



Life skills and mental health

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Abstract

Mental health is a very important component for well being. It influencing how individuals think, feel and act in their daily life. Life skill is a psychosocial component. These components are emotional thinking, stress management, communication, decision making and positive behaviour. These are all components are placing a very vital role in maintaining good mental health. This paper explores the interconnection between life skills and mental health. It highlights how skills like self awareness, decision making, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills can reduce anxiety and improve overall psychological well being. This abstract also presents the recommendation for integration life skills education into School curricular, teacher training and communication interventions. Ultimately promoting life skills is a proactive approach to safe gardening mental health and enhancing quality of life.

Key words: Life skills, Mental health, emotional regulation, anxiety, well being, interpersonal skills.

Introduction

Life skills and mental health are two interconnected pillars essential for overall wellbeing and success in life. Mental health is merely the absence of illness but a state of well being in which individuals realise their potential, cope with the stresses of life, work productively, and contribute to their community (WHO,2001).

Life skills refer to the abilities and behaviors that help individuals effectively handle the challenges of everyday life. These challenges include communication, decision-making, emotional regulation, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills... In this context, life skills play a vital role.

Defined by the WHO as "abilities for adoptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Mental health is a state of emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It influences how individuals think, feel, and act, and how they

handle stress, relate to others, and make decisions. Good mental health is not merely the absence of mental illness but also the presence of positive characteristics like resilience, self-esteem, and the ability to manage emotions.

Together, life skills and mental health form strong foundation for a balanced life. Developing good life skills contributes to better mental health by equipping individuals with the tools to cope with stress, overcome adversity, and maintain healthy relationships. Promoting both aspects from an early age is crucial for building confident, capable, and mentally resilient individuals.

Literature Review

WHO Framework: The WHO advocates ten core life skills, including problem solving, decision making, creative thinking, critical thinking, self awareness, empathy, interpersonal skills, communication, coping with stress, and coping with emotions. These form the foundation of emUNICEF and Life Skills Development (Multiple Countries)

Empirical studies

- UNICEF has supported life skills programs in countries like India, Kenya, and South Africa. These programs integrate life skills into school curricula. Life skills education contributed to increased self-confidence, better peer relationships, and improved mental health outcomes.
- Study on College Students (Singh & Kaur, 2017): A study among Indian college students found that those with higher life skills had better mental health and lower perceived stress. Strong communication and coping skills were directly correlated with lower depression and anxiety.
- CBSE AND NCERT Initiatives: Indian education policy has increasingly emphasized life skills education through adolescence education programmes, social emotional learning and value based curriculum.
- Indian context: India faces a mental health crisis due to stigma ,lack of access and inadequate awareness. life skills programs in schools and community centres can act as low cost, high impact preventive measures.

Objectives of the presentation

- To Highlight the Importance of Life Skills in Promoting Mental Health • To explore the relationship between life skills and mental health •
- Two examine how life skills training enhance emotional and psychological • well being
- To Analyze Challenges and Gaps in Current Life Skills Education Programs •
- To Encourage Policy and Practice Recommendations •

Impact of life skills on Mental health

- Enhances Emotional Regulation: Life skills help individuals recognize and manage their emotions, reducing the risk of anxiety, and depression.
- Improves Interpersonal Relationships: Effective communication and empathy improve relationships, leading to stronger social support networks – an important buffer against mental health issues.
- Reduces Risky Behaviors: Life skills training has been linked to lower rates of substance abuse, self-harm, and aggressive behavior, particularly in adolescents.
- Boosts Self-Esteem and Confidence: Skills like goal-setting and decision-making increase a sense of personal control and competence, which positively impacts mental well-being.
- Promotes Positive Thinking and Problem-Solving: People with strong life skills are more likely to approach challenges proactively and think constructively, reducing feelings of helplessness or hopelessness.

Barriers in implementation.

- Lack of Awareness and Understanding.
- Cultural and Social Barriers
- Limited Policy Support and Funding
- Lack of trained facilitators.
- Academic overload reducing time for holistic learning.
- Technological and Accessibility Barriers
- Poor Monitoring and Evaluation

Educational Implications

- Improved Academic Performance: Students with strong mental health and emotional regulation skills are better able to concentrate, manage stress, and perform academically.
- Safe and Supportive Learning Environments: Promoting life skills by a positive school climate, reducing stress, discrimination, and violence.
- Increased Student Engagement and Attendance: When students feel emotionally supported and mentally prepared, they are more likely to attend school and participate actively.
- Teacher Training and Support: Educators must be equipped with knowledge and strategies to teach life skills and address students' mental health needs.

Conclusion

Mental health and life skills both place a very important role among each individual. Schools, communities, and policy makers must work together to make life skill education a nationwide movement for mental well-being.

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