

ENHANCEMENT OF LIFE SKILLS AMONG THE ADOLESCENTS THROUGH EDUCATION

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Educational institution is one of the best platforms for learning for the student. The main objectives of school are to build a productive generation in the future. That's why teacher focuses on the overall development of the students. Teacher develops not only reading writing and arithmetic skills among students but also develops such types of abilities or skills which enable to face challenges in life. It is life skills education which enables individuals to take decision to what to do and how to do it. It is the generic life skills like self-awareness, empathy, effective communication, inter personal relationship, problem solving, decision making, creative and analytical deliberating, confront with stress and emotions that help the students to overcome challenges in real life. In this paper an attempt has been made to throw a light on the concept, importance and role of school education in the enhancement of life skills among individuals which enables them to face the challenges of future life and lead a joyful, prosperous and happy life.

Keywords: Life Skill Education, Educational Institution, Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Education is a never ending process of inner growth and development and its period stretches from cradle to grave. It develops the innate capabilities of individuals. Education is a process which draws out the best in child and man – body, mind and spirit, (Mahatma Gandhi, 1937). It is one that lends dignity to man and helps to build up the personality of child by assisting his physical, cognitive, ethical and emotional development. Life skills refer to skills which have utmost needs throughout life. Typically life skills are linked with running and living an enhanced excellence of life and guide us to accomplish our wishes and live to our full latent. Any skill i.e. polishing your shoes, dancing, driving a vehicle and using a technology can be considered a life skill. Life skills are the capabilities, facilitate us to deal efficiently with confront in various situations like at educational institution, at workplace or in our individual lives. Every individual can cope up efficiently with the hassles, barriers, and strain of daily life through life skills, (Trivedi, 2005). The developmental years from 6-18 years, one can achieve the life skills through various teaching methods. Life skills are psycho-social skills that facilitate students to cope up successfully with their critical situations of life, (Austin, 2012). Over the past twenty years, educators, employers, and policymakers have increasingly placed great emphasis on the development of life skills as they prepare adolescents for success in today's rapidly changing and globalized world. Basically, life skills are coping skills consonant with the developmental task of the basic human

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development process, namely those skills necessary to perform tasks for a given age and gender in psychological, physical, sexual, vocational, cognitive, moral, ego and emotional areas of human development. Different organizations define life skills in different ways, (Powell, 1990). A large group of psycho-social and interpersonal skills that can help people make informed decisions, communicate effectively, and develop coping and self-management skills that may help lead a healthy and productive life, (UNICEF, 2010). However, all of these viewpoints have several composite elements, including the psychosocial, interpersonal, and emotional nature of life skills, as well as their function in enabling youth to overcome challenges, act positively, and develop to their fullest potential.

IMPORTANCE OF LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION

Puberty has often been known as a period of stress and strain due to rapid change. But it is true that adolescents can be proved great contributor to develop prospers and healthy community if proper support and space through informed interaction given to them at every step of their life. Adolescents are full of energy, vitality, innovative ideas and having progressive outlook and they are guided and directed well, then they can prove most productive force for any country of the world, (Ruskin, 1993). In comparison to other stages of human development teenagers have special attributes in the all aspects of personality development. These attributes indicated that they need special attention and care by which we can promote mental, physical and social well being and enables them to face realities of life. Life skills education can be proved better alternatives to shape their attribute and equip them with such types of skill or abilities that help them overcome the critical situation and problems of life, (Jeffrey and Blannie, 1993). Life skills education put positive impact on the academic achievement, reduced violence, increased self confidence, self concept and self esteem. Further it helps in preventing the students from the abuse of drug, alcohol and in creating peace full environment, (Yadav, 2014). Life skill approach is an interactive educational methodology that emphasizes on acquiring knowledge, attitudes and interpersonal skills. It means to enables youngsters to take life responsibility and to lead healthy life style. Life skills has important role in improving the reproductive health of younger adults, (Cecilla, 2010).

Life skills education empowers children's and enabling them to take more responsibility for their proceedings. There are so many situations in our lives that cause worry. Life seems to be really difficult. This is due to the fact that somewhere we lack the essential skills that are required to handle these difficult situations. Life skills help us to regulate our lives. Life skills supply to our sensitivity of self-assurance and self-worth as well as motivate us to look after ourselves and others, handle day to day situations effectively and prevent any health and behavior problems. Life skill education is very effective in educating the youth about prevention of drug, sexual violence, teenage pregnancy, suicide prevention,

consumer education etc, (Raveendra, 2012). There are different types of life skills like managing and controlling situations, solve the problem, advance thinking, analytical thinking ,communiqué, interconnected relationships , decisiveness, warmth, self-control and confidence, dealing with stress, shock and loss and flexibility which are essential for all and can be developed through life skill education, (CBSE, 2014). A person is able to deal with the different critical situation with the help of life skills and lead happy and joyful life. So, it is essential to impart life skill education to the children's at all school levels. There is ominous need of integrating life skills in the syllabus at different levels and professionally trained teachers must be given opportunities to develop these skills in student's (Dubey, 2015).

ROLE OF SCHOOL AND LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Life skills development is a process which ends with the end of life and helps individuals grow and mature; encourage working with efficiency and confidence, taking bold decisions to get rid of critical situations. School education plays vital role in life skills development, especially in present time when conventional mechanisms for passing on life skills are not good enough, considering influences that shape a young individual's development, (Sharma, 2015). Therefore, school education has an ample possibility to provide them with variety of practical experiences in their crucial years. So it is important that students must be encouraged to participate actively in the productive teaching and learning process at the time of transacting life skill education. School is an appropriate place where we can introduce life skills programs because during early schooling children acquaint a major part of their regular education. Life skills have inevitable role in the development of adolescents. Life skill education is the most cost effective way to empower the psycho-social skills of adolescents, (Prajina, 2014). Now education is institutionalized in India. Schools require to be recognized as the most significant medium to reach out to youth people. Like ways any programme designed to influence the adolescents, should be incorporated to the educational system. The teachers are the next-door resources to the children and they have to be trained effectively to offer the life skill programme to the students, (Shankaram, 2006).

In this regards, school authorities' needs to be encouraged and made understood to analyze the relevancy and scope of life skill education in the context of promotion of mental health among students. It improves the mental health issues among students can reduce the vulnerability of students life, (Sahil, 1990). Many schools follow teacher centered approach in teaching and the role of student is minimal. Education is not to prepare for any particular vocation. In fact it should equip the child with such skills and techniques which may be helpful to him in solving the problems of his life. So he advocated discovery or enquiry based learning, (Dewey, 1938). Learner centered approach in learning foundation on the theory of client

centered therapy. Teachers must be attentive to necessitate for child psychological wellbeing as element in teaching, (Carl Rogers (1969). Through education child should realize his/her potential and should be capable to decide what he wants to achieve and how it will be achieved.

In school, children's acquire social skills through academic and non academic activities and also interaction with teachers, peers and authorities other than their family members. Development of life skill is helpful to decrease anti social activities and create healthy and peaceful environment in the society. For the proper guidance, support and direction students always looked upon the adults of school community and have a elevated veracity with parents and members of the society caused great influence on children and also their families, (Ghosh, 2006). An educational institution is a dreadful institution for a life skills intercession. So it is essential that school education should emphasize on academics, mental and social welfare of child to make so that it become a cheering place of wisdom.

ROLE OF TEACHER IN PROMOTING LIFE SKILLS

Teaching learning process is basically associated with teachers. It is aims oriented process in which learner, teacher, curriculum and other variables are organized in a systematic and psychological manner. Basically the teachers or facilitators can adopt two approaches to the teaching learning process. Although one of the above approaches can be utilized, the emphasis should be given on planning such types of teaching learning experiences which promotes real learning experiences among students. Experiential learning cannot be taught to students through abstractly and theoretically rather they are better taught through experienced by the learners themselves. A teacher who followed a traditional way of teaching by lecturing feels indifferent to accept child centered teaching methodologies like life skill education. For such kind teachers this method are irrelevant, time consuming, difficult to manage etc. if we provide them an opportunity to implement child centered teaching that will be failure due to their wrong perceptions, (CBSE, 2010). Many of teachers are not aware about the relevance of life skill education in handling the issues faced by students but hesitate to apply this because of time constraint and lack of support from school and parents. Another section of teachers consider it as non-academic activity with less importance and unwilling to change from the approach of teacher centered classroom teaching to child centered. School authorities are worried about the discipline of school while engaging in participatory learning approach and due to excess consumption of time they cannot finish their syllabus on time will affect their result, (Yadav, 2012). So before integrating life skill education we have to handle the perception of teachers and school authorities regarding the benefits of life skills education. So it is essential that teachers and school authorities must be encouraged towards life skills education.

Teacher plays vital role in the development of students as student spends most of his time in school with teachers. Teachers provide support and directions to students to handle these problems. Before give support and directions the teacher should perceive this problem in an empathetic manner. Teacher should able to identify the root cause of the problem, (Bhatt, 2011). Aggressive behavior of the student destroys the atmosphere of harmony in class as well as his family. This can be tackled by building good interpersonal relationships with others and by teaching him the ways of effective communication, (Jessy, 1998). These skills help in good decision making, prevent drug abuse and sexual experimentation. Apart from that if the student is doing the such behavior under the influence of friends or media the teacher should develop critical thinking in student to analyze the situation critically and decide whether they depend on friends decision or not. Unhealthy relationship and lack of communication among students creates many psychosocial problems like depression, stress, suicidal attempts, over use of drugs, anti-social behavior and violence, (Shamsher, 2006). The teachers should be properly given training in life skill education, so that they can provide best solution of the health and sexual problems of adolescents. They can execute these skills to perk up the quality of life of adolescents and help them to overcome the troubles of their routine life, (Krishnendu, 2014). Most of the problems faced by students can be resolved through life skills education but initially the teachers to be trained on this otherwise the actual goal of life skill education will be misinterpreted. Life skill education must be a part of curriculum and starts from different levels of schooling. Further through in-service training programs teachers should be equipped with various techniques by which they can promotes life skills among students. For the development of life skills a teachers must be equipped with various tools through pre-service and in-service training, (Shekh (2013). If teachers are facilitated with a wide-range of training program on life skills education it would smooth the progress of the teachers but also would support children's educational and psychological health necessities, (Edwards, 1994; Cohen,1999; and Brooks, 2001.

It is advisable that whatever methods a teacher or facilitator chooses, they should be learner centered, i.e. based on the particular needs, developments and interests of the learners and help bring about positive behavior change. Life skill can be developed by adopting following behaviors by the teachers-

- Asking for validation of the ideas logically
- Encounter learners with alternatives and thought provoking questions.
- Proving opportunities for students to ask open ended questions.
- Use of dialogue approach, enquiry and debate to stimulate critical thinking.
- Assigning simple assignments and projects based on life skills. Life skills as an independent subject as well as integrating it with other disciplines.
- Providing opportunities for developing life skills.

- Increasing participation of parents in developing positive attitudes towards life among the students, as family is also one of the basic institutions that lay the foundation of life skills.
- Acting as positive role models, as life skills are better caught than taught.

METHODS OF TEACHING AND LIFE SKILL EDUCATION

Methods of teaching play a vital role in teaching learning process. Selection of methods depends on the nature of the subject and content and also the act of the teacher. There are variety of teaching methods that can be used by the teacher i.e telling method, doing method and visual method to impart knowledge. A teacher can use any of these methods or combination of these methods in their teaching. But the method of doing is not much projected in current teaching. Learning by doing method can be implemented by the teacher to impart life skill education in the classroom. By the use of doing method teacher can plan different activities which are helpful to develop various life skills in the students. Education should be provided through creative and productive activities. Learning by doing is one of the best methods of teaching, by which the child grasps the subject matter quickly, (Gandhi and Dewey, 1938). Beside scholastic activities a teacher can develop these skills through non-scholastic activities also. A teacher can develop life skills among students through co-curricular activities as these activities provide them to act in different situation physically, (Rubbey, 2015). A teacher can plan workshops and practical activities which provides direct experiences focusing on a particular skill. Because activities like arts, music, theatre, dance, small groups, educational tours, debates and decision mapping or problem trees promotes values like co-operation, patience, and feeling of togetherness, how to seek help from others, respecting self esteem and sense of responsibility among students. These activities are helpful to provide practical experience or knowledge of contents as well as develop life skills. Methods to advance the psychosocial capability and resilience of the youth as health promotional activities and expansion sloping approach need to be included in the school curriculum and provided as much significance as the Three Rs (reading, writing, arithmetic). Life skill program is one such program, (Botwin GJ, Eng A, Williams, 1980). Life skills are capabilities for adaptive and optimistic behavior that enable students to deal effectively with the hassles, tasks, and pressure of everyday life. Childhood and youth are the developmental periods during which one attains life skills through numerous teaching devices and teachers. Experience and knowledge also has shown that educators need support in the form of syllabus, resource materials, and training to be able to endorse life skills among the students, (WHO, 1997).

CONCLUSION

In sum, life skills are essential for all individuals and must be provided at different school levels as it enables them to face the challenges of future life. So it is essential

to impart life skills education to the young children as they can contribute more for the development of society. Life skills education must be part of school curricula and must be started from early schooling years. Our Teachers are the centre point of teaching learning process and can play a vital role to develop life skills among students. So they need to be encouraged to interlink teaching process with life skill by planning and executing teaching and learning experiences which provides experimental learning to them.

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