



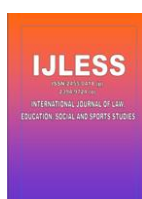
Life Skill Education: Preparing Young Minds for the Digital World

Geetha C.¹ and Deepu R.²

¹Professor, Department of Education, Kuvempu University, Jnanasahyadri, Shankaraghatta, Shivamogga – 577451, India. Email: geetha.edu@gmail.com

²Research Scholar, Department of Education, Kuvempu University, Jnanasahyadri, Shankaraghatta, Shivamogga – 577451, India. Email: deepukreis@gmail.com

DOI: [10.33329/ijless.12.S2.398](https://doi.org/10.33329/ijless.12.S2.398)



Abstract

Traditional academic knowledge alone is no longer enough to prepare kids for the opportunities and difficulties they will face in a world that is becoming more digitally connected and networked. Critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, flexibility, and emotional intelligence are all included in life skills education, which has become an essential part of holistic education. This abstract investigates how teaching students life skills might help them meet the demands of the digital world. It emphasizes the value of digital literacy, online safety, moral online conduct, and the capacity to assess information critically in a technologically advanced setting. Students can develop into responsible, resilient digital citizens in addition to being digitally savvy by incorporating these qualities into educational institutions.

INTRODUCTION:

The phrase "life skills" has been widely used in social policy and health education. Although the World Health Organization's definition is broadly acknowledged, there isn't a single, well-agreed-upon definition for it. Various organizations in the field have defined life skills in a variety of ways. After examining a significant number of definitions of life skills, Dupuy and Halvorsen (2016) noted that "there are as many definitions of life skills as there are global education actors and thought leaders." Some international organizations emphasized that education should not only help people become more academically competent but also give them what are commonly called "life-skills," "non-cognitive skills," "character skills," and/or "socio-emotional skills."

Life skill education is now more important than ever in today's technologically advanced, fast-paced society, especially when it comes to preparing pupils for the digital age. Giving young people the tools, they need to succeed in, contribute to, and navigate a digital world is essential for their personal and professional growth as the boundaries between online and offline life continue to disappear.

With technology permeating every part of life in the twenty-first century, teaching pupils life skills is essential to preparing them for both academic and practical challenges in a digital society. The

following are the main justifications for the significance of life skills education in preparing pupils for the digital age:

Life Skill Education and Digital Literacy

Life skill education refers to the cultivation of abilities that help individuals handle the demands and challenges of everyday life. These include:

- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Effective communication and collaboration
- Self-awareness and emotional intelligence
- Decision-making and responsibility
- Digital literacy and online safety

In the digital context, life skill education expands to encompass skills like media literacy, cyber security awareness, digital communication etiquette, and adaptability to emerging technologies.

Why It Matters in the Digital Age?

1. Handling Information Overwhelm

- Students need to develop the ability to assess the reliability of information found online.
- Students who receive media literacy instruction are better able to discern between fact and fiction.

2. Proficiency in Digital Communication

- In today's workplace, being able to communicate effectively online – whether through social media, video calls, or email – is essential.
- Students who comprehend internet etiquette are better able to remain professional.

3. Cybersecurity and Privacy Awareness

- It is important to educate students about the consequences of digital footprints and how to safeguard their data.
- This entails employing secure passwords and identifying phishing frauds.

4. Flexibility in the Face of Technological Development

- Technology is changing quickly. Pupils must be adaptable and eager to pick up new digital skills and platforms.
- Education in life skills promotes an attitude of lifelong learning.

5. The concept of digital citizenship

- Stresses the use of technology in an ethical and responsible manner.
- Consists of avoiding cyberbullying, respecting others online, and being aware of one's digital rights.

Importance of life skill education in the digital world

With technology permeating every part of life in the twenty-first century, teaching pupils life skills is essential to preparing them for both academic and practical challenges in a digital society. The following are the main justifications for the significance of life skills education in preparing pupils for the digital age:

1. Encourages the use of digital literacy

Students who receive life skills instruction learn how to use digital tools efficiently, find trustworthy sources of information, and comprehend how to use technology in an ethical manner. Success in both academic and professional contexts is based on this literacy.

2. Develops Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking Skills

There is a lot of contradictory or deceptive information in the internet age. Students that receive life skills instruction are better able to analyse information critically, work through issues quickly, and make wise choices in challenging digital situations.

3. Promotes Cooperation and Communication

A lot of communication in the modern world takes place online. Students that receive life skills training are better equipped to communicate effectively online, cooperate with others electronically, and adhere to digital communication standards.

4. Instructs students in digital responsibility and cyber safety

Students acquire the skills necessary to safeguard their private data, identify online dangers, and engage in responsible digital citizenship. This lowers the possibility of identity theft, cyberbullying, and improper use of online platforms.

5. Encourages Lifelong Learning and Adaptability

Technology is always changing. Education in life skills promotes flexibility, a growth mentality, and the ongoing education required to stay up to date with emerging technologies.

6. Promotes Mental Health and Emotional Intelligence

Emotional equilibrium is essential for navigating the digital world. By fostering self-awareness, empathy, and stress management, life skills education assists students in preserving their mental health in the face of online stress.

7. Gets Ready for Future Employment

Beyond academic knowledge, the workforce of the future needs abilities like time management, ethical judgement, and digital collaboration. Education in life skills closes this gap and increases students' employability.

Challenges of life skill education: preparing students for the digital world

Although teaching life skills is crucial for preparing children for the digital age, there are a number of major obstacles in the way of its implementation. How well educational institutions can train students to become capable, responsible digital citizens is impacted by these issues.

1. Inconsistent standards and curriculum

A standardised framework for teaching life skills is lacking in many educational institutions, particularly when it comes to digital literacy. As a result, instruction, methods, and progress evaluation become inconsistent.

2. Inadequate Training for Teachers

Teachers frequently lack the necessary expertise to impart life skills, especially those pertaining to technology, like media literacy, cybersecurity, and digital ethics. Teachers find it difficult to successfully include these subjects into their classes if they are not adequately prepared.

3. Poor Access and Infrastructure

Schools in many areas lack the technology tools that kids need to practise and hone their digital abilities. Unequal access to gadgets and the internet, known as the "digital divide," continues to be a significant obstacle, especially in poor or remote schools.

4. Overburdened Courses

The academic subjects that are taught in current curricula frequently leave little opportunity for teaching life skills. Life skills may therefore be viewed as optional or secondary rather than crucial.

5. Social and Cultural Opposition

Discussions regarding online conduct, digital safety, and emotional intelligence may encounter opposition in some communities because of cultural norms or a lack of understanding of the significance of these abilities.

6. Absence of Instruments for Assessment

Assessing the growth of life skills, like digital ethics, teamwork, and critical thinking, is more difficult than evaluating academic knowledge. It is challenging to monitor progress and defend the inclusion of life skills in formal education when there are no reliable assessment instruments available.

Conclusion

Teaching pupils life skills is now essential to preparing them for the digital age, not an optional extra. It gives them the skills they need to conduct appropriately online, handle digital obstacles sensibly, and use technology for constructive, constructive ends. Incorporating life skills into educational institutions as we advance into the digital age guarantees that students are not just tech-savvy but also morally upright, resilient, and mindful digital citizens.

References

- [1]. Achumi, M. & Joseph, S. (2022). An Interface between NEP 2020 and Early Childhood Care and Education. *Global Journal of Applied Engineering in Computer Science and Mathematics (GJAECSMA)*-Special Edition. Life Skills. Retrieved from www.unodc.org/pdf/youthnet/action/message/escap_peers_07.pdf
- [2]. Aftanas, L. I., Golocheikine, S. A. (2002). Non-linear dynamic complexity of the human EEG during meditation. *Neuroscience letters*, 330 (2), 143-146. 3.
- [3]. Amutha, S., & Ramganes, E. (2013). Efficiency of teacher educators through life skill building. *International Journal of Management and Development Studies*, 2(3), 13-18.
- [4]. Ferreira-Vorkapic, C., Feitoza, J. M., Marchioro, M., Simões, J., Kozasa, E., Telles, S. (2015). Are there benefits from teaching yoga at schools? A systematic review of randomized control trials of yoga-based interventions. *Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, 2015. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2015/345835>
- [5]. Hardikar, G., Nair, A. R., & Ranjan, M. S. (2020) National Education Policy 2020 and Inclusion of Life Skills Education in Curricula: The Way Forward. *International Journal of Life Skills Education*, 6, 75-86.
- [6]. Nasheeda, A., Abdullah, H. B., Krauss, S. E., & Ahmed, N. B. (2019). A narrative systematic review of life skills education: effectiveness, research gaps and priorities. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 24(3), 362-379.
- [7]. Patricia K. Kuhl, Soo-Siang Lim, Sonia Guerriero and Dirk van Damme.,(2019), towards a science of learning for 21st century education, https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2019/04/developing-minds-in-the-digital-age_bbefade8/562a8659-en.pdf

- [8]. Prajapati, R., Sharma, B., & Sharma, D. (2017). Significance of life skills education. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research (CIER)*, 10(1), 1-6.
- [9]. Razia, B. (2016). Life Skill Education: A Missing Component in Teacher Education Programmes in India. *National Curriculum Framework for School Education*. Retrieved from https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NCF-School-Education-PreDraft.pdf
- [10]. Rooth, E. (2000). *Introduction to life skills: Hands-on approaches to life skills education*. Cape Town. Afrika.
- [11]. Saravanakumar, A. R. (2020). Life skill education for creative and productive citizens. *Journal of Critical Reviews*, 7(9), 554-558.
- [12]. Simona, G. (2015). Teacher training for embedding life skills into vocational teaching. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 180, 814-819.
- [13]. Singh, M. (2003). *Understanding Life Skills*. Gender and Education for All: The Leap to Equality, UNESCO. WHO. (1999). *Partners in life skills education*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization, Department of Mental Health.
- [14]. Vranda, M. N., & Rao, M. C. (2011). Life skills education for young adolescents-Indian experience. *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology*, 37(9), 9-15.