory or not. It allows students to defend a position that may mean a lot to them. It offers a chance to practice higher thinking skills.

II. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

A practical implementation of life skill education is the need of of the present hour when the whole world is trying to survive with this Covid-19 pandemic situation. Imparting life skills education to the students, can be helpful in motivating, providing practical, cognitive, emotional, social and self-management skills for life adjustments.

Yadav P, Iqbal N(2009) showed positive results of imparting life skills education to students and bringing the change in adolescent' s attitude, thought and behavior by providing supportive environment to them.

According to Errecart et al., (1991) and Caplan et al., (1992) life skills education proves to be an effective approach in primary prevention education, as its more interactive, uses problem solving approach and is activities based.

Future Implications

Although considerable progress has been made in the past decade, and in the present study too, to reflect, life skills education, as an effective mode of education, which does enhances social, emotional and thinking skills, and helps the 21st- century youngsters to achieve their goals, by strengthening their abilities to meet the needs and demands of the present society and be successful in life but still further research is needed from future researchers, academicians and professionals in the related field to face challenges like Covid-19 pandemic situation when the whole world is struggling for survival.

This new challenge requires immediate and an effective response from a socially responsible system of education.

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