



Life Skill and Well Being of Children and Youth in the Digital World

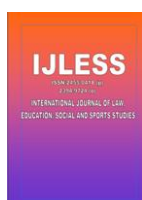
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Abstract

Life Skills Education (LSE) is one of the important component for the holistic development of children and youth, especially for adjust with changing environment. Of digital world. Life skills education is defined as psychological competencies for improve the abilities to cope with emerging challenges in effective manner. Indian government undertaken different programs and policies related to life skills education in formal education and community-based programs to empower the children's and youth. The article consisting the significance of life skills in present era defined by WHO and UNICEF with the goal of life skill education like, Improvement of critical and creative thinking, better communication, and expression of emotional and promoting societal adjustment.

Indian government has taken initiatives including National education polices and Curriculum framework, some of the programs such as Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK), and Skill India Mission and others. The main intention of on the program is to improve the life skills like problem solving, better division making, financial awareness. Some of the programs like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao and Poshan Abhiyan to enhance the gender equality and reduce gender difference and improvement of health the well being, development of responsible citizen

Keywords: Life Skills Education, Government Policies, National Education Policy 2020, Holistic Development, Skill India Mission, Adolescent Well-being.

Introduction

Life skills are the basic essentials skill required for each and every member of the society to lead a better life and to enhance their skills strategies to become an ideal personality and role model for society. Like skills are a set of psychological, social and interpersonal competencies that are required for the person

to possess the good personality, enhanced behavior to deal with the day to day challenges in everyday life.

Life Skills Education is a structured program that improve the abilities like problem-solving abilities, creativity and critical thinking, decision-making, interpersonal skills, both verbal and non-verbal communication, management of stress and emotions.

The government of India has introduced different programs and policies to inculcating the life skills education in school and university curriculum vocational training, and community-based initiatives. This article provides an overview of major government policies and programs in promotion of life skills education in India.

Definition of Life Skills and Life Skills Education:

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines them as "abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life."

UNICEF describes life skills as a behavior change or development approach designed to balance knowledge, attitude, and skills. These typically encompass skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, communication, interpersonal skills, and self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions, and coping with stress.

Life skills education (LSE) refers to the educating of psycho-social based competencies that enable individuals to:

- Better decision making (critical thinking).
- Problem solving ability.
- Effective Communicate clearly (interpersonal skills).
- Emotional management (resilience, stress management).
- Adore to societal challenges (financial literacy, digital literacy).

Life Skill Education refers to a specified program that educate the individuals to adopt the skills which is needed to adaptive and positive behavior, to enable them for deal with day to day challenges effectively and calmly.

Like skill education improve the competencies like good decision making capabilities, problem-solving ability, critical and creative thinking ability, effective communication, strong relationship among them self and community, empathize and appreciating others, to manage healthy and productive life style.

Some of the **core life skill** was developed and suggested by the **World Health Organization (WHO)** include:

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

Goals of Life Skill Education

Life Skills Education is a main aim is to holistic education by focuses on improving psychosocial competencies to deal with day to day challenges. Some of the goals are:

- To improve the essential psycho-social skills required for personal and social development.
- To improve the capacity for solving the day to day life challenges and problems.
- To promote mental health, resilience, and a balanced personality.
- To reduce risk like substance abuse, violence, and harmful practices.
- To enhanced productivity and decision making capabilities

Objectives of Life Skill Education

Life Skills Education main aim is remove the negative complexities and enhance the confidence, empathy and improved academic output

- 1) To enhance critical and creative thinking capabilities.
- 2) To promote effective communication and interpersonal relationships.
- 3) To improve self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions, and coping with stress.
- 4) To encourage better decision-making and problem-solving ability.
- 5) To manage healthy and productive life style.
- 6) To prepare students for all types of challenges (academic, personal, and professional)
- 7) To make learners to accept social and environmental changes positively.

Importance of Life Skill Education

Life skills education is enhance the holistic development and moving towards traditional knowledge to all round sustainable development.

- 1) Helps in development of good personality.
- 2) Improve the ability to coping with real-life challenges.
- 3) Improved academic performance and career decision and opportunities.
- 4) Make a responsible citizenship with societal responsibility.
- 5) Reduces problems of school dropout ratio, drug addiction percentage, violence, and mental health problems.
- 6) Promotes awareness and guidance to remove gender based issues.
- 7) Strong relationship among them self and community, empathize and appreciating others
- 8) Supports in development of healthy habits and positive attitudes.
- 9) Reduction of substance abuse, avoidance of gender-based violence, and mental health problems.

Government policies and programs:

The Indian Government has launched several programs to promote Life Skill Education among children, adolescents, and youth to prepare them for day to day life challenges, improvement of employability, and promote mental health and wellbeing.

Government initiatives multiple programs under different disciplines such as education, health, youth affairs, and skill development to work with cope and support to integrate the Like skills with sustainable development. These initiatives focus on equipping learners with essential psychosocial, emotional, and interpersonal skills needed for personal and professional growth.

Objectives of Government Interventions:

Government interventions in life skills education primarily to:

- Equip individual with essential psycho-social skills to make fair decisions for better health and well-being.
- Address removal and avoidance of harmful social practices such as child marriage, gender inequality and dowry by empowering informed and skilled young.
- Enhance employability by developing soft skills, digital literacy, and financial literacy alongside vocational training and entrepreneurship.

Integrate life skills across the curriculum, moving away from traditional methods to experiential and activity-based pedagogies.

Improve the capacity of teachers and trainers to impart life skills in formal education system.

Ensure inclusive education to address the diverse needs of all students.

Integrate Life skill education with formal education.

Bringing the correlation with academic learning with real-life events.

Encourage gender equity, health awareness, and responsibility citizens (Beti Bachao Beti Padhao).

Specific Life Skills

The government giving importance to some of the specific life skills to make them to adopt the school curriculum. Such as

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| • Critical thinking | • Coping skills |
| • Problem-solving | • Resilience |
| • Decision-making | • Collaboration |
| • Communication skills (effective communication) | • Teamwork |
| • Interpersonal relationships | • Leadership |
| • Self-awareness | • Financial literacy |
| • Empathy | • Digital literacy |
| • Emotion management | • Health and well-being |
| • Stress management | • Refusal skills (e.g., related to substance abuse, risky behavior) |

National Policies Promoting Life Skills Education

Some of the government initiatives taken for enhancing the life skill in formal education system

National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

National Education Policy 2020 emphasizes the importance of life skills as part of holistic education across all the level of education. It play a strong emphasis on the acquisition of 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, problem-solving, decision-making, digital literacy, and empathy.

Main aim is to improve the personal well-being and professional success. The policy aims to remove the rote learning and foster a comprehensive development of students.

It make the part of curriculum rather than taking as an optional subject in the education system. It involves multidisciplinary learning, explore various subjects, arts, sports, and vocational skills through experiential and activity-based learning methods, including interactive classroom activities, projects, and group discussions.

Integration in School Curriculum: It advocates with of critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills in school education.

Vocational Education: providing vocational training in addition to essential life skills like financial literacy, digital literacy, and entrepreneurship from 6 standard on words.

Experiential Learning: it promotes hands-on learning, social-emotional learning to develop all round individuals.

Holistic development: inclusion life skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and emotional intelligence with general school subjects. Co-scholastic activities such as arts, sports, and storytelling are encouraged.

National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): It focuses on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) with emphasis on holistic development, drawing inspiration from the "Panchakosha Vikas" model (physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual growth).It encourages the children to understand and manage their emotions and develop the concept of working well with others, through stories and activities to learn empathy and teamwork.

Experiential and Critical Pedagogy: The NCF 2023 advocated pedagogical from general to experiential and activity-based learning. It removes rote methods and focuses on learning by doing practical activities like field trips, projects, and simulations. It encourages critical thinking, inquiry-based learning and problem-solving.

Inclusive Education: it gives more importance for inclusive learning situations in classroom environment Life skills training for children with disabilities.

Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

Life Skills for Adolescents:Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (Integrated Scheme for School Education) Emphasize on inclusion of life skills education as part of the curriculum for adolescents. It focuses on gender sensitivity, health, hygiene, and digital literacy and provides training for teachers in integration of life skills effectively.

Co-Curricular Activities: it Promotes sports, arts, and leadership programs to build confidence and teamwork and development of leadership.

Gender Inclusion Fund: under this scheme the government provides funding for the school to support and organize the life skills programs for girls.

ICT-Based Learning: providing Digital tools for interactive life skills training organized by government and the agencies.

Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK)

Peer Education (Saathiya Initiative): spreading awareness about gender sensitivity, reproductive health, hygiene, health, and life skills through trained Peer educators in schools and communities. Through role-play and games.

Adolescent Health and Life Skill: RKSK links life skills with adolescent health outcomes nutrition, mental health, substance abuse, and sexual reproductive well-being prevention towards injuries.

Modules are age-appropriate and culturally sensitive. Life skills such as decision-making, critical thinking, communication, and coping mechanisms are part of RKSK's strategy.

Weekly Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation (WIFS): organizing events to create awareness above health. Combines health education with nutrition awareness in school and public places.

Adolescent-Friendly Health Clinics (AFHCs): establishing the clinics and Provide counseling on stress management, substance abuse, and career guidance among adolescents and students.

Skill India Mission (PMKVY & NSDC)

Soft Skills and Vocational Training: The Skill India Mission emphasizes equipping the youth with employable skills. It is not just vocational training in specific activity including a strong focus on soft skills such as effective communication, ethics, teamwork, time management, professionalism, and customer service needed in the workplace.

Digital and Financial Literacy: fulfilling the demands of the modern economy, Skill India Mission also giving importance to digital literacy and financial literacy. It is helpful for participating meaningfully in economic activities.

Soft Skills Training: organizing sessions for improving Communication, teamwork, and problem-solving are integrated into skill development courses.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS): Provides life skills training for rural and marginalized communities.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)

Empowerment Life Skills for Girls: it focuses on addressing the life skills for the learner without gender discrimination through the Child Sex Ratio and promoting the education of the girl child. It ensures the survival, protection, and education for girl children and enhances the confidence, decision-making resilience. It also includes vocational training and awareness on topics like menstrual hygiene management, contributing to their overall empowerment.

Self-Defense Training: providing awareness and orientation on self defense mechanisms. Martial arts programs are organized in schools.

Financial Independence: creating Awareness on savings and scholarships through implementing many initiatives like free books, uniform, free admission for girl child to promote literacy rate and admission of girl child and empowering the women.

Poshan Abhiyan (Nutrition Mission)

Nutrition and Hygiene Education: Poshan Abhiyan, or the National Nutrition Mission, aims to improve nutritional outcomes among children, adolescents, pregnant women, and lactating mothers. It provides guidance to maintain proper nutrition, hygiene practices, and health-seeking behaviors.

Integrates life skills with health education: creating awareness about Hygiene and Sanitation like Hand washing, menstrual hygiene management. Balanced Diet Awareness among the learner to take nutrition-related decision-making. In relation to selfcare and health management.

Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL)

Innovation and Problem-Solving Skills: under this lab develops critical and creative thinking, STEM based innovation self-paced tools among the learner. It focuses on problem-solving, design thinking and collaborative learning

Creativity and Innovation: it encourages entrepreneurial thinking, problem-solving, sustainability and Annual innovation challenge for students.

National Youth Policy (NYP) 2021

It Encourages life skills development for youth empowerment. Its main focus on the areas include leadership, entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and mental health.

Vocational Education in Schools (under CBSE & State Boards)

Skill-based course such as tailoring, craft mating, fashion designing, business or work place internship, retail, healthcare, IT and many more vocational educations providing with life skills components. The ultimate aims of this scheme is to bridge the gap between education and employment.

NIPUN Bharat Mission (Foundational Literacy and Numeracy)

The program consists of awareness and adoption of many life skills in relation with their academic subject by the primary and secondary school children's. It focuses on communication, hygiene, and social behavior among the learners

Conclusion

Life skills education plays a vital role in nurturing responsible, capable, and empowered citizens. Government policies and programs provides a strong foundation for implementing of life skills education. The main intention of this initiatives is to equip the life skill in every individuals of the society for personal growth and societal well-being. Government policies in India, specially NEP 2020 and NCF 2023, have strong commitment to inculcate the life skills education for holistic development. Some of the Major programs such as Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, RKSK, and Skill India Mission, along with special initiatives like BBBP, Poshan Abhiyan, and ATAL Tinkering Labs, and others programs and policies taking efforts to achieve the goals of holistic development of the students in academic as well as in life skills education.

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