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Research Paper

Life skills: need and importance in academics

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ABSTRACT

Background: The contemporary world is happening to go through big economic and socio-cultural movement, and in turn people get new requirements, like having to adjust well to changing environments. Life skills are basically the abilities that help individuals act in a proper way when something particular shows up, so wellbeing and happiness can actually grow. Different from academic skills, life skills lean toward the capacity to understand, manage, and use emotions in a constructive manner. This tends to help create a stress-free and rather harmonious life. At the same time, these skills help nurture self-acceptance, contentment, and positive connections with other people, while they also strengthen rational choice making and problem resolution abilities, even when the situation is not simple.
Objective: This paper wants to look at what life skills are, and to separate them from academic skills. It also tries to show their role in regulating emotions, supporting decision-making, communication, and problem-solving, especially under the pressure of continuing socio-economic and cultural change.
Method: A conceptual and analytical approach was used, and it relied on the existing ways life skills frameworks are described. The discussion is centered on figuring out the main parts of life skills such as emotional management, communication, decision-making, and critical plus creative thinking. Then it clarifies how these are not just the same as academic competencies, or only book-related abilities.
Result: The analysis suggests that life skills have a core role in letting people manage emotions effectively, speak clearly, and decide in time, in a rational manner. These skills also build a kind of problem-solving orientation because they blend critical thinking with creative thinking. Moreover, life skills support inner calm, balance, and a healthier self-respect, and they go together with better interpersonal relationships. So overall, they stand apart in a meaningful way from academic knowledge and skills.
Conclusion: Life skills are,essential for personal wellbeing especially in times of quick economic and socio-cultural shift. When people build emotional regulation, improved communication, better decision-making, and stronger problem solving, they are able to move toward more balanced, calm, and meaningful lives. Adding life skills education alongside academic

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learning might help learners prepare for present day societal difficulties more effectively, or at least with better readiness.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The term "life skill" is defined as psychosocial abilities that enables an individual so that he can effectively deal various difficulties/challenges in life. A child needs lot of skills beyond the fixed set of traditional skills which involve learning, reading, writing skills etc. Therefore, to practically face various situations that pertain to the challenges in various contours and domains of his life beyond academics, the life skill plays an important role. WHO refers it as a fundamental skill that contributes to the healthy life. It is a broad skill that includes the problem solving, decision making, goal setting, creative thinking, critical thinking, coping with stress and emotions, empathy, self-awareness, self-assertiveness. Life skills are defined as "the abilities for positive behavior that enable and empower to meet the challenges of life". Life skills help in communicating effectively, empathize with others, think objectively and creative the solutions for problems, cope with stress and help in building the positive relationships and be aware of the self. Skills are generally identified as thinking skill which involves the skills related to the thinking, and social skill which helps us to effectively deal with others [1]. The elements of ten core life skills as identified by WHO are: -

1.1. Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is the concrete knowledge about self which involves paying attention to the internal state of the emotions and having an impartial assessment of them. It includes recognizing the strengths, limitations/shortcomings, desires, etc. It plays a pivotal role in helping to recognize in the situations when one is stressed or troubled. It also plays a key role in maintaining the effective communication and the key understanding and empathy with others.

1.2. Empathy

It is another important skill which helps us to understand others, what they are going through in their frame of reference or viewpoint. It reflects the unity and understanding of the emotions with another person. Empathy means mimicking the feelings of another person. There are multiple ways of the expression of the emotions of a person which involves gesture, voice tone, facial expression etc. A person with good life skill understands quickly the pain that another person is going through and responds to the situations appropriately. It is believed that by being an empathetic person increases the chances of learning, collaboration and dealings [2]. It brings harmony, togetherness and resonance and thus helps in tackling the stress and strain.

1.3. Critical Thinking

It is skill that helps to evaluate the information that we have gathered related to some event with an objective and purpose. Doing a thing without thinking about the various pros and cons of it may land us in difficulties. It is important to know what we are doing and having a fair utility/purpose of it and hence critical thinking is very important aspect. It helps us to make decisions, solving the problems, passing the

judgments, and ensures the maximum utilization of the resources.

1.4. Creative Thinking

It involves an ability which defies parochial, naive and limited approach to thinking process. It implies an ability to produce a novel, beneficial and purposeful result/solution to a problem. It is a multifaceted feature which is built on the divergent thinking, expertise, etc. Putting the disconnected/seemingly unrelated things together and crafting a new or something unique is also a creative art [3]. Creative thinking comes from a burning desire to accomplish something that is new and useful. The divergent thinking and lateral thinking can be used to create new ideas and hence the creative thinking.

1.5. Decision -Making

It is an important skill that is utilized before problem solving. The decision making expedites the task and gets the task done successfully in little time. The model of decision making involves some steps which are:

a) Problem finding: It involves locating a problem and having an in-depth study of it.
b) Problem stating: It involves looking at the problem through various perspectives and angles.
c) Option finding: means to look for various possibilities and options which can help us solve the problem.
d) Decision making: After having an exhaustive study, the decision maker arrives at the most viable alternative of all the possible alternatives.

1.6. Problem-Solving

It is a skill that is of paramount importance in life skills. Problems are the situations that are hard to circumvent. No matter whether the problem is small or big, they are to be faced. If we fail to find the solutions to the problems, we don't accomplish our goals, and run into trouble, stress and anxiety. The problems act as impediment and hinder the way to development and prosperity [4]. If our approach to the problems fails us to reach a solution, we are rendered helpless and redundant. Therefore, problem solving is a vital aspect in the overall success.

1.7. Interpersonal Relationship

This skill pertains to maintaining good relations with peers. This skill helps us to keep intact the relations and enables us to do or don't do things in our friendship space. This skill helps in maintaining the long-term relationship with others by giving the respect and care they deserve. There are the places where this skill finds its application which involves workplaces, home, friendship space. Giving a constructive criticism to the people you know, encouraging the people in your circle to do good, handling disagreements, making them feel important paves way for the good relations with each other, and thus bring harmony, glory and success in life.

1.8. Effective Communication

A confident, non-hesitant and clear articulation of thoughts is regarded as an effective verbal communication while as confused, stumbling and muddled presentation of ideas is a bored and often a non-useful information. Therefore, it is important that an individual communicates well so that the listeners/peers don't get bored and find it interesting and enjoyable. Thus, in order to build relationships, collaboration, it is important to persuade and communicate well with the listeners/peers.

1.9. Coping with Stress

It is an important skill related to the ability of how to deal with stress. Stress is caused due to an excessive pressure/burden. There are various ways of dealing with stress. Avoiding preoccupation, negative thoughts, and focusing only on the strengths can help us deal effectively with the stress.

1.10. Coping with Emotions

Emotions is a response to something/someone. Emotions can be positive or negative. The negative emotions include anger, worry, etc. while as positive emotions include hope, love etc. Emotions are a vital component of our daily lives.

If we mute the emotions, the life would appear dull. The manifestation of deficiency in emotional management appears in the form of violence, anger, suicides etc.

1.11. Plan of the Study

In this study, we plan to discuss the need and importance of the life skill and its relevance in the academic ecosystems. Life Skill plays a very crucial and vital role in the educational systems. Due to the tremendous advancements in the modern technology and the chaotic trends in the modern world scenario, there is lot of mumbo jumbo in the work style and the imbalance in the life. There is a critical need for the teacher to inculcate the life skill education in the students and himself as well. The life skill education works as remedy to the solution and thus facilitates the happy and joyful life. It additionally provides critical thinking, rationality and logic and thus empowers an individual.

2. METHODOLOGY

The authors have investigated the research study using the secondary sources of data. The data was collected from records, reports, research articles and credible digital sources. In addition, given the nature of study, the authors used the thoughts, and writings of the experts who are well versed with the subject.

2.1. Significance of Life Skills

In the contemporary world with a continuously evolving technology, there are lot of challenges in almost every profession. These technological advancements bring the stress, fatigue, increased workload, frustration and complexities in many respects. The learners are completely unaware of what they might get, what they are working for. Therefore, it is very important to develop and nurture the abilities to fight against the stress that comes of the waxed and complex education system. It can be said that the life skills play a vital role in make up a healthy social and academic life. It can help in many aspects that are discussed as:

1. Incorporating novel and new ways of learning and thus promoting the spirit of discovery and innovation.
2. Sensitizing and making us more socially recognizable.
3. Developing the self- esteem and self-reflection.
4. Collaboration and cooperation with others.
5. Management of the time effectively.
6. To prepare for the future effectively and efficiently.
7. Looking for the alternatives and options for solutions.

3. CONCLUSION

Life skills play an indispensable role in the modern educational system. There is need to improve the teaching and student learning so that the academic achievement is increased which will enhance the life skill of teachers. A need is felt to plan a robust and holistic curriculum so that it helps the learners to circumvent the challenges and develop the life skills. There should be a great focus to include the modules so that it can foster the life skill. Some regular sessions on the life skill can be conducted at the school and college level so that it can create awareness and bring a positive change in the minds of the students and hence contribute to the life skill.

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Author Contributions Statement

Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
Sayed Iram Tabish	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
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C : **C**onceptualization
M : **M**ethodology
So : **So**ftware
Va : **Va**lidation
Fo : **Fo**rmal analysis
I : **I**nvestigation
R : **R**esources
D : **D**ata Curation
O : Writing - **O**riginal Draft
E : Writing - Review & **E**diting
Vi : **Vi**sualization
Su : **Su**pervision
P : **P**roject administration
Fu : **Fu**nding acquisition

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Informed Consent

All participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and their voluntary consent was obtained prior to data collection.

Ethical Approval

Not Applicable.

Data Availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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