

Challenges faced by Educators in teaching Life Skills

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Abstract—Just as fertilizers nurture the growth of a plant, life skills education nourishes the overall development of a child — helping them not only grow but truly bloom into confident, responsible, and compassionate individuals. This research investigates the challenges encountered by educators in implementing a life skills curriculum in schools. It examines how training, demonstrations, and structured frameworks (such as modules, lesson-plans and assessment tools) support or hinder the effective delivery of life-skills programmes. Using a mixed-method design, the study explores educators’ perceptions of preparedness, availability of professional development and teaching-learning resources, and institutional supports. It also assesses how these variables influence the fidelity of life skills implementation and its outcomes in student behaviour, decision-making and social responsibility. Findings aim to illuminate key barriers (such as inadequate training, curriculum overload, and resource constraints) and propose recommendations for enhanced teacher capacity, curriculum design and school policy. The research concludes by emphasising that for children to truly “bloom”, life-skills education must be embedded systemically, supported by strong frameworks and continuously nurtured by committed educators.

Index Terms—curriculum implementation, educator challenges, life skills education pre-school/primary education, professional development, training frameworks

I. INTRODUCTION

Every academic year begins with teachers setting a vision for their students, one that extends beyond academic growth to embrace holistic development. Yet despite this intent, the realities of the classroom often impose constraints syllabus coverage pressures, limited time frames, multiple institutional responsibilities which leave little space for the deliberate cultivation of values and human skills. As a consequence, children may progress through school with solid subject-knowledge yet lack confidence,

understanding, and empathy for their peers, compromising their development as responsible citizens. In this context, life skills act as the “fertiliser” for a young person’s personality: just as a plant nourished with good fertiliser grows strong and blooms beautifully, so too does a child nurtured with skills such as self-awareness, decision-making, problem-solving, effective communication and empathy mature into a competent member of society. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), life skills are defined as “abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Moreover, life skills education is widely recognised as central to holistic development—enabling children not only to learn, but to live well and contribute meaningfully.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

- Bhuvaneshwari et al., (2017) has studied the assessment of life skills among 40 nursing students (B. Sc., 1st year) from nursing colleges of Tamil Nadu. A cross-sectional descriptive survey design by using the standardised life skills assessment scale was used to reveal the life skills score. Majority (75 percent) of them were having average level of life skills and others were having low scores in life skills.
- According to Albertyn et al. (2004) life skills training enhance critical thinking abilities, which further impacts were living life actively, being responsible in the job and in future planning too.
- Ramesh and Farshad C. (2004) in his study proved the effectiveness of like skills training in increasing mental and physical health, pro-social behaviour and decreasing in behavioural, social problems & self destructive behaviours.

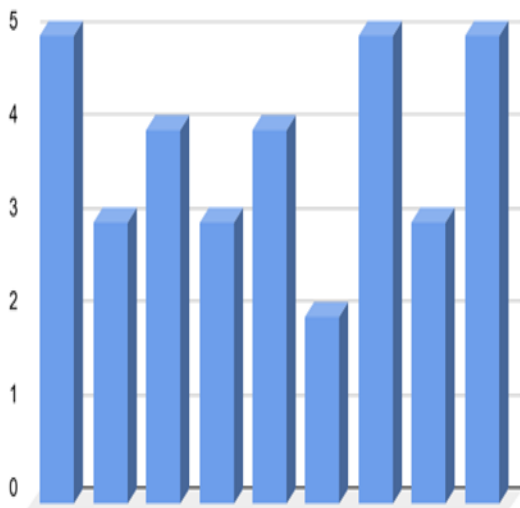
III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To identify the challenges faced by educators in teaching Life skills.
- To understand the frequency of teacher training on teaching life skills.
- To explore the institutional and curricular barriers affecting implementation.
- To suggest measures to improve the delivery of Life skills.

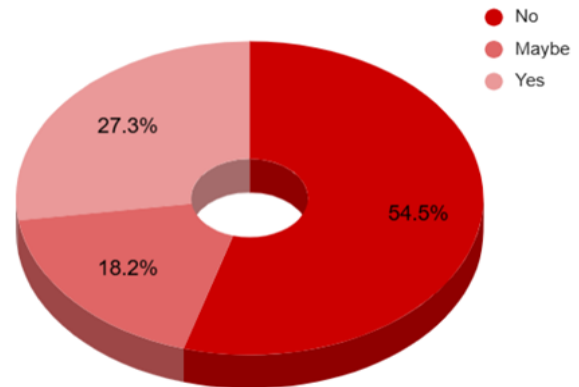
IV. METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted to understand the challenges faced by educators in teaching Life Skills. A group of teachers randomly selected from different schools across Mumbai served as the sample for this research. The experimental method was adopted to ensure fairness and representation of diverse teaching contexts. To collect relevant data, a structured questionnaire was developed to gather information on educators' experiences, students' understanding of life skill concepts, The questionnaire included both closed-ended and open-ended questions to obtain a balance of quantitative and qualitative insights. The data collected were systematically analyzed to identify and compare recurring challenges and patterns faced by teachers in implementing life skills education across different school settings.

V. FINDINGS



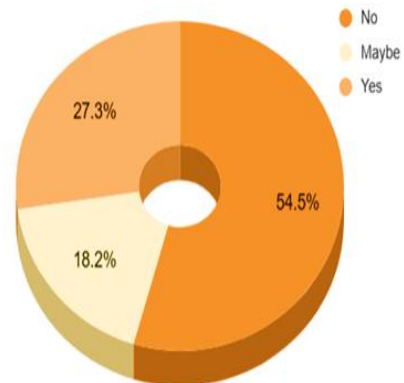
Formal Training on Life skills for Teachers



Teachers' familiar with the concept of Life skills

The research aimed to identify the challenges faced by educators in teaching life skills and to evaluate the level of institutional support and teacher preparedness in this area. The findings reveal that while teachers recognize the importance of life skills education, several gaps exist in its implementation. The data shows that 54.5% of teachers reported receiving little to no formal training on life skills, while only 18.2% confirmed receiving proper training. This highlights a need for more structured and frequent professional development programs.

Support of School Management in promoting Life skills



Similarly, when asked about the support of school management in promoting life skills, over half of the respondents (54.5%) felt that there was insufficient institutional backing, indicating that administrative focus on this aspect of education remains limited. Educators expressed that the concept of life skills is moderately understood, with some uncertainty regarding effective teaching methods and integration into the curriculum. The traditional methods used in classrooms tend to limit student engagement, whereas

innovative methods—such as interactive activities and real-life applications—were found to be more effective and appreciated by students. Overall, the responses suggest that the existing system neither performs poorly nor exceptionally well, but lies in an average range, showing significant scope for improvement. Strengthening training opportunities, enhancing management support, and adopting innovative teaching practices can bridge the current gaps. Since life skills education plays a vital role in problem-solving, decision-making, emotional balance, and adaptability, prioritizing it within the school environment is essential for holistic student development.

VI. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Formal Training on Life Skills for Teachers

Lack of Training and Professional Development:

Most teachers reported they had not received formal training in life skills education, making it difficult to design engaging lessons.

Time Constraints

Teachers stated that heavy academic syllabi leave little time to focus on non-academic subjects like life skills.

Inadequate Resources and Materials:

There is a lack of structured teaching materials, activity guides, and assessment tools for life skills.

Limited Administrative Support:

Some schools do not prioritize life skills, viewing them as “extra activities” rather than essential learning areas.

Student Engagement Issues:

Teachers found that students sometimes view life skills lessons as less important or irrelevant to examinations.

Assessment Challenges:

Evaluating skills like empathy, decision-making, and emotional regulation remains subjective and difficult to standardize.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Enhance Teacher Training and Awareness

Organize regular workshops and formal training sessions focused on Life Skills education.

Conduct ongoing professional development programs to help teachers integrate Life Skills into their subject areas effectively.

Provide continuous support and mentoring for teachers to ensure sustained implementation.

Integrate Life Skills into the Curriculum

Embed Life Skills naturally into existing subjects rather than treating them as separate topics.

Use backward planning to align lesson objectives with specific Life Skills, ensuring a focused and realistic approach.

Design curriculum units that link academic content with real-life applications and problem-solving opportunities.

Adopt Innovative and Experiential Teaching Methods

Use project-based and experiential learning methods that encourage collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking.

Incorporate real-life examples such as learning calculations from a shopkeeper’s stall, writing practical letters, or connecting daily experiences to classroom concepts.

Focus on progress, not perfection — viewing challenges as opportunities for growth.

Create Structured Life Skill Opportunities

Introduce weekly Life Skill classes or sessions dedicated to topics such as emotional intelligence, communication, and decision-making.

Conduct workshops and seminars on career planning, social awareness, and community engagement.

Encourage student-led classrooms to promote leadership and self-management skills.

Involve Parents and the Community

Engage parents and local community members in activities and discussions that reinforce Life Skills outside the classroom. Build partnerships with local organizations for experiential learning and service-based projects.

Curriculum Reform and Realistic Learning

Develop a more relevant and practical curriculum that connects classroom learning to everyday life.

Ensure that educational experiences help students think clearly, understand themselves, and apply learning independently in real-life contexts.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that while educators acknowledge the significance of life skills education, there are evident challenges in its effective implementation. The findings indicate that insufficient

training, limited institutional support, and reliance on traditional teaching methods hinder the successful promotion of life skills among students. Most teachers have only a basic understanding of the concept, and formal training opportunities are irregular or inadequate. Despite these challenges, educators show a positive attitude and willingness to adopt innovative approaches when given proper guidance and support. To strengthen life skills education, schools must provide continuous professional development, foster an encouraging management environment, and integrate life skills into daily classroom practices. Enhancing these areas will not only empower teachers but also ensure that students develop essential competencies such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and emotional resilience, which are crucial for their overall growth and success in life.

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